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Author(s): HEATHER JONES
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HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

AS THE CENTENARY APPROACHES: THE REGENERATION OF FIRST WORLD WAR HISTORIOGRAPHY*

HEATHER JONES
The London School of Economics and Political Science

ABSTRACT. *This historiographical review explores the impact of new interdisciplinary, comparative, and cultural approaches to studying the First World War upon the historiography, as the centenary of the conflict approaches in 2014. It assesses to what extent these approaches have led to new consensus regarding five key established historiographical questions: why did war break out; why did the Allies win; were the generals to blame for the high casualty rates; how did men endure trench warfare; and to what extent did civilian society accept and endorse the war effort? It also examines how these historiographical approaches have led to the emergence of new themes – in particular, military occupation, radicalization, race, and the wartime body – in the war's historiography. Ultimately, it concludes that how the war is understood has undergone radical revision since the 1990s as a result of these changes.*

Few historical fields can have regenerated themselves as successfully as First World War studies in the last twenty years. As the centenary of the war approaches in 2014, it is clear that the historiography of the conflict has undergone a major transformation, beginning in the 1990s, with the turn to cultural history that has enriched the historical understanding of the subject beyond all recognition. Far from going gentle into the good night of historical obscurity with the death of the last veterans, the war's historiography has embraced new cultural and interdisciplinary, as well as comparative and transnational, approaches, which have reinvigorated established debates, particularly on well-known topics, such as the role of civilian society in the conflict, or the question of troop morale on the battlefield, as well as revealing previously overlooked themes for scholarly study. This article aims to assess the impact of these new approaches upon First World War historiography, as well as their limitations. It will first explore to what extent these approaches have

Department of International History, London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London, WC2A 2AE H.S.Jones@lse.ac.uk

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affected our understanding of five key well-established questions, central to historiographical debate about the war, and, second, assess four key new themes – military occupation, radicalization, race, and the body – that have emerged in First World War studies, largely as a result of the adoption of new cultural and comparative methodologies.

I

The famous perennial questions relating to the war have met with perpetual revision since the conflict occurred as each new generation of historians has encountered them: why did war break out; why did the Allies win; were the generals (and for British audiences, was Haig) to blame for the high casualty rates; how did men endure trench warfare; and to what extent did civilian society accept and endorse the war effort? Yet, in the past twenty years, new approaches have clearly revitalized these debates, in ways that merit closer analysis here.

Regarding the first question, why did war break out, there continues to be no overall historical consensus, although thankfully the bitterness which marked both the war guilt debate of the interwar years and the Fischer debate of the 1960s, has given way to a more dispassionate discussion regarding the attribution of responsibility.[1] The recent historiography reveals two emerging, and clearly interrelated, trends: first, a renewed emphasis upon the July Crisis, placing the main weight of causation upon the short-term decision-making in the month immediately preceding the conflict, with the longer-term causes depicted as more secondary contributory factors, and second, a debunking of older arguments that a major European war was 'inevitable', which again implicitly puts the focus back upon what happened in July 1914 to make war break out. Both these trends illustrate the extent to which traditional political historiographical approaches continue to dominate the debate on the origins of the war, although increasingly they engage with international relations studies and cultural histories of public opinion, and decision-makers' mentalities are also being integrated into the discussion in valuable ways.

With regard to the first trend, opinion remains divided among historians as to what weight to place upon the different roles that key states, particularly Serbia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary, played in the July Crisis. In a comprehensive review article in 2007, Samuel R. Williamson Jr and Ernest R. May summarized the latest historiographical evidence as showing that Austria-Hungary reached the decision to launch war on Serbia in the aftermath of the Sarajevo assassinations without pressure from Berlin, arguing that 'Fischer's thesis that Berlin pushed Vienna into war no longer stands.'[2] The most recent work on Serbia, by Mark Cornwall, among others, has also concluded that, faced with

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[1] Samuel R. Williamson Jr and Ernest R. May, 'An identity of opinion: historians and July 1914', *Journal of Modern History*, 79 (2007), pp. 335–87.   [2] Ibid., p. 355.

what it saw as the need to defend its sovereignty against Austro-Hungarian belligerence, Serbia determined to resist the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum independently; Russia had far less effect on this Serbian stance than previously presumed.[3] In other words, Austria-Hungary determined upon a local war against Serbia at all costs, during the July Crisis, even if this risked a larger conflagration.

Germany's role continues to be controversial. Debate continues as to what degree Germany's deliberate support for Austria-Hungary's stance was the crucial impetus that escalated the situation beyond the Balkans and whether Germany could have restrained Austria-Hungary's belligerence. Although Fritz Fischer's argument that Germany planned war from 1912 has been largely discounted in light of later historiographical findings, German support in July 1914 for Austria-Hungary's intention to go to war with Serbia remains clear, as is the fact that Berlin was also well aware of the risk of European escalation that such a war entailed.[4] Debate, however, continues as to what extent Berlin actively wanted such escalation – the preventive war thesis – to break out of its perceived encirclement or was gambling that escalation would not happen and the war would remain localized to the Balkans. John Röhl's work emphasizes the extent to which Germany deliberately engineered the outbreak of war.[5] Mark Hewitson highlights German leaders risking war because they thought they could win.[6] Annika Mombauer has shown conclusively that Helmuth von Moltke was far more consequential and warmongering than previously thought.[7] In sum, in light of the overall historiographical findings, a thesis of shared German-Austro-Hungarian co-responsibility remains very difficult to dismiss. Although two new studies by Sean McMeekin on Russia and Stefan Schmidt on France have argued that these states bore the major share of responsibility for war in Europe in 1914, based on both their long-term foreign policy strategies and their decisions in the July Crisis, their conclusions remain a minority view.[8]

An alternative, interesting, interpretation of the July Crisis is presented in the recent influential study by Christopher Clark, *The sleepwalkers: how Europe went to war in 1914* (London, 2012). Clark argues that it is not possible clearly to attribute responsibility for the outbreak of the war to any one state or group – instead, he points to a series of intermeshing dynamics that drove a

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[3] Ibid., p. 352.   [4] Ibid., p. 361.

[5] John C. G. Röhl, 'The curious case of the Kaiser's disappearing war guilt: Wilhelm II in July 1914', in Holger Afflerbach and David Stevenson, eds., *An improbable war? The outbreak of World War I and European political culture before 1914* (New York, NY, and Oxford, 2007), pp. 75–94.

[6] Mark Hewitson, *Germany and the causes of the First World War* (Oxford, 2004).

[7] Annika Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke and the origins of the First World War* (Cambridge, 2001).

