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PRISONERS IN WAR: ZOOS AND ZOO ANIMALS DURING HUMAN CONFLICT 1870-1947

Clelly Johnson

Clemson University, clelly.alex.johnson@gmail.com

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PRISONERS IN WAR:
ZOOS AND ZOO ANIMALS DURING HUMAN CONFLICT
1870-1947

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
History

by
Clelly Alexander Johnson
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Accepted by:
Dr. Michael Silvestri, Committee Chair
Dr. Alan Grubb
Dr. Michael Meng

ABSTRACT

Animals are sentient beings capable of many of the same feelings experienced by humans. They mourn a loss, they feel love and loyalty, and they experience fear. During wars and conflicts, fear is a prevailing emotion among humans, who worry for their well-being. Animals, too, feel fear during human conflicts, and that fear is magnified when those animals are caged. History has shown the victimization of zoo animals during military conflicts. Zoo animals already lack agency over their own lives, and in times of war, they are seen as a liability. From the Siege of Paris to recent Israel-Hamas conflicts in Gaza, zoo animals have been unwitting victims of man's inhumanity to man. Mahatma Gandhi once wrote, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." If this sentiment is true, most nations have progressed little in the 150 years covered in this thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am nothing without the people in my life who have molded and inspired me. I would like to thank my father for giving me a deep appreciation for the environment and the natural world. I would like to thank my mother, though our time together was brief, for instilling in me the belief that the only barriers in life are the ones in my own mind. I would also like to thank my dear friend Amanda Crawford for being the best cheerleader, sounding board, and proofreader. Without their love, support, and humor, I would not have made it this far in my education or in life.

I would like to thank Dr. Silvestri for taking on the role of advisor on my committee. I would also like to thank him for being generous with his time and insight. Moreover, I would like to thank him for introducing me to John MacKenzie's *The Empire of Nature*, a work that has taken on a pivotal role in the direction of my future pursuits. I would also like to thank Dr. Grubb for taking the time to be on my committee and for helping me come to terms with the "off-center" topics that intrigue me. It is important that I thank Dr. Meng as well for being on my committee. I never had a class with him, but I appreciate him taking the time from his busy schedule to help with this process.

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Finally, I would like to thank the entire history department and my cohort in the MA program. It was truly an amazing opportunity to work with you all. Every day was filled with laughter and inspiration, and I thank you.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the zoo animals and the people who cared for them that perished during human conflict. I hope that one day the loss of those lives will inspire others to prevent more senseless deaths.

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I

Introduction: Our Wars, Not Theirs

Animals do not keep journals, write letters, or submit editorial pieces to newspapers about their experiences, but that is not to say that they have not lived — and in the case of human military actions, lived through harrowing events. There have been many accounts of humans' heroics and losses, but the wartime victimization of animals is vastly forgotten and unexplored. When remembering the events of war, the cruelty of humanity against its own is apparent. Though less publicized, the plight of vulnerable caged animals that have died by human hands is also of great importance.

Recently, there have been reports about animals after some of the most disturbing disasters. There were people who refused to evacuate New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina because they did not want to leave their pets behind.¹ After the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, viewers across the globe watched with wrecked hearts as dogs searched the barren landscape of the Japanese coast for their owners and homes. But these events, while catastrophic, were natural occurrences. When human beings wage war over borders and ideologies that animals have no part of, it makes the animals' victimization harder to fathom. It is harder still to understand when caged animals who were once heralded as a source of education and entertainment are the victims of warfare.

Those in favor of zoos often assert that they are sites of education and research — but all too often these institutions have become battlegrounds. In times of human conflict

¹ Froma Walsh, "Human-Animal Bonds II: The Role of Pets in Family Systems and Family Therapy." *Family Process* 48, no. 4 (2009): 488.

there are rules of engagement: certain regulations set forth by the Geneva Conventions, highlighting humanitarian rights during war. Yet in these rules of war, the rights of animals are not considered. Hospitals, schools, and religious buildings are often considered off-limits in the throes of war. But zoos — places of entertainment for children and adults alike, locations of scientific research — become battlegrounds in many conflicts. There are many reasons why this has persisted throughout history. The senseless deaths of animals during human conflict can be seen as speciesism. There is the belief that animals' lives are worth less than human lives, or that they just do not matter at all. Perhaps humans cannot form the same personal connections with zoo animals as with domestic pets. Or perhaps the physical distance that separates animals from humans, through bars and enclosures, has created a much more significant divide. Critic John Berger writes, "Animals are born, are sentient and are mortal. In these things they resemble man. In their superficial anatomy — less in their deep anatomy — in their habits, in their time, in their physical capacities, they differ from man. They are both like and unlike."² Humans, however, concentrate on the ways in which they differ from animals, focusing on those traits that makes the latter easier to eliminate. This leads to the suffering of animals in many human conflicts — yet this information rarely reaches the public consciousness. In the last 150 years, there have been numerous examples of zoo animals being tortured, starved, and killed during war — but news of these atrocities is often absent from the media.

² John Berger, "Why Look at Animals?" in *About Looking* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 2.

“A Left Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals,” historian Erica Fudge writes that a past unacknowledged by the present will soon disappear. She adds, “If that past is allowed to disappear it will take with it knowledge of the present, because the two are inseparable. In fact, history is where both the past and the present must be brought together, and the historian has a duty to both.”³ This statement applies to every historian, but it especially true for historians of animals and human-animal interactions. The purpose of this thesis is not just to remember animals that have been forced to endure human conflict, but to give them a sense of agency that they have lacked in the human world. The only time that animals have true authority over their lives is when they are in their natural habitat, away from humans — but with the expansion of humanity over thousands of years, animals’ dominion has decreased dramatically. Even in the wild they are constantly under the scrutiny of game wardens, hunters, and biologists. With civilization encroaching on their habitats and their lives, unable to share their own stories, animals need to be given a new sense of agency through their interactions with humans, which is the focus of this thesis.

There is debate between historians regarding the subfield of animal history. Fudge argues that animal history relies too much on human linguistics and documentation to be considered merely the “history of animals.” Instead, she claims it is “the history of human

³ Erica Fudge, “A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals,” in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 3.

attitudes toward animals.”⁴ In contrast Etienne Benson argues in “Animal Writes: Historiography, Disciplinarity, and the Animal Trace,” he argues that there is an animal history, but one must search for these “traces” of animals in the historical record. Benson establishes a need for the discipline when he writes, “Needless to say, documenting the lives of animals for their own sakes has heretofore not been a high priority of archivists, historians, or governments.”⁵ Benson counters Fudge’s claim by stating that everything we do, including writing, has some form of connection to the animal world.⁶ According to Benson, the research of animal history is closely related to the research one would do in subaltern studies. It involves scholars studying the traces left behind by those living on the fringes of popular society. The issues faced by subaltern scholars in archives are the same as those confronting animal historians.⁷ Although they might not agree on semantics, both Fudge and Benson believe that animals are actors in history, and therefore should be represented. This thesis would not be deemed an animal history, per se, but it is a history of human-animal relations.

When describing the effects of human conflict on zoos between 1870 and World War II, it is impossible to tell the story of every individual zoo. For this thesis, the primary zoos of focus are the Jardin des Plantes in France; the Berlin Zoo and the Hamburg Zoo in Germany; the London Zoo; the National Zoo and the Bronx Zoo in the United States; and the Ueno Zoo of Tokyo, Japan. Other zoos are mentioned, but are not discussed to

⁴ Ibid, 6.

⁵ Etienne Benson, “Animal Writes: Historiography, Disciplinarity, and the Animal Trace,” in *Making Animal Meaning*, ed. Linda Kalof and Georgina Montgomery (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2011), 11.

⁶ Ibid, 5.

⁷ Ibid, 6.

the extent of those listed. In examining this global topic, primary research was limited mainly to American and British newspapers from that time, as well as some journals and memoirs written soon after. Unfortunately, this topic has limited sources for research. The history of animals during human combat is seen as inconsequential when so much human life is lost. Because of this, there is not a massive amount of primary documentation about the plight of zoos and their animals during wars. The archives from many zoos were destroyed during these conflicts, and it is likely that some animal culls that occurred were not well documented. Newspapers from the time of the conflicts can be a valuable source in tracing what happened to zoos. Sometimes the articles that ran in newspapers were printed not out of concern for the zoos or animals, but as fluff pieces to amuse the reader who had grown weary of bad war news. In the cases where newspapers reported the experience of zoos in an unflattering light, it was often done to emphasize the human suffering taking place.

Today, we live in a world with numerous animal welfare organizations and laws for the sole purpose of protecting animals. Yet in many respects, it is still a world that — when it comes down to primal motivations — sets us (humans) against them (animals), especially during times of human conflict. There is a long-held impression that the institutions of zoos, and animals in general, are frivolous and unproductive during wartime. During such periods of extreme duress, it was often believed that zoo animals were more useful dead than alive. Those caged, vulnerable animals, many of whom were snatched from their natural habitats, were not deemed a high priority in a society thrust into crisis. These creatures were expendable and had little value to war machines on the

march. Animal studies scholar Randy Malamud presents three common rationalizations for the purposeful destruction of zoo animals. First, as evidenced by the Jardin des Plantes during the Franco-Prussian War, is the slaughter of zoo animals for their meat or to conserve supplies for humans. Malamud explains, “Keeping captive animals alive and on display may be considered worthy during peace, but becomes an expendable luxury when played off against human duress.”⁸ The second reason for the destruction of zoo animals, according to Malamud, is on “humanitarian grounds.” He adds, “This rationale seems incongruous, given the captive and inherently oppressive nature of zoo animals’ everyday existence.”⁹ The third and most common justification, Malamud writes, is to ensure human safety.¹⁰ This reason is illustrated in cases at both the London Zoo and Ueno Zoo. And perhaps there is a fourth reason beyond those put forth by Malamud: patriotic duty. In times of war, when citizens are suffering from extreme austerity measures, some politicians and individuals decide to destroy captive animals for the good of their nation.

For as long as humans have fought wars, animals have played roles as combatants and victims. They have served as weapons, communication liaisons, and even as mascots to cheer up and inspire war-weary soldiers. Along with human civilians, animals have been among the innocents killed in the mass bombings and air raids of modern war. When animals become collateral damage while imprisoned in enclosures and cages, they take on great significance. A Sarajevo resident, who took it upon himself to care for the last

⁸ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 57

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

remaining animal at a city zoo during the Yugoslav wars, sums it up best: “People have people to look after them, to come for them, but animals in cages have only us, they can’t protect themselves, they can’t fend for themselves.”¹¹ The advancements in modern military technology since the 19th century have had horrifying effects on the lives of humans and animals alike. Since 1870, the devastating effects of wars on zoos have been repeated regularly with every new conflict; it is not a novel occurrence. For as long as animals have been held in captivity, they have been the victims of human conflict.

The term “zoo” did not catch on until the mid- to late nineteenth century, but the keeping of wild and exotic animals has been practiced for many millennia. It is believed that people have kept wild and exotic animals in confinement since the development of cities around 3000 B.C.¹² Animal studies scholar Linda Kalof notes, “With the creation of cities, the accumulation of wealth, increased trading, and fighting, powerful animals and untamed nature began to be used to symbolize struggle, violence and war. Human representations of animals assumed a motif that emphasized animals as wild, ferocious, strong and symbolic of warring kingdoms.”¹³ The first known zoo existed seven miles outside the city of Nippur, in ancient Mesopotamia. Not much is known about this menagerie, located on the estate of Great King Shulgia, other than it housed lions.¹⁴ For as long as there has been human civilization, the keeping of exotic animals has been a

¹¹ John Burns, “In the Zoo’s House of Horrors, One Pitiful Bear,” *New York Times*, October 16, 1992.

¹² Vicki Croke, *The Modern Ark: The Story of Zoos: Past, Present and Future* (New York: Scribner, 1997), 128

¹³ Linda Kalof. *Looking at Animals in Human History* (London, England: Reaktion Books, 2007,) 2.

¹⁴ Vicki Croke. *The Modern Ark: The Story of Zoos: Past, Present and Future* (New York, NY: Scribner, 1997), 129.

part of it; and as long as there have been wars, imprisoned animals have played a role in them.

Individuals feuding with their neighbors eventually evolved into nations feuding with their neighbors, which led to the building of empires. And as empires were built, animals were imprisoned as spoils of war, to display the dominance of the conquering nations. There have been many such occurrences throughout history, but one of the earliest notable examples involved Alexander the Great. Alexander returned from his military conquests with many animals, such as elephants. He was also given many animals as tributes from people he had conquered, including tigers. It is believed that these animals were the basis of Aristotle's *History of Animals*, which cataloged three hundred species.¹⁵ The Roman Empire followed in Alexander's footsteps, importing animals back to Rome as spoils of war. Classics and animal studies historian Jo-Ann Shelton wrote about these animals: "Their exhibition in Rome therefore provided concrete proof that the wars had been successful and that Rome was able to subdue any force that resisted it. The spectacle also established that the upper-class politician who sponsored it was attentive to popular wishes, had the military and political connections needed to obtain animals from foreign lands, and was thus worthy of holding a position of great authority."¹⁶ Thus, the acquisition of animals through war was seen as a political move to demonstrate the power of the Roman Empire. In addition, the animals that were returned to Rome were often killed in arenas before massive crowds. The slaughter of foreign animals might have been

¹⁵ Ibid, 131.

¹⁶ Jo-Ann Shelton, "Beastly Spectacles in the Ancient Mediterranean World," in *A Cultural History of Animals in Antiquity*, ed. Linda Kalof (Oxford: Berg, 2007), 120-21.

carried out for several reasons. The animals could have been serving as a proxy for the foreign people Rome had battled. Perhaps they gave Romans who were not at the war the satisfaction of seeing blood spilled, even if only from animals from the conquered region. Another reason could be that killing animals was a subconscious show of dominance: the power of the Roman Empire was so colossal, it could even conquer nature. Regardless of the reasoning behind these actions, capturing and transporting large and dangerous animals solely for the purpose of killing them was a mighty display of the power of Rome.¹⁷

When Hernan Cortes made contact with the Aztecs in 1521, he discovered in their city of Tenochtitlan a vast zoo that indicated an animal trade among the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The Aztec zoo comprised several large halls, which contained birds, fish, large snakes, and many wild cats. It was believed that all the carnivorous animals were fed nothing but turkeys. When Cortes and his fellow conquistadors laid siege to Tenochtitlan, its zoo became one of the first to be directly affected by war. Many of the city's 300,000 inhabitants survived for a time by eating the zoo animals.¹⁸ The history of zoos being unwilling participants in war continued into the eighteenth century with Napoleon's conquest of Europe. In 1795, the French army occupied the Netherlands and plundered many menageries there, taking the pilfered animals back to France as war trophies. Included in the looted bounty were the first two elephants sent to the Musee d'Histoire Naturelle. Animals were confiscated by French forces in Vienna as well.

¹⁷ Vicki Croke. *The Modern Ark: The Story of Zoos: Past, Present and Future* (New York, NY: Scribner, 1997), 136.

¹⁸ E.G Boulenger. *The London Zoo* (New York, NY: E.P Dutton and Co. Inc., 1937), 1.

Napoleon himself protected the menagerie at Schonbrunn, which limited the number of animals taken back to France.¹⁹ Historian Louise E. Robbins writes of these military conquests: “On such occasion, the grasping hands of empire gathered up live animals to be returned to the capital. Always justified in terms of public instruction and utility, the living booty also boosted national pride and brought crowds to the Jardin to marvel at the new acquisitions.”²⁰

The building of empires continued further into the nineteenth century. Old and new empires built their wealth by enslaving foreign civilizations, then flaunted that wealth through menageries and zoos. According to historian Nigel Rothfels, zoos of the nineteenth century were a tool of European imperialism. Vanquished native people from far-flung corners of the world were used as exhibits with their animals to display the might and ambitions of European powers.²¹ The role of imperialism is most apparent at the London Zoo at Regent’s Park. Historian Jonathan Schneer writes, “In 1900 the zoo contained animals from all over the world, but many came from parts controlled by Great Britain. Every day the viewing public, including especially schoolchildren, viewed these representatives of the imperialized territories.”²² Zoos were the propaganda of governments’ global endeavors. Through imperialism, warmongering would in many circumstances lead to zookeeping. Many nineteenth-century zoos relied heavily upon

¹⁹ Harro Strehlow, “Zoological Gardens of Western Europe,” in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisting (London: CRC Press, 2001), 89-90.

²⁰ Louise Robbins, *Elephant Slaves and Pampered Parrots: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth Century Paris* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2002), 225.

²¹ Nigel Rothfels, *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 81-142.

²² Jonathan Schneer. *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 99.

military and political supremacy to keep them well-stocked. The United States was not an exception to using imperialism in this manner. After the Spanish-American War, Samuel Langley, the Secretary of the Smithsonian and one of the creators of the National Zoo, distributed a circular to U.S. servicemen overseas listing the zoo's most wanted animals. The circular was a success: animal donations began to arrive from the new American empire. There were snakes and lizards from Puerto Rico; iguanas and crocodiles from Cuba; anteaters from the Panama Canal Zone; and monkeys, birds, and deer from the Philippines. The Army and Navy continued to collect local fauna from every new port up until World War II.²³

Zoos were not threatened only by conquering nations. Internal conflict such as revolutions and civil wars also had devastating effects on zoos. After the French Revolution, two accounts emerged about the animals that were housed in the menagerie at Versailles. One account states that the revolutionaries occupying Versailles did not think to bring food to the animals that were housed in the menagerie. The royal beasts were faced with starvation — and many died — until they were eventually transferred to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris.²⁴ Another account reports that an angry mob of hungry citizens arrived at the menagerie, outraged at how the animals were cared for while the people of France starved. The crowd wanted to free the animals so that the starving masses could kill and eat them. A keeper at the menagerie explained to the mob how dangerous the lion and rhino were, so the crowd decided to release only the more passive

²³ John Kinder, "Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers," in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 51-52.

