

War Losses (Africa)

By [Joe Harris Lunn](#)

Human resources in Africa were exploited during the First World War for imperial ends. Men were sent to Europe to augment the manpower of the combatants, and soldiers and labourers were mobilized to aid in the conquest or defense of Germany's colonies. In all, about 2,350,000 Africans were mobilized between 1914 and 1918 to secure these respective ends, while over 250,000 soldiers and carriers, as well as approximately 750,000 civilians perished in this effort. The transfer of German colonial territories in Africa that resulted from this conflict ultimately depended on the outcome of the fighting in Europe and would likely have taken place even had the war in Africa never been fought.

Table of Contents

- [1 Introduction](#)
- [2 Losses in Europe: Soldiers and Laborers](#)
- [3 Losses in Africa: Soldiers and Laborers](#)
- [4 Losses in Africa: Civilians](#)
- [5 Conclusion](#)
- [Notes](#)
- [Selected Bibliography](#)
- [Citation](#)

Introduction

When it occurred, the First World War was the most destructive war in European history, and also in the history of Africa. In terms of the number of soldiers that were mobilized, the thresholds of violence and destruction reached, and the lingering social and political impact of the war, no other previous conflict is comparable. This is especially true when considering that the conflict took place

over a duration as brief as four years.

Africa's involvement in this conflict came as a consequence of Africa becoming gradually more integrated into the European dominated global economic system from the 15th century onwards. This process culminated in the political and economic subjugation of the continent by a handful of west and central European nation states through armed conquest during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These European states, which included the most powerful European industrial nations, namely, [Britain](#), [France](#), and [Germany](#), a series of lesser powers, including [Belgium](#), [Portugal](#), and [Italy](#), as well as the European settler communities within Africa itself, directly controlled the political and, more particularly, the military destinies of the peoples of Africa, who were invariably subordinated to European rather than African interests.^[1] These Eurocentric military imperatives were expressed during the war in two ways: the extensive [use of African combat troops](#) and supporting [laborers](#) to conquer German colonies on the continent, and the export of 750,000 African soldiers and laborers to the [Western Front](#) to augment the strength of Allied armies there, which, incidentally, resulted in the first extensive contact ever by Africans with European society.

Though the war caused widespread misery and carried far-ranging consequences, it is a paradox of Africa's forced military involvement in this European struggle that a precise reckoning of the human toll it exacted is, and will always remain, uncertain. To some extent this is inherent in the nature of [warfare](#). As the eminent British military historian [John Keegan \(1934-2012\)](#) has observed about numbering European deaths during the First World War, "anything better than a rough calculation [of losses] is difficult with such notoriously unreliable statistics as casualty figures."^[2] The accounting of African losses is even more imprecise. Military and civilian bureaucracies that kept track of information, such as wartime recruitment and casualty figures, were frequently rudimentary and inexact, especially in Africa. This was particularly true when counting [carriers](#), especially among those serving under local civil authority, where faulty record keeping repeatedly occurred, if indeed there were any records at all.^[3] Calculating African losses is rendered more difficult by the differing national definitions used by the British and French, for instance, about when soldiers, initially listed as "missing," became reclassified as fatalities.^[4] Estimating civilian losses in areas severely devastated by pillaging armies, and where reliable census data itself was often lacking, is even more problematic. A final consideration is the mentality of many Europeans at the time of the war; in the eyes of those steeped in the pseudo-scientific racist assumptions that served as a rationale for European domination in the first place, the loss of African lives was not always deemed to be especially noteworthy.

What follows is an inexact approximation of the losses suffered by Africans during the First World War, based on official estimates, as well as more recent and sometimes significantly revised calculations by historians. These may be differentiated between three broad categories, with decreasing degrees of probable exactitude in the accounting of wartime fatalities. They include: 1) soldiers and laborers recruited for service overseas in Europe or in the Mediterranean basin; at the Dardanelles, Thessaloniki, and Palestine; or as support troops awaiting deployment in [North Africa](#);

2) soldiers and laborers recruited in Africa and serving as garrison troops or in campaigns waged there, notably during the Allied conquests of German colonies in Togoland, Cameroon, Southwest Africa, and [East Africa](#); and 3) civilians who perished as a result of rebellions against European wartime exactions, the depredations of marauding European-led armies, or malnutrition, illness, and/or disease directly caused by the conflict.