[8] Sean McMeekin, *The Russian origins of the First World War* (Cambridge, MA, 2011); Stefan Schmidt, *Frankreichs Außenpolitik in der Julikrise 1914: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Ausbruchs des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Munich, 2009).

sequence of decisions across Europe's interrelated chancelleries, before and
during July 1914, which cumulatively contributed to the final conflagration
outcome, although Clark does attribute particular weight to Serbian decisions
in how the chain dynamic unfolded, impeccably researched in his study. This
reflects a more general trend in the historiography to reassert the importance of
the Balkan origins of the war, and, in particular, the first and second Balkan
Wars of 1912–1913 and 1913 as a key prelude phase to what happened in 1914.

Thus, the renewed debate on the July Crisis reveals no agreement among
historians regarding attributing responsibility for the outbreak of the war.
However, there is an increasing, and welcome, trend across the historiography
towards contextualizing the decision-makers' motivations in greater detail.[9]
Who willed a war in the face of other, non-belligerent alternative choices, as
opposed to who accepted it reluctantly under duress believing there was no
other option; what kind of war did the decision-makers believe they were
choosing; what cultural attitudes to war were held by elites; to what extent was a
pan-European war expected or anticipated before the July Crisis of 1914?[10]
These are the more nuanced questions that the latest historiography uses to
distinguish how 1914 unfolded in the way that it did.

The current historiographical re-evaluation of the July Crisis is thus clearly
closely related to the second trend in the historiography on the outbreak of the
war: a reassessment of the question as to whether an international war was
inevitable or not. The increasing interdisciplinarity of First World War studies is
evident here, with international relations theorists and historians alike debating
whether war was unavoidable due to the flawed structures of the international
system. In other words, this trend in the historiography on the origins of the war
is more interested in systemic crisis than *Sonderweg*, as illustrated very clearly
in two key new books: *The origins of the First World War* by William Mulligan
(Cambridge, 2010) and *An improbable war? The outbreak of World War I and
European political culture before 1914,* edited by Holger Afflerbach and David
Stevenson (New York, NY, and Oxford, 2007). The overall verdict on this
question of the war's inevitability currently falls heavily on the side of the
argument that war *was* avoidable in 1914 and that its immediate outbreak
following the July Crisis largely came as a surprise, a conclusion also emphasized
by Michael Neiberg in a 2011 study and by Christopher Clark. Indeed, Clark
depicts the impact of the Sarajevo assassinations as a 'shock' to the international
system, akin to September the 11th, that changed the political landscape
dramatically.[11] He also highlights the agency of the key decision-makers in

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[9] Richard F. Hamilton and Holger H. Herwig, eds., *War Planning, 1914* (Cambridge, 2010).
[10] See, on these questions, the special edition of *Francia: Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte,* ed. Heather Jones and Arndt Weinrich, on 'The pre-war period: imagined wars, future wars' (forthcoming, 2013).
[11] Michael Neiberg, *Dance of the furies: Europe and the outbreak of World War I* (Cambridge, MA, 2011); Christopher Clark, *The sleepwalkers: how Europe went to war in 1914* (London, 2012).

the wake of the assassinations, restoring a sense of contingency and chance to the outbreak of the war.

As Mulligan's and Afflerbach and Stevenson's books show, traditional political and diplomatic analysis on the origins of the war now increasingly integrates cultural approaches in order to assess the role of public opinion and political mentalities in the decision-making process that led to the outbreak of conflict. Yet, we still need more research into the collective cultural mentalities of the pre-war period, particularly those of diplomats and military establishments, and how these contributed to the decision for war in 1914. New methodologies currently emerging in the fields of the history of emotions, a field pioneered by Ute Frevert, and of masculinities could fruitfully be applied here.[12] One area where such work has begun is the question of pre-war honour codes and their role in the outbreak of the war, explored in 1995 by Avner Offer, and more recently by Ute Frevert, who has examined how masculine concepts of honour prevented states from backing down during the July Crisis.[13] A similar ground-breaking use of cultural approaches to investigate older questions is employed by Jan Rüger who reassesses the traditional topic of the Anglo-German naval race in terms of how naval power was constructed in pre-war Britain and Germany through what he describes as 'naval theatre'. Rüger investigates a host of rituals, in particular fleet reviews and the launches of warships, that put the navy on the public stage, revealing the extent to which navies amassed power through symbolism and seduced the general public through leisure cultures: for example, the Kaiser's fleet put on night-time light displays for the masses in Kiel harbour, using the ships' searchlights in co-ordinated performances.[14] In sum, over forty years since James Joll made his visionary, but long unheeded, call for historians to consider the role of 'unspoken assumptions' in the decision for war, the advent of cultural history is finally facilitating precisely this kind of analysis of mindsets and value systems.[15]

The most recent studies on the second of our perennial questions, why did the Allies win the war, have generally continued to espouse political and military history approaches. David Stevenson's impressive international study *With our backs to the wall: victory and defeat in 1918* (London, 2011), argues for the highly contingent nature of Allied victory, emphasizing that the war's outcome very nearly went the other way. Stevenson points to Allied weakness between late 1917 and spring 1918 when they were hit by a string of serious setbacks – Caporetto, the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Ludendorff

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[12] See Ute Frevert's work on the historicity of emotions: Ute Frevert, *Vergängliche Gefühle* (Göttingen, 2013).

[13] Avner Offer, 'Going to war in 1914: a matter of honor?', *Politics and Society*, 23 (1995), 213–41; Ute Frevert, 'Honor, gender, and power: the politics of satisfaction in pre-war Europe', in Afflerbach and Stevenson, eds., *An improbable war*, pp. 233–55.

[14] Jan Rüger, *The great naval game: Britain and Germany in the age of empire* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 1–2, 192.

[15] James Joll, *1914: the unspoken assumptions* (London, 1968).