²⁴ Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 106.

creatures to be killed.²⁵ The opening of the United States' first zoo — the Philadelphia Zoo — was delayed due to the American Civil War. While the Zoological Society of Philadelphia was formed in 1859, the zoo did not actually open until 1874. The development of zoos in the United States essentially halted due to the internal conflict. It would take more than a decade of social and economic recovery for zoos to be considered by many American cities once again.²⁶

There has been much written about the history of zoos, and even more about the ethics of zoos and if they are truly necessary in modern society. However, with few exceptions, there has been very little written about war's effects on zoos and zoo animals. Writing about zoos began as early as 1853, when Leopold Joseph Fitzinger wrote *Outline of the History of Menageries*, which provided details about the zoo at the Imperial Austrian Court. In 1912, Gustave Loisel published *History of Menageries from Antiquity to the Present*, which consisted of three volumes.²⁷ The majority of zoo histories were written in the twentieth century. E.G Boulenger's *The London Zoo*, published in 1937, is essentially a glorified advertisement for the London Zoo. Sixty of its 212 pages are devoted to sepia-toned photographs of the animals that were exhibited at the zoo at that time. The book also gives a brief history of zoos, focusing on the menageries of the Zhou dynasty and the Aztecs. Modern scholarship on zoos has focused primarily on the origin of zoos from menageries. For example; in *New Worlds, New Animals*, editors R.J Hoage

²⁵ Vicki Croke, *The Modern Ark: The Story of Zoos: Past, Present and Future* (New York: Scribner, 1997), 138.

²⁶ Vernon N. Kisling. "Zoological Gardens of the United States." *In Zoo and Aquarium History*, edited by Vernon N. Kisling, (London: CRC Press, 2001), 152.

²⁷ Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 76.

and William A. Deiss assembled essays that explore the transition from menageries to zoological parks in the nineteenth century. Another zoo history is Vicki Croke's *The Modern Ark: The Story of Zoos: Past, Present and Future*. Written in 1997, her work is an in-depth study of zoo history from ancient Mesopotamia to the present. In 2002, Eric Baratay and Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier published *A History of Zoological Gardens in the West*, which is a zoo history focused predominantly on Western nations. Also published in 2002, Nigel Rothfels' *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo* upon some of the aftereffects of war on zoos, but does not go into detail about how zoos function while war is going on. There are a number of works that give rich and detailed histories of zoos around the world, but very few actually touch on the subject of zoos during wartime — and when they do, those details are scant.

There are three recent exceptions to this: Clair Campbell's *Bonzo's War*; Mayumi Itoh's *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy*; and Vernon N. Kisling's *Zoo and Aquarium History*. Kisling's work, published in 2001, is a "go-to guide" of zoo histories; numerous sources encountered cite this work. *Zoo and Aquarium History* is often acknowledged for being one of the few zoo histories to discuss the effects of war in any detail. Still, while wars are mentioned, there is little written about them as compared to other topics covered. Most war-related information is limited to a page or two. Published in 2013, Campbell's *Bonzo's War* explores the role of animals in World War II Britain. The primary focus of the work is domesticated pets that were owned by the average citizen. However, Campbell does touch upon issues that were facing zoos during the war, primarily the London Zoo and Whipsnade. In 2010, Mayumi Itoh published *Japanese*

Wartime Zoo Policy, which is (to date) the only English-language book devoted entirely to the effects of war on zoos. Her research centers on Japan during World War II, but the scope of her work is commendable. While she could have focused only on Ueno Zoo in Tokyo, she instead broke her work down into different locations throughout Japan and its empire. Itoh even highlights other nations' zoos during World War II, although these references are limited. Mayumi Itoh's work is particularly important because it displays that an entire book can be written based solely on research about zoos during wartime.

It was my objective to cover a wide breadth in writing this thesis, but I do acknowledge there are places that were not explored. The zoos and menageries of Australia and South America were not touched upon in this thesis, it is my goal that in the future that I will expound on this topic and include them. The first chapter "The Birth of Modern Zoos and Modern War: 1870-1939," deals primarily with conflicts in Europe. The chapter covers events the Franco-Prussian War, World War I and the Spanish Civil War. The second chapter "World War Zoo: The Second World War and Zoological Parks," discusses the zoos affected by the Second World War in allied nations. The majority of the chapter deals with Great Britain, but others allied nations are also mentioned in some detail. The final chapter "Animals of the Axis," deals with zoos in Axis controlled nations during World War II. The conclusion of the thesis discusses the state of zoos during human conflict in the last 25 years and what if any changes have taken place.

II

The Birth of Modern Zoos and Modern War: 1870–1939

What is a life worth? This question is often asked during times of war when self-sacrifice and sacrifice for one's nation are at their highest. Men and women are often given medals and memorials for the sacrifices that they have made during a time of conflict between warring nations. During times of war, there are numerous examples of the unnecessary deaths of men, women, and children. But what is an animal's life worth, particularly during a time of war when human loss is so heavy? In the time of modern warfare, the swath of devastation is vast with ever-increasing death tolls. Rarely documented, though, in casualty statistics, however, are animals, especially zoo animals that are so dependent upon human protection. This chapter covers the effect of modern warfare on zoos from the Franco-Prussian War to the Spanish Civil War, covering 1870 to 1939. Animals in war would often play a huge role on stirring the consciousness of populations. One of the most horrific rumors from the Rape of Belgium during the First World War was that the Germans were nailing kittens to doors. The report of the, "Fiendish Huns Cruelty", discovered by British soldiers, heightened anti-German sentiment around the world.²⁸ This harsh brutality against the innocent animals would be one of the defining moments in bringing nations to blows with one another. The birth of modern warfare and what is considered today as the modern zoo both came about during

²⁸ "Fiendish Huns Cruelty," *The National Human Review* (November 1918): 208.

the same point in the 19th century. From its onset, modern warfare has had devastating effects on zoos.

The Discreet Taste of the Bourgeoisie:

The Eating of the Zoo in the Franco-Prussian War

If one was to walk the streets of Paris in the winter of 1870–1871, they would have been greeted with sights never seen before in the City of Light. The gastronomic capital of Europe, perhaps the world—was on the brink of starvation. The carcasses of wolves hung in front of the stalls of butchers, and the topic on the tips of the elite’s gossiping tongues was how Castor tasted.²⁹ According to Harro Strehlow, “Among all the events and turmoil the French Revolution engendered was the establishment of what may be considered the first modern zoo, the menagerie at the Jardin des Plantes in Paris.” The zoo of the Jardin des Plantes owes its origin to the kingly menagerie of Versailles. The Versailles menagerie was opened in 1662. The most popular of its inhabitants was an elephant, which was a gift from the king of Portugal. In 1789, during the French Revolution, the Versailles menagerie was liberated to the people like other royal property. Some revolutionaries wanted to free the animals so that the masses could be able to eat the animals. Thankfully, animal attendants at Versailles managed to persuade the revolutionaries by explaining to them that some of the freed animals might actually eat the masses instead.³⁰ The animals that survived the revolution were taken to the

²⁹ Frank Schoessler “Siege Dinners, 1870-71: Les Menus D’un Sur Menu,” *The Living Age* (January 22, 1910): 209.

³⁰ Harro Strehlow “Zoological Gardens of Western Europe.” Edited by Vernon N. Kisling, in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 89.

Jardin des Plantes as a living example of the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle. This addition of a menagerie to a natural history museum became what many consider the first modern zoo.³¹

The zoo of the Jardin des Plantes had a relatively short existence before war would give it a drastic setback. On July 19, 1870, war was declared between France and the Prussian Kingdom. On September 1, Napoleon III surrendered to the Prussians at Sedan. While the Second Empire had surrendered, the city of Paris remained a holdout to the Prussian forces, and thus the Siege of Paris began. In the countryside surrounding Paris, two Prussian armies congregated to lay waste to the French capital. By September 19, the armies had completely surrounded Paris and in doing so, imprisoned two million people.³² The Siege of Paris is noteworthy because it lasted into the long bitter winter of 1870–1871 and because of the effect it had on the average citizens of the metropolis. During the siege, the population was faced with life-threatening hunger, the failure of French soldiers in Paris to halt the siege, and the relinquishment of optimism.³³ Those conditions led Parisians to take unthinkable action. At the Jardin des Plantes hangs a plaque that reads: “Finally, famine required the sacrifice of any animal which would be contribution, however small, to the public food supply; It was necessary, despite the pain

³¹ Ibid., 82.

³² Maurice Crosland, “Science and the Franco-Prussian War,” *Social Studies of Science* 6, no. 2 (1976): 189.

³³ Ibid., 205–206.

it caused the keepers- who had become quite attached to their boarders-to slaughter the two elephants, Castor and Pollux.”³⁴

The siege of Paris brought many Parisians to the point of desperation. The Prussian army was set to starve Paris into submission through military blockade. But even in this time of extreme austerity, the city still displayed an extreme schism between the classes. While the poor foraged for rats to survive, the middle class and the rich gravitated to such delicacies as elephant consommé or kangaroo stew.³⁵ The plaque at Jardin des Plantes leads one to think that the zoo animals were sacrificed for the good of all Parisians, but the reality is that the well-to-do people were the ones to know what the exotic zoo beasts tasted like. During the siege, members of the guard complained that they were hardly able to survive on gruel, while the rich “feasted on elephant steaks.”³⁶ An Englishman living in Paris during the siege wrote of how important meat was for those who moved among the higher echelon of Parisian society:

A great many curious animals have been put up for sale and devoured; but the hippopotamus, who sometimes disports himself in the Seine, cannot find a purchaser at the moderate price of 80,000 francs. At “Voisins” elephant was charged at the rate of 40 francs a pound! A clever gentleman, being anxious to obtain an audience with a certain witty Minister without being kept waiting in the antechamber, instead of giving his card to the user, whispered into that functionary’s ear, “Say it’s the man with the leg of mutton.” He was immediately shown into the Minister’s cabinet.³⁷

³⁴ Rebecca Spang, “And They Ate the Zoo,” Relating Gastronomic Exoticism in the Siege of Paris,” *French Issue* 107, no. 4 (1992): 757.

³⁵ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 55.

³⁶ Rebecca Spang, “And They Ate the Zoo,” Relating Gastronomic Exoticism in the Siege of Paris,” *French Issue* 107, no. 4 (1992): 758.

³⁷ Hon. Captain Bingham, *Journal of the Siege of Paris* (London : Smith, Elder and Co., 1871), 280.

In a Washington Post article from 1914, it reported, “During the last siege of Paris in 1870–1871, the craving for flesh food among the famishing people was so great that practically every known beast and bird was greedily devoured.”³⁸

This statement sheds a light between those that were truly starving in Paris and those that wished to have meat as a part of their gastronomic events. Rebecca L. Spang stated: “It is certainly true that many people in Paris went hungry during the siege, but it is equally true that the meat of the zoo animals was neither prepared in poor relief soup kitchens nor served in military canteens.” She further explained that zoo animals sold at prices went to the elite butchers of Courtier and deBoos.³⁹ There was no necessity for zoo animals to be slaughtered during the siege; rather panic and anxiety from war caused many Parisians—the wealthy ones—to deem it a necessity. On November 27, Geoffroy Sain-Hilaire, director of the zoo, left a note to the staff: “You may sell, very dear, of course, a few of the worst fowls; very dear, I tell you. But in no case dispose of any of the ducks. You may sell the geese, if there are any left. Also keep a few chickens for us, in case we should need them.” Below he added an addendum: “Inform the Duc de Montbello that all the wapiti and nilgai, or blue bulls, have been killed.”⁴⁰ There isn’t any information stating where the money of the sold animals went. Did it go into the coffers of the government or the pockets of the zookeepers?

³⁸“Zoo Pets on Menus of Paris during the Siege of 1871,” *The Washington Post*, October 13, 1914, 4.

³⁹ Rebecca Spang, “And They Ate the Zoo,” *Relating Gastronomic Exoticism in the Siege of Paris*, *French Issue* 107, no. 4 (1992): 758.

⁴⁰ “Sacrifice of a Zoo,” *The Washington Post*, March 30, 1914, 6.

Throughout Paris, new types of butchers sprung up, selling everything from cat, rats, and dogs to elephants. The more exotic the animal, the higher prices it fetched, and those exotic animals more than likely came from the Jardin des Plantes. A litter of wolf cubs were sold from the zoo for the price of 10 shillings a pound. Along with the wolf cubs, other odd animals graced the plates of Paris: camel steaks, yak chops, zebra fillets, and ragout of elephant flesh. Perhaps these exotic animals seemed more desirable to most Parisians than sewer rat in which many complained had a “musky” taste.⁴¹ By December, two months into the siege, the most elite butchers of Paris were selling mouflon (a wild sheep), Siamese pigs, camel, kangaroo, yak, swan, and pelican—all bought at auction for 12,000f.⁴² The elite Parisians flocked to the butchers and restaurants that served exotic zoo animals not out of starvation but out of fashion. The eating of dinner has often been seen as a social function among family and friends, but when the menu is an exotic zoo animal, it becomes an event. An example would be a Briton that lived in Paris during the siege who procured 10 pounds of camel and then invited about 20 of his countrymen to consume the dromedary.⁴³

Two of the most well-known victims of the Siege of Paris are Castor and Pollux. They were the two elephants of the Jardin des Plantes that were slaughtered and sold for exuberant prices. On December 29, Castor and Pollux were the last animals sold from the zoo. The two elephant, often described but never proven, brothers were sold for 27,000 francs. After they were sold, it was reported that the only animals that remained were a

⁴¹ “Zoo Pets on Menus of Paris during the Siege of 1871,” *The Washington Post*, October 13, 1914, 4.

⁴² “Sacrifice of a Zoo,” *The Washington Post*, March 30, 1914, 6.

⁴³ Frank Scholessor “Siege Dinners, 1870-71: Les Menus D’un Sur Menu,” *The Living Age* (January 22, 1910): 209.

few peacocks and a peccary. (Why other animals were devoured by the public before a peccary, a species of pig, is interesting.)⁴⁴ Castor and Pollux were bought at a public auction by the butcher duBoos, who owned a shop called the English Butchery. M. duBoos retailed the meat with the trunks and feet garnering the highest prices.⁴⁵ When the animals were killed by a big game hunter, *Le Journal du Siège* wrote, “Pollux fell yesterday under the gun of Mr. Devisme. The rifle which killed him was the 33 millimeter caliber, and weighed six kilograms. The exploding bullet was fifteen centimeters long. It was cone-shaped, and armed at the tip with a steel point, on which the capsule was placed.”⁴⁶ The eating of the giant mammals became the social event of Paris. Parisian Juliette Lamber described purchasing elephant meat as a “conquest,” and then further states, “My piece of elephant was part of the whole, which had been named Castor.”⁴⁷ According to Rebecca L. Spang, there is an interesting account to illustrate the popularity of Castor and Pollux. A Parisian restaurateur secured about five pounds of the pachyderms, and in 30 minutes of sales, he found himself with one portion left and 600f richer. The restaurateur then ordered his cook to create elephant escallops made from horse meat, which sold very well at high prices. Another Englishman living in Paris further described the eating of elephant as though it was a trend:

⁴⁴ “Sacrifice of a Zoo,” *The Washington Post*, March 30, 1914, 6.

⁴⁵ “Zoo Pets on Menus of Paris during the Siege of 1871,” *The Washington Post*, October 13, 1914, 4.

⁴⁶ Rebecca Spang, “And They Ate the Zoo,” Relating Gastronomic Exoticism in the Siege of Paris,” *French Issue* 107, no. 4 (1992): 758.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 172.

Yesterday I had a slice of Pollux for dinner. Pollux and his brother, Castor, are two elephants which have been killed It was tough, coarse and oily, and I do not recommend English families to eat elephant as long as they can get beef and mutton. Castor and Pollux' trunks sold for forty-five francs a pound; the other parts of, the interesting twin fetched about ten francs a pound. ⁴⁸

By December 27, 1870, the price of a cat had gone up to 8 francs, and the price of a bear from Jardin des Plantes was 200. On January 28, 1871, an armistice was signed, ending the Paris Siege, even though civil strife still left Paris in chaos.⁴⁹ The four months of the siege left Paris broken and practically without a zoo. The Prussian blockade of Paris had drove Parisians to extreme behavior, but was it necessary? The prices charged for the meat of the zoo animals, for Castor and Pollux, was so excessive that only a few of Paris's two million population could have been helped by turning the zoos into abattoirs. Rebecca L. Spang argued that the "zoo-eating functions as a type of stigmata, as a sign of the suffering inflicted on the people of Paris by the besieging Prussians."⁵⁰ Perhaps the eating of zoo animals was a way that the wealthy and elite of Paris could say that they did their part during the siege and show how they too suffered. Another perspective is that it was due to supply and demand during a time of war, and they were able to afford the excessive prices of the profiteer butchers. All that is certain is that the animals that lived in the zoo paid a heavy price during the Siege of Paris. At the dawn of

⁴⁸ Frank Scholessor "Siege Dinners, 1870-71: Les Menus D'un Sur Menu," *The Living Age* (January 22, 1910): 209.

⁴⁹ Maurice Crosland "Science and the Franco-Prussian War," *Social Studies of Science* 6, no. 2 (1976): 205-206.

⁵⁰ Rebecca Spang, "And They Ate the Zoo," *Relating Gastronomic Exoticism in the Siege of Paris,* *French Issue* 107, no. 4 (1992): 756.

the 20th century, newspapers in the United States began to run news articles about the Siege of Paris and the drastic measure taken by its inhabitants. Perhaps this renewed interest in the dark days of zoo animals was due to the murmurs of an even deadlier war soon to come.

