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# Occupation during the War

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**After an initial wave of interest in 1914 and the immediate post-war period, international historiography long neglected the wartime occupation of territories inhabited by large civilian populations. Recently, new research has focused on the populations' fates and occupation practices. Two interpretive models have been proposed: the first emphasizes the total character of war, involving civilians and combatants equally; the second stresses continuities between Germany's and Austria-Hungary's occupation policies during the First World War with the successive Nazi "New European Order." However, a wide range of exceptions in the single cases of occupation weakens the validity of general explanatory models.**

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# Introduction

The first wave of interest in military occupations began in 1914, as accusations and justifications regarding German [atrocities](#) during the invasion of [Belgium](#) spread internationally.<sup>[1]</sup> First-hand documents such as letters, [diaries](#) and reports by Belgian, French and foreign authors,<sup>[2]</sup> with their documentary character, helped legitimise them in the public's eyes. Politicians, intellectuals, the daily press and the public all took part in the occupation- and German crime-centred debate, which focused on two striking cases: [Belgium and northeast France](#). Less attention was aroused over the situation in [the Balkans](#), where enquiries by criminologist [Rodolphe A. Reiss \(1875-1929\)](#) remained on the edge of public debate.<sup>[3]</sup> In general, the topic of military occupation remained confined to records offices and think tanks studying [war aims](#).

The topic was taken up again in the 1960s with [Fritz Fischer's \(1908-1999\)](#) pioneering studies on [German war aims](#),<sup>[4]</sup> which brought to light the Reich's annexionist goals, linking them with the national socialist regime's expansionist policies, or according to Immanuel Geiss, the "preliminary stage of the national-socialist policies of the vital space."<sup>[5]</sup> Fischer's studies opened the way for new research on continuities in German history. However, neither Fischer nor his followers were interested in analysing what these projects meant for the populations in the occupied territories. There was even greater caution in addressing these topics in [Austrian historiography](#).<sup>[6]</sup>

Immediately after 1918, attention focused on the damages suffered. [Italy](#) is an emblematic case. The journalist [Ugo Ojetti \(1871-1946\)](#) proposed the creation of an inquiry commission "on the violations of people's rights" to collect compensation requests for damages, which Italy intended to give the Central Powers during the peace conference. The last volume of this documentation was devoted to the territories occupied after [Caporetto](#).<sup>[7]</sup> By the end of November 1918 important French intellectuals, led by [Maurice Barrès \(1862-1923\)](#), were already preparing dossiers to document invasion-related damages to cultural patrimony in Belgium and [France](#).<sup>[8]</sup> At the [Paris Peace Conference](#), American Secretary of State [Robert Lansing \(1864-1928\)](#) presided over a war crimes commission, which produced only long-term effects, offering prompts for the human rights debates at the end of World War Two.<sup>[9]</sup> One reason for the winners' reticence was that the commission had highlighted the dramatic consequences of the [naval blockade](#) on the supply of goods to occupied populations.

Much space was devoted to occupation in the 1924 *Social and Economic History of the First World War*, edited by James Shotwell and supported by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Belgium and France were given most weight.<sup>[10]</sup> However, studies on the Austro-Hungarian,<sup>[11]</sup> Yugoslavian and Romanian<sup>[12]</sup> occupations were also published in the collection. A long silence followed in the historiography, dominated instead by military and political topics.

More recently, new studies in France, Austria, Germany and Italy<sup>[13]</sup> have brought the civilians, or the “forgotten”,<sup>[14]</sup> to the centre of attention. This new angle makes it seem that the violence in 1914-1918 centred mostly on civilians, oppressed by new violent policies, a warning sign of what would happen on a larger scale two decades later. The belligerent powers, in particular the Central Powers, were said to have organised forms of mass exploitation and violence. Among the civilians that suffered, together with refugees and prisoners of war,<sup>[15]</sup> the inhabitants of occupied territories, the “laboratory mice”,<sup>[16]</sup> stand out. A connection has been suggested with German and Soviet Union action in 1939-1945. Annette Becker wrote that “even if the measures of deportation and forced labour did not all result in mass massacres, they show that the war against the criminals is extremely violent.”<sup>[17]</sup> Similarities such as expansionist plans, aims to colonise and intensive economic exploitation, but also “a new criminal quality” were highlighted in a 2001 conference on occupation.<sup>[18]</sup>

## Occupation: General Features and Case Studies

The studies on single cases of occupation provide essentials for a more articulated history of the war. Military occupations were governed by international legislation on war, with limitations which were mostly ignored.<sup>[19]</sup> Starting with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, they were generally organized via a “General Government”: a military-run administration with civilian bureaucratic personnel and local administrative support. During the First World War, only the Central Powers occupied territories inhabited by civilians, with the exception of the Russian army, which initially occupied small parts of German and Austrian territory. The occupations had two main goals. The first was to guarantee public order behind the frontline and thereby eliminate the obstruction of military operations, and to curtail espionage and the so-called franc-tireurs (free shooters).<sup>[20]</sup> These armed groups, made up of civilians and disbanded soldiers, had become a nightmare for the Germans. Similar fears against armed civilians and the *Komitadji* militias conditioned the Austro-Hungarian army’s behaviour during the brutal war against Serbia.<sup>[21]</sup> The second goal was to guarantee economic, productive and commercial activities using all measures necessary so as to a) supply the troops and b) maintain acceptable standards of living for the population. In this way, the maintenance of troops and civilians in the occupied territories would not burden the home economy. Finally, the occupied territories had to supply the homeland with food, raw materials and workforce, which were very scarce, particularly in Germany.

In order to realise these goals, the occupying powers tried to regulate relations with the occupied populations. In many cases they sent officials and administrators who, because of their experience and linguistic knowledge, were able to communicate with locals, for example in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.<sup>[22]</sup> Maintaining order was crucial for both the occupiers and the occupied, ensuring that life continued as usual.

Various factors influenced this model in individual cases, such as a territory's economic value or the ruling class' willingness to collaborate with the occupier and oversee general affairs. The time factor was also significant: occupations in the first phase of the war had more time to develop. In territories occupied in the final phase (Friuli and eastern Venetia, Ukraine), it was difficult to implement a well-structured policy. In general, the military tended to give way to civilian structures. However, this tendency was subject to variations. In any case, political-military goals were prioritised. The war aims were also varied. The occupying power did not always have a clear plan how to exploit the occupied territory or what to do with it at the war's end. A tendency to promote modernisation was seen both in [Ober Ost](#) (*Oberbefehlshaber der gesamten deutschen Streitkräfte im Osten*, or Supreme commander of the German troops in the East) and in the Balkan territories occupied by Austria-Hungary. Austro-Hungarian authorities felt particularly responsible for the modernisation of [Albania](#), considered a "companion" country.<sup>[23]</sup> The final key factor was the number of occupiers: one, or in [Romania's](#) case, two or three Central Empires. Jurisdiction conflicts were commonplace, complicating the implementation of effective forms of occupation. Intertwining occupation and internal policies further complicated matters. The deterioration in the treatment of the French and Belgian populations after 1917 was connected to the need to justify supply cuts for inhabitants of the Central Empires. How was it possible to justify that rations in [Brussels](#) were higher than in Berlin?