Offensives – before substantial American troop contributions had arrived. What ultimately determined the war, Stevenson argues, was logistics. In particular, Germany's ongoing shortage of supplies was the fundamental reason it lost, exacerbated by the collapse of Bulgaria which opened the way for the Allies to liberate the Romanian oilfields, a crucial German source of fuel, from Central Power control, and triggered Ludendorff's temporary nervous breakdown.[16]

In contrast, the recent work of British military historians has tended to be much more narrowly focused upon the British army's specific contribution to the victory equation. Central to this has been the idea of the 'learning curve' – the argument pioneered, in particular, by Gary Sheffield, that the British army learned better fighting techniques, especially improved co-ordination between the artillery and the infantry, as the war went on, leading finally to the successful 'Hundred Days' of Allied victories, which saw the co-ordinated use of shock troops, airpower, and mobile artillery, that culminated in the Armistice on 11 November 1918 and Allied victory.[17] Jonathan Boff's study *Winning and losing on the Western Front: the British Third Army and the defeat of Germany in 1918* (Cambridge and New York, NY, 2012) provides much valuable detail on this process. The 'learning curve' argument has the laudable aim of revising the inaccurate, if widespread, image of British tactics in the Great War as obsolete and stagnant – a stereotype that, historians have pointed out, ignores the realities of the time: for example, Stephen Badsey has championed the argument that cavalry was not outmoded, but rather for much of the conflict was the only way to move troops forward in the event of a return to mobile warfare.[18] Debate continues as to whether the 'learning curve' stemmed from grassroots innovation by ordinary soldiers, engineers, and junior officers on the ground which was only grudgingly, if ever, accepted by the high commands or whether it was driven by individual commanders willing to innovate. Yet, while the 'learning curve' argument remains at the forefront of current military historiographical debate, it is not universally accepted, and there is also a need for more comparative work to contextualize developments in the British army during the war with those occurring in other armies, particularly the French and the American, and with the international political, economic, and cultural historiography.[19]

One new military history which does utilize a transnational approach is William Philpott's study *Bloody victory: the sacrifice on the Somme* (London, 2009) which argues that the battle of the Somme laid the basis for Allied victory.

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[16] David Stevenson, *With our backs to the wall: victory and defeat in 1918* (London, 2011), p. 148.

[17] Gary Sheffield, *Forgotten victory: the First World War: myths and realities* (London, 2001).

[18] Stephen Badsey, 'Cavalry and the development of breakthrough doctrine, 1914–1918', in Stephen Badsey, *The British army in battle and its image, 1914–1918* (London and New York, NY, 2009), pp. 55–106.

[19] Holger Afflerbach and Gary Sheffield, 'Waging total war: learning curve or bleeding curve', in Jay Winter, ed., *The legacy of the Great War: ninety years on* (Columbia, MI, 2009), p. 62.

Philpott contends that the Somme was the turning point of the war, a crucial battle of attrition, which served a function similar to Stalingrad in the Second World War – permanently breaking the strength of the German army in the long term.[20] While the first day was a disaster, Philpott contends the British army went on to improve both tactics and technology in a rapid learning curve: 'There were two battles on the Somme in 1916', he writes, 'the sudden shock offensive of early July, the tragic last hurrah of an old style of warfare; and the sustained, multi-army advance of September, the first manifestation of modern operational warfare.'[21] He also points to the overlooked final successful segments of the Somme offensive, in particular, 'the persistent forward-sapping of winter 1917 which rendered the German front untenable', rarely even identified as part of the battle.[22] It is a bold, provocative, and not uncontested, revisionist thesis; what strengthens it is the book's skilful analysis of how public perception of the Somme has become more negative over time and its detailed coverage of multiple national perspectives of the battle, particularly the British and French; as Philpott points out, French casualties in the Battle of the Somme 'number around two hundred thousand: nearly half of the British figure, and deserving of more than a paragraph or two in the history books.'[23] Like Philpott, Elizabeth Greenhalgh also adopts a transnational approach in her study, *Victory through coalition: Britain and France during the First World War* (Cambridge and New York, NY, 2005), which suggests, drawing upon detailed research of both French and British sources, that improved co-ordination between the British and French armies in 1917–18 was key to Allied success, despite the initial reluctance of their generals to embrace coalition warfare. Clearly, the historiography has, as yet, reached no overall consensus on why the Allies won.

The 'learning curve' historiography has impacted greatly upon our third question: were the generals to blame for the high casualty rates? For, if the Allies won the war because of the way they improved their military tactics, coalition co-ordination, and strategy, then this implies that their commanders played a part in this success. This suggestion threatens to overthrow one of the sacred cows of the popular anglophone cultural view of the war which, from Alan Clark to Blackadder, has depicted the generals, and, in particular, British generals, as callously profligate with the lives of their troops. Some attempts to rehabilitate the generals' reputation have indeed occurred as a result of the 'learning curve' thesis, particularly that of the British Expeditionary Force's Commander, Douglas Haig, already the subject of a long-established debate regarding his merits or flaws, which dated back largely to Lloyd George's memoirs in the interwar period. Gary Sheffield's new biography of Haig, *The chief: Douglas Haig and the British army* (London, 2011), the latest contribution to this discussion, suggests that Haig, doughty and supremely inarticulate, has been unfairly

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[20] William Philpott, *Bloody victory: the sacrifice on the Somme* (London, 2009).
[21] Ibid., p. 626.   [22] Ibid., p. 627.   [23] Ibid., p. 9.

maligned, in part because modern commentators have failed to understand that attritional warfare was the only option open to him at the time, due to the preponderence of the defensive. Sheffield emphasizes that Haig was fighting a necessary war, foisted upon Britain by Germany's aggression and cites his willingness to adapt to new technologies such as the tank and his tireless work on behalf of ex-servicemen in the interwar years as evidence he was innovative and compassionate. However, his book also reveals the ruthless nature of Haig's role in the Boer War – where his compassion was far less in evidence in prisoner of war treatment.[24]

The fervour of the Haig debate has overshadowed the fact that we still know surprisingly little about many of the other key Allied military figures, for example Birdwood or Byng, although Simon Robbins has sought recently to rehabilitate Henry Horne, in a largely conventional biographical study.[25] It has also obscured the fact that historical debate regarding First World War generals is a predominantly Australian and British proclivity – far more work needs to be done on continental generalship. French generalship has long fallen out of favour as a subject of research among historians of the war, with the exception of Elizabeth Greenhalgh's 2011 study of Foch, perhaps a symptom of the fact that military history has experienced a steeper decline in France since the 1960s than in the anglophone world.[26] Among German generals, Ludendorff and Hindenburg have recently been the subject of new biographies by Manfred Nebelin and Wolfram Pyta respectively; Erich von Falkenhayn has been the subject of an excellent recent study by Holger Afflerbach and Annika Mombauer's aforementioned analysis of Moltke is unlikely to be surpassed.[27] However, fresh studies of other German military figures, would be welcome, in particular, Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, as well as more new work that combines military and cultural approaches, like Wencke Meteling's innovative study on the importance of regimental cultures in the French and German armies.[28] Currently, the question of the generals' performance remains the historiographical debate least affected by the new cultural and comparative methodologies, and, while the military history studies on this subject have had the effect of creating a general consensus across First World War studies that command choices have to be contextualized in terms of the fact that

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[24] Gary Sheffield, *The chief: Douglas Haig and the British army* (London, 2011), pp. 50–3.