Great Zoos and the Great War

Nearly half a century after the Franco-Prussian War, zoos were once again at risk because of the wars humanity waged against itself. The beginning of the 20th century brought about great scientific advances that would forever change the world, and in the case of the advancement of weaponry, it would be a change for the worst. The new century brought about new nations, new political movements, and new wars that would scar the landscape of Europe and beyond. The first 40 years of the 20th century saw two world wars and countless civil wars across the globe, all with a heavy loss of human and animal life. Animals were used during World War I as they had never been before. The animals that were used were more than the typical horse used in so many wars of the past. During the first global conflict ran the gamut from dogs to camels. Some animals were used exclusively by military forces, Allied and Central Powers alike. Both even went as far as to acquire zoo animals to serve as beasts of burden for their war effort. The Great War would be one of the last to use animals to the extent as it did. By the outset of the Second World War, technology had advanced enough to replace many of the jobs once needed for animals in war.⁵¹ The First World War affected zoos in numerous ways from

⁵¹ Alan Taylor, "World War i in Photos: Animals at War," *The Atlantic*, May 18, 2014, accessed February 20, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/static/infocus/wwi/wwianimals/>.

severe food shortages, the acquisition of animals for the war effort, anxiety and xenophobia affecting the progress of zoos to finally the addition of new animals that were once mascots of warring forces.⁵²

The Great War and the Zoos of Europe

World War I had devastating effects on the citizens of Great Britain. Men returned from the conflict gassed, shell shocked, and never again the same as they were before leaving for the front. The war was felt on every aspect of British society, including its zoos. The effects of war upon zoos paled in comparison to the effect that the Second World War had, but they were still significant. World War I created stark austerity measures for the zoos of Britain. Despite these measures and the loss of many of its employees, the zoos remained open.⁵³ During the war, with many horses sent to the front for the war effort, there was an extreme shortage of beasts of burden in helping with the war effort on the home front. The government turned to zoos to help fill this void left by horses. An example of one such elephant was named Lizzie.⁵⁴ Lizzie's primary job, which seemed very dangerous for home-front standards, was to haul ammunition in the city of Sheffield.⁵⁵ The zoos of Britain played an important role in supporting the military. During and immediately after the war, the zoos in Britain became the homes of many military mascots. One of the most famous was an American black bear that

⁵² Mathew Shaw, "Animals and War," British Library, accessed February 20, 2015, <http://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/animals-and-war#sthash.k3sTdh7b.dpuf>.

⁵³ "The Zoo in War Time," *Times*, April 29, 1916, 6.

⁵⁴ Mathew Shaw, "Animals and War," British Library, accessed February 20, 2015, <http://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/animals-and-war#sthash.k3sTdh7b.dpuf>.

⁵⁵ John Kinder, "Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers," in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 66.

belonged to a troop of Canadian soldiers who named it Winnipeg—or Winnie for short. The bear would become an inspiration for AA Milne, who penned the stories of Winnie the Pooh.⁵⁶ The London zoo proved to be an escape for many during the war. During its war years, it retained over a million visitors each year. During the war, the families of sailors and soldiers were admitted for free on Sundays, and wounded men in uniform were admitted for free.⁵⁷

On the continent, the zoos of the Central Powers were the ones that felt the effects of the war the most. Some of the challenges that affected the Central Powers zoos were a shortage of food and the bad quality of the little food that was acquired. There was also the lack of food, fuel, and manpower that took a harsh toll. Before the war, the Berlin zoo documented that it had 1,474 species of mammals and birds. At the end of the war, there was only 700 left living.⁵⁸ The dwindling resources because of the war brought the Berlin zoo to make the sacrifice to cull some of their animals in the winter of 1917–1918. Carl Olsson reported for *Animal and Zoo Magazine* about what occurred:

When ordinary Germans who have always loved their zoo and their academic leaders who had made them into the finest institutions of their kind in the world protested at attempts to cull the animals, thousands were saved to see the Armistice.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ “The Role of Animals During World War One,” CBBC, August 3, 2014, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/28604874>.

⁵⁷ “The Zoo in War Time,” *Times*, April 29, 1916, 6.

⁵⁸ Harro Strehlow, “Zoological Gardens of Western Europe,” in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisting (London: CRC Press, 2001), 106.

⁵⁹ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo’s War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd., 2013), 83.

As in Great Britain, there was an extreme shortage of manpower and beasts of burden. Carl Hagenbeck's zoo outside of Hamburg was no exception. Hagenbeck's zoo suffered from losing so many of its young zookeepers because they were drafted into military service. Hagenbeck was able to negotiate an agreement with the government to send an Indian elephant, Jenny, instead of more keepers into military service.⁶⁰ The elephant was used in Valenciennes, France, to move tree trunks. Jenny was far from the exception. Because of the lack of beasts of burden, many animals from German zoos and circuses were used in the war effort.⁶¹

Hagenbeck's sacrifice of Jenny might have been because of the surplus of animals he was left with because of the war. The Hagenbeck family was world renown for their zoos and circuses that traveled the glob. They were also known for traveling the deepest recesses of far-flung locals to acquire the animals for their zoos and circuses as well for selling to others around the world. In October 1914, the *New York Times* ran an article about how the war had taken a financial toll on the Hagenbecks. The Hagenbecks were left with an excess of animals but with no market to sell them. The Hagenbecks had a contract to "deliver wild beasts to the amount of £10,000 (\$50,000) to America, besides other big contracts with the zoos of belligerent powers." The stock that the Hagenbecks were left with included 75 full-grown lions, 45 tigers, 70 trained polar bears, 100 hyenas, and 67 elephants. The Hagenbecks' financial future was of little concern compared to what would become of those excess animals. Food in 1914 Germany was already

⁶⁰ Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kislring (London: CRC Press, 2001), 106.

⁶¹ Alan Taylor, "World War I in Photos: Animals at War," *The Atlantic*, May 18, 2014, accessed February 20, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/static/infocus/wwi/wwianimals/>.

becoming scarce, and with so many more animals to feed, the outcome could be disastrous. The *New York Times* reported, “Oats and maize are hardly to be had, and fish is almost impossible to procure. The only thing easily obtained is horse meat.”⁶² Other zoos on continental Europe felt the effects of war as well as Germany. In an attempt to reserve resources and out of fear of the unexpected, the Antwerp Zoo euthanized several bears and large felids just days before the German invasion.⁶³ In 1918, the menagerie of the Austro-Hungarian emperor was placed in the hands of the new Austrian government. On June 30, 1914, the Austrian menagerie was estimated to hold 3,400 animals. On June 30, 1918, only 1,128 remained. The primary reason for the loss of captive animal life in Austria was due to shortages of food and medicine, as well as many being slaughtered to feed the cats and bears.⁶⁴

World War I and American Zoos

Across the Atlantic and a world away from the death and carnage of the First World War, the United States rested at ease as a neutral nation. Eventually, over the duration of the war, the United States was also ensnared into its trap. As the case of World War II, the United States was not affected by the First World War as greatly as other combatant nations. That is not to say that the United States still did not feel the effects of the war. During the war, zoos in the United States felt the pinch from rationing. The National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C. undertook austerity measures for the war effort.

⁶² “Haggenbeck’s Zoo: A ‘White Elephant,’” *New York Times*, October 17, 1914, 4.

⁶³ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 57.

⁶⁴ Harro Strehlow, “Zoological Gardens of Western Europe,” in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 86.

The zoo set about using substitutions for some of the previous food used at the zoo before the war. Higher prices of foodstuffs were also a factor in the zoo making that leap. Horse meat became the substitute for the beef that was normally fed to carnivores of the zoo. Flour was also eliminated from the diet of many zoo animals as directed by the national zoological park. In its stead, bran and dog meal were used.⁶⁵ These rations also took place at the Bronx Zoo. *Stars and Stripes* wrote about the diet change to the animals of the Bronx Zoo, referring to them all as patriotic with the exception of the East Indian python, which continued with its normal diet.⁶⁶

Patriotism and xenophobia had played a part in zoos in the United States during times of war, and the First World War was no exception. As early as 1915, zoo employees began enlisting the New York zoological society to allow its employees to have leaves of absence during the war so that they would still be employed at the zoos upon their return. When a food shortage began, the zoo plowed the field that kept elk and grew their own crops.⁶⁷ The Bronx Zoo “erected massive flagpoles, hosted Liberty Loan drives, and plastered the zoo grounds with recruitment posters” all for the war effort. The Bronx Zoo even turned the lion house over to the Bronx chapter of the American Red Cross. “As zoo visitors and pacing cats looked on, white-robed female volunteers sewed and rolled bandages for American doughboys overseas.”⁶⁸ The Hagenbeck method of animal enclosures displayed animals in environs similar to where they were found in the wild,

⁶⁵ “War Felt at Zoo,” *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1917, E11.

⁶⁶ *The Stars and Stripes* (Paris, France) 1, no 8 (March 29, 1918).

⁶⁷ Harro Strehlow, “Zoological Gardens of Western Europe,” in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 164-165.

⁶⁸ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 61.

and the most impressive idea of Hagenbeck's was the use of moats instead of bars. After the First World War, this method of enclosure, which was better for the animals and their spectators, began to catch on at other zoos—that is, except for the United States. William Honaday, the director of the New York zoological society, harbored a deep German phobia after World War I. It was to such an extreme that he dismissed the Hagenbeck enclosures as a “fad,” and along with other zoo directors, they began an American boycott of the method.⁶⁹

During the First World War, the primary fear among zoos in the United States pointed to the possibility of depleted animals stocks with a prolonged war. During the war, animal importation had ceased as discussed with Carl Hagenbeck's excess of animals. The Washington Post reported this fear in 1917:

The zoo men expect to be affected in another way by the war. Since the war began the field for airing most new animals for the park has been cut off. Africa was the most fertile domain for explorers maintain zoological parks, and the continent has been in such turmoil since the war that explorers dare not enter it.⁷⁰

Thankfully, the war did not last long enough for this fear to become a reality. The import of animals to the United States from South America also helped to ease those fears. In 1917, the steamship *Carrillo* arrived carrying a bevy of animals from Columbia and Brazil, which included 60 boa constrictors and 300 parrots and marmosets.⁷¹ In fact, the

⁶⁹ Randy Malamud, *A Cultural History of Animals in the Modern Age* (New York: Berg, 2007), 99.

⁷⁰ “War Felt At Zoo,” *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1917, E11.

⁷¹ “Biggest Zoo Cargo Since War Began,” *New York Times*, March 3, 1917, 7.

American zoos fared so well that after the war, the New York zoological park was able to send the Antwerp Zoo, which had killed many of its animals before the German occupation, 329 animals along with supplies.⁷² After the First World War, American zoos suffered from such an abundance of animals in which some were even killed. After the war, America's doughboys were not the only ones to return home. The Bronx Zoo received 16 carrier pigeons used in the war. All of the pigeons had seen service in France as members of the pigeon section of the Signal Corps.⁷³ The San Diego zoo received many black bear cubs from a nearby naval base. The bear cubs had served as mascots on ships during the war. There was such an excess of black bears at the zoo that it decided to slaughter the adult bears. The redundant bear's meat was then sold to local hotels. The zoo director defended the action, stating that it kept money in the zoo treasury as well as providing an exhibit of lively young bears that did not lie about all day.⁷⁴

Poncho and the Legacy of War

The early 20th century had seen many wars and uprisings besides the First World War. One of the most devastating to zoo animals was the Spanish Civil War. The Spanish Civil War lasted from 1936 to 1939 and pitted the Republicans against the fascist nationalists. The relatively short war had devastating effects that left Spain in ruins, many people dead, and the zoos practically decimated. When the civil war finally came to a

⁷² Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 164-165.

⁷³ "Zoo Gets 16 Carrier Pigeons," *New York Times*, April 28, 1919, 22.

⁷⁴ John Kinder, "Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers," in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 67.

close in 1939, there were only 25 animals left alive at the Madrid Zoo and Aquarium.⁷⁵ One inhabitant that lived at the zoo was an elephant by the name of Poncho. His tortured tale was reported in newspapers in the United States. The New York Times reported on May 17, 1937, “There was no particular happiness for the animals since, as much as the children may have wanted to, they were unable to throw them food of any sort. A few spared some stale bread crumbs for the ducks and monkeys, but the lone and very skinny elephant had only grass thrown to him.”⁷⁶ A mere eight months later, the Washington Post reported, “Pancho, the retired park zoo elephant who had thrilled generations of Madrid children, died today, a war casualty.” Poncho, ill from extended malnourishment, died in his pen filled with snow “without having tasted a peanut or any tidbit except coarse black bread for a year and half.” The war that killed the giant mammal that had once been the source of joy for countless children would claim him completely. “Fat from his body will be converted into grease for war purposes.”⁷⁷

In the 20th century, Europe was a hotbed for revolutions—world war, civil wars, and economic crisis, but they have spread far beyond just Europe. All over the world, new military technology was taking the lives of humans and animals. The Japanese Empire was rolling across Asia adding to its empire. Japan pillaged their newly conquered lands, including their zoos. The Ueno Zoo in Tokyo was the owners of two hippopotamuses that were appropriated from Changkyungwon Zoo in Seoul, Korea, in 1919.⁷⁸ The spoils of

⁷⁵ Benjamin Joel Wilkenson, *Carrion, Dreams 2.0: A Chronicle of the Human-Vulture Relationship* (Abominationalist Productions, 2013), 548.

⁷⁶ “Visitors to Madrid Zoo Have No Food for Animals,” *New York Times*, May 17, 1937, 4.

⁷⁷ “Madrid Zoo Elephant Dies: A War Casualty,” *The Washington Post*, January 5, 1938, X3.

⁷⁸ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 55.

war from distant lands were on display when Romans marveled at two lions at the Rome zoo. The two lands represented the might of Italian force in Ethiopia, as well as serving as a reminder to their ancient Roman heritage.⁷⁹ The first 40 years of the 20th century was overrun by the blood of zoo animals during human conflicts, but it would soon pale in comparison with the war that was on the horizon

⁷⁹ "Loss of Abbi Addi Denied: Big Armies Clash in North Ethiopia," *New York Times*, December 29, 1935, 1.

III

World War Zoo: The Second World War and Zoological Parks

To many, the Second World War was seen as a global conflict between good and evil. There were the clear heroes of the Allies and the evil villains of Axis at odds in a battle for the world. While the division between good and evil is clear during was that defining line becomes increasingly blurred. For zoo animals that were already in many cases the prisoners of human conquest of other nations, during the war the currying of favor or even the conquest of nature itself—it did not matter if they lived in an Allied or Axis nation. The dogmas of fascism, democracy or communism did not matter when it came to zoos and zoo animals during the Second World War; they all shared the same fate.

Across the globe, civilization was on the brink of being destroyed. The Second World War saw the great cities of Europe in rubble, and it led individuals to extreme behavior. In the years since the war, much has been written about the crimes against humanity. There were great nations imprisoning its citizens on both sides of the Atlantic, and there were those who committed genocide against their populations. In the seventy years since the end of World War II, enough time has passed that we can now cast an eye upon the other victims of the war and focus upon the crimes against nature. The events that occurred in zoos across the world during the global conflict can be seen as crimes against nature, just as to many the institution of zoos in general can be seen as such.

During the war, zoos were at the epicenter of nightmarish events, but they were also seen as a glimmer of light in a dark world filled with chaos.

World War II saw zoo animals starving and freezing to death in their cages due to the lack of food and fuel. Animals lay dead in their cages, not having a fighting chance once bombs fell upon their cities. Zoos were also the scene of mercy killings where zookeepers were forced to kill the creatures that—up till that point, they had protected and nurtured. The zoos in some cases, also became the last resort for starving, bombed-out populations. While the victimization of animals is evident in the mere nature of the topic, there is also a human aspect to the existence of zoos during World War II. In Germany, the Jewish population was barred from public spaces, including zoos. In some nations, zoos went from being prisons for animals to prisons for people. The use of the zoo as a prison is particularly interesting because it demonstrated how far humanity had fallen. Allied and Axis nations alike—both employed zoos as a means to raise money for the war effort, or just to raise morale for their citizens. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill stated, “The whole of the warring nations are engaged, not only soldiers, but the entire population; men, women and children. The fronts are everywhere. The trenches are dug in the town and streets.”⁸⁰ The role of zoos in the war shows how true Churchill’s statement was. Zoos were battlegrounds, and the caged animals were made to be participants in a war they did not want, nor know anything about.

⁸⁰ Kathryn Selbert, *War Dogs* (Watertown: Charlesbridge, 2013), 5.

Keep Calm and Kill the Zoo Animals: Great Britain's Zoos and World War II

In the spring of 1938, the Women's Guild of Empire met at Saint Andrew's Hall for a lecture entitled *The Rights of Animals*. The primary focus of the organization's lecture was to "alleviate the plight of wild animals captive in this country, and it is their urgent wish to prevent the exploitation of animals for gain, by all and sundry, without qualifications or supervision."⁸¹ Unbeknownst to the Women's Guild of Empire or to any of the other animal supporters in Great Britain, it was in a mere few months that zoo animals would become some of the first and most tragic victims of World War II. The plight of zoo animals in Great Britain during the Second World War was tragic, because as discussed in the previous chapter, zoo animals were often seen as a liability. During a conflict, that resource and labor-saving initiatives were exploited in propaganda as patriotic throughout the nation; the keeping of zoo animals were seen as more of a luxury rather than a necessity. From the declaration of war in September 1939 through to 1944, it was estimated that 188 animals were destroyed by the London Zoo alone—at the hands of those who were meant to protect them.⁸²

Great Britain has had a long tradition of exhibiting animals. The animals kept in menageries and zoos were seen as examples of the nation's sea and economic power as it built a global empire. According to Clinton H. Keeling, "Ship captains knew full well how lucrative it was to obtain unusual animals from their agents in exotic ports, and to endeavor to ensure the animals arrived in London, Liverpool, or Portsmouth alive, if not

⁸¹ "The Rights of Animals," *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* (May 21, 1938): 324.