Losses in Europe: Soldiers and Laborers

The vast mobilization of African soldiers and laborers for service in Europe between 1914 and 1918 was the consequence of an extractive imperial system commandeering the lives and labor, as well as the products and resources, of colonized subjects the world over. Indeed, in the broadest possible terms, the initial [war aims](#) of the major European states represented a struggle to perpetuate the 19th-century global economic status quo dominated by the British (and to a lesser extent their wartime allies, the French), upon which their continued pre-eminence depended. For this reason, elites in Britain and France did not appreciate the efforts of the revisionist Germans to secure a redistribution of global wealth commensurate with their newly acquired national unity and rapidly expanding industrial infrastructure. More specifically, because of the population disparity between Germany and France, the latter placed a premium, especially after 1916, on the mobilization of North and [West African](#) soldiers to augment their outnumbered armies on the Western Front, while also relying on African as well as [Indochinese laborers](#) to supplement the French workforce.^[5] For their part, the English preferred to draw on Indian rather than African colonial troops throughout 1914-1915, while a mass army was being raised in Britain to fight on the continent. In addition, they supplemented their available labor force with workers imported from [South Africa](#) and [Egypt](#), as well as with South Asian and West Indian levees.^[6] The Germans had far fewer global manpower resources available and were unable to import either African soldiers or laborers to Europe due to the [Allied blockade](#). However, the fact that Germany did use Africans in the defense of their colonies illustrates that their reluctance to use Africans on the continent was prompted by a lack of means rather than the absence of will.

The numbers of African soldiers and laborers mobilized by the Allies for service in Europe, as well as estimates of the loss of lives incurred by them, may be summarized as follows:

Region	Recruited	Combatants	Deaths	Percentage
North Africans	260,000	189,000	35,900	13.8/19.0
West Africans	199,200	139,700	31,000	15.6/22.2
East Africans	43,400	36,500	4,000	9.2/11.0
Total	502,600	365,200	70,900	14.1/19.4

Table 1: African Soldiers in Europe^[7]

Region	Recruited ^[8]	Deaths	Percentage ^[9]
North Africans	211,400	Unknown	Between 7-10
West Africans	1,900	Unknown	Above 8.2
South Africans	33,200	More than 1,655	Above 5.0
East Africans	5,500	Unknown	
Total	252,000	Unknown	Above 7

Table 2: African Laborers in Europe^[10]

Among more than 500,000 Africans recruited as soldiers, and more than 350,000 serving as combatants in Europe, losses may be reckoned with some degree of accuracy from official sources at about 71,000. This represents nearly 20 percent of all troops engaged, rising to over 22 percent for some categories, such as the West African “[Senegalese](#).” To these figures may (or may not) be added the loss of nearly 18,000 Eurafrican soldiers among 120,000 mobilized. Among more than 250,000 laborers working overseas, calculating the loss of life is more problematic. If mortality rates among South Africans and southern Frenchmen serving in Europe amounted to a minimum of 7 percent, it is reasonable to assume that fatalities among other, but predominately North African, labor contingents, drawn from similar “Mediterranean” climates, that also suffered inordinately from diseases like tuberculosis in France, may have been equivalent. Total losses among soldiers and laborers probably approached 90,000 men, with French colonials bearing the overwhelming majority of these fatalities, perhaps in excess of 95 percent. British colonial subjects likely accounted for less than 5 percent of the dead, while German losses were negligible.

Losses in Africa: Soldiers and Laborers

The outbreak of war in Europe in 1914 was accompanied by the rapid expansion of the comparatively small pre-war colonial African mercenary armies into much larger forces. Used primarily since the European conquest to enforce compliance with the local wishes of colonial regimes, this build-up not only augmented French combat power in Europe, but also abetted Allied military aggression against Germany’s colonial possessions in Africa (or, in the Germans’ case, facilitated the defense of these territories). There was nothing new in this policy of colonial aggrandizement during continental wars; indeed, west Europeans states had practiced such policies for more than three centuries. What had changed, however, was the scale of possible mobilization; conflict on the peripheries of operations was now sustained, at least in part, by the new industrial infrastructures and the coercive capacities of nation states operating at the core of the struggle. The European colonial regimes mobilized tens of thousands of soldiers to fight in Africa and supported these troops logistically, especially in remote areas, with rudimentary pre-industrial transportation infrastructures, and also with hundreds of thousands of often forcibly conscripted, ill-fed, and disease-prone colonial porters and laborers.