[25] Simon Robbins, *British generalship during the Great War: the military career of Sir Henry Horne (1861–1929)* (Farham and Burlington, VT, 2010).

[26] Elizabeth Greenhalgh, *Foch in command: the forging of a First World War General* (Cambridge, 2011).

[27] Manfred Nebelin, *Ludendorff: Diktator im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2010); Wolfram Pyta, *Hindenburg: Herrschaft zwischen Hohenzollern und Hitler* (Munich, 2007); Holger Afflerbach, *Falkenhayn: Politisches Denken und Handeln im Kaiserreich* (Munich, 1994); Mombauer, *Helmuth von Moltke.*

[28] Wencke Meteling, *Ehre, Einheit, Ordnung. Preußische und französische Städte und ihre Regimenter im Krieg 1870/71 und 1914–1919* (Baden-Baden, 2010).

technological developments favoured the defensive at the time, the overall verdict on the generals remains decidedly mixed.

In many ways, the cultural history counterpart of the military history debates on generalship is a range of exciting new work on how wartime leadership was culturally configured in the media, on the battlefield, and in public opinion. It is exemplified by Anna von der Goltz's superb study, which blends political and cultural history, of how Hindenburg gained mythic status in Germany both during and after the war.[29] She argues that Hindenburg 'acquired mythical stature soon after the Battle of Tannenberg' due to his perceived victorious defence of Germany against the Russians; however, he retained it because his myth 'united and personalized older semantic and semiotic traditions, such as the cults of Bismarck, Hermann the Cherusker and Barbarossa'.[30] His myth outlived the war, despite defeat, because it evolved over time, a complex process of negotiation between Hindenburg himself and the German public. Different groups deployed the myth 'at different times and for different purposes', including the Social Democrats, who were in awe of Hindenburg, as well as the Nazis.[31] This study shows Hindenburg as a political manipulator, an active agent in determining the construction and parameters of his own iconic status, thereby contributing to the on-going revision of the old view of Hindenburg as apolitical and weak-willed. It seems a paradox of history that Haig, the victorious, taciturn constitutional democrat, increasingly divided Britain after his death in 1928, while Hindenburg, his defeated, reactionary foe, gave rise to a potent unifying nationalist myth that long outlived him. Indeed, so fearful were the Americans that Hindenburg might prove a rallying point for a fresh wave of German nationalism that they reinterred his body by night, in Marburg, in 1946.[32]

This brings us to the fourth of the perennial Great War questions – how did men endure trench warfare? A whole wave of new work infused with cultural, transnational, and interdisciplinary approaches has been published on this topic in the past ten years. Alexander Watson in a remarkable debut monograph *Enduring the Great War: combat, morale and collapse in the German and British armies, 1914–1918* (Cambridge and New York, NY, 2008) concludes that endurance was both the norm – most men adapted well to the war and resilience, not mental collapse, was the standard response – and multi-factorial, based upon fear of the enemy, cultural factors that encouraged military obedience and camaraderie, over-optimism due to a failure among soldiers to assess accurately their likelihood of death or injury, religious faith, patriotism, rest, and adequate material resources, particularly food and munitions.[33] This is both an interdisciplinary and comparative study: drawing on both sociology and

[29] Anna von der Goltz, *Hindenburg: power, myth, and the rise of the Nazis* (Oxford, 2009), p. 2.
[30] Ibid., p. 211.   [31] Ibid., p. 11.   [32] Ibid., p. 194.
[33] Alexander Watson, *Enduring the Great War: combat, morale and collapse in the German and British armies, 1914–1918* (Cambridge and New York, NY, 2008), p. 232.

psychology, as well as primary sources from several countries, Watson finds that coping strategies, motivation, and resilience were remarkably similar in the German and British armies, thereby challenging older historiographical assumptions. In particular, Watson emphasizes the role of good leadership by junior officers in sustaining morale in both armies. While he suggests that British paternalist culture had the edge over German leadership training in producing close officer–men relationships, he also points out that German junior ranking officers generally had good relationships with their men, revising the myth that all German officers were hated by the troops – it was largely staff and middle-ranking officers who were the subject of *Offiziershaß*. This German junior officer leadership was key to ending the war, he argues, challenging Wilhelm Deist's thesis of a German army 'strike' in 1918. For Watson, 'the conflict ended not by mass desertion or mutiny but principally by an ordered surrender' in which German junior officers 'led their weary men into Allied captivity', choosing to surrender their units en masse rather than waste their lives once they realized the scale of the Allied counterattack.[34]

How resilience was sustained remains a popular theme – Michael Roper's new interdisciplinary study, *The secret battle: emotional survival in the Great War* (Manchester, 2009), focuses on emotional resilience in the British army as a key explanation for how men endured trench warfare, which he explores using a psychoanalytic methodology. For Roper, men's relationships with their mothers and their comrades were key to sustaining resilience and to withstanding their constant fear of evisceration.[35] New studies have also examined soldiers' religious faith as a key, overlooked factor that helped men endure the trenches, moving away from an older historiographical focus on war theology, particularly in Germany. Edward Madigan's recent study *Faith under fire: Anglican army chaplains and the Great War* (Basingstoke and New York, NY, 2011) shows how British army chaplains were pivotal in supporting combatants: his painstaking research of chaplain casualty figures reveals that many paid the price with their lives, revising the interwar myth of the inept padre. Madigan's book reflects increasing new interest in the role that religion played in 1914–18, also evident in new work by Adrian Gregory and Patrick Houlihan.[36] Annette Becker's study *War and faith: the religious imagination in France, 1914–1930* (Oxford and New York, NY, 1998) has likewise revealed the widespread influence of religious belief upon French combatants and their families. Overall, what is emerging

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[34] Ibid., p. 235.
[35] Michael Roper, *The secret battle: emotional survival in the Great War* (Manchester, 2009), pp. 5–6.
[36] Adrian Gregory, *The last Great War: British society and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 152–86; Patrick J. Houlihan, *Clergy in the trenches: Catholic military chaplains of Germany and Austria-Hungary during the First World War* (Chicago, IL, 2011); Edward Madigan and Michael Snape, eds., *The clergy in Khaki: new perspectives on British army chaplaincy in the First World War* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2013).

from this new research is that the wave of social histories of the war in the 1960s and 1970s overestimated the extent of secularism in Europe during the conflict.