⁸² Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 123.

in good order.” Indeed, this was a long-lasting practice, considering one of the earliest examples of animal exhibition in England was a walrus during the reign of King Alfred the Great who ruled from A.D. 871 to 899.⁸³ The most famous of the early English menageries would be the one at the Tower of London. England’s first elephant of historic times was kept at the Tower of London, a gift from King Louis IX of France to King Henry II.⁸⁴ This is also an early example of nations attempting to curry favor with one another through the exchange of animals. The collection at the Tower of London was one of the first to be open to the public, with an admission fee of one shilling. Over the years, the Tower menagerie began to decay, and by 1822 its only inhabitants were an elephant, a grizzly bear and two or three birds.⁸⁵

The few remaining creatures of the Tower menagerie found their way to the London Zoological Garden. Established in 1828, it is considered by many to be the first modern zoological garden (a claim also made by the Jarden de Plantes).⁸⁶ The zoo was different from menageries in that it implemented an education, research and conservation program, which established the London Zoological Garden as a place to learn, as opposed to merely a place to gawk at animals. The London Zoological Garden was ground-breaking for the vast array of specimens that it housed. According to Clinton H. Keeling, “The number of species exhibited for the first time in Europe (or not seen since the Roman era)

⁸³ Clinton H. Keeling, “Zoological Gardens of Great Britain,” in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon N. Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 49.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 50.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 51

⁸⁶ R.J. Hoage, Anne Roskel, and Jane Mansour, “Menageries and Zoos to 1900.”, in *New Worlds, New Animals*, ed. William A. Deiss and R.J. Hoage (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 15.

or bred for the first time is beyond enumeration."⁸⁷ In the ninety years before the Second World War, the London Zoo served as the example to Zoological Parks throughout the nation and the world over. Unfortunately, many zoos also followed the London Zoo's example of dealing with their animals in preparation for war.

In September 1938, the populace of the United Kingdom waited with baited breath as to what the future would hold for them. The world was abuzz with the prospect of war. The German military machine was making itself known with its conquests of Czechoslovakia. The discussions between Neville Chamberlain and Adolph Hitler in Munich were the deciding factor as to whether there would be peace or whether there would be another major war on the European continent. The prospect of war was unacceptable to the majority of the British population, many of whom still had the memories and the scars of the last war with Germany.⁸⁸ From the beginning of the war of diplomacy with Germany, many in the United Kingdom feared the bombs that would fall on them. The advancement of aircraft technology made the world much smaller since the previous war, and if that war had been any indication of what the future held for Britain, its people also feared the use of chemical weapons. As the Munich Conference continued, zoos across Great Britain began making plans for what they'd do with the animals should war become a reality.

On September 29, 1938 the *Times* ran an article detailing the "elaborate precautions" the London Zoo had enacted in the event of war. The article seemed rather standard for

⁸⁷ Ibid, 69.

⁸⁸ Walter Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today* (Lexington, D.C. Heath and Company, 1996), 325.

what one would expect in air raid preparedness, in scope at its beginning, detailing how basements were strengthened with sandbags so that they could be used as air-raid shelters. It then stated that the first objective in the event of an air-raid was to evacuate the zoo into Regent's Park, where trenches were being dug that would keep the general public safer, as opposed to staying inside the zoo. The article also stated that there would be supplies such as sand readily available to extinguish fires, as well as materials to repair cages that might be damaged. The article then took a more ominous tone: "All poisonous snakes and spiders will be immediately killed. Should any large animals escape as a result of damage to their cages, they will be shot. Men have been detailed for this eventuality." Without a bullet ever having been fired, the demise of the zoo animals had already been foretold. The article continued to describe how the valuable animals would be evacuated to the breeding zoo of Whipsnade, and then went on to describe the fate of the animals not seen as valuable: "The stock of other animals would be gradually reduced in order to save essential foodstuffs."⁸⁹ The people had every right to fear being in the vicinity of animals, as Clair Campbell stated in *Bonzo's War*, "It was a general fear of poison gas that gave the Munich panic its particular edge. And there were real fears in Government that Germany might use animals diseases, especially anthrax, as a weapon."⁹⁰ Fortunately for the animals, the wrangling of politicians had bought them a one-year reprieve.

⁸⁹ "A.R. P. At The Zoo," *Times* September 29, 1938 p.9.

⁹⁰ Clair Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 11.

On September 30, 1938, Neville Chamberlain pronounced “peace for our time”, calming the fears of his anxious nation. Normalcy returned to the lives of the people of Great Britain, and a return to everyday captivity for the zoo animals. By March 1939, however, many in the United Kingdom began to realize that a lifetime of peace was a just a pipe dream. The government quickly began to prepare for the probable nightmare of war. In May, military conscription was reintroduced, and rearmament was put into full swing.⁹¹ The Home Office began publishing a series of air raid precautions handbooks for the long-feared German aerial attack.⁹² As the fears of the nation increased, the zoos of Great Britain dusted off their contingency plans from the previous year and readied themselves to implement them if need be. A trial blackout was held in British cities on August 10, yet the London Zoo carried on, as one visitor wrote, “Twice a week the park was open late, you could dine elegantly and with courteous attention, then dance outside holding your partner deliciously close as you whirled under the colored lights in the trees.”⁹³ As with other dreaded moments in history, the zoo has often been a place where the populace could go to escape their troubles. However; behind the scenes of the merriment of the zoo, keepers were familiarizing themselves with the workings of the 303 Lee-Enfield rifle should there be an unfortunate animal escape—and the heat in the reptile house was turned off, making its occupants sluggish.⁹⁴ The news of the proposed plans of the London Zoo had made its way across the Atlantic, with the *Washington Post* reporting on August 27 that “scores of valuable but carnivore animals will be shot

⁹¹ Walter Arnstein, *Britain Yesterday and Today* (Lexington, D.C. Heath and Company, 1996), 326.

⁹² “Animals in Air Raids,” *Times*, July 11, 1939. 9.

⁹³ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 28.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 36.

immediately if war begins, Zoo officials said, while the population of the reptile and insect houses will be gassed. Some of the more valuable animals are being evacuated, including an okapi, two giant pandas, two gorillas and a Grevy's zebra valued at \$2500. No one has offered to board the gorillas."⁹⁵ In the London Zoo's log for September 1, 1939, it was written in red ink, "Germany invades Poland."⁹⁶

Then on September 3, 1939, the situation worsened. At 11:15 a.m., Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announced that a state of war had been declared between Great Britain and Germany. A mere twenty minutes later, air raid sirens began to wail, which undoubtedly sent people into a state of panic. C.A. Le Jeune wrote for *The New York Times*, "This is the war nobody wanted, but that everybody felt to be inevitable. Too bad if it's mustard gas; too bad if it's a direct hit. But there will be no happy life again in Europe, we feel. Until this thing is settled. There are no more ifs or buts to shake our entrails."⁹⁷ As promised, the cull of poisonous reptiles began once the war had. Julian Huxley, director of the London Zoo, recalled in his memoirs; "When the news came over the radio, the first thing I did was see that the poisonous snakes were killed, sad though it was for some snakes were very rare as well as beautiful. I closed the aquarium and had its tanks emptied and arranged that the elephants—that might run amok if frightened—be moved to Whipsnade."⁹⁸ On September 3, zoos and other locations that attracted large crowds were closed by the order of the government and would not reopen again until September 15. Although the zoos reopened, the aquarium still remained closed due to the

⁹⁵ "London Zoo To Kill Beasts if War Comes," *Washington Post*, August 27, 1939 pg. 5.

⁹⁶ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 38.

⁹⁷ C.A. Le Jeune, "As War Came to England," *New York Times*, September 10, 1939. E5.

⁹⁸ Julian Huxley, *Memories* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970) 249.

fear of flying glass.⁹⁹ This was the first time that the London Zoo had been closed in 110 years.¹⁰⁰

The headline “London Destroys Poisonous Snakes as Precaution,” appeared in newspaper articles on both sides of the Atlantic. The *Washington Post* carried the story, stating that it was the first time in the history of the London Zoo in which it did not house any poisonous creatures.¹⁰¹ The Phony War that wreaked anxiety and paranoia on the people of Great Britain was fatal for its animals. It is estimated after the declaration of war that as many as sixty-five snakes—including cobras, rattlesnakes, and puff adders—were beheaded. Five poisonous Gila monsters shared the same the same fate as the poisonous snakes.¹⁰² Soon after the poisonous animals were destroyed at the London Zoo, the remaining non-poisonous reptiles were also destroyed, as reported by the *Times*: “Several constrictor snakes and a number of others which were neither tame nor extremely valuable have also gone the way of their poisonous relatives.” The same article also stated that some of the animals had been spared. The pythons were saved, but the zoo took extra precautions by enclosing them within wooden boxes. Some of the freshwater fish were saved by being released into the park's Three Island pond.¹⁰³ Clair Campbell wrote that it had been reported that some of the fish from the London Zoo aquarium found their way to West End restaurants.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 123.

¹⁰⁰ “The Zoo Open Again,” *Times*, September 16, 1939.

¹⁰¹ “London Destroys Poisonous Snakes as Precaution,” *Washington Post*, September 3, 1939, 5.

¹⁰² Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 122.

¹⁰³ “Thinning Out At The Zoo” *Times*, September 9, 1939, 6.

¹⁰⁴ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 39.

For the most part, the majority of newspapers that mentioned the zoo cull only highlighted the deaths of perceived slimy—and often unfriendly—venomous snakes and reptiles. These were the sort of deaths that would not elicit many tears from the majority of the populace. In reality, other animals were being killed as well. For example, as *The New York Times* reported, the evacuation of beloved crowd-pleasers like the giant pandas and the chimpanzees “who amuse children with their daily tea party”.¹⁰⁵ It should be pointed out that any animal crowd pleaser or otherwise, under duress of an air raid could be prone to react in a violent manner. The fear of disrupted food supplies led to the London Zoo destroying a manatee from its aquarium along with two American alligators, seven Nile crocodiles and two lion cubs.¹⁰⁶ Others that were evacuated were put to death due to the lack of resources. One such victim was the African bull elephant, Jumbo II.

The Times reported the event:

All the elephants have been removed to Whipsnade. To make room for them, it was necessary to be drastic in only one instance. The young African bull elephant, which was about two-thirds grown, had to be destroyed. It was considered that in any event, his accommodation at Whipsnade would be insufficient to keep him in if he grew to adult size.

The killing of zoo animals continued throughout the nation. As London and Whipsnade zoos were thinning their flock, the Kursaal Zoo in Southend took the same drastic measures. An RSPCA representative was brought to Kursaal Zoo to kill the animals. The animals killed included seven lions, a lion cub, bears, wolves, tiger

¹⁰⁵ “London Kills Zoo Snakes Lest Air Raid Free Them,” *New York Times*, September 3, 1939, 14.

¹⁰⁶ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 40.

monkeys, apes, hawks and eagles.¹⁰⁷ The destruction of the animals was more than the Kursaal Zoo could withstand, and the zoo was disbanded soon afterward. The Kursaal site was commandeered by the government for the war effort.¹⁰⁸ The London Zoo still continued to destroy animals. On September 28, a lion, a Siberian tiger and an emu were among those slaughtered “for unclear reasons.”¹⁰⁹ These measures were also seen at the Scottish Zoological Park in Edinburgh. The zoo staff was armed and all snakes were killed, to prevent the remote possibility of there being an escape due to an air-raid.¹¹⁰ A veterinarian who took part in the euthanization of zoo animals would later recall, “How could one, in cold blood, take the life of such an animal? Killing a monkey was to feel something like murder.”¹¹¹

The zoos of Great Britain faced severe rationing, just as the general population had. With horsemeat being deemed fit for human consumption, it put a lot of pressure upon the zoos to keep their carnivores fed. Still adhering to the British adage of keeping “a stiff upper lip”, the zoo presented a brave face to the media. At the close of 1939, the zoo played its role in interest stories to keep up the air of patriotism. In a *Times* article entitled “A Zoo Put To Work,” the role of zoo animals in the day-to-day operations of the London Zoo was detailed. The article stated that the animals had been “enlisted”, which would bring images to the mind of the reader, that like human civilians, the zoo animals

¹⁰⁷ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 122. “Thinning Out At The Zoo” *Times* September 9, 1939, 6.

¹⁰⁸ Nicholas Skinner “The Kursaal Zoo,” Southend Timeline, 2015, accessed March 5, 2015, <http://www.southendtimeline.com/thekursaalzoo.htm>.

¹⁰⁹ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 124.

¹¹⁰ “Thinning Out At The Zoo,” *Times*, September 9, 1939, 6.

¹¹¹ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 49.

were also doing their part for the war effort. Pack animals replaced motorized vehicles, and “the camels and llamas are being used to carry food supplies to the other animals and sandbags to the air-raid shelters”. The members of the zoo’s large herd of Shetland ponies were used to carry carts into the city center for such tasks as depositing gate receipts at the banks. In fact, during the Second World War newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic ran articles about the zoo, most likely in an attempt to bring a sense of normalcy or escapism to the public, or perhaps it was an attempt to draw back the much-needed visitors to the zoo.¹¹² The London Zoo drafted two of its more popular occupants to help out with the war effort. George and Ming, the zoo's chimpanzee and panda bear were media darlings in the spread of war propaganda. Scenes were staged for photographers taking pictures of George “digging ditches, knitting socks for soldiers, and completing other patriotic tasks.” Meanwhile, Ming was seen as a hero of the Blitz, even though he would not wear a gasmask. The panda was “a model of wartime preparedness, complete with air-raid helmet, identity cards, and ration coupons.”¹¹³

After the initial declaration of war, there was a general ban on places of entertainment and public assembly.¹¹⁴ Soon afterward came the evacuation of the children of London. It was believed to be the largest migration of youth in the country’s history, when 750,000 children were evacuated from eleven boroughs of London.¹¹⁵ In addition to the children, many Londoners also fled the city. For an institution that depended on two-

¹¹²“A Zoo Put To Work,” *New York Times*, December 31, 1939.

¹¹³ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 63-64.

¹¹⁴ “The Zoo Open Again,” *Times*, September 16, 1939.

¹¹⁵ “Mr. H. Morrison’s Tour” *Times*, September 2, 1939, 12.

thirds of its income from gate receipts, this could have been a tragic blow. The end of 1939 was a desperate time for the financially strapped zoo.¹¹⁶ In an article from *Science, New Series*, London Zoo director Julian Huxley stated, “During the war, the attendance of visitors has fallen to about one quarter of normal, so that, in spite of the utmost economy in running costs, and in spite also of the loyalty of its fellows, it is operating at a very heavy loss.”¹¹⁷ The population sought to help the zoo by offering to adopt animals: “One of the most interesting of these has been the unsolicited offer on the part of many Fellows to adopt some of the animals. This idea of adoption has spread rapidly and offers are now being received from many members of the public who are not Fellows of the Society, which are being gratefully accepted.”¹¹⁸ In 1940, the Zoological Society of London took hold of these offers of help and officially introduced an “Adopt An Animal” drive in order to compensate for the lagging admittance to the zoo. Despite the evacuation of many, the campaign was a success and, due to its success, might have saved countless animals that would have gone the way of Jumbo II.¹¹⁹ While the fundraisers helped, the zoo still struggled to recoup the attendance that it had before the war. The number of visitors to the London Zoo in 1941 was 512,966, which was a decrease of approximately 119,000 compared to 1940; it was also the lowest attendance figure for the zoo since 1864.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ “A Zoo Put To Work,” *New York Times*, December 31, 1939.

¹¹⁷ Julian S. Huxley “Zoological Society of London,” *Science*, 92, 2377 (July 19, 1940): 60.

¹¹⁸ “Support For the Zoo,” *Times* November 11, 1939, 9.

¹¹⁹ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 124.

¹²⁰ “The Zoo in War-Time,” *Times* August 3, 1942, 6.

Across the Irish Sea, the events that had unfolded in Britain were repeated at the Belfast Zoo. The Belfast Zoo was relatively new when World War II began, founded in March of 1934.¹²¹ By April 1941, Belfast was the target of German aerial attacks known as the “Belfast Blitz”. Due to public safety fears, the Ministry of Public Security ordered the destruction of what they deemed to be thirty-three dangerous animals. The animals that were killed included: a hyena, six wolves, a puma, a tiger, a black bear, a lynx, and two polar bears.¹²² The loss of the thirty-three animals—for such a young zoo—must have been devastating. New animals did not arrive at the Belfast zoo until 1947.¹²³ The loss is even more tragic due to the fact that the zoo never sustained any damage during the Belfast Blitz, which meant that the zoo shot healthy animals for an eventuality that never happened.¹²⁴ An interesting side note to the destruction of the Belfast Zoo animals was an indignant radio broadcast emitted from Nazi Germany. The broadcast was heard on April 20, 1941, in which it was stated that the destruction of the animals at the Belfast Zoo was to “incite all the animal-loving people of the entire world against Germany.” The broadcast continued, “Even English observers have to admit that the German Luftwaffe drops its bombs exclusively on military objectives, into which classification a zoo does not belong, however.” The Germans continued their public relations spin by

¹²¹ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 128-129.

¹²² “Our Elephant Angel,” Belfast Zoo, accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.belfastzoo.co.uk/ZooHome/NewsAndEvents/80thbirthday/elephantangel.aspx>.

¹²³ “History of Belfast Zoo,” Belfast Zoo, accessed February 22, 2015,

<http://www.belfastzoo.co.uk/ZooHome/AboutBelfastzoo/HistoryOfZoo.aspx>.

