

## States of Confinement

Paris in the wake of the Revolution serves as a starting point for this journey into the Bastille Effect. Even while French architects were making plans to preserve of the Bastille as a monument to a fallen despot, the site was swiftly being demolished, due in large part to Pierre-François Palloy, who went by the self-appointed title “Patriote Palloy.” This well-connected entrepreneur had his fingerprints all over a newly formed cult of the Bastille, which would quickly emerge as a global symbol of liberated humanity. Debris from the site was carted away and circulated around Paris as popular souvenirs. Palloy proudly promoted and meticulously regulated the business behind remembrance, using masonry from the ruins to make medallions and authentic replicas in the shape of the Bastille (BnF, 2010; Schama, 1990). At the Museum of the National Archives (Hotel de Soubise) in Paris is a model of the Bastille made by Palloy dated 1790, formed from stone recovered from its ruins. That mesmerizing remnant speaks to a dual transformation: the masonry of the former prison has abandoned its use-value and acquired signifying-value: thus, its afterlife celebrates the triumph of the Revolution and the storming of the Bastille. Secured as it is in a plexiglass vitrine, the object is clearly something important for visitors to gaze at. At a higher level of cultural commentary, that finely crafted model represents a transition from the profane function of incarceration to the sacred current of liberty in the French Republic (see figure 3).

Going beyond such cultural transformations, this chapter considers the important role of the state in political imprisonment by drawing attention to the subjective nature of such confinement. Efforts to nail down precisely who is a political prisoner are difficult and often self-defeating. To provide some perspective on that predicament, I will be turning critical attention to the United States, South Africa, and France. Along the way, we will remain mindful of themes of ascent in terms of the high status of some prisoners relative to the low status of other convicts, who are subjected to degrading treatment as they descend into the profane. After that, I will offer select readings on political imprisonment that contend with the

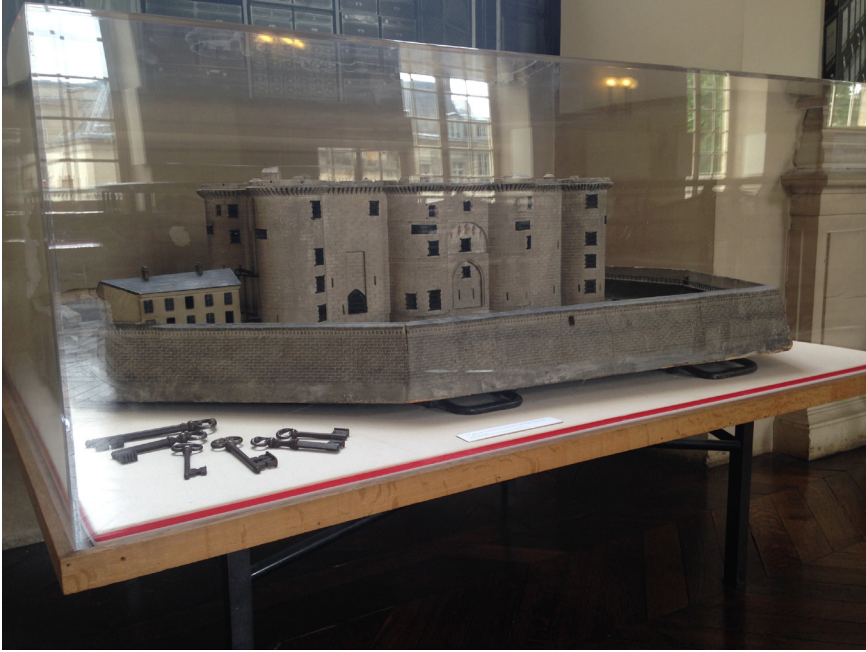


FIGURE 3. “The Bastille, a model by Palloy.” An original model (1790) of the Bastille made by Palloy with stone recovered from its ruins is on display at the Museum of the National Archives (Hôtel de Soubise) in Paris. *Maquette de la Bastille réalisée à partir d’une pierre de la forteresse par Palloy\*, 1790, Archives nationales, AE VI a 79.* © retrowelch 2022.

perennial struggle for justice against the misuse of state power. To provide context for that discussion, I will briefly summarize autobiographies of famous political prisoners alongside related writings on the Troubles in Northern Ireland and the “dirty wars” in the southern cone of Latin America.