Occupation apparatuses sought to cover all aspects of collective life, trying to maintain pre-existing bureaucracy. However, it had to reckon with cogent factors: time, priorities dictated by home policies (for example, opposing German and Austro-Hungarian aims regarding rebuilding the Polish state), the necessity to supply the military apparatus deployed in occupied territory, war demands. The forms of self-government introduced in these territories, which reduced men and resources and reinforced trust in the occupier, could only be partially realised either because the existing ruling class had escaped (Friuli-Veneto) or because it was difficult to form a new one (Albania) or, lastly, because self-government impeded the control of occupied territory (Belgium). Military authorities faced a dilemma in dealing with local populations: "If they reacted in too tolerant a manner, they splintered the order and their own status of supremacy; if, instead, they reacted too harshly, they rapidly lost or could not even acquire the trust of the population they were aiming at."<sup>[24]</sup> Thus, there was a wide gap between what goals and reality. Violence often superseded respect for the law.

Preserving order was a precious asset, both for the occupiers and the occupied, and occupation authorities were prepared to carry out any kind of violence to maintain it.<sup>[25]</sup> Internal order was the basis for a normal progression of economic activities. With the exception of Belgium and France, occupied territories were characterised by a prevalently rural economy. However, food distribution was a point of strong friction. How much food was to be subtracted from the civilian populations to feed the armies? Where should the bureaucracy-invoked "minimum" be set to keep the population from rebelling? What were the most opportune ways to behave towards farmers: with force, persuasion, or incentives, such as good prices? In some cases, from Ober Ost to Serbia, occupation authorities pledged to set up advanced rural economies, creating model farms and diffusing the agronomic practice in schools. In Ober Ost this measure aimed to cement the

superiority of German *Kultur*. In Serbia, they thought a sort of “state socialism” would improve general conditions to both sides’ advantage.<sup>[26]</sup> The longer the war continued, the worse food conditions became in the Central Powers’ territories. As a result, occupation authorities enacted increasingly harsh food and raw material appropriation policies until it reached the point of plundering, carried out with disastrous results in [Ukraine](#) after the [Treaty of Brest-Litovsk](#).

The [historiography](#) has drawn primarily on sources from the occupiers. The behaviour of occupied populations is therefore inevitably interpreted from their point of view. Were there forms of resistance or of collaboration? Is it correct to use these concepts in order to understand the reciprocal relationships between the occupiers and the occupied, projecting backwards specific categories of the subsequent war? Take the Balkans: sources describe the presence of armed groups as a cause of worry for the occupiers. Reports classify the groups as brigands, a traditional form of these populations’ barbarism, over which a “small political cloak”<sup>[27]</sup> was laid. Today, it is difficult for historians to evaluate these interpretations given the lack of alternative sources. If this “small cloak” existed, it had nationalist features; similar to the *flamingants* (Flemish activists) or occupied [Poland](#). Becker went so far as to claim that this small share of the population in the western occupied territories, part of the information networks, was to be “considered as resistant groups.”<sup>[28]</sup> In France and Belgium, anti-occupier moral resistance was more widespread, at least initially, when everyone was convinced the occupation would be short. “The fall in spirits increased in 1916 and got worse and worse until the summer of 1917, when the feelings of determination and faith in the victory reappeared.”<sup>[29]</sup> At the end of the war, legal action was brought against collaborators condemned to harsh prison sentences. The accused were referred to as “*inciviques*,” a term showing the non-ideological character with which the topic was treated. On the other hand, this legal action did not last long and gave way to oblivion.<sup>[30]</sup> In general, resistance and collaboration with political connotations were rare during the war years, dominated instead by the civilian population’s attempt to survive.

## Occupying Governments in Occupied Territory

### Belgium

Belgium was invaded in August 1914. The Belgian army slowed the advance, eliciting a bitter reaction. From that moment, the myth of the *franc-tireurs* became the topic of reciprocal accusations.<sup>[31]</sup> “The least incident was followed by reprisals.”<sup>[32]</sup> During the advance, 5,521 civilians were killed in Belgium and 906 in France. The violence triggered flight: 1.5 million of the 7.6 million inhabitants fled. In subsequent months some returned. However, at the end of 1918, there were 325,000 refugees in France, 100,000 in [the Netherlands](#) and 160,000 in England.<sup>[33]</sup> As elsewhere, such tension and reciprocal accusations of betrayal arose between [refugees](#) and those who stayed behind.

Meanwhile, a government was set up in Belgium. About one-fifth, including Flanders and Hainault,

was part of the so-called *Etappe*, in zones behind the front, and was controlled by the military. Everyone was forced to come to terms with a severe and invasive occupier and a fundamental food problem. Private initiatives were taken to address the scarcity of food. The banker [Émile Francqui \(1863-1935\)](#) promoted a *Comité Nationale de Secours et d'Alimentation*, which obtained permission from the German authorities to import foodstuffs bought on international markets or donated by a parallel organisation set up by [Herbert Hoover \(1874-1964\)](#), the *Commission for Relief in Belgium*. The *Comité* and Commission set up canteens to channel foodstuffs from abroad. The occupying authorities were invested in making the international aid work, since they could thereby transfer responsibility for civilians' welfare. The food situation deteriorated after the winter 1916/1917, due to the [United States'](#) entry into the war. *Comité* food imports dropped by 22 percent from 1915 to 1918.<sup>[34]</sup>

The people's isolation was fundamental, hampering mobility and limiting their information channels to those run by the occupier. However, social networks did not break up completely. Municipal administrations were the centre of community life. Forms of patriotic religion, focused on the royal family and national history, developed. There were only rare cases of active resistance or open collaboration. Attempts to find a *modus vivendi* with the occupier were widespread. Thus, the vision proposed by [Henri Pirenne \(1862-1935\)](#) of a "moral resistance of the nation" has to be reshaped.<sup>[35]</sup> However, there were clandestine networks that helped young people or Allied soldiers to escape over the borders. An English woman, [Edith Cavell \(1865-1915\)](#), ran one and was later condemned to death. Her execution drew condemnation at an international level.<sup>[36]</sup> The insubordination of part of the population was encouraged by the "police state"<sup>[37]</sup> established by the occupiers. The occupiers' severity was also provoked by widespread prejudice against the Belgians, judged perfidious and inferior to German *Kultur*.