¹²⁴ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 128-129.

adding that the killing of the zoo animals due to German bombing was “nothing else but an atrocity fairy tale.”¹²⁵

A side story that sheds a glimmer of light on the plight of zoos also came from the Belfast Zoo. As the Belfast Blitz filled the residents of the city with fear. It appeared that when the Ministry of Public Safety ordered the Royal Ulster Constabulary to shoot thirty-three animals, zoo employee Denise Weston Austin took it upon herself to save the elephant known as Sheila. Every night after the zoo closed its doors, Ms. Austin would walk Sheila through the streets of Belfast under the cover of darkness to her home, where Sheila would remain in her garden for the night. Sheila was kept hidden by the high walls of the garden and then she would be returned to the zoo every morning.¹²⁶ While Sheila might have survived the Ministry of Public Safety—and in hindsight she would have been safe at the zoo—there is still a sense of heroism in the act of Denise Weston Austin. Sheila lived another 25 years at the zoo, until her death in 1966.¹²⁷

While the Belfast Zoo escaped the blitz unscathed, the London and Whipsnade zoos were not as fortunate. During the apex of the Blitz, in 1940 and 1941, there were three incidents that affected the London Zoo and another three that affected Whipsnade. In a *Times* article from August 3, 1942 it was revealed that, “Fifty-five high explosive

¹²⁵ “British Propaganda Seen by Nazis in Zoo Killings” *New York Times*, April, 21, 1941, 7.

¹²⁶ Claire McNeilly “Story of How Belfast Zoo’s Baby Elephant was kept in a Backyard” November 4, 2013 <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk>.

¹²⁷ Stephen Adams “Baby Elephant Kept As Pet To Save Her From WW2 Blitz” March 23, 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/howaboutthat/5038279/Baby-elephant-kept-as-pet-to-save-her-from-WW2-blitz.html>.

bombs, 200 incendiaries, and two oil bombs fell in the society's grounds."¹²⁸ The first bombs fell on the London Zoo on September 27, 1940. The zoo's occurrences book stated: "Thirty-eight incendiary bombs. Extensive damage to main restaurant by fire and water. Gardens closed until further notice due to unexploded bomb. Zebra and Wild Asses' house both damaged beyond repair. One Grevy's Zebra and wild ass mare and foal escaped but were captured next morning. Bomb in road at back of rodent house. Animals uninjured."¹²⁹ On August 30, 1940, Whipsnade Zoo encountered heavy bombings.¹³⁰ Though both zoos experienced bombing that shattered windows and destroyed buildings, few animals died directly from the bombs. In addition to the zebra and wild asses, other animals managed to escape the zoo during the Blitz, most notably three hummingbirds and a demoiselle crane that was captured a few days later by the offer of food.¹³¹ There was news of one particular zoo casualty during the Blitz that made its way to the American press. It was the death of Cocky, a cockatoo from the London Zoo. Cocky's keepers reported that air-raid sirens strained the bird to such an extent that it collapsed and died. It should also be noted that the cockatoo in question was also reported to be 142 years old.¹³²

The damage that fell upon the London Zoo during the Blitz might have reinvigorated concerns about the possible escape of dangerous animals. In a *Times* article

¹²⁸ "The Zoo in War-Time," *Times*, August 3, 1942, 6.

¹²⁹ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 158.

¹³⁰ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 127.

¹³¹ "Carrying On At The Zoo Times" *Times*, Oct 22, 1940; 6.

¹³² "Aged Cockatoo Succumbs To London's War Strains" *New York Times*, August 1, 1942; 5.

from October 22, 1940, the correspondent went into precise detail on how the dangerous animals were kept:

All the dangerous larger cats have been placed in the lion house, and every night are shut up in the inner sleeping dens. These are situated such that it would take two bombs to release an inmate—one to break open the den and second to break the bars of either the outdoor or indoor cage. The odds against such a double event are so great that its possibility can be safely disregarded. The polar bears (whom the keepers almost unanimously regard as the most alarming inmates of the zoo) are each night shut in the underground tunnel behind their terrace, from which escape would appear to be impossible.¹³³

It would stand to reason that an explosion that would have the ability to blow apart concrete and steel would most likely also kill the inhabitants of the cage. Yet, during those trying times it was most likely better to allay the fears of citizens, regardless of how unfounded they may have been.

The zoos of Great Britain used the Blitz to research animal reactions during the darkest hour. During this time newspapers began running a plethora of articles that explored animal reactions to the bombing. Researchers and reporters alike turned an inquisitive gaze upon all animals; domestic, in the wild and from the zoo. There had been often-held beliefs that animals had predictive capabilities. *The Times* used the observation of zoo animals to point out that “there is certainly no evidence that any of the animals in the Zoo can (a) anticipate the arrival of aircraft, (b) distinguish between ours and theirs, (c) supplement or react in any important way to the sirens, or (d) foresee the impact of

¹³³ “Carrying On At The Zoo,” *Times*, Oct 22, 1940; 6.

bombs.”¹³⁴ There were differing interpretations of the observations. *The Times'* take on animal reactions:

A London Times investigator has been studying animals' behavior under fire at the Maidstone Zoo, in the “invasion corner” of Southeast England. In general, the animals at Maidstone show no reaction to the most violent air activity or anti-aircraft fire. But there are exceptions. Two chimpanzees stamp and shriek at the howling of the sire, but don't mind the guns at all. A 20-year-old cow elephant hurries to her house if the anti-aircraft barrage catches her in the open; but once indoors, she is unconcerned. One of two emus is indifferent to noise; the other rushes about so violently during the barrages that her keepers are afraid she will kill herself against her cage.¹³⁵

In an article of *Science*, zoologist H. Barraclough Fell saw that the reactions of animals fell under three headings: “(1) species showing alarm; (2) species showing indifference, and (3) species which react with defiance.” Through his observations and the observations of others, Fell came to the conclusion, “Thus, among mammals at least, there is considerable evidence to support the claims of those naturalists who regard animals as capable of having definite and distinctive 'personalities.'” In other words, the reactions of animals ran the gamut from calm to panic, much as with humans. Fell recounted cases from the London zoo: “During recent air-raids on London, a young giraffe deserted its house to sleep in the open (thereby catching a chill). One zebra preferred to take shelter in a basement, while another which had been liberated by a bomb blowing down the gate of its enclosure, emerged to water through Regent's Park. The monkeys were indifferent.” The reactions of the animals at the zoo could easily be placed

¹³⁴ “Animals Reactions to War,” *Times*, September 7, 1940, 9.

¹³⁵ “Animals in Air Raids,” *New York Times*, November 10, 1940, 86.

upon a human being. A human feared being trapped in a building during an air-raid and thus ran outdoors instead of a giraffe. Instead of a zebra, imagine a human seeking shelter in a basement that was made into an air-raid shelter.¹³⁶ The British zoo animals, much like British humans, were resilient. It was observed, “After a few minutes of anti-aircraft fire the other night, the cranes got rather excited and began their rattling cries; but they soon settled down.”¹³⁷

In 1945, there was a victory for the Allied nations against those of the Axis. As in ancient times with Romans or the more recent army of Napoleon, animals had once again become the spoils of war. In 1947, certain rare (or most likely profitable) animals were removed from zoos in the British zone of Germany and taken to the London Zoo. *The Times* stated, “Many of the animals of the world, especially the larger kinds, are now lamentably scarce, with the result that it becomes ever more important both to protect, where possible, the surviving wild stocks and to avoid unnecessary wastage among captive specimens.”¹³⁸ Some of the animals brought to the London Zoo from Germany included an elephant, two adult hippopotami, a zebra and three raccoons.¹³⁹ This could also be seen another way—that the British had killed many of their animals at the dawn of the war and that they were recouping their supply at a cost to the Germans. The London Zoo tried to portray these actions as a way of helping the animals during lean times in Germany, yet it should be pointed out that Great Britain itself was still living

¹³⁶ H. Barraclough Fell, “Animal Behavior During Air-Raids.” *Science, New Series* Vol. 93, No. 2403 (January 17, 1941)

¹³⁷ “Animals Reactions to War,” *Times*, September 7, 1940, 9.

¹³⁸ “Animals in Trust,” *Times*, April 3, 1947, 5.

¹³⁹ “London Gets German Zoo Quota,” *New York Times* April 6, 1947, 34.

under rationing. While the London Zoo had killed many of its captives, *The Times* stated, without irony, “Many thousands of people will, no doubt, be visiting one 'zoo' or another during the next few days. It will add to the interest of their visit if they reflect that what they see is not a mere raree-show, not even only a collection of scientific specimens, but an institution which, properly handled and developed, may preserve for posterity much that they world is in grave danger of losing .”¹⁴⁰

The zoos of Great Britain suffered many hardships and setbacks during the war, but they continued to stay open whenever possible. Zoos were far more than educational research facilities, more than animal spectacles—they were an escape for a war-weary population. During the week, the London Zoo offered half-price admission to the men of H.M Forces and to their wives and children, and on Sundays they were admitted free of charge.¹⁴¹ Though there was a lag in the crowds, people still managed to come to the zoo, even though many had been evacuated. Although finding transportation was difficult, people still came to escape their troubles, and to block out the outside world.¹⁴² Despite the bombings, which left unexploded timed bombs, shattered glass, destroyed buildings, and often with no running water, the London Zoo made an effort to always stay open. It was one of the few places of open-air entertainment in war-fatigued London, as well as a place for adults and children alike. A *Times* contributor encapsulated what was probably the opinion of many who lived in London when he wrote, “The Zoo in fact is a microcosm of London. Hitler’s bombs cause a certain amount of damage to it,

¹⁴⁰ “Animals in Trust,” *Times*, April 3, 1947, 5.

¹⁴¹ “Visitors to the Zoo,” *Times*, February 3, 1940, 4.

¹⁴² “Support For the Zoo,” *Times*, November 11, 1939, 9.

and a considerable amount of inconvenience; but they have not destroyed the moral or the routine of its inhabitants, animals or human, and it continues to function with a very respectable degree of efficiency.”¹⁴³

The Others: Allied Zoos of Axis-Controlled Lands

The zoos in the Allied nation of France also encountered their share of adversities. When the Nazis invaded France, priceless works of art were being evacuated from the Louvre—and so were the animals from the Parisian zoos and parks. On September 12, 1939, *The New York Times* reported that the zoos of Paris were being evacuated to the country.¹⁴⁴ The Paris Zoo in the Bois de Vincennes had shut for a week, as had the London Zoo when war first began. The majority of the animals were evacuated to the south and to the west. It was reported that only some of the animals were killed—an orangutan and an elephant that refused to enter its traveling car.¹⁴⁵ In September of 1942, newspapers in the United States ran stories of how the near empty zoos were now being used to hold Americans in Vichy France.¹⁴⁶ As the Nazis made their way through France, they acquisitioned what they found of value and destroyed the rest, and the same was true when it came to animals. An example of such destruction and plunder was the aviaries of Captain Jean Delacour. As secretary of the International Committee of Ornithologists and president of the International Committee of Bird Preservation, he had a collection of 2000 birds that was valued at \$200,000 (1941). According to General

¹⁴³ “Carrying On At The Zoo,” *Times*, Oct 22, 1940, 6.

¹⁴⁴ “Paris Evacuating Zoo To Secret Safety Zones,” *New York Times*, September 12, 1939, 3.

¹⁴⁵ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 84.

¹⁴⁶ “The War Today..” *Washington Post*, September 28, 1942, 1.

Delacour, he lost half of his bird collection due to aerial bombardment, and the remainder was disposed of by German dealers. Fortunately, Delacour found his way to the United States and found employment at the Bronx Zoo.¹⁴⁷ The Nazi occupation of France became a prolonged event which brought the plight of humans and zoo animals to an extreme. In 1944, three Parisian zookeepers were each sentenced to prison for two months. Their crime was selling meat on the black market from the lion house where they worked. While most likely not the most desirable or edible portions of the meat, in desperate Paris it was needed by both human and animal alike.¹⁴⁸ In a reprise of events that had occurred in the Siege of Paris, the Paris Zoo killed and sold a buffalo to be slaughtered. It is unknown if this was due to a need for monetary resources or to help alleviate the food shortages of post-war France.¹⁴⁹

During the early tense days of World War II, the world sat on pins and needles as Nazi Germany looked toward Poland with a covetous gaze. When Germany eventually invaded Poland, so began the Second World War with Great Britain and France backing the invaded land. The invasion officially began September 1, 1939 as Nazis crossed the Polish border. Poland began to be redrawn between Germany and the Soviet Union. The German policy was not only to destroy Polish cities, but to go even further and destroy their culture and science.¹⁵⁰ On September 25, 1939, the Warsaw Zoo was bombed. During the mêlée, seals escaped into the River Vistula and ostriches and anteaters were

¹⁴⁷ "New Expert at zoo lost Birds in War" *New York Times*, January 27, 1941; 17.

¹⁴⁸ "Paris Zoo Keepers Jailed For Stealing Lions' Meat," *New York Times*, May 12, 1944; 7.

¹⁴⁹ "Parisians Will Eat Anatole, Zoo Buffalo," *Washington Post*, February 16, 1949, 14.

¹⁵⁰ Vernon Kislung, "Zoological Gardens of the United States," in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 122.

said to wander the Old Town. The zoo director's wife, Antonina Zabinski wrote in her journal, "Submerged in their wallows, the hippos, otters and beavers survived, somehow the bears, bison, Przewalski horses, camels, zebras and reptiles survived."¹⁵¹ The Nazis looked upon Warsaw as a small provincial town undeserving of a zoo, but considering the devastation laid upon Warsaw by the Nazis must have seen Warsaw undeserving of existence.¹⁵²

Soon after the destruction, Lutz Heck, director of the Berlin Zoo, arrived in Warsaw. There Heck, who had once been a colleague of the Zabinkis in the pre-war days, gathered the surviving animals to be shipped to Germany. Among the survivors sent to Germany included a baby elephant whose mother had been killed in the air-raid.¹⁵³ Afterward, newspapers would report that the Warsaw zoo—then devoid of exotic animals—was being used as a pig farm.¹⁵⁴ Other zoos in Poland suffered heavy losses as well. The Poznan Zoo had initially lost about fifty animals during the first days of the conflict. The lowest point for the Poznan Zoo came in 1944, at the hands of the Soviets. The Germans had already by that time killed many of the Poznan Zoo's citizens. The animals that the Germans destroyed at Poznan included tigers, lions, bears and other large mammals.¹⁵⁵ When all was said and done, only 176 animals remained of the 1,200 that

¹⁵¹ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 80.

¹⁵² Vernon Kisling, "Zoological Gardens of the United States," in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 122.

¹⁵³ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 80.

¹⁵⁴ "Warsaw Zoo Now Pig Farm," *New York Times* March 27, 1940; 4.

¹⁵⁵ Vernon Kisling, "Zoological Gardens of the United States," in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 122-123.

were housed there before the war.¹⁵⁶ The Krakow Zoo situated outside the city, survived the bombings. Although it had survived the bombings, it was still plundered by the Nazis. The Germans confiscated six rare, pure-blooded European Bison; the irony of the situation is that these bison were taken to preserve the breed, and all of them died during the Allied bombings.¹⁵⁷

An interesting occurrence that can shed some light on the Nazi invasion was at the zoo in Lodz. Toward the end of the war, for unknown reasons, the Nazis started transferring many animals from German zoos and circuses to Lodz' small zoo. It is odd to think that a place of so much devastation at the beginning of the war became a safe haven for many German animals. Lodz is most likely the only European zoo to hold the distinction of actually having more animals in its care by the war's end. At the beginning of the German invasion, the Lodz Zoo cared for only fifty species of animals; at the end of the war it had over 600 animals that belonged to 117 different species. One such animal brought to the Lodz Zoo was an Indian elephant that lived there until 1960.¹⁵⁸ Another occurrence that brought light to those dark days was what happened at the Warsaw Zoo after the majority of the animals were gone. The zoo director and his wife Antonia Zabinski used the ruined zoo as a hiding spot for Jews who were fleeing the Germans. The Zabinskis devised a plan in which they used the cages and enclosures to hide more than 300 Jews. It is believed that this refuge "became one of the most

¹⁵⁶ John Kinder, "Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers," in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 56.

¹⁵⁷ Vernon Kisting, "Zoological Gardens of the United States," in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 123.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

successful hideouts of the war.” The story of the Zabinskis is told in the 2007 work *The Zookeeper’s Wife*.¹⁵⁹

The Nazi-Soviet Pact fell apart in 1941 when Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union and unleashed four long years of death and destruction. The loss of human life was devastating in the Soviet Union, and while zoos did experience hardships, for the most part they emerged unscathed. An exception to this was the Askaniya Nova reserve in present-day Ukraine. Many of the animals of the reserve were killed during the German occupation or during the Soviet liberation. During the siege on Leningrad, amazingly, the zoo survived. The survival of the Leningrad Zoo was a surprise due to the long blood siege against the city in which many humans (100,000 or more) died of starvation.¹⁶⁰ The Leningrad Zoo had managed to evacuate some of its animals to Kazan. One animal that survived the German attacks and the starving Leningrad citizenry was a hippopotamus named Krasvica. Krasavica’s keeper kept her alive by bringing water to her from the Neva River.¹⁶¹ In 1943, *The New York Times* reported that the Leningrad Zoo’s tiger had been reduced to being a vegetarian, due to the lack of meat available.¹⁶² Between 1941 and 1942, the Nazis bombed the area of the Moscow Zoo several times,

¹⁵⁹ Diane Ackerman, “Why We Love Zoos,” *New York Times*, February 4, 2012, accessed March 1, 2015, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/02/04/why-we-love-zoos/?_r=1.

¹⁶⁰ Vernon Kislring, “Zoological Gardens of the United States,” in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 138.

¹⁶¹ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 141-142.