Military operations were conducted in three sub-continental regions. In western Africa, French, British, and Belgian colonial troops invaded Togoland and Cameroon, where German resistance was ongoing from August 1914 until February 1916. In southern Africa, British South Africans and [Rhodesians occupied German Southwest Africa](#) between September 1914 and July 1915. In the much more protracted struggle in [eastern Africa](#), the Germans repulsed an initial British task force from India in October 1914, eluded a larger invasion by South African and Belgian Congolese troops throughout 1916, and, after expanding the conflict into neighboring Portuguese East Africa and Northern Rhodesia, only surrendered to units of the [King's African Rifles](#) in November 1918, after the Armistice was signed in Europe.

The following figures enumerate regional totals for soldiers and laborers participating in the three major zones of conflict in Africa, as well as losses incurred among them.

Region	Recruited	Deaths	Percentage
West Africans	51,350	5,450	10.6
South Africans	9,500	560	5.9
East Africans	74,450	9,230	12.4
Total	135,300	15,240	11.3

Table 3: African Soldiers in Africa^[11]

Region	Recruited ^[12]	Deaths	Percentage ^[13]
West Africans	158,500	Unknown	Above 9.8
South Africans	59,650	Unknown	Above 3.4
East Africans	1,247,000	More than 154,800	Above 12.4
Total	1,465,150	Unknown	Above 11.8

Table 4: African Laborers in Africa^[14]

About 135,000 African soldiers served in one or more of the three conflict zones on the continent, while at least ten times that number, about 1,465,000 laborers, provided logistical support for them, as well as an additional 70,000 European South African and 50,000 Indian troops. Casualties were influenced by the duration of the campaigns, the preponderance of force employed by the Allied colonial powers against the Germans, and, most significantly, by the local geography and ecological environment. Deaths from malnutrition and disease far outnumbered those from combat, often by a factor of twenty to one. Total losses among African soldiers may be reckoned at a minimum of 15,000 while those among laborers exceeded 150,000. The proportion of losses among those mobilized is also problematic. The most complete records, those of the British, suggest that losses among the usually better-fed and cared-for soldiers exceeded 10 percent of those mobilized, while

those of the all-too-often neglected carriers varied much more erratically, between perhaps 5 and 25 percent, depending on the logistical situation, the locale, and the validity of the record keeping. At a minimum they averaged nearly 12 percent overall and may have been substantially higher.

As with the mobilization of African troops for service in Europe, the burden of service in the colonial campaigns was also distributed disproportionately. Total British recruitment of African soldiers and laborers outnumbered their combined French, Belgian, Portuguese, and German counterparts on the order of two to one. The Allies, with vastly greater human resources to draw upon, mobilized manpower, sometimes amounting to over 80 percent of the adult male population, as in Nyasaland, where rates were nearly five to one for soldiers and over fifteen to one for laborers. Finally, the scale of the conflict waged in East Africa, and the losses accompanying it, dwarfed the campaigns conducted elsewhere on the continent. Nearly 1,350,000 Africans were mobilized in East Africa, or about 90 percent of all the soldiers and laborers in all of the African campaigns combined. Losses were likely proportionately higher there than in other zones of conflict and fell predominately on British recruits, totaling more than 150,000 men.

Losses in Africa: Civilians

In addition to losses suffered by African military personnel and the laborers supporting their operations, very large, but unknown numbers of African civilians perished during the war. In some cases where military operations occurred, as during the suppression of rebellions, which were often prompted by recruitment demands, a partial accounting of fatalities, albeit fragmentary and inexact, usually took place. In other instances of death, resulting from attempts to evade recruiters, famine prompted by a lack of manpower to till the fields, and diseases exacerbated by malnourishment, accounting is scant and often only anecdotal: “Behind us,” as one German officer serving in Cameroon remembered, “we leave destroyed fields, ransacked magazines and, for the immediate future starvation.”^[15]

What follows is an imprecise accounting of African civilian fatalities, which could be used to provide a frame of reference for further inquiry. It is a compilation of estimates by Vadim Erlichman, derived from the methodology pioneered by the Russian demographer Boris Uralnis (1906-1981), and based on peacetime population projections in the hypothetical absence of war.^[16] Wherever appropriate, semi-official estimates of civilian losses are also noted. As with the estimates concerning soldiers and laborers, the following tables are sub-divided between North, West, South, and East Africa, with fragmentary details, shedding further light on the overall losses, provided among the comments.