The occupation apparatus was dualistic, according to a model reproduced in other cases: a military-commanded apparatus, subjected to the governor that responded directly to the emperor and operated in an almost colonial condition, was supported by a *Zivilverwaltung* (civil administration), dependent on the government. Belgian bureaucracy was left as it was, although under tight control.<sup>[38]</sup> To complicate matters, in the territory behind the frontline (*Etappe*) another system of occupation was in place, organised with brutal methods by local commanders.<sup>[39]</sup> The situation was complicated by the Berlin government's meddling. The decision-making chaos resembled the "policracy" of World War II occupations.<sup>[40]</sup>

General [Moritz Freiherr von Bissing \(1844-1917\)](#) held the reins as governor.<sup>[41]</sup> Under his command the bureaucratic apparatus proliferated at the expense of the Belgian fiscal system. Occupied Belgium was seen as a career springboard; others practised their planning imaginations. Policies espoused by German intellectuals, such as historian [Karl Lamprecht \(1856-1915\)](#), to appraise the Flemish national character, relying on a pre-existing "*flamingant*" trend, can be placed in this context. The climax of this policy was the re-founding in autumn 1915 of the [University of Gand/Ghent](#). This

attempt was a definitive failure: few intellectuals adhered to it and the number of enrolled students never exceeded 200, since participation signified collaborating with the occupiers.

Berlin's decision to split the territory's administrative subdivision into Walloon and Flemish (capital: Namur) components in March 1917 led to disappointment. Per exiled government orders, officials assigned to Namur handed in their resignation. The manoeuvre to give way to the radical secessionists, who called themselves *Raad van Vlaanderen*, drew widespread opposition. The secessionists themselves were divided on the wisdom of putting their own cause under the occupiers' flag. The new governor, [Ludwig Alexander Freiherr von Falkenhausen \(1844-1936\)](#), who had succeeded von Bissing in April 1917, supported the political separation of the Flemish part. However, the radical secessionists' [activism](#) did not sway public opinion. The convening of elections, which were supposed to gather a selected public of voters to support the independence cause, was blocked by Falkenhausen himself in February 1918 because of protests.<sup>[42]</sup> The occupation system was based on a financial contribution increased several times: from 40 million monthly per province to 60 million. When, in the summer of 1917, Berlin authorities demanded 80 million, the governorate replied that a further increase would lead to a revolt.<sup>[43]</sup> In the face of the Belgian apparatus' growing resistance, the Germans took over the contribution collection in March 1917.

In total, exacted contributions exceeded 2.2 billion francs. However, the whole financial and monetary system set up by the occupiers aimed at the most intensive exploitation.<sup>[44]</sup> Ordinance after ordinance, the pace of confiscations intensified.<sup>[45]</sup> The increasing lack of raw materials choked what was left of the Belgian economy with increased unemployment, approximately 650,000 workers in the industrial sector. On the other hand, the [Supreme Army Command \(OHL\)](#), headed by [Paul von Hindenburg \(1847-1934\)](#) and [Erich Ludendorff \(1865-1937\)](#) since August 1916, had drawn up an agreement with powerful economic interests, which intended to exploit the availability of manpower. Within this framework, there was an escalation, beginning in autumn 1916, of coercive manpower recruitment.<sup>[46]</sup> At the beginning, recruitment was voluntary, but with mediocre results: fewer than 30,000 recruits. The shift to a policy of coercion was accompanied by a press campaign that emphasized Belgian idleness. The same argument was used to justify the coercion imposed on unemployed in the East, where local authorities used coercion from the beginning.<sup>[47]</sup>

The OHL launched the coercive recruitment plan in the *Etappe*, in order to carry out infrastructural projects. 60,000 people were recruited in the battalions of militarised work. In the end, military pressure got the upper hand on the governor's and the Berlin government's resistance, both of whom feared negative repercussions.<sup>[48]</sup> Between October 1916 and April 1917, another 60,000 people were deported. Military authorities conducted round-ups on the spot in rudimentary ways, in contrast to the "rationality" twenty years later. Difficult living and working conditions in the Reich led to high mortality rates.<sup>[49]</sup>

Rations were also halved. In September 1917, workers were only guaranteed (on average) 1,500 calories daily. Meat disappeared from the dishes, especially in the towns. The result was a 30

percent increase in mortality from 1912 to 1918.<sup>[50]</sup> In this context, the first rifts began to be felt in a society that until that moment – apart from some *flamingant* – had been compact. The so-called “*profitariat*” (speculators who profited from the war, primarily farmers and industrialists) was at the core of the controversies. The exhaustion caused by a seemingly never-ending occupation and the initial success of the [spring 1918 German offensive](#), weakened the patriotic front, where the Catholic Church remained the standard bearer.

## Poland

The German advance on the [Eastern Front](#) in spring 1915 took control of Polish territory in the tsarist state. During this chaotic phase, there were enormous forced movements of populations. Tsarist troops did not hesitate to destroy property so as not to leave spoils for the advancing enemy. The advance led to an estimated 1.5 million refugees. “The lines upon lines of refugees were followed by the [Cossacks](#) who destroyed everything in their path, killing animals and burning the crops.”<sup>[51]</sup>

In the occupied territories, after an initial attempt to set up a civilian administration, two governments were established; an Austrian one with headquarters in Kielce and then in Lublino (1 October 1915) had less autonomy with respect to Vienna in comparison with the German one, established on 4 September 1915 with headquarters in Warsaw. Roughly 6 million people lived in the former and more than 3.5 million in the latter. The governments in occupied Polish territory implemented a policy of unscrupulous exploitation; on the other hand, the Central Powers were trying to exploit the Polish card for their political interests which, however, were divergent: “The Polish question was one of the many factors that caused an embitterment in the Austrian-German relations until 1918.”<sup>[52]</sup> Not only did this happen, but in Berlin proponents of a soft line, aimed at winning over the population, clashed with annexation supporters represented by the Pan-Germanist movement. The military governor, [Hans von Beseler \(1850-1921\)](#), supported the first position and tried to win the population, for example by rebuilding a scholastic system and reopening the University of Warsaw in November 1915. The second group demanded a border strip with the future Polish state, in which German colonies would be settled; this aspect resembles the National Socialist Generalplan Ost (Master Plan East), but without a racial tinge.<sup>[53]</sup>

It is no surprise that an uncertain policy was carried out in the occupied territory. One example is the measures issued in favour of the self-government of towns and rural districts. The laws that foresaw the election of local administrative bodies were issued with great delay and, in fact, were never set up; “despite this autonomy, the district always remained under strong dependence of the occupation authorities.”<sup>[54]</sup> On 1 December 1916, a council of state was created, which could express a non-binding opinion on legislation issued by occupation authorities. A further step was taken by the two emperors who set up a regency in Warsaw with a bill issued on 12 September 1917, the anniversary of Vienna’s liberation from the Turks by the Polish King [Jan Sobieski \(1629-1696\)](#). In subsequent months, matters of responsibility were handed over to the new government, in particular the school and the judiciary. The occupiers’ offers aroused a certain favour, especially in conservative Polish

circles, which feared [Russia's revolutionary](#) contagion.

