

Fighting Hunger, Dealing with Shortage. Everyday Life under Occupation in World War II Europe (2 vols.). Hrsg. von Tatjana Tönsmeier, Peter Haslinger, Włodzimirz Borodziej, Stefan Martens und Irina Sherbakova, in Zusammenarbeit mit Francis Igrave und Agnes Laba. (History of Warfare, Bd. 133.) Brill. Leiden—Boston 2021. CXV, 1374 S. ISBN 978-90-04-44824-7. (€ 249,—)

The rapidly growing body of literature on the history of World War II and life under German occupation in Europe usually excludes the everyday life experiences of local populations, interactions of the occupiers with the occupied, and their daily efforts to survive the occupation marked by food shortages, severe malnutrition, and intensifying supply problems. This thoroughly prepared source edition, stemming from the research project “Societies under German Occupation—Experiences and Everyday Life in World War II,” by contrast, considers these issues and aims to answer the question of how millions of people impacted by the German occupation responded to these scarcities and quotidian struggles with food insecurity. The book under review presents a collection of archival documents assembled from 20 European countries, from the Soviet Union to the Channel Islands, that focus on different perspectives of daily life experiences in Europe during World War II and its immediate aftermath. According to the editors, this is the first edited collection of archival documents dealing with shortage and supply in German-occupied Europe to contain a large number of archival sources and which is linguistically accessible to the international academic community, as all documents are translated into English.

The two volumes consist of an extensive introduction, explanatory editorial guide, and 600 annotated and text-based sources (four documents also include imagery) presented in a strictly chronological order. To contextualize this rich collection of documents, German historian Tatjana Tönsmeier, in cooperation with other international scholars, provides readers with an introductory chapter on everyday life under occupation in World War II Europe by focusing on the above-mentioned issues of hunger and shortages. The edition also includes important research instruments that facilitate navigation through this comprehensive archival collection. In the beginning of the book, the sources are listed by country and date. Additionally, at the end of this publication, a list of archives as well as indices of subjects and places are provided. These additional lists enable readers to study the sources based on their own specific research interests.

A well-structured introduction gives a concise account of war and occupation in Europe from a comparative perspective. It also outlines various source types that can be found in this edition and briefly discusses the archival situation in various countries whilst researching the topic of supply and scarcities in German-occupied Europe. At the end of the introduction, the main findings based on the analysis of the selected sources from a pan-European perspective are presented. Among the key commonalities across occupied Europe, the authors underline the existence of rationing systems that “hierarchized *all* members of *all* occupied societies along the racist and utilitarian lines of the occupiers” (p. lvii, emphasis in original). Likewise, common efforts across Europe to develop certain coping strategies to respond to shortages as well as the occupiers’ attempts, especially in Eastern Europe, to violently respond to these survival strategies, are outlined as common European-wide experiences during World War II. However, the findings mostly emphasize the communalities that existed under German occupation across Europe and only briefly approach the differences that most probably existed in various countries during the war. According to the authors of the introduction, “it was often not so much in concrete forms of behavior that the occupied societies in Western and Eastern Europe differed [...]” (pp. lvii–lviii); however, they do not elaborate more extensively on these distinctions.

It would also have been interesting to read how the history of emotions could be integrated within this research framework, as the sources presented in this book reveal a wide set of emotions, ranging from stress to anger and fear. Military historian Lukas Milewski argues that: “If the human element is truly the font of the most enduring dimensions of

war, then one must be interested in the human experience of strategy. This necessarily includes both stress and the emotions it engenders.”⁶ Thus, in the case of the quotidian experiences of the local populations of the occupied societies, it would be especially useful to investigate them from the perspective of emotions, as each survival strategy usually has an emotional facet that has to be uncovered.

The archival sources are presented with annotations and, if necessary, additional information is provided in the footnotes. It should also be noted that the editors have decided to shorten some sources and, therefore, certain passages of the archival documents are omitted. Of course, the commentators provided footnotes for the deleted passages, briefly explaining the excluded information. Nevertheless, in some cases, scholars will not have a possibility to read the sources in full length and will be offered only a limited insight into the archival material. Additionally, the readers of these volumes also have to be very well informed about a large number of historical contexts, since the majority of these sources are extracted from very specific historical and regional contexts. Therefore, a more profound engagement with this material will require additional research, since the edition offers only a brief glimpse into a possible source collection that is stored in a specific European country. However, to read beyond the selected sources on similar topics, often an additional European-wide language competence will be required.

These two comprehensive volumes deal with several significant research desiderata. Firstly, despite the extensive research on World War II, the editors correctly observe that the majority of the research in this field, especially that dealing with the history of exploitation, has been written from three perspectives, mostly focusing on macro-economic history, giving attention to the agency of the perpetrators, and exploring the exploitation of forced labor. Even though there exists, as this edition shows, an extensive archival collection of historical records on this topic, the everyday life experiences of the ordinary members of the occupied societies remain largely unexplored: “By contrast we know a good deal less about how people coped with shortages and scarcities or how they sought to survive in a time when starvation afflicted entire societies” (p. xxi). Therefore, this source edition can be seen as an important contribution to this field of research. Secondly, the collected sources not only document daily experiences in different European countries but also through its wide geographical spectrum and chronological order of their presentation provide a possibility to read the wartime history of Europe anew, namely from the transnational and comparative perspective, thus crossing the borders of strictly national historiographies. This provides an innovative look into the history of the German occupation in Europe and shows its interconnectedness.