As the above illustrates, most recent British studies of the war have focused upon 'carrot' rather than 'stick' factors as key explanations as to why British combatants persevered. In contrast, in the recent French and German historiography, military discipline has been the focus of far greater scholarly attention as a factor which kept men fighting than it has been in Britain, where only Gerard Oram has specialized on the subject, a surprising historiographical silence given the public controversy that raged in the UK in the early 2000s regarding whether to pardon those executed under military law during the war.[37] The greater focus on military discipline by historians of France and Germany is perhaps due to the fact that their armies saw instances of mass mutiny and surrender which challenged discipline to an extent that never occurred in the British case.[38] Leonard V. Smith's study shows how democracy and Republicanism interacted with military discipline to create cohesion within the French army, ultimately helping it to overcome the 1917 mutinies, while Christoph Jahr's comparative study argues that desertion was disciplined more harshly in the British than the German army.[39] More recently, Emmanuel Saint-Fuscien's new monograph *À vos ordres? La relation d'autorité dans l'armée française de la grande guerre* (Paris, 2011) shows how French military discipline was extremely harsh in 1914, but softened as the war continued, with the stark realities of living conditions in the trenches increasingly taken into account as a mitigating factor in incidents of indiscipline. Indeed, some commanders felt that it was this softening of military discipline that explained why French troops mutinied in 1917; their fear of military discipline had lessened. For the Eastern Front, on which less research has been done, new work by Joshua Sanborn has challenged the old assumption that coercive discipline was the sole reason why illiterate Russian troops endured the fighting, showing that, in fact, there was a sense of patriotism among Russian peasant soldiers which motivated troops.[40] Mark Cornwall has also revealed that propaganda mattered, highlighting how Italian propaganda played a crucial role in weakening the Austro-Hungarian

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[37] Gerard Oram, *Death sentences passed by military courts of the British army, 1914–1924* (London, 1998); Gerard Oram, *Military executions during World War One* (Basingstoke, 2003); Julian Putkowski and Julian Sykes, *Shot at dawn: executions in World War One by authority of the British Army Act* (Barnsley, 1996).

[38] Nicolas Offenstadt, *Les fusillés de la Grande Guerre et la mémoire collective (1914–1999)* (Paris, 1999).

[39] Leonard V. Smith, *Between mutiny and obedience: the case of the French Fifth Infantry Division during World War I* (Princeton, NJ, 1994); Christoph Jahr, *Gewöhnliche Soldaten: Desertion und Deserteure im deutschen und britischen Heer, 1914–1918* (Göttingen, 1998). For a contrasting interpretation of the French mutinies, see André Loez, *14–18, les refus de la guerre: une histoire des mutins* (Paris, 2010).

[40] Joshua Sanborn, *Drafting the Russian nation: military conscription, total war, and mass politics, 1905–1925* (DeKalb IL, 2003).

troops' ability to endure.[41] Overall, the historiographical focus is now upon
what cultural beliefs led to particular disciplinary codes and sustained them; the
current conclusion is that military discipline was neither as constantly harsh nor
as uniform as was once assumed and, while important, had less of an impact in
keeping men fighting than previously thought, with the key exception of Italy
where coercive discipline was extreme.[42]

This brings us to our final question: to what extent did civilian society accept
or endorse the war effort? Here new comparative and cultural historiography
has dramatically revised old assumptions. In particular, the belief that there was
widespread war enthusiasm among European populations at the outbreak of
war has been debunked. In 1977, Jean-Jacques Becker showed that the majority
of France's population, the peasantry, were horrified by the advent of war but
reluctantly accepted that they had no choice other than to fight in response to
the German invasion.[43] In 2000, Jeffrey Verhey's painstaking study of public
opinion revealed that German war enthusiasm was limited – largely affecting
young male urban middle-class men, particularly students, with German
working-class and rural peasant areas reluctant or even anti-war.[44] Verhey's
conclusions concur with Benjamin Ziemann's work on rural Bavaria which
found that the population was depressed by news of the outbreak of war and
Christian Gienitz's findings on Freiburg in 1914; Roger Chickering has also
concluded that the scenes of war support which occurred in certain German
cities were limited 'exclusionary rituals directed in the main at Socialist
workers'.[45] New studies on Britain have also challenged the idea of widespread
war enthusiasm: Adrian Gregory has argued that there was considerable anti-
war protest in the lead-up to the British declaration of war, particularly
organized by the trade unions and nonconformist religious groups.[46] Catriona
Pennell, in the first thorough archive investigation of the mood across the

[41] Mark Cornwall, *The undermining of Austria-Hungary: the battle for hearts and minds*
(Basingstoke and New York, NY, 2000).

[42] Vanda Wilcox, 'Discipline in the Italian army, 1915–1918', in Pierre Purseigle, ed.,
Warfare and belligerence: perspectives in First World War Studies (Boston, MA, and Leiden, 2005),
pp. 73–100; Marco Pluviano and Irene Guerrini, *Le fucilazioni sommarie nella prima Guerra
mondiale* (Udine, 2004).

[43] Jean-Jacques Becker, *1914: comment les français sont entrés dans la guerre: contribution à l'étude
de l'opinion publique printemps-été 1914* (Paris, 1977).

[44] Jeffrey Verhey, *The spirit of 1914: militarism, myth and mobilization in Germany* (Cambridge,
2000).

[45] Roger Chickering, '"War enthusiasm?" Public opinion and the outbreak of war in 1914',
in Afflerbach and Stevenson, eds., *An improbable war*, p. 210; Benjamin Ziemann, *War
experiences in rural Germany, 1914–1923* (Oxford and New York, NY, 2007); Christian Geinitz,
Kriegsfurcht und Kampfbereitschaft: Das Augusterlebnis in Freiburg. Eine Studie zum Kriegsbeginn 1914
(Essen, 1998).

[46] Adrian Gregory, 'British "war enthusiasm" in 1914: a reassessment', in Gail Braybon, ed.,
Evidence, history and the Great War: historians and the impact of 1914–18 (Oxford and New York,
NY, 2003), pp. 67–85. See also the chapter 'Going to war', in Gregory, *The last Great War*,
pp. 9–39.

various regions of the UK at the outbreak of the conflict, emphasizes the sheer diversity of responses, finding that 'enthusiastic responses in Britain and Ireland are not so much repudiated as circumscribed'.[47] Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, Nicolas Beaupré, and Gerhard Hirschfeld similarly challenge the old view of widespread civilian 'war enthusiasm' across Europe.[48] The cumulative effect of this rich new historiography on public responses to the war's outbreak has been to show that the populations of 1914 were not as naïve or gung-ho about war as previously thought.