Region	Civilian Losses	Comments
North Africa	50,000	rebellions, famine
West Africa	327,000	war zone, rebellions
South Africa	?	war zone, rebellion
East Africa	365,500	war zone, rebellions, famine

Total	742,500
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Table 5: African Civilian Losses^[17]

Though inexact, these estimates offer significant insights. Among African peasant societies, which were far more fragile than their west-central European industrial counterparts, civilian losses were likely proportionately, and sometimes absolutely, higher than those suffered among the metropolitan populations of the imperial powers themselves. The former was probably the case in the French, German and Portuguese colonies, while the absolute number of civilian deaths among African subjects may have surpassed those among their British and Belgian counterparts.^[18] African distress was compounded by the fact that the southern, and especially eastern zones of conflict between 1914-1918, corresponded to areas that had already suffered severely during the immediate pre-war era. For example, during the Maji Maji Rebellion, the systematic slaughter of the Herero and Ovambo peoples, the abuses of the Congo Free State, and the Boer War, which, consequently, exacted an additional heavy toll on already weakened populations.^[19] In this regard, the brutality of imposing European rule was but a prelude to still more sacrifices demanded of Africans by their new colonial masters a decade later.

Conclusion

The total number of Africans mobilized during the war was about 2,350,000 men, amounting to over 2 percent of the continent's probable pre-war population of just under 100 million. African military and labor losses may be reckoned at about 255,000 men, distributed among the European imperial powers as follows:^[20]

European Power	African Soldiers	African Laborers	Total
British Colonies	7,850	127,100	134,950
French Colonies	73,450	Unknown	73,450
Belgian Colonies	2,600	15,600	18,200
Portuguese Colonies	Unknown	8,000	8,000
German Colonies	14,000	6,400	20,400
Total	97,900 [15.3]	157,100 [9.1]	255,000 [10.9]

Table 6: African Military Deaths by European Power^[21]

This represented human sacrifice on a very large scale, indeed. Compared to other industrial powers on the peripheries of the European-centered conflict, notably the [United States](#) and [Japan](#), the losses suffered by African soldiers and laborers, reckoned as a percentage of those mobilized, were far heavier. If colonial military fatalities are conservatively estimated at more than 10 percent, they were much higher than those of Japan (0.5 percent) and the [USA](#) (2.7 percent). They were comparable to, or slightly exceeded, those suffered by the [British](#) (10.2 percent), and among the major imperial

powers were only surpassed by the [French](#) and the [Germans](#) (about 16.1 percent each). Moreover, when gauged in absolute instead of proportional numbers, the loss of Africans mobilized by the colonial military authorities was officially reckoned at half those of all Belgian fatalities, and may have been higher than for comparable Portuguese deaths.^[22]

This loss of life was also distributed unequally. Among those serving or supporting the colonial armies in Europe, mortality rates reflected the improved diet and health care of industrial societies. Soldiers were perhaps twice as likely to die as laborers, while combatants' fatalities on the Western Front, especially among the "shock troops" recruited from among "[warrior races](#)", were nearly three times as great. In agrarian Africa, older historical patterns persisted. Malnutrition and disease, not combat, remained the primary killers, and non-combatant laborers, who were often less well cared for than the ostensibly more important fighting men they supported, paradoxically appear to have suffered slightly higher death rates.^[23]

When civilian losses were added to those of the military, African fatalities during the war probably exceeded 1 million lives, or more than 1 percent of the population. This burden, too, was distributed disproportionately. Some areas, such as independent Ethiopia, were barely touched by the conflict; in other European colonies, and especially German East Africa, total losses may have approached, if not exceeded, those of the Germans themselves.^[24] Though both European military and civilian leaders were profligate with the human lives during the Great War, the results of this African sacrifice were negligible. To be sure, East Africa (with its 800 German-owned plantations) was shared out between British, Belgian, and Portuguese territorial claimants, as were the other German colonies, which were divided between the French and British in accordance with their respective contribution to the war effort. However, this outcome depended not on the result of the fighting in Africa, but rather in Europe, and would have likely been included in the provisions of the [Versailles Peace Treaty](#), as was the [occupation of the German Rhineland](#), for instance, had these campaigns never been waged.

