

## Captured French-African Soldiers (1940)

### Abstract

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Over 100,000 men from French West Africa served in Europe from 1939 to 1940. After German victories, Wehrmacht soldiers routinely separated captured French-African soldiers from their white counterparts and subjected them to unique abuses. Fueled by an intense racial propaganda campaign from home, Wehrmacht soldiers often verbally harassed African soldiers. In some cases, they physically abused them, shot them, or killed them with grenades. It is estimated that 3,000 French-African soldiers died between May and June 1940 alone, with the number totaling 10,000 in the years that followed. In Germany, this grotesque reality was often justified by lingering stories and propaganda about the violation of German women in the Rhineland by French-African soldiers after the end of World War I. France was continuously depicted as a state infused with degenerate African culture and interracial sexuality.

### Source

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Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum courtesy of Instytut Pamięci Narodowej.

Instytut Pamięci Narodowej

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