It was in fact a half-sovereignty, ambiguously recognised by the occupying powers and considered inadequate by many Poles. The governor himself complained about the contemptuous behaviour adopted by the German administration, which caused irritation among the civilians. Freedom of association and of expression was controlled and every infraction punished.<sup>[55]</sup> On an economic level, a policy of confiscation predominated in the countryside, with the deportation of forced workers to Germany and Austria reviving the tradition of seasonal agricultural workers recruited from the East.<sup>[56]</sup> Austro-German attempts to enlist a Polish legion, made up of the tsarist army's ex-prisoners, were a failure. Its leader, [Józef Pilsudski \(1867-1935\)](#), considered it a symbol of the sovereignty that was being established. Relations between the Germans, Austro-Hungarians and Pilsudski were tense: the Germans had no intention of making concessions, while Vienna supported the legion. In the end, Pilsudski tried to take advantage of the rivalry between the two powers to obtain independence, becoming a hero in the public's view who would subsequently be entrusted with the lot of the new Polish state.

## The Balkans

[Austria-Hungary](#) had the strongest regional interests in the Balkans and had broad plans for the gradually occupied territories, without the corresponding resources needed to implement occupation policies beyond temporary exploitation. The occupation of [Serbia](#) began only in autumn 1915, with the German and Bulgarian armies' support. Vienna insisted that defeated Serbia be annexed, but strong German economic interests had to be respected. Meanwhile [Bulgaria](#) occupied Kosovo. On 1 January 1916, the *Militärgouvernement Serbien* was established with headquarters in Belgrade.

Occupation was accompanied by repression of the civilian population.<sup>[57]</sup> In autumn 1915 between 20,000 and 25,000 people were interned. The second large wave occurred after [Romania](#) entered the war. The violence, including mass shootings and forced labour, targeted intellectuals and priests, who were considered custodians of the national spirit and were subject to a pervasive policing network.<sup>[58]</sup> Harsh regulations were imposed concerning the confiscation of food, raw materials and industrial products, and Serbian banks and firms were seized. The Bulgarian occupation policy was even more brutal given the strong ethnic rivalry between occupiers and occupied.

The violence and pressure on the weak Serbian economy led to deteriorating living conditions. Whole areas witnessed persistent instability. In 1917, armed revolts broke out, especially in the border area between the Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian administrations, verging on guerrilla warfare.<sup>[59]</sup> More than a quarter of the population died.<sup>[60]</sup> The Kingdom of [Montenegro](#), part of the Entente, was defeated by Austro-Hungarian troops at the beginning of 1916. In contrast to nearby Serbia, where the majority of the population and the ruling class were hostile towards the occupiers, the government in Montenegro was prepared to collaborate. On the insistence of the army commander, General [Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf \(1852-1925\)](#), a military government was established in

Cetinje on 1 March 1916. In following years, the Austro-Hungarian military apparatus maintained considerable tranquillity in Montenegro, even though living conditions deteriorated.<sup>[61]</sup> The Bulgarian military authorities, who had occupied eastern [Macedonia](#) (which Sofia claimed as national territory), were even harsher. They implemented a policy of starvation to force people to leave, thereby freeing the territory for future settlement by Bulgarians. Estimates show that a fifth of the population had either died of hunger or been expelled by the war's end.<sup>[62]</sup>

The northern part of Albania was occupied at the beginning of 1916. Plans to set up a civilian occupation administration were never carried out; the territory was inhospitable and scarcely populated. Thus, it was left under the direct administration of the XIX Armed Corps; this situation remained unchanged until the end of the conflict. Military authorities behaved quite respectfully towards civilians, since they did not want to antagonise their strong national pride. Moreover, Albania was recognised as a "friend"; limiting exploitation and repression.

## Military Occupations

### Northeast France: Exploitation and terror

The German armies occupied ten departments of northeast France on the Belgian border (3.7 percent of the metropolitan area), the second most important industrial region, with a population exceeding 2.3 million inhabitants. The greatest difference from Belgium was the fact that the occupied territory was subjected to the status of "military rear area": it was directly governed by German army commanders deployed to the front. There was no go-between German civilian administrative apparatus, which meant local administrators had their hands tied. The occupying regime in general was much tougher than in Belgium: "This country suffered less and will have to suffer less from the enemy occupation with respect to the territory invaded in France."<sup>[63]</sup> The soldiers, fearing threats in the areas immediately behind the front, acted without scruples: a terrorist regime, as the American journalist [John Reed \(1887-1920\)](#) remarked.

The most pressing problem was that of externally supplying the population with goods. In March 1915, a *Comité* that depended on the Belgian one was set up. Foodstuffs arrived from Brussels but were not enough. The French lived incessantly on the brink of starvation. In the countryside, it was possible to make up for the shortage, but the urban population did not have this possibility. Not even the black market could thrive, since the distribution of foodstuffs was rigidly controlled.<sup>[64]</sup>

"Following the occupation, France lost 80 percent of the steel production, 94 percent of the wool production and 90 percent of the wool-yarn production."<sup>[65]</sup> Available regional resources were confiscated "with a fine-toothed comb."<sup>[66]</sup> Many industrial plants were dismantled and moved to the Reich. In October 1916, mandatory labour for all adults, male and female, was introduced. About 45,000 adults were enlisted in battalions of militarised workers, characterised by red armbands. They were put in barracks and treated as prisoners of war, forced to work more than ten hours a day. The

useless mouths – children, old and sick people – were moved inland and forced to live in difficult conditions in improvised concentrations camps. For example during Easter 1916 approximately 24,000 women and children in Lille were deported in order to show the German public that occupied civilians received no privileges. Almost 1 million people, 323,000 of whom were children, fell into poverty by mid-1916. The worsening living conditions are reflected in the increasing death rate, which went from 19 percent before the war to 41.6 percent in 1918.<sup>[67]</sup>

The terrorist regime<sup>[68]</sup> instated by the soldiers left little room for the collaboration of mayors and local elites; in fact, it aroused a widespread passive resistance, cloaked in patriotism and often led by priests. This is a common trait with other occupied regions such as Belgium, the Balkans and Friuli. Many underwent deportations and severe prison sentences.<sup>[69]</sup>

### **Ober Ost: Plans for Germanisation**

Ober Ost is the most particular example of a military-occupied area in which an experiment of transformation, in view of a future submission to the occupying power, was set in motion, or at least planned. Research ignored Ober Ost until recently, due probably to the fact that the territories which were part of Ober Ost in the post-war period were allocated to different national states (Lithuania, Latvia, [Poland](#)). Thus, there was no national historiography which could interpret the occupation in terms of martyrdom, as in Belgium.