¹⁶² Henry Shapiro, “100,000 Died in Leningrad Siege,” *New York Times*, June 29, 1943, 6.

however, there was no significant animal loss. During those chaotic years, attendance to the Moscow Zoo remained high, which was the primary source of funds for the zoo.¹⁶³

Red, White and Zoo:

United States Zoological Gardens and Park and the World War II

The zoos of the United States existed in relative safety during the Second World War, with two vast oceans serving as a buffer between the fronts in Europe and Asia. But that is not to say that the zoos in the United States did not have their own negative wartime experiences. For the most part, zoos shared the same obstacles they faced during World War I but to a harsher extent. While American zoos did not share the destruction faced by the zoos of continental Europe, they encountered the loss of employees that were needed for the war effort. The zoos also confronted harsh austerity measures that reduced budgets which made acquiring food, fuel and building supplies difficult. There were also the rare cases of American zoos that followed the lead of European and Japanese zoos by killing their occupants as a means of saving resources. The Second World War affected the growth of American zoos to such an extent that only five zoos and no aquariums were opened during the 1940s, which was the lowest number of any decade in the twentieth century.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Vernon Kisling, "Zoological Gardens of the United States," in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 138.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 169.

The most common challenge faced by the majority of American zoos was the harsh austerity measures inflicted upon the nation during World War II. As American citizens were forced to ration to enable the nation to have enough resources for the fighting troops, zoos too were forced to change the way they operated, and most importantly how they fed their inhabitants. In 1942, less than a year after the United States entered the worldwide conflict, the Bronx Zoo switched the carnivores in their care from beef to horsemeat. This was due to horsemeat not being rationed, which was good for the zoo considering it estimated that it needed about a ton a week. The zoo went about the switch in gradual steps so that the animals would be none the wiser. They began by mixing the horsemeat with beef and then over time eventually eliminated beef from the mixture.¹⁶⁵ In 1943, the Central Park Zoo began streamlining the amount of food the animals ate “for patriotic reasons.” This included the lions and tigers eating less horsemeat and the monkeys switching from bananas to sweet potatoes. A Central Park Zoo representative explained the reduction of meat for the big cats: “The average adult cat eats from six to eight pounds of raw meat each day. Without injury to the animals, we have been able to cut this down from one to three pounds.” He further stated, “We have to be prepared for eventual shortages in many things, and we are trying to accustom the animals to different and wholesome foods.” The Central Park Zoo used up to 1,300 pounds of horsemeat every week, about one-quarter of which was waste fat and bone.¹⁶⁶ Zoo officials most likely began a self-imposed reduction in meat due to the worry that horsemeat had become regulated for human consumption, which would have caused a

¹⁶⁵ “Diet Shift Averts Zoo Meatless Days,” *New York Times*, October 8, 1942, 18.

¹⁶⁶ “War Streamlines Tigers at Zoo,” *New York Times*, January 10, 1943, 44.

spike in competition and price of the much-needed commodity for the zoo. Not all zoo animals eagerly accepted their patriotic duty to sacrifice their food intake. The superintendent of the Oklahoma City Zoo bemoaned, “Man may reconcile himself to a rationed diet on the basis of patriotism, but try telling that to the polar bears.”¹⁶⁷

The fact that the zoos in the United States did not face the same dangers and destruction as zoos in other areas of the war torn world did not mean that they did not share the same fears. Zoos in New York City issued 44-caliber game rifles to keepers, in order to shoot any dangerous animals that might be freed by explosions. The zookeepers received marksmanship lessons at the police armory. The destiny of the non-dangerous animals was left to the zookeeper’s discretion. The zoos contemplated following the lead of the London Zoo by having their reptiles destroyed, but decided against it.¹⁶⁸ In Washington, D.C. , the National Zoo faced fears of its own. The residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the National Zoo had concerns of animals being set free during an air-raid. The zoo’s director William M. Mann stated the day after the Pearl Harbor attack, that the institution's poisonous snakes would be exterminated if the nation’s capital came under attack.¹⁶⁹ The National Zoo’s 1942 annual report showed that the majority of venomous snakes were removed from the collection, but it didn’t state how they were removed. However, the arrival of a pair of Scottish highland cattle, a pair of spider monkeys and other animals from the New York Zoo indicated that the National Zoo perhaps had initiated a trade to save the snakes from being destroyed. The National

¹⁶⁷ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 63.

¹⁶⁸ “Jungle Law,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 18, 1942.

¹⁶⁹ “Zoo’s Snakes to Die if D.C. Faces Attack,” *Washington Post*, December 9, 1941.

Zoo was still on alert; the zoo faced a blackout from dusk to dawn. In addition, the zookeepers were also issued weapons in the event of an escape due to attack. It was reported that “keepers and watchmen were equipped with guns that would stop anything from guinea hen to bull elephant. Any bomb close enough to blast open stone walls and iron bars that held the animals inside would leave the more dangerous animals in no condition to attack anyone.”¹⁷⁰

Though rare, there were events in the United States that mimicked the ones in Europe and elsewhere, of zoos culling their zoo populations in the attempt to save resources. In Mayumi Itoh’s *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy*, she revealed through an email correspondence with a zoo official that the Boston Zoo had killed the majority of its monkeys. The Boston Zoo director was worried about having enough fuel to heat the monkey enclosure during the cold Boston winter. The director made attempts to re-house the monkeys with other zoos, but when those attempts failed, the animals were destroyed.¹⁷¹ In 1942, *The Oklahoman* reported how zookeeper Bill Volz almost the entire stock at his Cedar Rapids, Iowa zoo. The zookeeper stated to the Associated Press, “We don’t feel that we can conscientiously keep on buying meat for animals when human beings are limited to a certain amount a week.” The animals that were destroyed in Cedar

¹⁷⁰ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 152.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, 146. Marvin Lee Jones, Letter to Ken Kawata, July 4, 1989; Ken Kawata, e-mail to Mayumi Itoh, February 1, 2010.

Rapids consisted of four bears, four foxes, a wolf, two bison, a coyote and several alligators.¹⁷²

During the Second World War, American zoos were places of entertainment for those seeking a refuge from news of the carnage of war. This was especially true of the zoos in New York City. The Central Park Zoo exhibit, *Life in the Jungle*, brought in 232,000 visitors in 1943, and the overall attendance for the year was 2,106,000.

Unbeknownst to many visitors, their refuge from the war was also a place of cutting edge research for the war effort. Zoo scientists were working on shark repellents and on a way to make seawater drinkable.¹⁷³ The zoo's aquarium was also doing research with a sea-diving bathysphere that was developed by Dr. William Beebe. The use of the bathysphere was used for “analyzing shellfish suspected of being poisonous, making basic experiments for electrical detection devices, studying parasitized fish used as human food, and experimenting with the aquarium’s electric eels in an effort to improve electric batteries.”¹⁷⁴ Research was also taking place at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., though that research could be construed as cruelty to animals. A 1,000-pound bear was made to drink a solution of boric acid. The purpose of this experiment was so that Navy scientists could then study the chemical’s effects on the brain pathology of the bear.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 57.

¹⁷³ “The Zoo in Wartime,” *New York Times*, January 15, 1944, 12.

¹⁷⁴ “Even the Zoo Goes to War,” *Washington Post*, February 24, 1944, 2.

¹⁷⁵ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 67.

When World War II finally came to an end, many zoos in Europe lay in waste. Although not as heavily damaged, the London Zoo had seen its share of loss (mainly at their own hands). Allies in war and allies in peace, a new lend-lease program was initiated between the Bronx Zoo and the London Zoo. The first animals in this program were sent across the Atlantic in October of 1947. These included a hummingbird named Wally (which was most likely needed due to the fact that three had escaped from the London Zoo during the Blitz) and two quetzal, birds native to the western Hemisphere.¹⁷⁶ While the zoos in the United States did not face much loss of their stock due to the war, but they were nonetheless unable to replenish or add to their stock. In March of 1947, the first post-war cargo ship of big game since the war began left Africa for the United States. The *New York Times* reported that the cargo of the ship *Robin Locksley*, included seventeen giraffes, six lions, four zebras, fifteen monkeys, six pythons, four vultures and an ostrich.¹⁷⁷ Many zoos throughout the United States also showed their patriotism by assuming the care of many former military mascots brought home both during and after the war. The animals that were once mascots of military units came from all corners of the globe.¹⁷⁸ One of the biggest changes that came to American zoos by the war's end was a change in the ranks of zookeepers. One of the biggest obstacles that American zoos faced during the war years was a labor shortage due to the number of male zookeepers being drafted into service.¹⁷⁹ This led to many women across the nation stepping in to take over the care of the animals. One such example was Dr. Patricia O'Connor, who was

¹⁷⁶ "Bronx and London Zoos Start 'Lend-lease' Plan," *New York Times*, October 11, 1947, 6.

¹⁷⁷ "First Post-War Cargo Of Big Game On Way Here," *New York Times*, March 20, 1947, 55.

¹⁷⁸ "Woman Is Doctor to 600 Zoo Animals," *New York Times*, July 28, 1943, 2.

¹⁷⁹ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 157.

believed to be the only female veterinarian at any zoo in the United States in 1943. In her position at the Barrett Park Zoo on Staten Island, she cared for as many as 600 animals.¹⁸⁰ O'Connor also served as the first president of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians at its formation in 1946.¹⁸¹ Since the war, the role of women at zoos in the United States has continued to grow.¹⁸² The post-war 1950s saw an explosion of new zoos in the United States, with the opening of seventeen new zoos.¹⁸³

The Second World War caused devastating loss to human and animal alike. The Allied powers came together to overthrow a global conquest by the Nazi's and their allies. It is certain that the allies were on the right side of history in many aspects, except perhaps in regard to the care of zoo animals. In this aspect there is a commonality between the Allies and the Axis powers. The Allies were the epitome of justice in a chaotic world, yet they feed that chaos by implementing extreme procedures that killed zoo animals before they were even a danger. There is no harm in being prepared for worst case scenarios, but the governments and zoo leadership of many Allied zoos took a preemptive action that was not needed. The majority of the zoo animal casualties occurred before the war even began. Today there is a war memorial for animals in Hyde Park in London. Unfortunately this memorial only pays tribute to animals that served in

¹⁸⁰ "Woman Is Doctor to 600 Zoo Animals," *New York Times*, July 28, 1943, 12.

¹⁸¹ Vernon Kisting, "Zoological Gardens of the United States," in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (London: CRC Press, 2001), 171.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, 169.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, 170.

some capacity in the military.¹⁸⁴ The noncombatant animals that died and suffered during the Second World War are still for the most part nameless and without recognition.

¹⁸⁴ "Animals in War Memorial," Animals in War Memorial, accessed March 20, 2015, http://www.animalsinwar.org.uk/index.cfm?asset_id=1375.

IV

Animals of the Axis: German and Japanese Zoological Parks

There is some difficulty in writing about the zoos of Germany during the Second World War. The majority of the few memoirs written by zoo officials have yet to be translated. There is also the issue that many records involving German zoos and zoos in German-controlled lands were destroyed due to the war. Then there is the issue of misinformation from newspaper sources, many of whom were reporting based on rumors. There are for example, several newspaper articles that relate the death of the last elephant in the Berlin Zoo, with different dates and different names for the deceased pachyderm.¹⁸⁵ These same issues are also true for Japan. Yet while these issues may prevent the full, and perhaps the true story of the zoo animals wartime experiences, what has been discovered should still be told. Without the inclusion of these stories, it would not be a full study of the zoos during modern human combat, especially since World War II is considered the deadliest war in the history of modern warfare. The paramount purpose of this chapter is to highlight that while the Allies and the Axis had vastly different political ideologies, they both treated zoo animals with the same degree of ambivalence during conflict.

Writing about animals during war is a hard undertaking. It is difficult to highlight the plight of zoo animals when there were such great losses to human life. It is

¹⁸⁵ "Berlin Has Parade in Midst of Rubble," *New York Times*, April 22, 1946, "Berlin Zoo Man Under Charges," *New York Times*, February 8, 1948.

particularly difficult to write about the plight of zoo animals in Nazi Germany, when so many people suffered and died at the hands of a brutal fascist government. Jews, Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals and countless other groups of individuals were rounded up as though they were animals and then exterminated in fashions that the Nazi government would consider criminal to use for an animal. When literally millions of people died, it may come across as frivolous to write about the zoo animals that died. Has there been enough time since the tragic events of the Second World War to write about the suffering of zoo animals? The purpose of this chapter is not to ignore the tremendous human loss in Germany and other nations during the war, but to shed a light on a tragedy that more should be aware of, and to perhaps shed light on the Nazi paradox in animal-human relations and even their hypocrisy when it came to the most vulnerable of German animals -- those held in zoos.

When the Second World War finally came to a close, the majority of Berlin lay in a smoldering ruin. The years of conquest, brutality, starvation and defeat took a huge toll upon the people of a nation that was once poised to conquer the world. The hubris of the Nazi regime was apparent in the nothingness that remained. Unfortunately for the animals of the Berlin Zoo, they too were a part of this fall, though it was not of their own choosing. The destruction of the Berlin Zoo could be seen as especially harsh in a land that had previously enforced some of the most progressive animal protection legislation in the world. In 1933, not long after gaining power in Germany, the Nazis passed a law regulating the butchery of animals. This law banned kosher slaughter as an attack on the Jews of Germany. Shortly following this law, the Nazis issued a decree banning

vivisection, under the threat of being sent to a concentration camp. The protection of animals from experimentation was an important campaign for the Nazis. Most should note the irony in this crusade due to the medical experiments imposed upon their human prisoners. In a radio address in 1933, Hermann Goring stated: “To the German, animals are not merely creatures in the organic sense, but creatures who lead their own lives and who are endowed with perceptive facilities, who feel pain and experience joy and prove to be faithful and attached.”¹⁸⁶

The Nazis used their views on how animals should be treated in their propaganda during the war and against their perceived enemies. It was a known fact that Hitler was a vegetarian, as were many of the higher-ups in the Nazi party. As Kathleen Kete has argued: “The Nazis worked within a new paradigm. Accepting the logic of modernism, they abolished the line separating human and animals and articulated a new hierarchy based on race, which placed certain specie-races-of animals above “races” of humans -- eagles and wolves and pigs in the new human/animals hierarchy were placed above Poles and rats and Jews.”¹⁸⁷ With these lofty ideals of human-animal relations, it should have come as a shock years later when animals were massacred in their cages at the Warsaw Zoo. It would have been an even bigger shock when the animals in the Berlin Zoo were killed by their own keepers, and some of those that survived were later killed

¹⁸⁶ Boria Sax, *Animals in the Third Reich* (Providence: Yogh and Thorn, 2013), 100- 101.

¹⁸⁷ Kathleen Kete, “Animals and Ideology: The Politics of Animals Protection in Europe,” in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 20.

from aerial bombing in a war caused by German conquest. When the dust and smoke from the rubble finally settled, only 91 of the pre-war 4000 inhabitants lived.¹⁸⁸

Opened in 1844, the Berlin Zoo was regarded as one of the best zoos upon the continent, if not the world. It was known for a vast collection that often included some of the rarest animals. One such example was a gorilla named Bobby, one of the first males to ever reach adulthood in captivity. In the 1920s, the zoo adapted to the new barless enclosures that attempted to mimic the animals' natural habitats.¹⁸⁹ With its staunch laws for the protection of animals, it would be no wonder that the Nazi party would use zoos and zoo animals to highlight Germany and the Nazi cause. In 1936, when the Nazis possessed control, zoo director Lutz Heck opened a "German Zoo" for the occasion of the Berlin Olympics. The exhibit honored Germany's native wildlife, including a Wolf Rock at the center.¹⁹⁰ As Kathleen Kete pointed out in her work, predatory animals, particularly wolves, were seen as symbols of Germany and the Nazis. In December of 1938, the Washington Post reported a Nazi fundraising effort that included the zoo: "Cub lions, monkeys, camels and a pack of hunting dogs will be let out of the Berlin Zoo tomorrow to help Field Marshal General Goering, Dr. Goebbels and other Nazi cabinet members together with their wives, collect money in the streets of Berlin for the annual Nazi winter relief fund." This same event came a week after a curfew forced Jews throughout Germany "to wait behind the closed doors of their homes from 12 noon until

¹⁸⁸ Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisting (London: CRC Press, 2001), 95.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 81.

8 p.m., the period of the outdoor Nazi drive.”¹⁹¹ It should also be noted that these events also occurred not long after Kristallnacht in November of 1938. Was the Nazi admiration for animals real, or was it perhaps a way to spin their persona to the public?

Before the war got into full swing for Germany, news of its zoo animals had begun reaching the shores of the United States. In 1939, Hans Hagenbeck, the director of the Hagenbeck Zoological Gardens in Hamburg, announced that “only one male and one female of every species in the zoo will be kept, no matter what happens in Western Europe in the next few months.” All of the excess animals would be sent to Germany’s ally, by way of the Nazi-Soviet pact, the Soviet Union. He stated, “The Russians have agreed to return them intact at the end of the war, or to replace them with rare Russian and Asiatic animals.”¹⁹² It is doubtful that the animals sent to the Soviet Union ever saw Germany again, due to the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. But why would Hagenbeck, someone whose income was based on animals, give away so much of his stock to the Soviets? It is possible that Hagenbeck made a strategic move as a businessman to save his investment from being destroyed. In *Bonzo’s War*, Clair Campbell noted that Berlin Zoo director Lutz Heck’s autobiography described air-raid precautions and gas drills in September of 1939. Campbell further wrote,

¹⁹¹ “Animals Let Out, Jews Stay In for Nazi Relief Drive,” *Washington Post*, December 3, 1938.

¹⁹² “Berlin Zoo to Keep Only One Pair of Each Species,” *Washington Post*, September 16, 1939.

But now Herr Heck had concerns closer to home. His autobiography recorded the summer of 1939 as war approached and Nazi officials, like those in London, became concerned with what to do should any of Berlin Zoo's 4000 animals escape in an air raid. Lions and tigers would seek shelter rather than attack humans, so Herr Heck pleaded, and snakes (except the African mamba) would be numb and sluggish without artificial heat."