#### THE STATUS OF POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT

Consider, if you will, the task of defining political imprisonment and determining who qualifies as a political prisoner. Compound the chore by expanding your audience to members of diverse ideological, religious, socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. The exercise is likely to be stalled by the polarizing nature of what constitutes political imprisonment and who qualifies as such a prisoner. The popular adage that one man’s freedom fighter is another man’s terrorist remains undiluted. Which side to take is very much a subjective decision, and that judgement depends on one’s point of view. A sociology of culture allows us to recognize that one’s point (or points) of view often rests on themes of soaring

ascent as well as spiraling descent (Smith, 1999). Some observers might regard a particular political prisoner as noble, heroic, and patriotic; others, as a criminal, a thug, or a subversive.

Let's situate the controversy over political imprisonment specifically in the United States. Historically, foreign visitors were quick to detect a particular point of view with respect to the politics of confinement. French writer Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* helped explain how Americans saw themselves in the 19th century. A Continental European, Tocqueville was surprised to realize there were no political prisoners in America. The long, well-guarded French tradition was to treat an elevated class of offenders better than common criminals; American authorities had opted for a different path. James Q. Whitman, in *Harsh Justice*, clarifies the cultural divide between America and Europe as encountered by Tocqueville. From the American perspective, "the idea of subjecting the tiny minority of honorable prisoners to the sort of cellular confinement seen in either the Auburn system or the Pennsylvania system was unacceptable and indeed almost unimaginable" (2003: 125).

Let's fast-forward to more contemporary times to test this theory of cultural relativity. In 1978, during an interview with a French journalist, Andrew Young, a prominent African-American and at the time the US Ambassador to the United Nations, said: "After all, in our prisons too, there are hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of people whom I would call political prisoners" (Young, 1978). Enter Lennox Hinds, author of *Illusions of Justice: Human Rights Violations in the United States*, who reminds us that Young's remarks "reverberated throughout the world like a verbal rocket. In this country, it precipitated emotions ranging from appreciation of his candor to moral outrage" (2019: v). Calls for Young's resignation led to an impeachment resolution introduced in the US House of Representatives. Congressman John Conyers injected himself into the controversy by insisting that anyone familiar with the historical experience of Blacks and minorities in the US should not be shocked by Young's comments, especially given the widespread government abuses that had taken place in response to political dissent in the 1960s and 1970s (Hinds, 2016, 2019; see also Goodell, 1973).

Let's look more closely at the US from the point of view of the international human rights community. Albie Sachs, who would rise to serve on the Constitutional Court of South Africa, reminisces about the day he discovered he was a terrorist. He recalls with some bemusement that while teaching law in England, he was invited to attend a conference at Yale University. When he applied for a US visa, he was told he was ineligible because he was a "terrorist." Apparently, the US Department of State had classified the African National Congress (ANC) as a terrorist organization, and its members—including Sachs—as terrorists. Terms such as terrorist and political prisoner are rarely set in stone, however, and Sachs was eventually permitted to attend the conference at Yale. "And so, I discovered I wasn't a terrorist, and yet the description resonated, and irritated"

(Sachs, 2007: 355). Continuing to reflect on the matter, he noted his involvement in an unsuccessful bid to persuade Amnesty International to adopt Nelson Mandela as a prisoner of conscience. “Today—oh, how they wish, how they wish, how they wish they had adopted him! But AI didn’t” (Sachs, 2007: 355–56). Amnesty International decided that because Mandela had planned violence against the state of South Africa, he did not meet the criteria of a prisoner of conscience. Sachs seems to confirm the theory of cultural relativity by pointing out Mandela’s predicament:

If his conscience had simply left him immobilized, sitting his house and doing nothing against apartheid, and he was picked up [arrested], then you could adopt him [as a prisoner of conscience]. But if his conscience led him to give up his career, break up his family, go underground, and take all the risks that he took—changing his name, his appearance, dedicating his life to bringing about change; if his conscience could tell him to do all that *and* risk his life physically by confronting the state that was denying him and his people their rights, then he doesn’t qualify. (2007: 356)

Returning to Sachs’s own predicament, he actually did qualify as a prisoner of conscience due to his detention under Ninety Day Law of South Africa. That law allowed the state to hold citizens for 90 days if it was suspected they might have knowledge of plans to overthrow the state. Accordingly, the state maintained the authority to order persons arrested and placed in solitary confinement without charge and without access to legal counsel. In the aftermath of apartheid, Sachs helped draft a new constitution that reversed the direction of state power. “No detention without trial” is now in that constitution, since as Sachs remembers, the practice of holding persons without access to the courts “was the weapon, the instrument that was used to pervert the whole of our criminal justice system” (2007: 359).

As for Mandela, the state would continue to dictate his status in South Africa as well in the US, but not without some twists and turns of cultural relativity. In 1964, Mandela was convicted of sabotage for targeting the state electrical grid, though no one was harmed in the operation. Mandela was imprisoned until 1990, when he was released at the age of 71. Four years later, he was elected President of South Africa. While he was imprisoned on Robben Island, the US had placed economic sanctions on the white minority government of South Africa for its policy of racial apartheid. However, in the 1980s, the US appeared to reverse its course by banning the ANC. Oddly, Mandela and other ANC officials appeared on the terror watch list even as President George Bush welcomed President Mandela to the White House in 1990. It wasn’t until 2008 that the ANC was finally removed from the list of terrorist organizations monitored by the US government. By then, Mandela was 90 years old, having stepped down from the presidency nine years prior. Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State in the George W. Bush administration, complained to Congress that her department was required to issue waivers for

ANC members to travel to the US. “This is a country with which we now have excellent relations, South Africa,” Rice added, “but it’s frankly a rather embarrassing matter that I still have to waive in my own counterpart, the foreign minister of South Africa, not to mention the great leader Nelson Mandela” (Windrem, 2013; see also Waxman, 2018; Mandela, 1994).

Making sense of this cultural relativity as it pertains to political imprisonment can be tricky, so let us turn once again to Whitman (2003) and his analysis of the divide between America and Europe. From the standpoint of comparative history dating back to the 18th century, the traditions of social hierarchy on the Continent stem from an “aristocratic element” in legal culture. By contrast, in America the absence of such elevated respect and dignity moves punishment toward a harsher and more degrading form of justice. To degrade someone is to reduce that person’s status to an inferior level, thus widening the gap between the high-status punishments in Europe and the low-status ones in the US. Whitman points out that in European law there is a drive toward a high-status egalitarianism that raises everyone’s social standing, not only for political dissenters but also for criminal offenders (see Elias, 2005). “Nothing of the kind has happened in the United States . . . and this reflects the fact that the history of social status in the American world is very different” (Whitman, 2003: 11).

From its early days, America embraced the norms of low-status penalties. According to Whitman, the historical reasons for that leveling down are complex; yet we can say here that the legacy of slavery looms large in the realm of incarceration, with racial minorities facing demeaning treatment. In sociological terms, the administration of justice in Europe embraces themes of ascent, whereas themes of descent are characteristic of the US. Acts of mercy are not uncommon in the American courts, but they are much more institutionalized under European law. To explain the cultural divide, Whitman revisits the role of history in Europe in regard to how it has shaped status hierarchy. He insists that France—and Germany—are much stronger states than the US as well as relatively autonomous, in the sense that “they are relatively free to intervene in civil society without losing political legitimacy . . . [and] are relatively immune to the vagaries of public opinion” (Whitman, 2003: 13–14).