After beating off the first Russian attack in summer 1914, German troops led by Hindenburg carried off a victorious attack resulting in the conquest of Lithuania and much of Russian Poland from May to August 1915. The occupied territory, covering more than 100,000 square kilometres, was subjected to a military administration under the personal control of General Ludendorff, Hindenburg's vice. It was a vast territory, inhabited by a jumble of populations regarded by the occupying troops as inferior: Lithuanians, Latvians, Ruthenians, Jews, Poles, Germans, but also Tatars and Muslims: a scene that was "unsettling for Germans."<sup>[70]</sup> The civilian population totalled about 3 million people, mostly women, [children](#) and old people, as elsewhere.

According to Liulevicius, Ober Ost was a "military utopia"<sup>[71]</sup> in which the attempt was made to impose German *Kultur* in order to modernise the occupied territories. His approach to the "military state" pivots on the occupiers' point of view; he intended to highlight the continuity between this first occupation in 1915-1918 and the subsequent one beginning in 1939 by [Adolf Hitler's \(1889-1945\)](#) Germany. In particular, he tried to assess to what extent the occupiers had left marks. Liulevicius' conclusions are vague – he talked about an "important backdrop" of the Ober Ost experience on subsequent events.<sup>[72]</sup> He stressed the plan's utopian character, pursued by a vast bureaucratic apparatus consisting of more than 18,000 Prussian officials. Soldiers were in command. Ludendorff and his advisors aimed to carry out a colonial plan, based on good administration, in order to appraise the natural resources (lumber, agricultural products) for the war economy. In truth, the plan looked further ahead: Ober Ost was supposed to form part of the Reich. In autumn 1917, [Wilhelm](#)

[Freiherr von Gayl \(1879-1945\)](#), head of the administrative apparatus, had plans drawn up for a massive colonisation of farmers-warriors. These are topics that would be taken up again by the national-socialist regime twenty years later.<sup>[73]</sup> The plan envisaged a deep knowledge of the territory and its inhabitants, by means of statistical analyses, but also by widespread police control. Inhabitants' movements were to be controlled and agricultural production would be submitted to the occupation authorities' needs. However, there would also be widespread cultural dissemination via newspapers, theatres and schools. In short, there was to be a "new ordering of the territory."<sup>[74]</sup>

However, what was carried out ended up being very different from the plans. The Prussian bureaucracy resulted in an "administrative chaos within."<sup>[75]</sup> Resource organisation was a failure and did not take into account the inhabitants' vital needs. The coercive recruitment of workers was very harsh but with results below the expectations. The cultural policy came up against obstacles of reciprocal misunderstanding. Even the healthcare policy pursued by the occupying authorities, obsessed with the fear of epidemics, turned into an inefficient "biological warfare."<sup>[76]</sup> After the Russian February [Revolution](#), attempts to make room for the national demands of suppressed populations in order to win their trust, were too late. It was a "programmed failure" because the goals were formulated starting from an abstract vision of the occupied territory.

The revolution and [peace of Brest-Litovsk](#) aroused great agitation, opening the way for even more annexation and exploitation in the Caucasus. However, these plans were overrun by the defeat on the [Western Front](#). The short military occupations in the territories acquired due to the Brest-Litovsk peace have not been studied in depth. Germany and Austria-Hungary divided the Ukraine in May 1918 and installed military apparatuses designed to gain control of agricultural resources. Military authorities tolerated a nationalist and anti-Bolshevik puppet government, but the occupation actually pivoted on the unscrupulous exploitation of resources.<sup>[77]</sup> These were to be exported to the motherland to ease the difficult food situation.<sup>[78]</sup> In fact, Central Empire propaganda promoted the peace imposed on the Bolsheviks at Brest-Litovsk as the "peace of bread." The occupying countries' expectations were disappointed both because of structural problems and the rural population's passive resistance. In early November 1918, the German and Austro-Hungarian armies abandoned the Ukrainian territory.<sup>[79]</sup>

Returning to Ober Ost: The Marxist historian Abba Strazhas highlighted the population's "passive and active resistance", supported by disbanded tsarist officers and soldiers.<sup>[80]</sup> He defined this phenomenon as a "partisan struggle", fuelled by the "Herrenvolk" mentality with which the occupiers treated the civilian population.<sup>[81]</sup> The forced labour introduced by decree in October 1916 and the confiscation of agricultural only instigated the partisan struggle.

The limits of military control over Ober Ost emerged after the Russian revolution. Berlin tried to regain political control of the situation: in September 1917, two national councils were set up in Lithuania and Latvia, intended to guarantee consent from the population to a future national structure

under German hegemony. The Germans were convinced that once a separate peace with Russia was obtained, they would have free rein to reorganise Eastern Europe to their liking. Thus, in December 1917, they forced the Lithuanian national council to formally accept special German protection for an independent state established in an unspecified future. In sum, historiography has drafted a negative appraisal of Ober Ost policies, incapable of “moral achievements over a longer time period.”<sup>[82]</sup>

### **Romania: A Triple Occupation**

The occupation of Romania is particular for two reasons. First, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria were all represented, with different objectives.<sup>[83]</sup> Second, part of the local ruling classes cooperated, at least until summer 1918. At that point, because of both deteriorating food conditions and the change in the general equilibrium of the war, civilians became impatient. Romanian politicians distrusted Russia, its long-time enemy on the northern borders. The German and Austro-Hungarian occupation was endured as “the lesser evil.”

Romania entered the war in summer 1916 against the Central Empires, driven by the desire to consolidate national unity by annexing Transylvania. However, the badly organised Romanian army was beaten by Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria’s triple attack. Occupation began in December 1916, when the government abandoned Bucharest to seek refuge in Moldavia; two thirds of the territory was occupied.