Indeed, the over-riding outcome of the new historiography has been to overturn the belief that the home front did not know much about the realities of the war. Both Joëlle Beurier and Nicolas Beaupré have shown the extent to which details of the war's horrors were published in France where there was relatively little censorship with regard to explicit news photographs of the war and combatant literary writings respectively.[49] Emmanuelle Cronier has revealed that French civilians were well-informed regarding trench warfare by soldiers on leave.[50]

In fact, the home front and front line are no longer seen as separate spheres as was the case in much of the earlier 1960s and 1970s social history, but rather as profoundly interconnected; in particular, the extent to which civilians held out in the face of increasing food shortages in the Central Power states has been the subject of exciting new research.[51] Recent historiography, such as Adrian Gregory's *The last Great War: British society and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2008) depicts British civilians as aware of the war's horrors, yet prepared to support it because they ultimately believed in the national cause. Even children were culturally mobilized as Manon Pignot has shown.[52] Older historiographical assumptions that wartime propaganda was fabricated by states have been overturned, as new work has revealed that much propaganda material was often accurately based upon real events, incorporating genuine witness testimony

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[47] Catriona Pennell, *A kingdom united: popular responses to the outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012), p. 228.

[48] See Gerhard Hirschfeld, '"The spirit of 1914": a critical examination of war enthusiasm in German society', Nicolas Beaupré, 'Construction and deconstruction of the idea of French "war enthusiasm" in 1914', and Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, 'The mood in Britain in 1914', all in Lothar Kettenacker and Torsten Riotte, eds., *The legacies of two world wars: European societies in the twentieth century* (Oxford and New York, NY, 2011).

[49] Nicolas Beaupré, *Écrire en guerre, écrire la guerre: France, Allemagne, 1914–1920* (Paris, 2006); Joëlle Beurier, 'Information, censorship or propaganda? The illustrated French press in the First World War', in Heather Jones, Jennifer O'Brien, and Christoph Schmidt-Supprian, eds., *Untold war: new perspectives in First World War studies* (Boston, MA, and Leiden, 2008), pp. 293–324.

[50] Emmanuelle Cronier, *L'échappée belle: permissions et permissionnaires du front à Paris pendant la Première Guerre mondiale* (Paris, 2012).

[51] Belinda Davis, *Home fires burning: food, politics and everyday life in World War I Berlin* (Chapel Hill, NC, and London, 2000); Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the fall of the Habsburg Empire: total war and everyday life in World War I* (Cambridge, 2004).

[52] Manon Pignot, *Allons enfants de la patrie: génération grande Guerre* (Paris, 2012).

and frequently also produced by civic or commercial organizations, acting independently of the state.[53] Home front engagement from below now appears more voluntarist, self-motivated, informed and proactive than previously thought in light of the new cultural history.[54] This revelation has unleashed particular controversy in France where passionate debate continues to rage over the strength of anti-war feeling among civilians, particularly by 1917. What is clear is that civilians were more complicit and less coerced in waging the war than previously thought. They were not just keeping the home fires burning; they were setting Europe ablaze.

II

Clearly cultural, comparative and interdisciplinary approaches have helped provide dynamic new answers to key established questions in First World War historiography. Yet, what is also evident is the extent to which they have contributed to the discovery of major new themes. In particular, four topics stand out, as the focus of a range of new research and debate, meriting detailed discussion, as they have effectively revolutionized our understanding of the war: occupation; radicalization of violence; race; and the wartime body.

The First World War is not associated with the terrors of occupation in the way that the Second World War is. Yet, major cities such as Warsaw, Belgrade, Brussels, Lille, and Bucharest, as well as vast swathes of territories, experienced long-term military occupation in 1914–18. Central Power wartime occupations controlled parts of northern France, Belgium, Poland, the Balkans including all of Serbia and most of Romania, the Transcaucasus, the Baltic, the Ukraine, and the Veneto after Caporetto, although there was little incentive post-war for the victorious Allies to incorporate this into the war's history as it symbolized their enemy's military success. In contrast, the Allies' occupation phases were briefer: Salonica theoretically 'occupied' from 1916 to 1918, temporary Italian control of parts of the Soča/Isonzo region, Russian incursions into East Prussia, and a sliver of Alsace-Lorraine taken from Germany by France at the outset of the war. Only the Russian temporary occupations of parts of Galicia saw longer periods of Allied occupation, the focus of new work by Mark von Hagen and Peter Holquist, among others.[55]

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[53] John Horne and Alan Kramer, *German atrocities, 1914: a history of denial* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2001), pp. 229–61.

[54] For the Italian case, see Antonio Gibelli, *L'Officina della Guerra: le grande guerra e le trasformazioni del mondo mentale* (Turin, 1991); Angelo Ventrone, *La seduzione totalitaria: guerra, modernità, violenza politica (1914–1918)* (Rome, 2003).

[55] Mark von Hagen, *War in a European borderland: occupations and occupation plans in Galicia and Ukraine, 1914–1918* (Seattle, WA, 2007); Alexander V. Prusin, *Nationalizing a borderland: war, ethnicity and anti-Jewish violence in East Galicia, 1914–1920* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 2005); Peter Holquist, 'The role of personality in the first (1914–1915) Russian occupation of Galicia and Bukovina', in Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan Meir and Israel Bartal, eds., *Anti-Jewish violence: rethinking the pogrom in European history* (Bloomington, IN, 2010), pp. 52–73; Peter

We still know too little regarding many of these occupations. However, for France and Belgium, there is now a rich new historiography on the occupation experience. Key works by Annette Becker, *Oubliés de la Grande Guerre: humanitaire et culture de guerre, 1914–1918: populations occupées, déportés civils, prisonniers de guerre* (Paris, 1998) and *Les cicatrices rouges, 14–18, France et Belgique occupées* (Paris, 2010), have emphasized the extent of German coercion of the French civilian population, a finding supported by Philippe Nivet's recent book *La France occupée, 1914–1918* (Paris, 2011). For Belgium, Sophie de Schaepdrijver's *La Belgique et la Première Guerre Mondiale* (Berlin and New York, NY, 2004) provoked a wave of new interest in the Belgian experience of German occupation.[56] Jens Thiel's mammoth study '*Menschenbassin Belgien': Anwerbung, Deportation und Zwangsarbeit im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Essen, 2007) focuses on the exploitation of the 58,000 Belgian workers who were deported to Germany to labour in the war economy: another 62,000 Belgian civilians were forced to work behind the lines on the Western Front.[57] Laurence van Ypersele and Emmanuel Debruyne have revealed the danger of execution that the Belgian resistance faced.[58] Such coercion co-existed with *modus vivendi* as research by Benoît Majerus and Aurore François on Belgian police and magistrates shows.[59] Cumulatively, this new historiography suggests that the Great War was an important logistical and cultural precedent for the later occupations of 1939–45. It also serves to dismantle further the idea of a home front–front line divide in 1914–18. Occupied zones *were* the front line – the war was waged in and around them, with civilians subjected to a litany of hardships, beaten, starved, deported, forced into damaging harsh manual labour, raped, subject to reprisals or executed.[60]

Although to date more research has been done on western Europe, Central Power occupations in eastern Europe raise particular continuity questions. Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius's ground-breaking study of the German army's military occupation in the Baltic, *War land on the Eastern Front: culture, national identity and German occupation in World War I* (Cambridge and New York, NY, 2000), reveals the extent to which territorial expansionist ideals were central to

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Holquist, *Making war, forging revolution: Russia's continuum of crisis, 1914–1921* (Cambridge, MA, 2002).