High status, as pegged within a European social hierarchy, throws historical light onto political imprisonment. In medieval society, aristocrats defeated in battle risked being taken captive and held for ransom. As war booty, those prisoners added to the symbolism of royal victory. Their high status also ensured that while in captivity, they would be treated well, often within the protection of a fortress. Fortress confinement, as embodied most famously in the Bastille, would survive for centuries, with high-status prisoners—political dissenters, philosophers, literary figures—retaining their honor and enjoying privileged accommodations (BnF, 2010; Spierenburg, 1995). Their special treatment was rarely challenged because they weren’t *really* criminals. By the 1960s, “that high-status imprisonment [had]

been generalized to all in France. The French pattern of leveling-up in status runs from *aristocrats and the like; to political dissenters and debtors; to everybody*" (Whitman, 2003: 108). Hence, common criminals benefited by being identified with the "politicals," who were viewed as opponents of the state.

In 1960s Paris, upheaval against the Algerian war only fueled that shift toward leveling up, for when the French authorities resorted to the mass imprisonment of protesters, those protesters once behind bars expected better conditions in accordance to the old French tradition (Spire, 1991). As these events unfolded, Michel Foucault and like-minded activists pushed for even more sweeping prison reforms (Welch, 2011b, 2010a). Left-wing militants who opposed the colonial war in Algeria demanded "special treatment" as political prisoners. The French state capitulated, and soon after, laws were passed that extended a dignitary regime to prisoners nationwide. "For the old privileges of 'political prisoners' were at last extended to 'ordinary' confines of the 'droit commun.' In effect, one of the most radical demands of the 1960s was successfully realized in France, all prisoners came to be treated as political, as rebels against the established order" (Whitman, 2003: 130; see also Vimont, 1993, 1990). Of course, depending on one's point of view, those developments speak to themes of ascent in which humanity brings an end to the degrading treatment of *all* prisoners, regardless of their status. Regrettably, though, as this book will reveal, political prisoners as well as civilians have been swept into detention, with the state exercising brutal forms of power that are not limited to mistreatment, torture, and death. Themes of descent with all its degrading forces are the subject of deep reflection in this book. To widen our understanding of those matters, let us delve into the memoirs and other writings that contemplate political imprisonment.

#### READING THOUGHTS ON POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT

The journey along which we reflect on the transformation of sites and symbols of political imprisonment benefits from my previous work that recognizes how former prisons in their afterlives have reemerged as storytelling institutions, emitting signifying-value (Welch, 2012, 2013, 2015). Indeed, the Bastille Effect is animated by stories, legends, and tales that rely on themes of ascent as well as descent to express the duality of political confinement. From that perspective, this book is a book about stories and the role institutions play in telling those stories. When we absorb those stories, our exploration—however vicarious—becomes all the more meaningful. In this section, we turn to some of the literature, which I have grouped into three areas specific to this project: autobiographies, the Troubles in Northern Ireland, and the last dictatorships in the southern cone of Latin America.

Memoirs figure prominently in the literature on political imprisonment. But these works create an unavoidable paradox for readers. Stories of political

confinement are enthralling; we want to know what these prisoners think of their personal ordeals. Yet themes of ascent—of survival, for example—are routinely accompanied by those of descent, including suffering. Readers find their own point of view shaped by both. Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994) is one of the most renowned autobiographies of a political prisoner, and rightly so. Its sweeping narrative begins with his early childhood under apartheid, then tracks his transformation into a freedom fighter. The arc of the story extends to reconciliation, or what Mandela refers to as "talking to the enemy." In between these stages of development are moving passages that allow readers to appreciate the polarity between justice and injustice. Life as a political prisoner serves as Mandela's main literary device for sharing his insights. When he was processed at the notorious Robben Island prison, he was assigned the number "466/64," indicating that he was the 466th prisoner admitted in the year 1964, and ordered to strip naked. The ritual reminds readers that stripping is just one of the "indignities of prison life" (1994: 334). Foucault (1979) theorizes that the minute dispensation of punishments down to the smallest detail amounts to a micro-economy of perpetual penalty. At Robben Island, prison uniforms both illustrated and reflected apartheid's stringent regulations. Whites and Asians were issued long pants. By contrast, Black prisoners were given short pants. Mandela writes that being assigned shorts was intended to instruct Africans that "we were 'boys'" at least from the point of view of the guards. This might sound trivial, relative to the systemic inhumanity faced by political prisoners at Robben Island, yet it was consistent with the degrading treatment that saturated the entire apartheid system of control.