German and Austro-Hungarian military authorities decided to trust the local administrative system. Willingness to cooperate was high, particularly in the judicial and economic sectors. However, corruption and incompetence emerged quickly. The occupying forces considered the occupation of “substantial interest”;<sup>[84]</sup> they were interested in the country’s economic resources, particularly agricultural and oil resources. Regarding the former, German authorities introduced a fixed price system, set at the beginning of the harvest to favour productivity, thereby increasing stockpiles. These were destined first for the troops as in other occupied territories, and then for export. In addition to price incentives, the military set up a control system. However, owing to the reduced number of soldiers available to control, they had to depend on the producers’ goodwill.

German memoirs present an idyllic picture of relations between village inhabitants and the garrisons. This does not correspond to reality. The most serious problem was the lack of manpower for agricultural work. To solve this shortage, they resorted to Russian prisoners and local wage earners. Military authorities often organised forced mass recruitments. The recruiting methods of manpower in the *Etappengebiete*, along the front, were particularly brutal. In any case, the amount of grain harvested in 1918 was higher than the previous year, and not far below the pre-war amount.

The Romanian occupation policy was marked by a reciprocal diffidence: the Austrians feared German military and economic superiority. German authorities, in turn, suspected that the ally’s claims hid the desire to take control of the occupied territory after the war. The attempt to find an

agreement, exchanging the respective spheres of influence between Romania and Poland, was discussed unsuccessfully at the Kreuznach conference in April 1917. One crucial question concerned the reciprocal exchange between the German Mark, the Austrian Krone and the Romanian Leu. The matter was anything but technical; control of the occupied country's market and financial system was at stake. In the same vein, there was a bitter dispute about oil resources. When the occupation began, companies belonging to enemy states were subjected to forced administration. However, who was to take control of these companies? The proportion of assigned oil resources was also discussed. In other words, "the economic value of Romania was too great for either ally to give way."<sup>[85]</sup> A sophisticated system of requisitioning and extracting wealth from the occupied land provoked Romania's lasting bankruptcy.<sup>[86]</sup>

Friction between the two allies remained even after the peace treaty of Bucharest on 7 May 1918, which led to an independent Romanian government without ending military occupation. Relations with the population, cordial until then, began to break down, owing to worsening living conditions. The first strikes broke out and passive resistance began to spread.

### **Northeast Italy: Simply Surviving**

The retreat of the Italian army after [Caporetto](#), in October 1917, was disorganised. Tens of thousands of civilians sought safety. City inhabitants and the wealthy were lucky, having either means or information that the farming population, the majority, did not have. Civilian escape was thus characterised by class bias. Many farmers decided not to leave their farmsteads and were helped by parish priests.<sup>[87]</sup>

A one-year period of occupation began in November 1917 after the Austro-Hungarian attack petered out against the Italian defence along the river Piave. The occupied territory covered about 15,000 square kilometres, with 900,000 civilians remaining, compared to 230,000 refugees on the other side of the Piave. Members of the ruling classes, mayors and administrators stood out among the refugees, although the majority were state employees. The clergy remained in the occupied lands, with few exceptions. These two diverging dynamics aroused bitter debate: one group accused the other of disloyalty, while temporary administrators and the priests who had stayed claimed proudly that they had not fled.

The occupiers found themselves in a "land of milk and honey" and proceeded to plunder and waste resources. In mid-November 1917, occupation authorities intervened to stop the looting. Viennese authorities were not prepared for the capture of such a vast territory; hence there were no plans for rational utilization. In December 1917, the German and Austro-Hungarian militaries signed an agreement: troops in the occupied territory (almost 1 million soldiers) should rely solely on resources from the invaded areas. Furthermore, all unused products would be forcibly taken and divided equally among Austria, Hungary and Germany.

At the beginning of 1918, with the awareness that the war was coming to an end, a pragmatic line

was imposed: the occupied territory would be managed directly by military commandos who would try to exploit the local administrative apparatus as much as possible. To this end councils composed of local elites or priests were established. They were willing collaborators whose main interest was to support military requests in order to reduce the burden of occupation. In spite of controversies triggered by refugees in Italy, there was no open collaboration.

Hence, the soldiers' needs gained the upper hand; full rein was given to extract as much as possible from the invaded territory and to sustain the occupying army. A closed economic space was created. Foodstuffs were sequestered, but left in the farmers' barns. The latter was limited to predetermined rations and seeds. All private economic activities were forbidden and exchanges reduced to local bartering markets. An occupation currency, the Lira Veneta, was introduced, with an exchange rate disadvantageous to civilians. Everything soldiers needed was confiscated, often violently: from hay to corn ears, church bells to copper pans, bicycles to linen. The rural thefts intensified in spring 1918. Occupation authorities' attempt to complete the crop year 1918, necessary to sustain the troops, failed: there were not enough seeds, machines and fertilizers.

Despite the pressure put on the civilian population, supply conditions for soldiers worsened. From March to June 1918, average rations for Austro-Hungarian soldiers were estimated at 1,800 calories daily, against the 3,200 foreseen. The mid-June 1918 offensive, conceived as a thrust to break the front on the Piave, derived from the necessity to break out of that stalemate in order to get new food resources. Apart from strategic errors and the Italian defensive ability, the battle's failure can be attributed to soldiers' diminished physical abilities. But civilians were the main victims of the terrible hunger that marked the occupation of eastern Venetia and Friuli. In addition to the legal confiscations and illegal requisitions of all consumer goods, they were subjected to massive forced labour. Wages were low and working conditions harsh. Local military commandos carried out man hunts when they needed labour. More than 70,000 civilians worked for the occupying troops.

As a result, the annual death rate rose from approximately 20 percent in the pre-war period to 74 percent in Venice and 51 percent in Belluno in 1918. The civilian population nonetheless behaved submissively. Italian spies rarely received help. The Austro-Hungarian occupation of Friuli and eastern Veneto may thus be regarded as a particularly harsh form of military occupation, aimed at realising short-term objectives (sustaining the occupying army). Plans and projects remained on paper. What prevailed was the unscrupulous exploitation of available resources.