Such general observations, however sobering, obscure the personal tragedies concealed behind this catalogue of seemingly abstract statistics. It is perhaps appropriate to close by remembering the unborn child of Seydou Amadou Thiam's sister, who perished during a miscarriage when her grieving mother's brother was forcibly taken by recruiters from their village. This loss was never officially recorded by the French, but it personalizes the dubious merits of Africans being compelled to fight and die (or starve) in a war, ostensibly for the benefits of European "civilization," that was never truly theirs. It is also well to remember the words of the Senegalese combat veteran [Mahmout Demba \(1901-?\)](#) who offered an African interpretation about the enduring meaning of this conflict: "I don't know whether anything lasting resulted from the war, but I do know that no one can replace a human life."^[25]

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Notes

1. † In addition to Africans, other subject peoples in the African diaspora - notably West Indians, African Americans and African Canadians, as well as South Asians, Indo-Chinese, and Chinese - were recruited as soldiers or laborers during the war. In all, about 2 million soldiers and an additional 2 million laborers were mobilized during the conflict.
2. † Keegan, John: *The Face of Battle. A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo and the Somme*, Harmondsworth 1976, p. 276.
3. † On the imprecision of record keeping in Africa, see: Page, Melvin E.: Introduction. Black men in a White Men's War, in: Page, Melvin E. (eds.): *Africa and the First World War*, London 1987, p. 1-27.
4. † On differing definitions among the Allied armies about when "missing" soldiers were reclassified as "dead," see: Rapport Marin, in: *Journal Officiel de la République Française. Documents Parlementaires, Chambre*, 1920, table 2, annex 633, pp. 26-55, 101.
5. † Michel, Marc: *L'Appel à l'Afrique. Contributions et réactions à l'effort de guerre en A.O.F. (1914-1919)*, Paris 1982.
6. † Omissi, David: *Indian Voices from the Great War*, London 1999.
7. † These numbers do not include 93,000 European colonies from North Africa and other French African colonies, of whom about 13,000 died (13.9 percent), nor does it include 26,877 South Africans of European ancestry serving in Europe or Egypt/Palestine, among whom 4,909 died (18.3 percent). See, respectively, Frémeaux, Jacques: *Les Colonies dans la Grande Guerre, 1914-1918*, Paris 2006, pp. 55, 202; and *The War Office: Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War, 1914-1920*, London 1922, p. 348. Sources: Rapport Marin, 1920, pp. 58-59, 130; Frémeaux, *Les Colonies* 2006, pp. 63, 202; Lunn, Joe: *Memoirs of the Maelstrom. A Senegalese Oral History of the First World War*, Portsmouth 1999, pp. 72-73, 140-147, and 154, n. 83; and Sarraut, Albert: *La mise en valeur des colonies Françaises*, Paris 1923, pp. 42, 44.
8. † These official figures do not include illegal immigrants.
9. † Fatalities among North, West, and some groups of South African laborers in Europe are unknown. Estimates for death rates among North and West Africans are derived from fatality rates from diseases among soldiers from the south of France and West Africa, respectively. These are also minimal estimates, which do not take into account fatalities from industrial accidents, racial violence, etc. The same was true for South African laborers, whose records of fatalities are fragmentary and incomplete. See Frémeaux, *Les Colonies* 2006, p. 204; Lunn, *Memoirs* 1999, pp. 93, 106, and 117 n. 69; Lasnet: Notes concernant l'état sanitaire des divers contingents Européens et Indigènes de l'Armée du Rhin, in: *Annales de Médecine et de Pharmacie coloniale* 20 (1922), pp. 273-89.
10. † Sources: Koller, Christian: *'Von Wilden aller Rassen niedergemetzelt: Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)*, Stuttgart 2001, pp. 89-90, 94, 96; *The War Office: Statistics*, 1922, p.772; Roberts, A.D. (ed.): *The Cambridge History of Africa. Volume 7 from 1905 to 1940*, Cambridge 1986, pp. 560-61; Sarraut, *Mise en Valeur* 1923, p. 43; and Willian, B.P.: *The South African Native Labor Contingent*, in: *Journal of African History* 19/1, (1978) pp. 61, 77.