[56] First published in Dutch in 1997, its French translation had wider impact.

[57] James McMillan, 'War', in Robert Gerwarth and Donald Bloxham, eds., *Political violence in twentieth-century Europe* (Cambridge, 2011), p. 60.

[58] Laurence van Ypersele and Emmanuel Debruyne, *De la guerre de l'ombre aux ombres de la guerre: l'espionnage en Belgique durant la guerre, 1914–1918: histoire et mémoire* (Brussels, 2004).

[59] Benoît Majerus, *Occupations et logiques policières: la police bruxelloise en 1914–1918 et 1940–1945* (Brussels, 2007); Aurore François, 'From street walking to the convent: child prostitution cases judged by the juvenile court of Brussels during World War One', in Jones O'Brien, and Schmidt-Supprian, eds., *Untold war*, pp. 151–78.

[60] See Michael Geyer, 'Rückzug und Zerstörung 1917', in Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich, and Irina Renz, eds., *Die Deutschen an der Somme, 1914–1918: Krieg, Besatzung, Verbrannte Erde* (Essen, 2006), pp. 163–79.

German military culture as the army attempted to categorize local ethnicities and radicalized its exploitation of the region, setting important precedents. Likewise, Christian Westerhoff's new study shows the scale of the German use of forced labour in occupied Poland and Lithuania.[61] In contrast, Jonathan Gumz's provocative, fascinating monograph on the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Serbia argues that it reveals an Austro-Hungarian army trying to preserve older forms of nineteenth-century cabinet warfare in the face of totalization trends, viewing any civilian participation in war or armed resistance as illegitimate.[62] This was the explanation for the draconian Austro-Hungarian reprisals during the occupation against Serbian partisans and civilians, whom the Austro-Hungarian army sought to punish for taking up arms when not officially soldiers. Gumz shows how the radical oppression of the first two years of the occupation was relaxed as Serbian food supplies became vital for feeding Austro-Hungarian army elites. His argument – that the Austro-Hungarian army saw Serbia as a source of army food supplies rather than as a racially inferior land – will be controversial, the truth was probably somewhere closer to a combination of the two. But his interpretation of the Austro-Hungarian army's obsession with bureaucratic absolutism is a compelling one: according to Gumz, the army believed in an Austro-Hungarian state administered through bureaucratic absolutism – a dynastic state system which was nationality-blind. It rejected the ideas of nationalism and the nation-state and never sought popular wartime mobilization of the Austro-Hungarian population along nationalist lines for this reason.

Revelations regarding the extent of violence against civilians during wartime occupations have also contributed to the second key new theme in the war's historiography – radicalization: how and to what extent the conflict radicalized the use of violence, as well as the changes in cultural attitudes towards violence that facilitated this. Two studies, in particular, were pivotal in launching the radicalization debate, contending that the war saw significant acceptance in the German army of extreme violence against civilians: John Horne and Alan Kramer's book, *German atrocities, 1914: a history of denial* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2001), which revealed that the German army killed 6,427 Belgian and French civilians during its invasions of 1914, and Isabel V. Hull's study, *Absolute destruction: military culture and the practices of war in imperial Germany* (Ithaca, NY, 2005) which argued that the German army had an organizational culture that encouraged totalization – its military doctrines promoted the need to wage ruthless war in order to achieve swift and total victory.[63]

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[61] Christian Westerhoff, *Zwangsarbeit im Ersten Weltkrieg: Deutsche Arbeitskräftepolitik im besetzten Polen und Litauen, 1914–1918* (Paderborn, 2012).

[62] Jonathan Gumz, *The resurrection and collapse of empire in Habsburg Serbia, 1914–1918* (Cambridge, 2009).   [63] Horne and Kramer, *German atrocities*, p. 74.

Yet, later publications showed that such radicalization was not limited to the German army. Alan Kramer in his book *Dynamic of destruction: culture and mass killing in the First World War* (Oxford, 2007) argued that radicalization was both longer term, beginning in the Balkan Wars in 1912 and fuelling the post-war advent of fascism and communism, and more geographically widespread, than previously thought, affecting not just the German army but European cultures more broadly. For Kramer: 'the idea of singular German destructiveness and its fateful turn to fascism and genocide as a result of its alleged political backwardness ... is challenged ... by examining also Italy, the Balkan Wars 1912 and 1913, and Turkish policy towards its Greek and Armenian minorities'.[64] Kramer sees in the Great War's mass mobilization of populations the rise of newly radicalized nationalisms – which often presented the enemy as racially or ethnically 'other' – that facilitated both targeting civilians and cultural symbols. His interpretation of Habsburg occupation of Serbia is thus a darker one than that of Gumz, pointing to patterns that directly prelude 1939–45.

Most recently, however, the discussion of wartime radicalization has begun to emphasize the Armenian Genocide, in which at least one million Ottoman Armenians out of a population of 1·8–2 million died, as a pivotal event of the Great War, previously ignored or viewed as separate from the conflict.[65] Its inclusion has led to new understandings of the true scale and innovative nature of war violence against civilians. This realization has been further enhanced by new scholarly studies of the enormous refugee and deported civilian populations in eastern Europe during the war, a neglected topic, pioneered by Peter Gatrell and Erich Lohr.[66] In the Russian empire alone, the conflict displaced more than six million people.[67] Violence against prisoners of war has also been the subject of new research, with evidence of radicalization processes found for Germany, in particular.[68]

One element of radicalization has received particularly detailed attention, and is a debate in its own right: the extent to which the war brutalized combatants. Initially sparked by George Mosse, who argued that the violent nature of post-war German politics was a legacy of the war, this brutalization debate was further developed by Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker who contended that the conflict unleashed a process of brutalization of societies as certain forms of violent behaviour, previously taboo according to