Angela Davis begins her autobiography with her childhood in a time of violent segregation. Through those early experiences she developed a consciousness critical of the establishment. The book blends a literary style with edgier rhetoric that inspires an activist audience. Davis's imprisonment followed by her trial is remembered in dramatic prose. Among her memories as a prisoner is the enormous outpouring of support, including a letter from James Baldwin that reads:

Some of us, white and black, know how great a price has already been paid to bring into existence a new consciousness, a new people, an unprecedented nation. If we know, and do nothing, we are worse than the murderers hired in our name. If we know, then we must fight for your life as though it were our own—which it is—and render impassible with our bodies the corridor to the gas chamber. For, if they take you in the morning, they will be coming for us that night. (in Davis, 2016a: 306)

Davis went on to form a collective that published a book chronicling the stories of other political prisoners. After Baldwin, the anthology is titled *If They Come in the Morning* (Davis, 1971). After her famous victory in court, Davis was launched onto an international stage. With forces of ascent, Davis continues to speak passionately about justice and equality (2016b). In 2021, a major exhibition, *Angela Davis—Seize the Time*, began its tour. The retrospective invites viewers "to re-imagine the construction of the image of Davis as a political icon of the left, symbol of Black





FIGURE 4. “Angela Davis Poster in Paris.” A vintage poster of Angela Davis decorates a café in Paris. The caption borrows from a quote in Davis’s autobiography: “Walls turned sideways are bridges” (2016a: 347). © retrowelch 2022.

radical resistance, female empowerment, and a threat to the white patriarchal status quo” (Sokolowski, 2019). The materials on display document the campaign to “Free Angela and All Political Prisoners” as well as Davis’s own writings and actions related to freedom, oppression, feminisms, and prison abolition (Davis, 2016c; see figure 4).



The global war on terror, initiated by the US government, has generated streams of human rights abuses relevant to a discussion of political imprisonment (Welch, 2006, 2009a). In *Guantanamo Diary*, Mohamedou Ould Slahi delivers a tale of misery so compelling that it seems like a work of fiction. It is not. The heavily redacted journal chronicles his personal plight through what spy novelist John Le Carré calls “a vision of hell, beyond Kafka: a perpetual torture prescribed by the mad doctors of Washington” (Slahi, 2015: back cover). After more than 14 years of torture and confinement without charge, and even after finding relief in the US federal courts, Slahi faced an uncertain future that is still difficult to comprehend. Slahi spent his time in solitary confinement learning English well enough to write a book-length diary. The bizarre circumstances of Slahi’s confinement offer an opportunity to theorize a little on state power—and as we shall see, those lessons are applicable to similar problems in Northern Ireland and the southern cone of Latin America (see Fletcher and Stover, 2009).

In her critique of socio-legal transformations in a post-9/11 world, Judith Butler theorizes that the war on terror is being administered by newly created petty sovereigns who are mobilized by tactics of power they do not fully control. In the process, they are granted the power to render unilateral decisions, “accountable to no law and without any legitimate authority,” becoming “a ‘rogue’ power par excellence” (2004: 56). That “rogue” power determines the process of classifying certain persons as high-value detainees and unlawful enemy combatants. It is important to emphasize that those decisions take place in the context of a “state of emergency” that has set the conditions for removing accountability from the field of operations. The “emergency” ushers in rules (governmentality) that replace laws (juridical), thus reinstating sovereign power that distributes managerial authority even as it enjoys full and unreviewable discretion. As a result, pseudo-institutions are produced for the administration of the war on terror, most notably “a law that is not a law, a court that is not a court, a process that is not a process” (2004: 62; see also Welch, 2008, 2010b, 2014, 2016b).