Along with the transnational reading of wartime history, this edition also offers its readers a gender-based perspective. As the authors of the introductory section note: “Among the most notable transformation for people in the occupied societies was the impact which war and occupation had on the gender and generational composition of society” (p. xxxviii). Therefore, they assert that “a gender-historical perspective is essential to the investigation of occupied societies” (p. liii), as it was mostly women, children and the elderly who stayed at home and had to deal with everyday life struggles. “The Flemish women are patient—but they can’t go on like this—they have understood that they have to fight for their children’s lives” (Doc. 106). This is how, for instance, the Belgian newspaper presented in this book, documented women’s protests against food scarcity across the country. In this collection, the selected archival records not only reveal the deaths or sufferings of women and children from malnutrition—see, for instance, the death certificate of a two-year-old girl from Greece (Doc. 201)—and sexual assaults by Germans and their collaborators in Smolensk (Doc. 340, Doc. 463), but also show how women sought to oppose the occupiers by developing various survival strategies. A letter

⁶ LUKAS MILEVSKI: *Battle and Its Emotional Effect in War Termination*, in: *Comparative Strategy* 39 (2020), 6, pp. 535–548, here p. 545.

from a building supervisor in Kharkiv convicting several women of sex work (Doc. 310) as well as the interrogation protocol of a female resident of Kharkiv, who had engaged in prostitution (Doc. 295), portray women sex workers during the war in occupied Ukraine. Such topics as women's public fight against unfair salaries paid in certain industries in Lithuania (Doc. 349) or the activities of women as partisans and their active fight against the occupiers in the Bryansk area in Russia (Doc. 371, Doc. 373) are discussed in these sources as well. Therefore, this geographically diverse archival material can be used for writing a transnational history of everyday life experiences under German occupation from a gendered perspective.

In conclusion, this source edition is an important contribution to deepening our historical understanding of World War II. It gives us new insights into the historical dimensions of shortage and supply in German-occupied Europe and contributes to turning our attention to the local population of the occupied societies. This publication is mostly directed towards an international English-speaking academic, rather than general, audience. It can serve not only for scholarly research, but also pedagogical purposes. Hopefully, this book will stimulate scholars to write a pan-European history of daily life experiences under German occupation that will uncover many more aspects of what the ordinary life and daily struggles of the members of the occupied societies looked like across Europe in World War II.

Vilnius

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Polish Jews in the Soviet Union (1939–1959). History and Memory of Deportation, Exile, and Survival. Hrsg. von Katharina Friedla und Markus Nesselrodt. Academic Studies Press. Boston 2021. XXIX, 319 S. ISBN 978-1-64469-749-8. (\$ 139,-)

Der Sammelband legt einmal mehr Zeugnis ab von dem neu erwachten Interesse, das der Erforschung der jüdischen Fluchtbewegung angesichts des Nationalsozialismus seit einigen Jahren entgegengebracht wird. Im Mittelpunkt stehen hier ausschließlich Staatsangehörige der Zweiten Polnischen Republik, die sich 1939–1941 nach Osten – in die Sowjetunion – begaben, um dem Kriegsgeschehen und der nationalsozialistischen Judenverfolgung zu entfliehen. Und es geht hier einmal mehr darum, ob es sich bei ihnen in erster Linie um gewöhnliche Kriegsflüchtlinge oder um Überlebende des Holocaust handelt.

Für Letzteres spricht sich Antony Polonsky in seinem Vorwort aus. Die Hrsg. Katharina Friedla und Markus Nesselrodt blicken in ihrer Einführung vor allem auf die einschlägigen historiografischen Entwicklungen der vergangenen Jahre. Sie bedauern, dass es so schwierig sei, „to apply a single integrating term for all Polish Jews who survived the war in the unoccupied Soviet Union“ (S. xxiii).

Die folgenden zwölf Beiträge sind in zwei Gruppen gegliedert, die mit „Geschichte“ (acht Texte) und „Erinnerung“ (vier Texte) überschrieben sind. Im Abschnitt über die historischen Geschehnisse zwischen 1939 und 1959 werden vielfach autobiografische Aufzeichnungen und Zeugnisse herangezogen. Nesselrodt unternimmt einen Vergleich zweier Fluchtbewegungen: derjenigen nach dem deutschen Angriff auf Polen 1939 mit derjenigen, die im Juni 1941 einsetzte. Eliyana Adler analysiert Aussagen von Kindern und Jugendlichen über ihre „wartime journeys of Polish Jewish youth“ (S. 30). Den Beziehungen zwischen „polnischen Juden und katholischen Polen“ (S. xxviii) widmet sich Albert Kaganovitch in seinem kritischen Überblick „Together and Apart. Poles and Polish Jews in the War-Torn Soviet Union“. Im umfangreichsten Beitrag des Sammelbands befasst sich Friedla mit den jüdischen Soldaten in der polnischen Armee, die von 1943 an in der Sowjetunion aufgestellt wurde. Sie fragt danach, auf welche Weise die Verheerungen der Schoa auf die nach Westen vorrückenden jüdischen Soldaten gewirkt haben, wie sie deutschen Soldaten und Zivilisten entgegentraten und welche Schlüsse sie aus dem Erlebten zogen, wenn es um ihre persönlichen Zukunftspläne ging. Wojciech Marciniak schildert die Rückführung von „polnischen Katholiken und Juden“ aus dem Innern der