Campbell concludes that Heck was given order that all the "beasts of prey were to be shot."¹⁹³

There is no doubt that the people of Germany had fears, both founded and unfounded, about animals escaping their enclosures. But perhaps there was more involved than just concerns for the public's safety that led to the Nazi government ordering the deaths of zoo animals. At the beginning of 1940, newspapers began to run stories detailing the food shortages that were affecting the zoo animals in Germany. Mere months after Hagenbeck reduced his animal stock, a story ran about the probability of completely removing his animals from Germany. The town council of Bussum, in the Netherlands announced that it was considering an offer from Hagenbeck to reopen his establishment in their municipal park due to the difficulties of obtaining food for his animals in Germany. This proposal was met with much opposition due to the fact that they could "scarcely afford to waste any foodstuffs when they must be largely imported at great risk."¹⁹⁴ The Berlin Zoo was also feeling the pains of the food shortage. The *New York Times* reported, "The war finally caught up with the animals in the Berlin zoo today. Luxuries such as peanuts for the elephants were eliminated. Roland the sea elephant came up for an extra fish at lunch, but there was no fish. Zoo officials said they had to put him on wartime rations too." The monkeys were put on dried bananas. In addition, the carnivores of the zoo had

¹⁹³ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo's War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 81.

¹⁹⁴ "Food Shortage May Cause Hamburg Zoo to be Moved," *New York Times*, April 3, 1940.

their rations reduced from six to five horses.¹⁹⁵ The article written in a tongue in cheek manner still highlighted the reality of the war. As the war would worsen, this cut in “luxuries” would become a fond nostalgia compared to the nightmares that were yet to come.

It would appear that the animal-progressive Nazis had fallen victim to the fears of aerial bombardment just as the English had. Just as in other areas around the world, people feared the escape of savage beasts roaming city streets. Heck wrote in his memoir, published in 1952, that the public feared the release of big felids and poisonous snakes, while the zookeepers were more concerned about escaped bears and elephants wreaking havoc.¹⁹⁶ Clair Campbell wrote that the official order was followed by other German zoos: “Dresden Zoo’s lions, tigers and panthers had all gone the same way. All the snakes had perished except the boas and pythons, one of whom was fed an entire goat just before the outbreak of war. Munich Zoo had managed to evade the killing order, apart from ‘a few of the bigger chimpanzees’.” As in World War I, some zoo animals were used for the war effort. The Hamburg Zoo and Hagenbeck’s traveling zoo both had their elephants “pulling ploughs in Hanover and hauling lumber in the Black Forest.”¹⁹⁷

The deaths of the zoo animals by their own hands paled in comparison to what occurred when Allied bombing began. The aerial attack on Berlin on November 22-23, 1943 was devastating to the zoo animals of the city. George Axelsson reported for the *New York Times* on November 23, “The Berlin Zoo was smashed and elephants and other

¹⁹⁵ “Incidents in European Conflict,” *New York Times*, January 24, 1940.

¹⁹⁶ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 132.

¹⁹⁷ Clare Campbell, *Bonzo’s War* (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2013), 84.

animals roamed Berlin streets today, according to eyewitness.”¹⁹⁸ Among the destruction of the Berlin Zoo was the Indian-inspired elephant house known as the “elefantepagode.” This facility for was directly hit by the Allied raiders, killing seven elephants.¹⁹⁹ Axelsson wrote of an eyewitnesses account, “Making his way to the Tempelhor airfield, he said he met an elephant and a giraffe roaming the streets. The animals had been freed as a result of the bombs landing on the zoo. The people, he said, did not seem to care.” The bombing of Berlin was so intense this night that smoke from the fires drifted as far as 300 miles away to the Swedish Baltic island of Oeland.²⁰⁰ The Berlin Zoo suffered greatly during this attack. In addition to the elephants, the zoo also lost “1 rhino, 2 giraffes, 17 antelopes, 11 bovines, 25 deer, many carnivores, 15 monkeys, 1 chimpanzee, and 1 orangutan.” The zoo’s aquarium had a direct hit, and some of the animals that managed to survive the attack died due to the cold nights.²⁰¹ On November 28, 1943, the *New York Times* reported additional information from the chaos in the aftermath of the bombings: “Municipal open-air kitchens along Unter den Linden are using the animals killed after escaping the bombed Berlin Zoo. The Stockholm Tindingen correspondent said he had dined on zebra haunch and elsewhere elephant meat was served.”²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ George Axelsson, “Zoo Animals Roam Berlin Streets”, *New York Times*, November 25, 1943.

¹⁹⁹ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 45.

²⁰⁰ George Axelsson, “Zoo Animals Roam Berlin Streets”, *New York Times*, November 23, 1943.

²⁰¹ Harro Strehlow, “Zoological Gardens of Western Europe,” in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 107.

²⁰² “Siemens Plants Hit Hard,” *New York Times*, November 28, 1943.

The worst fears that had motivated the London Zoo to kill many of its zoo animals became a reality for the zoos of Germany. While London Zoo did sustain some damage during the war, but it was nothing compared to the devastation of the direct bomb blasts upon the zoo of Germany. In July of 1943, explosive and incendiary bombs fell over Hamburg. At the zoo, raccoons and eagles, and other birds of prey, escaped and were shot after they had begun eating some of the other birds -- ducks and geese -- that roamed the park. Many animals that did not initially die from the explosions would die “from licking traces of phosphorus from the fire bombs.” Probably one of the more heart wrenching tales in a disaster that had many involved the seals at the Hamburg Zoo. The New York Times reported, “The seals all died during the early raids. Terrified by the noise, they swam wildly around and around till their hearts gave out.”²⁰³ As horrifying as all those events were, there was more of a living hell for the zoo animals in Hamburg.

On the night of July 25th, hell visited Hamburg, creating an event that would be known as the “Great Fire of Hamburg.”²⁰⁴ Royal Air Force Typhoon pilots machine-gunned camouflaged vehicles, at the railway station, that they thought was a German military convoy.²⁰⁵ But the reality of the situation was that as the Allies began bombarding Hamburg, the Hagenbeck family, proprietors of the Hamburg Zoo, were already in the midst of transporting many of their animals to Vienna. In addition to machine-gun fire, incendiary bombs were also dropped upon the animals. Twenty-five

²⁰³ “Famous Hamburg Zoo Lost Heavily in Raids; Main Problem Now is Restocking and Food,” *New York Times*, June 17, 1946.

²⁰⁴ Lorenz Hagenbeck, *Animals Are My Life*, trans. Alec Brown (London: Bodley Head, 1956), 217.

²⁰⁵ James MacDonald “Circus Will Reopen This Week at Hamburg, But German Will Be Barred from Shows,” *New York Times*, June 11, 1945.

animals burned to death in their confinements. Many of those that survived had to be shot afterward due to the severity of their wounds.²⁰⁶ It was reported in the *New York Times*, “Some horses were killed, two brown bears perished and one lion was so badly wounded that it had to be shot.” This report two years after the event underplayed the true scope of animal lives affected from the bombing.²⁰⁷ In his memoirs *Animals Are My Life*, published not long after the war in 1956, Lorenz Hagenbeck described what happened in Hamburg in much harsher terms.

Lorenz Hagenbeck’s memoirs harken back to that horrendous night, when his multigenerational zoo and circus empire was almost decimated. Hagenbeck stated that the assault on Hamburg exceeded “anything in the way of bombing that had previously been humanly conceivable.”²⁰⁸ He wrote about the courage of his zookeepers who risked their lives in rescuing the imprisoned animals. Hagenbeck wrote of zookeepers struggling with giant tortoises that weighed upwards of 300 pounds, with their shells so hot from the fires that the keepers had to carry them in wet blankets.²⁰⁹ He described that the “sky above us was as bright as day,” as zoo employees and prisoners of war raced against time to save animals and to retrieve those that had escaped.²¹⁰ Two tigers had managed to escape their battered cages in the chaos that night. Hagenbeck described how his nephew found them cowering with fear under a damaged floor; the two tigers were shot due to there not being

²⁰⁶ John Kinder, “Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers,” in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 56.

²⁰⁷ James MacDonald, “Circus Will Reopen This Week at Hamburg, But German Will Be Barred from Shows,” *New York Times*, June 11, 1945.

²⁰⁸ Lorenz Hagenbeck, *Animals Are My Life*, trans. Alec Brown (London: Bodley Head, 1956), 216.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 219.

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, 217.

anywhere to house them in the ruins of the animal park. The *New York Times*, when reporting what happened to Hamburg Zoo, wrote about the Hamburg Fire in a detached tone and glossed over much of the horror that occurred that night when 450 animals were killed. Hagenbeck described that night in much more personal manner:

The heat became unbearable. Animals were crouching in terror in the corners of their cages. It was now clearly impossible to save them, and so to save them from a horrible death by burning, Heinrich and Carl Heinrich steeled their hearts and decided to shoot them, and thus at our own hands lovely Siberian tigers, black panthers, jaguars, pumas, bears, hyenas and wolves, and all our lion pit, creatures we had assembled through long years and treated with much love, had to perish, an animal-lover's agony as the shots rang out, destroying stock it would take tens of years to build up again.²¹¹

The victimization and deaths of zoo animals would be considered the assumed result of a major war. But zoos in Germany also had a human aspect that should be addressed. German zoos, like other German institutions today, now struggle with their role during the Nazi regime. The zoos of Germany suffered from the lack of manpower. Since most able-bodied men were drafted into the military, this drastically affected zoos. While some zoos in the United States and elsewhere looked to women to take the place of men gone to fight, in Germany, drafted zookeepers were replaced with prisoners of war.²¹² In his memoirs, Lorenz Hagenbeck addressed the use of forced labor at his Hamburg Zoo:

²¹¹ Ibid, 218.

²¹² Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 107.

Our handful of keepers were assisted by a number of prisoners of war, French Czech, Dutch and Polish. As all the men enjoyed the same conditions as our own, and the work in the animal park was not arduous or at all monotonous, ever one of them did his best not to lose the job, and worked well. Every night, our own men and our P.O.W.s alike were all to be found at their posts scattered about the park.²¹³

The use of prisoners of war as forced labor was often practiced by Nazi Germany. There are countless cases of POWs being forced to work in ammunition factories or in agriculture. To the actual prisoners, it was probably the more preferable of locations to be forced to work. The thought of zoos, institutions so often connected to the education of children, taking part in the use of prisoners of war as forced labor and then barring Jews shows Nazi inhumanity through an organization devoted to animals. Just as the war machine affected zoos with the use of prisoners of war, the politics of Germany also affected zoos. In September of 1941, the New York Times ran an article stating how a new Nazi decree barred Jews from public spaces, including zoos.²¹⁴ There were even cases of Allied pilots being shot down over zoos and hanging from their parachutes over bear pits.²¹⁵

In April 1945, the Berlin Zoo became a literal battle ground between the Nazi Army and the Soviets. Trenches were dug and ran throughout the Berlin Zoo. Even during this chaos, the zookeepers and their wives that lived at the zoo continued to feed and care for the animals left alive. Not a single building at the zoo escaped unscathed,

²¹³ Lorenz Hagenbeck, *Animals Are My Life*, trans. Alec Brown (London: Bodley Head, 1956), 216.

²¹⁴ "Aryans Condole Jews in Germany," *New York Times*, September 21, 1941.

²¹⁵ Lorenz Hagenbeck, *Animals Are My Life*, trans. Alec Brown (London: Bodley Head, 1956), 216.

and much of the zoo's archives were destroyed.²¹⁶ When peace was finally declared, there were only 91 specimens left in the Berlin Zoo.²¹⁷ The zoos of Germany had seen devastation unlike any zoos experienced before or since. The numbers speak for themselves in establishing how brutal the Second World War was to the zoo animals of Germany. In Berlin, only 91 specimens were left alive in the rubble of what was once one of the world's leading zoos. The numbers for the other zoos in Germany were just as devastating: in Frankfurt, only 50 animals lived; in Cologne, 22; in Vienna, 100 (out of 2,200 in 1939); in Hanover, 50; and in Karlsruhe, about 12.²¹⁸ The end of the war did not mean the end of the suffering for the people and the zoo animals of Germany. Food and fuel shortages greatly affected the rebuilding of many German zoos, as well as occupation. Many of the animals that survived the carnage would later be shipped off to conquering lands as what was perceived by some Germans to be spoils of war.

The Hamburg Zoo and the Hagenbeck family survived the war, though with much loss. In the 1943 bombing of Hamburg, over 400 of their prized animals were killed in a most grisly manner. By 1946, the Hagenbecks were still operating and were, according to them, managing to survive the dire food shortage affecting post-war Germany. In 1946, the Hagenbecks already feared the loss of their animals to the Allies. The New York Times reported, "Many of the younger animals were sent to Sweden, where they are still touring as a circus, and the Hagenbeck family is wondering whether

²¹⁶ Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 107.

²¹⁷ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 129.

²¹⁸ Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 108.

they will ever come back or whether they will be taken over by the Allies is reparations.”²¹⁹ A year later, this fear became a reality for the Hagenbecks. The animals that were sent to Sweden were seized by the Swedish government and then sold to Ringling and Barnum and Bailey circus of America. In 1947, the British steamer *Starling* sailed from Hamburg carrying “a wild Mongolian horse (one of the few wild horses in captivity), a zebra, four ostriches, 10 flamingoes, 12 cranes, 4 kangaroos and an assortment of ducks, geese and swans,” all of the animals once the property of the Hagenbeck family. The animals were sent to the London Zoo on the orders of the British military government. According to Carl Hagenbeck, the animals were taken due to the “shortage of foodstuff.” He also stated, “The animals will be away for three years, that is a long time in an animal’s life, and some of these are no longer young, so I do not know how many I will see again.”²²⁰ The loss of the animals to the British was significant due to the affection that the Hagenbecks had shown toward their animals and also because it was their source of livelihood.

On the surface, the transmission of animals from German to British zoos could be seen as a humanitarian effort to relieve some of the stress due to the food shortage. But it can be argued that British zoos really needed the German animals for their own zoos, which faced heavy loss due to paranoia at the onset of war and the freeze on wartime animal procurement. After negotiations lasting several months, the Control Commission of the British zone in Germany in 1947 began sending animals to the United Kingdom.

²¹⁹ “Famous Hamburg Zoo Lost Heavily in Raids; Main Problem Now is Restocking and Food,” *New York Times*, June, 17 1946.

²²⁰ “London Gets Hagenbeck’s Zoo Stock,” *Washington Post*, June 8, 1947.

The *Times* reported that the animals were on loan for three years, after which the German good shortage should have ended. But it continued to state, “Alternative arrangements have been made which provide for purchase or exchange to the same value at the end of the period.” In other words, Carl Hagenbeck’s fear of never seeing his animals again was a very real possibility. The first shipment of animals out of Germany were from Hanover and consisted of “a young Indian elephant (born in Germany in 1944), a pair of young hippos, two Chapman zebra mares, a female Prejvalski wild horse, a polar bear, and some small mammals and birds.” The *Times* continued to elaborate on the need of animals for British zoo: “The most welcome arrivals will be the hippos, for the zoo has been without these animals since 1943, except for three specimens of the pygmy race, which are much less spectacular than their giant cousins.”²²¹

The occupation forces did not just steal zoo animals to be shipped back to their lands as the ancient Romans and the armies of Napoleon had done. They also made great efforts to help the animals in the aftermath of war. The *New York Times* reported in 1945, “Arrangements have been made to feed the circus animals. Trained animals that could not do any war work and so went hungry are now being fed properly. Performing horses that were useless for hauling supply wagons for the Germany Army and took fright at battle explosions are now thriving. In other words, they are being rehabilitated.”²²² The food conditions in post-war Germany were so bad that many resorted to eating animals that died at the zoo. In 1947, Siam, the Berlin Zoo’s 30-year-

²²¹ “Animals for the Zoo from Germany,” *Times*, April 2, 1947.

²²² James MacDonald, “Circus Will Reopen This Week at Hamburg, But German Will Be Barred from Shows,” *New York Times*, June 11, 1945.

old elephant, died of a heart attack.²²³ It was said that Siam was the last elephant left at the Berlin Zoo, even though the *New York Times* published an article in 1946 referring to the last elephant as Jumbo (Jumbo could also have been a generic name given to the elephant in the article).²²⁴ In 1948, a zoo attendant was brought into German court charged with selling parts of Siam. The zookeeper was arrested for selling a twenty-pound slice of Siam for the excessive price of 400 marks, which was the equivalent of \$40 in 1948.²²⁵ This incident shows that even after the war, zoo animals were still being victimized.

Rebuilding the zoos of Germany was a major struggle due to occupations and blockades, but by 1949, the process was underway. By 1956, the Berlin Zoo emerged as a modern zoo with breeding programs of rare species. While today the Berlin Zoo is an important zoo housing many rare species, it still does not compare to the sheer numbers that were once there during its pre-war era.²²⁶

The zoos of Germany have played an important role to its people. In the pre-war years when most Germans were fascinated with nature, families would go to their local zoos to be a part of the natural world. In times of war, the German zoos remained open as a refuge to people fleeing the drudgery of the war. In April of 1946, a year after Hitler committed suicide in his bunker and the fires had been extinguished, the German people emerged from the shadow of death and marched through the rubble-filled streets in an

²²³ "Gone to Peanut Heaven," *Washington Post*, March 8, 1947.

²²⁴ "Berlin Has Parade In Midst of Rubble," *New York Times*, April 22, 1946.

²²⁵ "Berlin Zoo Man Under Charges," *New York Times*, February 8, 1948.

²²⁶ Harro Strehlow, "Zoological Gardens of Western Europe," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisling (London: CRC Press, 2001), 95.

Easter parade. But more importantly, the remnants of families came together and went to zoos. Children, many of whom born under the specter of death and war, took with them potato peels and any other precious scraps they could muster to feed to the animals. There were no peanuts or candy for the zoo animals or the children, but there was once again admiration from one living being to another.²²⁷

²²⁷ "Berlin Has Parade In Midst of Rubble," *New York Times*, April 22, 1946.