11. ↑ These figures do not include South Africans of European ancestry who were mobilized during the war. Aside from those serving in Europe, these were officially reckoned by the government at 109,197 which was certainly an over-estimate. The actual figure is probably closer to 45,000 to 50,000. Deaths among these South Africans numbered 2,804 (2.6 percent officially), nor does it include the 5,200 Southern Rhodesians, as well as nearly 19,000 Portuguese reinforcements sent to Angola and Mozambique between 1914 and 1918, and 48,000 Indians. See The War Office: Statistics 1922, pp. 364, 379, 384; Strachan, Hew: The First World War in Africa, Oxford 2004, p. 13; pp. 79-80, 82, 161-2, 176, 183. Page, Africa 1987, p. 13. Sources: Killingray, David: Repercussions of World War One in the Gold Coast, in: Journal of African History 19/1, (1978) pp. 46, n. 36 and 50-51, n. 55; Michel, L'Appel 1982, p. 42; Sarraut, Mise en Valeur 1923, pp. 41 and 44; Strachan, The First World War 2004, pp. 14, 22, 91, 103, 182; Farwell, Byron: The Great War in Africa, 1914-1918, New York and London 1986, pp. 26, 31, 71; Paice, Edward: World War I: The African Front: An Imperial War on the African Continent, New York 2008, pp. 102, 171, 299, 388; Cambridge History of Africa, p. 560; The War Office: Statistics 1922, pp. 352, 383; Hodges, G. W. T.: African Manpower Statistics for the British Forces in East Africa, 1914-1918, in: Journal of African History 19/1 (1978) p. 116; Anuario de Moçambique (1917), cited in Paice, World War I, 2008, p. 140; Boell, Ludwig: Die Operationen in Ostafrika,, in: cited in Strachan, The First World War, 2004, p. 103; Ministère de l'intérieur: L'Annuaire statistique de la Belgique et du Congo Belge, 1915-1919, vol. 46, Brussels 1920, p. 100.
12. ↑ These totals may include minor double counting of carriers serving first the Germans in Kamerun and German East Africa, then the British, while some over-counting, owing to double entries, occurred among South Africans. Official records indicate the recruitment figure for East Africans may be an underestimate by at least 474,000 carriers.
13. ↑ Records of total regional deaths are either incomplete (e.g., British West Africans in Kamerun), undifferentiated (e.g., Portuguese Angola), unreliable (Portuguese East Africa, Belgian Congo, Nyasaland) or were not kept (e.g., Southern Rhodesia). Death rates are based on fragmentary sub-regional compilations of fatalities or death rates and represent likely absolute minimums.
14. ↑ Sources: Killingray, David/Mathews, James: Beasts Of Burden. The British West African Carriers in the First World War, in: Canadian Journal of African Studies, 12 (1978), pp.10, 18; Strachan, The First World War 2004, pp. 5, 6, 8, 41; Michel, L'Appel 1982, p. 44; Frémeaux, Les Colonies 2006, p. 73; Hodges, African Manpower 1978, pp. 105-6, 114-116; Cambridge History of Africa, p. 561; Paice, World War I 2008, p. 398; L'Annuaire statistique de la Belgique et du Congo Belge, p. 100; Pélissier, René: Naissance du Mozambique. résistance et révoltes anticoloniales, 1854-1918, vol. 2, Orgeval 1984, pp. 684-85, cited in Strachan, The First World War 2004, p. 6.
15. ↑ Deppe, Ludwig: Mit Lettow-Vorbeck durch Afrika, Berlin, 1919, p. 393, cited in Strachan, The First World War 2004, p. 95.
16. ↑ Зрлиман, В: ЛОТЕРИ НЃРОДОНЃСЕЛЕНИЯ В XX ВЕКЕ [Loss of Population in the Twentieth Century], Moscow 2004, pp. 83-99; Uralnis, Boris: Wars and Population, Moscow 1974, pp. 5-45.