## Conclusion

The most recent historiography has stressed that the occupation policies during the First World War cannot be considered schematically with victims and oppressors. Instead, they should be seen as complex phases of conflict and of "reciprocal ways of influencing"<sup>[88]</sup> among several groups of people: the soldiers, in some cases from different armies, the rich civilians, the poor, etc. The two most recent models either interpret the First World War as a "total war", including military occupations in its essential elements, or highlight continuity with occupation policies in the Second

World War, introducing another influential factor into the equation between Imperial Germany and Hitler's rule.<sup>[89]</sup> Although the latest research has added convincing elements on both continuity and "totality", exceptions and oscillations along the timeline have weakened the models' heuristic value. In conclusion, a considerable ambivalence is derived "that makes it almost impossible to draw univocal conclusions."<sup>[90]</sup>

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## Notes

1. ↑ See Horne, John/Kramer, Alan: *German Atrocities 1914. A History of Denial*, translated by Irene Diamond, New Haven et al. 2001.
2. ↑ See the U.S. ambassador's memoirs: Whitlock, Brad: *Belgium. A personal narrative*, New York 1919.
3. ↑ See Bianchi, Bruna: *Crimini di guerra e contro l'umanità. Le violenze ai civili sul fronte orientale 1914-1919*, Bologna 2012, pp. 101ff.
4. ↑ Fischer, Fritz: *Griff nach der Weltmacht*, Düsseldorf 1961.
5. ↑ Geiss, Imanuel: *Der polnische Grenzstreifen 1914-1918. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Kriegszielpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Lübeck et al. 1960, p. 150.
6. ↑ Jeřábeck, Rudolf: *Die österreichische Weltkriegsforschung*, in: Michalka, Wolfgang (ed.): *Der Erste Weltkrieg. Wirkung, Wahrnehmung, Analyse*, Munich et al. 1994, pp. 953ff.
7. ↑ *Relazioni della reale commissione d'inchiesta sulle violazioni dei diritti delle genti commesse dal nemico*, 6 volumes, Milano 1919.
8. ↑ Becker, Annette: *Les cicatrices rouges 14-18. France et Belgique occupées*, Paris 2010, pp. 290ff.
9. ↑ First World War examples inspired the subsequent theoretical elaborations of Ralph Lemkin; see Becker, *Cicatrices rouges* 2010, pp. 302ff.
10. ↑ The monograph: Pirenne, Henri: *La Belgique et la Guerre Mondiale*, Paris 1928, has become a classic. Pirenne is an exceptional case, since the majority of the monographs were written by officials in the occupation apparatuses.
11. ↑ See Kerchnawe, Hugo (ed.): *Die Militärverwaltung in den von den österreichisch-ungarischen Truppen besetzten Gebieten*, Vienna 1928.
12. ↑ Yovanovitch, Dragoljub: *Les effets économiques et sociaux de la guerre en Serbie*, Paris et al. 1928; Antipa, Grigore (ed.): *L'occupation ennemie de la Roumanie et ses conséquences économiques et sociales*, Paris 1928.
13. ↑ See Bianchi, Crimini 2012; and Bianchi, Bruna: *La violenza contro la popolazione civile nella Grande Guerra. Deportati, profughi, internati*, Bologna 2006.

14. † Becker, Annette: *Oubliés de la grande guerre. Humanitaire et culture de guerre. Populations occupées, déportés civils, prisonniers de guerre*, Paris 1998.
15. † Jones, Heather: *Violence against Prisoners of War in the First World War*, Cambridge 2011. In Italy the first monograph on [prisoners of war](#) was published in 1993. See Procacci, Giovanna: *Soldati e prigionieri italiani nella Grande Guerra*, Rome 1993.
16. † Becker, *Cicatrices rouges* 2010; On p. 267 the author defines the occupied territories as a “laboratory of the total war.”
17. † Becker, *Cicatrices rouges* 2010, p. 313.
18. † Umbreit, Hans: *Einleitende Bemerkungen*, in: Thoß, Bruno/Volkman, Hans-Erich (eds.): *Erster Weltkrieg. Zweiter Weltkrieg. Ein Vergleich*, Paderborn 2002, p. 522.
19. † See Hague Convention of 1899: Section III. On Military Authority over Hostile Territory, in: *Convention with Respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land (Hague II) (29 July 1899)*, Articles 42-56.
20. † See Zilch, Reimjard: *Generalgouvernement*, in: Hirschfeld, Gerhard/Krumeich, Gerd/Renz, Irina (eds.): *Enzyklopädie Erster Weltkrieg*, Paderborn 2009, pp. 524ff.
21. † Gumz, Jonathan: *The Resurrection and Collapse of Empire in Habsburg Serbia 1914-1918*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 44ff.
22. † Scheer, Tamara: *Zwischen Front und Heimat. Österreich-Ungarns Militärverwaltungen im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt et al. 2009, pp. 82ff.
23. † Scheer, *Zwischen Front* 2009, pp. 177ff.
24. † Scheer, *Zwischen Front* 2009, p. 194.
25. † De Schaepdrijver, Sophie: *La Belgique et la Première Guerre Mondiale*, Brussels et al. 2004, p. 391.
26. † Scheer, *Zwischen Front* 2009, p. 148.
27. † Scheer, *Zwischen Front* 2009, pp. 113ff.
28. † Becker, *Cicatrices rouges* 2010, p. 264.
29. † Becker, Annette: *Le occupazioni*, in: Audoin-Rouzeau, Stéphane/Becker, Jean-Jaques: *La prima guerra mondiale*, vol. I, Turin 2007, p. 380.
30. † Becker, *Cicatrices rouges* 2010, pp. 295ff.
31. † Horne/Kramer, *German Atrocities* 2001.
32. † De Schaepdrijver, *La Belgique* 2004.
33. † De Schaepdrijver, *La Belgique* 2004, p. 105.
34. † Scholliers, Peter/Daelemans, Frank: *Standards of living and health in wartime Belgium*, in: Wall, Richard/Winter, Jay (eds.): *The upheaval of war. Family, work and welfare in Europe 1914-1918*, Cambridge 1988, p. 143.
35. † Pirenne, *La Belgique* 1928, pp. 69ff.
36. † The executions counted by Pirenne amounted to more than 300. See Pirenne, *La Belgique* 1928, p. 77.
37. † De Schaepdrijver, *La Belgique* 2004, p. 125.