Japan: An Elephant Starved and an American Displayed

A world away, Germany's Axis ally Japan was heavily involved in a war with its zoo animals as its unwitting victims. Years before World War II, the Japanese war machine had been at work conquering the lands of Asia, expanding its Empire. As Japan conquered other nations, they also conquered their zoos. Like the case in the European nations during the Second World War the zoos that were ruled under the Japanese Empire faced enormous struggles. There were severe shortages of food (for both human employees and animals), lack of staff, and the constant threat of air raids.²²⁸ Like the London Zoo and Berlin Zoo, zoos in Japan also resorted to drastic measures in regard to their animal inhabitants. With every passing year of the war, the death toll of zoo animals kept increasing until it reached its peak in 1944 with 977 animals killed -- by Japan's own hands.²²⁹

The creation of zoos in Japan began in the same relative timeframe as their counterparts in Europe. Modern zoos began in Japan with the Meiji Restoration of 1868.²³⁰ Tokyo's Ueno Zoo was established in 1882 as part of the National Museum of Natural History. According to Mayumi Itoh, "The Japanese came to perceive zoos as amusement parks rather than as facilities for promoting education and the scientific study of animals, as well as for breeding animals for the preservation of species."²³¹ This

²²⁸ Ken Kawata, "Zoological Gardens of Japn," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kisting (London: CRC Press, 2001), 298.

²²⁹ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 55.

²³⁰ *Ibid*, 15.

²³¹ *Ibid*, 18.

thinking is most likely the paramount reason for the Japanese government eventually giving a kill order for the zoo animals as expendable. John M. Kinder stated:

In the eyes of the government officials, the slaughter of the Ueno Zoo's animals was a necessary measure to prevent the beasts from rampaging through the imperial capital in the aftermath of an Allied attack. However, as Frederick S. Litten has shown, the animals' deaths also served as a propagandistic purpose, demonstrating the need to sacrifice, even to point of martyrdom, in the face of impending national threats.²³²

Whether the animals served as martyrs for the cause of a global empire, the general safety for the public, or for the preservation of dwindling resources as a result from a protracted war, there were many possible reasons for why the Japanese government saw their zoo animals as expendable. Regardless of the reasoning, the result was the deaths of hundreds of animals. At the end of the war, there remained only five living elephants in the whole of Japan.

One of the elephants that were killed on order of the Japanese government was an Indian elephant by the name of John. John's death order was issued on August 11, 1943.²³³ By August 16, the government and zoo's heads devised a plan on how to kill John and the other animals at the Ueno Zoo that were deemed superfluous. They first gave an order to the zookeepers to stop feeding the animals. Then when the animals had gone days without eating and were on the brink of starvation, they would present the animals with poisoned food. If this method did not work, they had two backup methods -- strangulation and spearing. In today's ideals of animal treatment, all of these methods

²³² John Kinder, "Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers," in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 59.

²³³ Mayumi Itoh, *Japanese Wartime Zoo Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 41.

would have been cruel and painful deaths. Unfortunately for John, his death was even more inhumane. After he was left to starve, he was served his favorite food, sweet buns, but sensing something was wrong, he forwent his favorite food, which had been injected with cyanide. The zoo then attempted to inject John with strychnine nitrate, but the horse needle could not puncture his thick dermis. They did not want to use a gun to kill John, supposedly to save the image of the zoo; instead they cut off all food and water to the elephant. It took 17 long, suffering days for John to die. After his death, his enclosure was used to house 150 coffins that the government had on standby in case of air raid deaths. Many other animals died tragic deaths. A Siberian brown bear writhed and convulsed in agony for twenty-two minutes after she had eaten poisoned sweet potatoes.²³⁴ A lioness named Katherina had one bite of poisoned horsemeat, and that was all that was needed. The poison worked its way through her body, and like the brown bear, she convulsed with unimaginable pain. In a desperate attempt to shorten her pain, the zoo keepers resorted to plan C and thrust a spear into her heart. It had taken the lioness an hour and thirty-seven minutes to die.²³⁵ There was also the instance of an American bison being clubbed to death with a hammer and pickaxe.²³⁶ While the suffering of the innocent animals is obvious, the suffering that the zookeepers were going through should also be acknowledged. The majority must have taken jobs as zookeepers for their love of animals, and then to be in the position to have to kill healthy animals that they had tended to would be unthinkable.

²³⁴ Ibid, 43-44.

²³⁵ Ibid, 48.

²³⁶ John Kinder, "Zoo Animals and Modern War: Captive Casualties, Patriotic Citizens, and Good Soldiers," in *Animals and War: Studies of Europe and North America*, ed. Ryan Hediger (Boston: Brill, 2013), 59.

During the duration of the Second World War, there were several occasions when zoos were used to hold humans. There was the example of the alleged holding of Americans in zoos in France at the beginning of the war. Then there was the case with the Warsaw Zoo being used by the Zabinskis to hide over 300 Jews from the Nazis. In all of these cases, one can easily draw a parallel about the breakdown of humanity when humans are being kept as though they were animals. This is true in the case of an American POW who was shot down in Japan. On January 27, 1945, Raymond “Hap” Halloran’s plane caught fire over Japan, and he bailed out and was quickly captured after landing. In April 1945, he was taken from his cell. Halloran recalled, “They told me to take my shoes, which meant it was my final day.” Instead of being executed as he feared, he was taken to Tokyo’s Ueno Zoo. At Ueno Zoo, Halloran was displayed naked in a tiger cage in an attempt by his Japanese captors to humiliate him. Halloran recalled the reactions of the Japanese spectators: “I thought I saw compassion (in the eyes of onlookers.) It was maybe because I wanted to see it. I needed somebody on my side to give a little hope.” The zoos of Japan were entrenched in propaganda, from the use of zoo animals to show morale among its people to degrading its captured enemies.²³⁷

In August 1945, two Japanese cities laid in waste, countless deaths, a humiliated nation, and zoos that were practically emptied were all that remained of the Japanese Empire. In addition to only 5 elephants remaining, the other remaining popular mammals consisted of 4 giraffes and one chimpanzee. The cages once filled with exotic

²³⁷ Jun Hongo, “War Trauma Leads to Efforts to Reconcile,” Japn Times, April 30, 2008, accessed March 5, 2015, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2008/04/30/reference/special-presentations/war-trauma-leads-to-efforts-to-reconcile/#.VRXNhTx0ytF>.

popular animals like lions and tigers now held domesticated farm animals. In the aftermath of war, an occupational force occupied a large majority of the zoo in Kyoto. Food shortages took their toll on the animals that had managed to survive the war. Osaka zoo's population plummeted from a pre-war 447 animals to just 99 a year after the war. The rebuilding process began for the zoos of Japan. In 1949, the Hogle Zoo in Salt Lake City contributed animals to the Ueno Zoo. While the initial shipment could be seen as unimpressive (four mud turtles and four box turtles), for a zoo in a nation that suffered such great loss it was still much welcomed. Later shipments to Japan from the Hogle Zoo included pumas, coyotes, striped skunks and macaws. The Ueno Zoo being without an elephant inspired the school children of Tokyo to take action. They wrote to Premier Nehru of India asking for an elephant for their zoo. In 1949, Nehru sent an elephant named Indira, after his daughter, to the children of Tokyo.²³⁸

²³⁸ Ken Kawata, "Zoological Gardens of Japn," in *Zoo and Aquarium History*, ed. Vernon Kislign (London: CRC Press, 2001), 300.

V

Conclusion:

“Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.”²³⁹

In September 2003, a U.S.-led coalition attempted to control and enforce order in newly-occupied Iraq. The nation was in the throes of chaos after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein’s protracted dictatorship. During this fragile time, an imprisoned Iraqi by the name of Mendouh was taunted by a group of intoxicated U.S. soldiers. When Mendouh retaliated against his aggressors, he was promptly shot and killed in his confinement. This event made headlines around the world, but it did not occur at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison — it happened at the Baghdad Zoo. Mendouh was one of the two Bengal tigers that lived in the zoo.²⁴⁰ The death of Mendouh is important; it displays that seven decades after World War II, there is still no safety for zoos and zoo animals during human conflict. It also reinforces the idea that zoo animals are a proxy for hatred felt towards other humans in wartime, just as they were during the Roman era.

In the past twenty-five years, there have been further examples of zoos suffering during human conflict. There are still a small number of people who take it upon themselves to rescue and care for the animals, risking their own lives in the process. But as in the past, the wants and concerns of animals too often fall by the wayside during war. One of the largest losses of life during the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait occurred at the

²³⁹ Proverbs 12:10 ESV

²⁴⁰ “Yanks Kill Baghdad Zoo Tiger,” *Daily Record*, September 22, 2003.

Kuwait Zoo. The wealthy nation became a battleground rife with oil well fires, and its zoo became the site of a massacre. As Iraqi forces took over, the 40 staff members at the Kuwait Zoo abandoned their posts, leaving an estimated 735 animals to fend for themselves. The animals — many caged — were faced with starvation, dehydration, and abuse from the invading forces. Some animals were sent to Baghdad as spoils of war. It is believed that nearly three-quarters of the edible species at the Kuwait Zoo, particularly antelope and deer, were killed and eaten by the Iraqi troops.²⁴¹ It is understandable that some animals were killed for food, but others were seemingly slaughtered out of malice. When the Iraqi forces were vanquished, one report stated: “Seven monkeys, five lions, three Syrian brown bears, two tigers, two water buffalo, a giraffe and hippo were all near death.” U.S. and British soldiers had to use landmine detectors to establish the location of bullets lodged in an elephant — one of the victims of the Iraqi forces.²⁴²

Not long after the invasion of Kuwait, the Balkan Peninsula was thrown into pandemonium with the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The entire area was at war as different ethnic groups vied for independence and control. Snipers and bombings took countless human lives, and in the mayhem the Sarajevo zoo became a symbol of the horrors taking place. In a New York Times article, John F. Burns reported on the terrible situation at the zoo in the midst of combat. Of the 100 animals once housed in the zoo, only one remained alive: a female black bear. The bear was suffering from severe malnutrition and was barely able to stand. The only food she received was from a few people who risked

²⁴¹ Michael Horsnell, “Saddam's Troops Kill Zoo Animals for Food,” *Times*, September 15, 1990.

²⁴² “Kuwait’s Animals Suffer in War’s Wake.” *Los Angeles Times*, March 24, 1991.

their lives, running through sniper fire, to bring her bits of bread and grass. One of the humans who provided her with her meager sustenance commented, “Many of us are dead and almost everybody is hungry, but I feel more sorry for the animals than for the people. People made this war, but the animals had nothing to do with it. They’re only victims.” The bear cage at the zoo once held four bears, but only one remained — along with the carcasses of the others that once lived. Burns describes the scene: “A putrid odor pervades the concrete building, and cage after cage is littered with the carcasses of lions, tigers, leopards and pumas. From the skeletal remains of some and the whole carcasses of others, it is clear that some died sooner than others, and that their surviving mates fed on the bodies before they, too, succumbed to hunger.” The animals in cages lasted longer than the giraffes, ponies, and buffalo, who were kept outdoors and exposed to gunfire. It is not certain if they were killed out of pity or for target practice. And it was not just a story of death for the animals at the Sarajevo zoo; a zookeeper was also killed by sniper fire while he tried to continue feeding the animals.²⁴³

In 1992, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan found itself in a vicious civil war. The violence was especially bad at the Kabul Zoo. The zookeepers abandoned their posts and the 400 animals there began to die of hunger. Fighters looted the zoo, taking deer, ducks, and any other edible animals they could find. The tigers, bears, and monkeys escaped the dinner table because they were considered haram, or “forbidden.” The symbol of the Kabul Zoo — and to some degree, Afghanistan — came from these events: Marjan the lion. Marjan arrived at the Kabul Zoo in the 1960s as a gift from Germany. At

²⁴³ John F. Burns. "In the Zoo's House of Horrors, One Pitiful Bear." *New York Times*, October 16, 1992.

the apex of the civil war in 1993, someone made the unwise decision to enter Marjan's cage and taunt him. Marjan attacked the antagonist, who would later succumb to his wounds. The following day, the brother of the antagonist sought revenge by throwing a grenade at the encaged lion. The blast caused Marjan to lose an eye and his teeth.²⁴⁴ The zoo was located only 12 miles from the front lines of the conflict. In 1998, a New York Times report labeled the Kabul Zoo a "zoo of horror." In addition to the injuries inflicted upon Marjan, a bear suffered a gunshot to the leg. The few remaining animals were in danger of freezing to death due to the lack of electricity and fuel. One of the remaining zookeepers was taken from his home and murdered. The zoo was also a favorite destination of Taliban soldiers on leave from the front lines. They would go to the zoo and throw snowballs at the animals.²⁴⁵ A decade later, when American forces liberated the city from the Taliban, they discovered Marjan still alive — but starving, dehydrated, and living in a filthy cage. When Marjan was rescued he still had shrapnel in his neck and jaw, and he was riddled with lice and mange.²⁴⁶ The day after Marjan's death, the Chinese government gave the Kabul Zoo a gift of two African lions — a more symbolic gesture than their usual panda bears, for a zoo with a tragic past. Today the story of Marjan is a parable for Afghani martyrdom. There is now a bronze statue of Marjan at the Kabul Zoo's entrance.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Frédéric Bobin. "Inside the Kabul Zoo: A Sign of Afghanistan's Future?" *Time*, July 4, 2011.

²⁴⁵ Stephen Grey. "Wounded Animals at Bar in Kabul's Zoo of Horror," *Times*, January 25, 1998.

²⁴⁶ Lawrence Anthony and Graham Spence, *Babylon's Ark: The Incredible Wartime Rescue of the Baghdad Zoo* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007), 15.

²⁴⁷ Frédéric Bobin. "Inside the Kabul Zoo: A Sign of Afghanistan's Future?" *Time*, July 4, 2011.

In 2003, South African wildlife conservationist Lawrence Anthony, along with associates from the Kuwait Zoo, was stalled at the Iraq border waiting to enter the war-torn nation. He and his companions told an American soldier why they sought entry into Iraq, and the soldier responded, “Man, people are shooting each other there. For real. Forget about animals. You’ve got to worry about your own sorry asses.”²⁴⁸ That sort of reasoning was the impetus behind Anthony’s mission to save the animals at the Baghdad Zoo. Anthony writes, “I knew nothing about Iraq and the politics of war. But what I did know was that in all human hostilities animals have suffered horrifically and often anonymously. Unable to flee or defend themselves, they either were slaughtered wholesale in the initial assaults or died agonizingly from thirst and hunger later, locked and desperate in their cages.”²⁴⁹ The zoo lay in ruin. During the war, an Iraqi artillery battery was built on the zoo grounds. This opened the zoo to attack by coalition forces and caused zookeepers to flee, which left the animals without any sort of care, including food and water.²⁵⁰ Although the zoo suffered grave damage in the battle, the most severe damage occurred due to looters. As in many other scenarios, the edible animals were killed, leaving behind only the dangerous animals that people with any sense knew to avoid. Even the lamp poles were toppled over and stripped of their copper wiring. By the time Anthony arrived at the zoo, the number of birds and mammals had been reduced

²⁴⁸ Lawrence Anthony with Graham Spence, *Babylon’s Ark: The Incredible Wartime Rescue of the Baghdad Zoo*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2007. 2.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 14-15.

²⁵⁰ “After the War.” *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 2003.

from 650 to 30.²⁵¹ Before Anthony brought food and supplies, the only morsels the zoo animals received were the small portions that American soldiers were permitted to feed them.²⁵² Following these efforts to ensure the well-being of the surviving animals came the senseless killing of Mendouh, the Bengal tiger, by drunken American soldiers. Mendouh may be seen to represent many Iraqis: people who were in dire need of salvation only to find death at the hands of their liberators. Again, this is a scenario that has occurred many times over, throughout the history of human conquest.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”²⁵³ To many individuals, this scripture passage about man’s dominance perfectly describes our relationship with animals. However, that verse came about during a time when animals were either wild or tame. Now, another category exists: zoo animals. Zoo animals are not the companion animals we love, interact with, and consider part of the family unit. And they do not exist in the wild; they are not in their natural habitat, free of human intervention, with full agency over their lives. Zoo animals are isolated from other species and completely dependent upon humans for their survival. They survive with little intervention other than the occasional human entering their manufactured environment to feed them. In essence, zoo animals exist purely in culture rather than in

²⁵¹ Lawrence Anthony with Graham Spence, *Babylon’s Ark: The Incredible Wartime Rescue of the Baghdad Zoo*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2007. 12.

²⁵² “After the War.” *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 2003.

²⁵³ Genesis 1:26 ESV

nature. Randy Malamud argues that zoos are “fundamentally related to imperialism, consumption, imprisonment, enslavement, sadism and voyeurism, and that captivity creates a perverted cultural representation of animals.”²⁵⁴ Animals are sentient creatures capable of the same emotions felt by human beings, although they display their feelings differently. Animals mourn, they feel joy, and — perhaps most of all — they feel fear. The same fear that human beings experience during times of conflict is also felt by animals, and perhaps to a greater degree, as they do not know the reasoning behind these conflicts. As late as 2014, stories of zoos suffering due to war continued. A zoo in Gaza reported that many of its animals were killed during a conflict between Israel and Hamas. The Israelis believed that there were rocket launchers located within the zoo. As in many past cases, this story was largely ignored, due to human suffering and loss of life.²⁵⁵ Although society and technology have evolved over the last 150 years, we have yet to reach a stage where we can resolve conflicts through means other than war. We still have wars, and we still have zoos, but we fail to protect imprisoned animals during war. Animals remain objects to be owned — our property — but in times of great strife, we so rarely take responsibility and protect the animals who are supposedly in our care.

²⁵⁴ Linda Kalof, *Looking at Animals in Human History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 153.

²⁵⁵ Frederik Pleitgen, “Gaza's Zoo Animals Caught in Crossfire of Israel-Hamas Conflict,” CNN, September 18, 2014, accessed March 8, 2015, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/08/18/world/meast/gaza-zoo-destroyed/>.

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