Turning attention to the ways in which political prisoners reflect on the state of confinement in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, we find Bobby Sands. In his *Writings from Prison*, Sands issues short stories and uplifting poetry to condemn the historical injustice of British colonialism in Ireland. Challenging the British state that has labeled him a criminal and a terrorist, Sands replies: “I am a political prisoner. I am a political prisoner because I am a casualty of a perennial war that is being fought between the oppressed Irish people and an alien, oppressive, unwanted regime that refuses to withdraw from our land” (Sands, 1998: 219). His readers already anticipate his death as a hunger striker, which makes the collection of entries all the more meaningful to tacticians of resistance. Sands’s memoir paves the way for other first-hand accounts of political prisoners in Northern Ireland, including *Cage Eleven* (Adams, 1997) and *Nor Meekly Serve My Time: The H Block Struggle (1976–1981)* (Campbell, McKeown, and O’Hagan, 1994). Their narratives

are often descriptive in style and content, offering a unified vision for a peaceful Ireland—a sentiment that continues to resonate.

Setting aside memoirs, the scholarship on the Troubles in Northern Ireland is extensive. As guideposts for this project, we turn to some selected books that prompt us to think along the lines of concepts and theory as well as processes of social and cultural transformation. Feldman's *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* is a daring exercise in urban fieldwork, offering readers a terrifying look at the Troubles in real time. His study consists of confidential interviews in 1985 and 1986, a time when Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries were operating under high alert. Feldman, an anthropologist, deciphers political violence and political imprisonment through representations of the body as text. In helping us develop a critical understanding of the Troubles, he describes his work as “an ethnography of surfaces—those sites, stages, and templates upon which history is constructed as a cultural object” (1991: 2).

In the massive *Paramilitary Imprisonment in Northern Ireland: Resistance, Management, and Release* (2001), Kieran McEvoy complements his research with a keen knowledge of the Troubles. With his focus on various activities behind prison walls, McEvoy recognizes that those dynamics fueled a larger political conflict across Northern Ireland. Correspondingly, the infamous Maze prison provides a site of resistance that is not unlike the legacy of the Bastille (see Wylie, 2004). With even more emphasis on culture, Laura McAtackney's *An Archaeology of the Troubles: The Dark Heritage of Long Kesh/Maze Prison* (2014) gravitates toward the significance of afterlife and how even (partly) demolished institutions resonate with meaning. Much as happened with the Bastille, remnants of the Maze have been dispersed to heritage sites elsewhere (see Welch 2016c). For broadening our point(s) of view of the Troubles, the investigative journalism of Peter Taylor is indispensable. Years of exhaustive coverage have produced a trilogy of books exploring each side of the low-level war. Beginning with *Provos: The IRA and Sinn Féin* (1997), followed by *Loyalists: War and Peace in Northern Ireland* (1999) and then *Brits: The War against the IRA* (2001), Taylor places the conflict into an international forum for serious reflection (see also Beresford, 1987).

Those writings on the Troubles in Northern Ireland provide some basis for understanding the southern cone of Latin America, where political violence ravaged the region around the same time (the 1970s through the 1990s). *The Condor Years* (Dinges, 2004) and *The Pinochet File* (Kornbluh, 2013) demonstrate the importance of cross-national journalism conducted by writers who have devoted their careers to investigating controversies in Latin America. Dinges, himself targeted, abducted, and detained at the notorious Villa Grimaldi (Santiago), explores the underground history of Operation Condor and role played in it by US intelligence agencies. In the course of his work, he traces vectors of accountability in cases of crimes against humanity. *The Pinochet File* exposes the dictatorship in Chile as well as the clandestine Operation Condor, an illustration of

“State-Sponsored International Terrorism.” From declassified documents held in US archives, Kornbluh details Pinochet’s criminal activity, including his implication in a scandal in which he funneled more than \$26 million to a US bank. Naomi Roht-Arriaza’s *The Pinochet Effect: Transnational Justice in Age of Human Rights* (2005) chronicles the enduring legacy of the 1998 arrest of Pinochet in London that sent shock waves through the international community.