38. † In comparison with occupation during the Second World War, this one was less oppressive with the local administration, in part because it could count on widespread ideological collaboration. De Vos, Luc/Lierneux, Pierre: Der Fall Belgien 1914 bis 1918 und 1940 bis 1944, in: Thoß/Volkmann (eds.): Erster Weltkrieg. Zweiter Weltkrieg. Ein Vergleich, Paderborn 2002, pp. 537ff.
39. † De Schaepdrijver: La Belgique 2004, pp. 223ff.
40. † Majerus, Benoit: Von Falkenhausen zu Falkenhausen. Die deutsche Verwaltung Belgiens in den zwei Weltkriegen, in: Kronenbitter, Günther / Pöhlmann, Markus/Walter, Dierk. (eds.): Besatzung, Funktion und Gestalt militärischer Fremdherrschaft von der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert, Paderborn et al. 2006, pp. 131-45.
41. † The first governor from August to November 1914 was General [Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz \(1843-1916\)](#), who was then sent to Turkey.
42. † De Schaepdrijver, La Belgique, 2004, pp. 280ff.
43. † Pirenne, La Belgique 1928, p. 100.
44. † Zilch, Reinhold: Okkupation und Währung im Ersten Weltkrieg. Die deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Belgien und Russisch-Polen 1914-1918, Goldbach 1994, pp. 196ff. In the economic field, the exploitation policy was even more ruthless than the one that followed twenty years later.
45. † De Schraepdrijver, La Belgique 2004, p. 214.
46. † On the policy of recruitment of manpower, see the monograph by Thiel, Jens: "Menschenbassin Belgien." Anwerbung, Deportation und Zwangsarbeit im Ersten Weltkrieg, Essen 2007.
47. † Westerhoff, Christian: Zwangsarbeit im Ersten Weltkrieg. Deutsche Arbeitkräftepolitik im besetzten Polen und Litauen 1914-1918, Paderborn 2012, pp. 200ff.
48. † The question of forced workers aroused much protest in the homeland and on an international level, rekindling the arguments of 1914 about the German barbarian and the Belgian martyr.
49. † Of the 12,000 deported from the province of Namur, 256 died in Germany and another 300 died for reasons connected with the deportation; 2,000 were invalids. De Schaepdrijver: La Belgique 2004, pp. 230f.
50. † Scholliers/Daelemans, Standards 1988, p. 150.
51. † Scholliers/Daelemans, Standards 1988, p. 150.
52. † Polonski, Antony: The German Occupation of Poland during the First and Second World War. A comparison, in: Prete, Roy Arnold/Hamish Ion, A. (eds.): Armies of Occupation, Waterloo 1984, p. 129.
53. † Polonski thus clearly distinguished the German policy towards Poland during the two wars, speaking on the period 1915-1918 about "conventional imperial power" and noting the "superficial resemblances"; Polonski, German 1984, p. 141.
54. † See Handelsman, Marcell: La Pologne. Se vie économique et sociale pendant la guerre, Paris et al. 1933, pp. 82ff.
55. † Handelsman, La Pologne 1933, p. 104.
56. † The total number of civilians recruited to work in the Reich oscillates between 200,000 and 240,000. Westerhoff, Zwangsarbeit 2012, p. 332.

57. † Original photographic sources testify to this violence: Holzer, Anton: *Das Lächeln des Henkers*, Darmstadt 2008.
58. † Mitrović, Andrej: *Serbia's Great War 1914-1918*, London 2007, pp. 225f.
59. † Gumz, *Resurrection* 2009, pp. 193ff.
60. † Bianchi, Crimini, 2012, p. 102.
61. † Scheer, *Zwischen Front* 2009, pp. 36ff.
62. † Bianchi, Crimini, 2012, p. 246.
63. † Collinet, Paul/Stahl, Paul: *Le ravitaillement de la France occupée*, Paris et al. 1930, pp. 34ff.
64. † Collinet/Stahl, *Le ravitaillement 1930*, pp. 64ff.
65. † Bianchi, Crimini, 2012, p. 275.
66. † Becker, *Oubliés* 1998, p. 46.
67. † Collinet/Stahl, *Le ravitaillement 1930*, pp. 152ff.
68. † See also McPhail, Helen: *The Long Silence. Civilian Life under German Occupation of Northern France*, London 2004.
69. † Becker, *Oubliés* 1998, p. 77.
70. † Liulevicius, *Vejas Gabriel: War Land on the Eastern Front*, Cambridge 2000, p. 33.
71. † Liulevicius, *War Land* 2000, p. 7.
72. † Liulevicius, *War Land* 2000, p. 9.
73. † Liulevicius, *War Land* 2000, pp. 202ff.
74. † Liulevicius, *War Land* 2000, p. 91.
75. † Liulevicius, *War Land* 2000, p. 63.
76. † Liulevicius, *War Land* 2000, p. 106.
77. † Grelka, Frank: "Jüdischer Antibolschevismus." Zur Tradition eines Feindbildes in der Ukraine unter deutscher Militärverwaltung 1918 und 1941, in: Kronenbitter/Pöhlmann/Walter (eds.): *Besatzung, Funktion und Gestalt militärischer Fremdherrschaft von der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, Paderborn et al. 2006, pp. 177ff. It talks about "Lebensmittelraum," playing on the assonance with the later concept of *Lebensraum*.
78. † See Vincent, C. Paul: *The Politics of Hunger. The Allied Blockade of Germany 1915-1919*, Athens et al. 1985.
79. † Dornik, Wolfgang/Karner, Stefan (eds.): *Die Besatzung der Ukraine 1918. Historischer Kontext – Forschungsstand – wirtschaftliche und soziale Folgen*, Graz 2008.
80. † Strazhas, Abba: *Deutsche Ostpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg. Der Fall Ober Ost 1915-1917*, Wiesbaden 1993, p. 14.
81. † Strazhas, *Deutsche Ostpolitik* 1993, p. 28.
82. † Strazhas, *Deutsche Ostpolitik* 1993, p. 280.
83. † Mayerhofer, Lisa: *Making Friends and Foes. Occupiers and Occupied in First World War Romania 1916-1918*, in: Jones, Heather/O'Brien, Jennifer/Schmidt-Suppran, Christoph (eds): *Untold war. New perspectives in First World War studies*, Leiden et al. 2008, pp. 119-49.
84. † Hamlin, David: "Dummes Geld." Money, Grain and the Occupation of Romania in WWI, in: *Central European History*, 42 (2009), p. 454.
85. † Mayerhofer, *Making Friends* 2008, p. 140.

86. ↑ Hamlin, Dummes Geld 2009, p. 469.
87. ↑ See Corni, Gustavo: La società del Veneto-Friuli durante l'occupazione austro-germanica 1917-1918, in: Buccioli, Eugenio/Schwarz, Angelo/Corni, Gustavo (eds.): Inediti della grande guerra. Immagini dell'invasione austro-germanica in Friuli Venezia Giulia e in Veneto, Portogruaro 2009 (1990); Corni, Gustavo: L'occupazione austro-germanica del Veneto nel 1917-18. Sindaci, sacerdoti, austriacanti e patrioti, in: Rivista di storia contemporanea, 3 (1989), pp. 380-408.
88. ↑ Kronenbitter/Pöhlmann/Walter (eds.), Besatzung, Funktion und Gestalt militärischer Fremdherrschaft von der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert, Paderborn et al. 2006, p. 13.
89. ↑ For a detailed analysis of continuities and ruptures in the field of workforce recruitment see: Westerhoff, Zwangsarbeit 2012, pp. 311ff.
90. ↑ Scheer, Zwischen Front 2009, p. 206.

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