17. ↑ Erlichman's assessment of 20th-century losses due to war, famine, epidemics, political persecutions, etc, is controversial, especially for the Stalinist era in Russia, which is the focus for his analysis. In an African context, three problems present themselves with his projections: semi-official estimates of civilian losses (especially in African war zones such as German East Africa, Portuguese East Africa, and Nyasaland) are frequently significantly higher; there are areas of omission (e.g., Morocco, Tunisia, Nyasaland) where losses should have been included but were not; and the census data itself upon which these projections are based, especially in Africa for the period before 1914, are often inexact. Sources: Зрлман, *Loss of Population* 2004, pp. 83-99. See also: Paice, *World War I* 2008, p. 398 (who cites 365,000 civilian deaths instead of 135,000 in German East Africa, Rwanda, and Burundi); and Paice, *World War I* 2008, p. 378 and *Diario de Noticias*. 14-15 July 1920, in: *Rapport Marin*, 1920, (which estimate Portuguese East African civilian losses respectively at 153,000 and 307,000 instead of 50,000). On losses from specific instances of flight, rebellion, or starvation, see also: *Cambridge History of Africa*, pp. 288-292, 353, 424, 514, 621; Michel, *L'Appel* 1982, p. 54; Lunn, *Memoirs* 1999, pp. 34-36, 49, 50 n. 7, 51 n. 9, 55, 56 n. 68, 58, n. 84; Killingray, *Military and Labor Policies in the Gold Coast During the First World War*, in: *Africa and the First World War*, p. 164; Strachan, *The First World War* 2004, pp. 4, 95, 131, 165, 176-7, 181; *The War Office: Statistics* 1922, p. 348; Paice, *World War I* 2008, pp. 129, 156, 288, 356, 394; and Page, *Africa* 1987, p. 17.
18. ↑ Using Erlichman's estimates (which do not include deaths from the 1918-1919 [Spanish Influenza pandemic](#)), African civilian losses were proportionately higher than those of Europeans in the French colonies (182,000 among 13 million Africans compared to 300,000 French among 40 million), the German colonies (185,000 among 15 million compared to 426,000 among 65 million European civilians), and in Portuguese East Africa (50,000 among three million Africans compared to 82,000 among 6 million in Europeans). In absolute numbers, 175,500 colonial Africans died compared to 107,000 British civilians, while 150,000 Congolese likely died compared to 62,000 Belgians. See: Зрлман, *Loss of Population* 2004, pp. 83-99; and Frémeaux, *Les Colonies* 2006, pp. 11-12.
19. ↑ Perhaps 200,000 Africans died during the Maji-Maji Rebellion, 1905-07; likely between 150,000-200,000 Herero and Ovambo peoples between 1904-1906 (though only 75,000 deaths were officially admitted); between 5 and 8 million Congolese perished between 1885 and 1908, while much of South Africa was left in ruins by the Boer War. See Paice, *World War I* 2008, pp. 1, 94, 165, 354; and Strachan, *The First World War* 2004, p. 98.
20. ↑ These figures represent a modest upward revision of total African losses estimated by Page and Strachan at approximately 2,000,000 soldiers and laborers mobilized, among whom about 200,000-250,000 lost their lives. See: Page, *Africa* 1987, p. 14, and Strachan, *The First World War* 2004, p. 3.
21. ↑ These totals are probably underestimates. Most are based on incomplete data because of the failure to record sub-categories of information (e.g., omitting laborers as a group, counting only combat fatalities and not those from disease, or, in the case of the Portuguese, not differentiating between losses suffered by African and European soldiers, etc.). Sources: See tables 1-4 above.
22. ↑ Three-quarters of Portuguese military losses occurred in Africa, but unlike the records of other colonial powers, they are ethnically undifferentiated between Africans and Europeans.
23. ↑ On comparative casualties, see tables above. On the recruitment of "warrior races" among the French, British, and Belgian colonial armies, see: Lunn, *Memoirs* 1999, pp. 142-147; and Strachan, *The First World War* 2004, p. 166.

24. † See tables above and The War Office: Statistics 1922, p. 355. German East African and especially German wartime fatalities have long been the subject of controversy owing to the imprecision of calculating civilian casualties. Estimates of total losses in colonial East Africa range between 2.6 and 5.9 percent of the population; for Germany, between 3.4 and 4.2 percent.
25. † Lunn, *Memoirs* 1999, pp. 234-235.

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