Conceptualizing state violence and political imprisonment in the context of Latin America’s southern cone, this project closely adheres to the lessons drawn from *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina* (D. Taylor, 1997) and *Accounting for Violence: The Memory Market in Latin America* (Bilbija and Payne, 2011). Those two books offer a critique of gender, nationalism, and memory. Taylor keeps her focus on the last dictatorship in Argentina, underscoring the cultural importance of hypermasculinity vis-à-vis feminism. *Disappearing Acts*’s use of the spectacle as an organizing principle is reconfigured herein by a decidedly Goffman-esque perspective on performance. *Accounting for Violence* examines the marketing of memory in a Latin America torn by mass violence. The volume serves as an important safeguard for memory studies by unveiling a range of motives for remembering as well as forgetting. In the later chapters of this book, discussion will similarly turn to the performance of memory not only in post-Condor cities but also in Belfast, where sites and symbols of the Troubles have been transformed.

A final grouping of works—by Marguerite Feitlowitz, Rebekah Park, and Susana Draper—establish a foundation for witnessing and interpreting discourse, sited-ness, and the afterlives of former detention centers in the Southern Cone. *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (1998) is a classic work on the torture carried out by state operatives as explained by Feitlowitz, who captures the surreal vocabulary concealing human rights atrocities. Park, in *The Reappeared: Argentine Former Political Prisoners* (2014), tracks the pathways from political imprisonment back into free society, where “life after prison still feels like imprisonment” (2014: 108). *Afterlives of Confinement: Spatial Transitions in Postdictatorship Latin America*, by Draper, strongly shapes our comprehension of the spatial transitions of former penal sites once used by military and later repurposed for memorialization. As we transit through post-Condor cities, we will also remain mindful of Jacobo Timerman’s *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* ([1981]1998). That powerful memoir benefits from the flair of a seasoned journalist, who details his horrific ordeal under the last dictatorship in Argentina. The book remains a benchmark in the human rights literature, appealing to a global audience (see Almada, 1993; Feierstein, 2014). This book does not attempt to compete with these impressive autobiographies and scholarly works. Rather, it absorbs their insights into a sociological context for cultural inspection of transformed sites of political imprisonment (see Newburn and Sparks, 2004).

## RESTATING THE BASTILLE EFFECT

Early in this chapter, we reflected on how Patriote Palloy created a cult of the Bastille so that it became a broader metaphor for liberated humanity. In doing so, he transformed the use-value of the infamous site into enduring signifying-value. As an example of the Bastille Effect by which the former prison shed its profane past and acquire sacred status, a stone from the prison's foundation was carved into a bust of Mirabeau, a celebrated ex-prisoner. The statue was honored at Mirabeau's historic funeral in 1791, thus gaining even greater distinction. In a similar ritual of transformation, a sword was bestowed on Lafayette made with four bolts from the Bastille. Lafayette, in turn, presented George Washington with one of 27 keys to the Bastille as a gesture of revolutionary goodwill. Demand for Palloy's mementos continued to mount outside of France; New York's Society of St. Tammany requested one. On site, former guards—converted Patriots—offered visitors graphic accounts of the torment and torture of legendary prisoners once held there. With the power of place, performances surrounding the former prison struck a delicate balance between the horror of imprisonment and the euphoria of its demise. On the first anniversary of the Bastille's fall, hundreds of thousands of provincial guardsmen made a pilgrimage to its grounds. Perhaps more memorable, July 14th would be commemorated as Bastille Day, which continues to be celebrated around the world (BnF, 2010; Fournel, 1892; Schama, 1990).

While offering added thoughts on cultural transformations and the afterlives of the Bastille, this chapter has addressed the subjective underpinnings of political confinement, especially given the state's complex role in determining—or denying—political status. After outlining lessons in the US, South Africa, and France, it turned its attention to controversies in other societies where the degrading treatment of political prisoners demonstrated the degree to which the state undermined justice. Along the way, human rights campaigns gathered leverage, prompting social and democratic reforms. In the chapters to follow, greater interest is focused on those developments in Northern Ireland and the southern cone of Latin America. As we shall see, the sites and symbols of political imprisonment, as embodied in sacred memorials, articulate those crucial shifts in history.