[64] Alan Kramer, *Dynamic of destruction: culture and mass killing in the First World War* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 3–4.
[65] McMillan, 'War', p. 59. See Jay Winter, ed., *America and the Armenian genocide of 1915* (Cambridge and New York, NY, 2003).
[66] Peter Gatrell, *A whole empire walking: refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington, IN, 1999); Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian empire: the campaign against enemy aliens during World War I* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2003).   [67] McMillan, 'War', p. 61.
[68] Heather Jones, *Violence against prisoners of war in the First World War: Britain, France and Germany, 1914–1920* (Cambridge, 2011); Uta Hinz, *Gefangen im Großen Krieg: Kriegsgefangenschaft in Deutschland, 1914–1921* (Essen, 2006), pp. 362–3.

peacetime morality, became acceptable.[69] The brutalization debate continues to centre upon the extent to which, in the interwar years, veterans were unable to adjust to the norms of peacetime society, with Robert Gerwarth, in a ground-breaking recent article, highlighting the extensive role of war veterans in political right-wing murders in interwar Germany, Austria, and Hungary.[70] Benjamin Ziemann, in contrast, in his study of Bavaria found that most veterans adjusted relatively swiftly to peacetime life, particularly those from rural backgrounds.[71] As Robert Gerwarth and John Horne have argued, the brutalization debate clearly extends the chronology of the Great War to encompass the violence of 1919–23 and interwar paramilitarism.[72] In this light, interwar European peace now appears even more shortlived and unstable than previously assumed.

The third new theme emerging in the historiography – race – remains curiously absent from the ongoing debates about radicalization and possible continuities with 1939–45, despite its later significance in the Second World War. We still know too little about how the Great War may have catalysed or given rise to new cultural ideas about racial hierarchies. What is clear is that the concept of race and what constituted racial identity was in flux during the conflict. A wave of new investigations into the experience of non-white troops and labourers, mainly adopting cultural history methodologies to explore how race was perceived and constructed, has revealed that wartime societies were far more heterogeneous than previously thought. It has also shown how imperial and anthropological discussions about race overseas now shifted to the European heartland as racialized language was increasingly used to describe the enemy and to denigrate his ethnic origins. Andrew D. Evans's new book has revealed how, during the war, German scientists sought to categorize race according to biological characteristics, measuring and photographing the physical traits of prisoners of war from different ethnicities to assess their racial identity, while Santanu Das's recent edited book *Race, empire and First World War writing* (Cambridge, 2011) analyses the experiences of, among others, Indian, Askari and Maori troops, black prisoners of war in Germany and Chinese labourers.[73] Das asks bold questions about how ideas of race and colonialism underpinned the entire conflict – they were not limited to the overseas war

[69] George Mosse, *Fallen soldiers: reshaping the memory of the world wars* (Oxford, 1990); Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14–18: understanding the Great War* (New York, NY, 2002).

[70] Robert Gerwarth, 'The central European counterrevolution: paramilitary violence in Germany, Austria and Hungary after the Great War', *Past and Present*, 200 (2008), pp. 175–209.

[71] Ziemann, *War experiences in rural Germany*.

[72] Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, 'Vectors of violence: paramilitarism in Europe after the Great War, 1917–1923', *Journal of Modern History*, 83 (2011), pp. 489–512; also Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, eds., *War in peace: paramilitary violence in Europe after the Great War* (Oxford, 2012).

[73] Andrew D. Evans, *Anthropology at war: World War I and the science of race in Germany* (Chicago, IL, 2010).

theatres but central to war discourses in Europe as well – and how these framed the experience of non-white subjects in the war.

In particular, the experience of black African troops has been the focus of new research, including Michelle Moyd's work on Askari soldiers and Joe Lunn's study on the experience of Senegalese troops.[74] Richard S. Fogarty in his ground-breaking book *Race and war in France: colonial subjects in the French army, 1914–1918* (Baltimore, MD, 2008) has exposed the tensions that existed in the wartime French Republic between its 'conceptions of republican principles, colonial ideology and race'.[75] Fogarty's work is comparative cultural history at its best: using military sources to elucidate French attitudes to indigenous troops from a wide range of colonies in West Africa, North Africa, and Madagascar. Examining the army's coercive and discriminatory recruit-ment, promotion, and language policies towards non-white troops, Fogarty highlights how 'race prejudice pushed French officials to pursue exclusionary practices in many areas, and to deny *troupes indigènes* full integration into the French nation, but republican principles prompted at least some nods in policy toward egalitarianism'.[76] He reveals French fears of miscegenation, as well as the considerable French secular Republican discomfort at allowing North African colonial troops to practise their Islamic rituals. The French civilian population emerge in this study as less discriminatory than military officials; as the force that upheld coercion in the colonies, the army always had more to lose in any concessions to colonial subjects than the metropolitan French civilian.

In sum, as these works highlight, the historiography now sees the war in global terms, that reach beyond the traditional focus on Europe, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, a shift that was initially pioneered by Hew Strachan.[77] New diplomatic and military histories have appeared on the war in Africa and the Middle East and a ground-breaking book by Guoqi Xu has examined the war's effect on China.[78] This is a logical progression: in the 1990s, the historiography began to move away from national histories to try to create a comparative European historiography that identified processes at work across Europe during the war, an approach pioneered by historians associated with the Historial de la Grande Guerre in France, in particular Jay Winter through his *Capital cities at war* volumes, co-edited with Jean-Louis Robert; the Historial was also instrumental in the production of a series of new

[74] Michelle Moyd, '"We don't want to die for nothing": *askari* at war in German East Africa, 1914–1918', in Santanu Das, ed., *Race, empire and First World War writing* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 90–107; Joe Lunn, *Memoirs of the maelstrom: a Senegalese oral history of the First World War* (Portsmouth, NH, and Oxford, 1999).

[75] Richard S. Fogarty, *Race and war in France: colonial subjects in the French army, 1914–1918* (Baltimore, MD, 2008), p. 270.   [76] Ibid., p. 287.

[77] Hew Strachan, *The First World War, I: To arms* (Oxford, 2001).

[78] Charles Townshend, *When God made hell: the British invasion of Mesopotamia and the creation of Iraq, 1914–1921* (London, 2010); Guoqi Xu, *China and the Great War: China's pursuit of a new national identity and internationalization* (Cambridge, 2005).

transnational encyclopedia studies on the war.[79] Since 2000, the historiography has increasingly shifted to the global level, re-emphasizing the original 1914–18 definition of the conflict as a 'world' war.

This brings us to the final important theme visible in the current historiography, particularly in anglophone countries: the wartime body. Increasingly, the ways in which the body was gendered, disabled, and reconstructed in wartime have become the focus of fresh attention. This has seen renewed interest in shell shock: Paul Lerner has published an accomplished study of shell shock treatment in Germany, while Fiona Reid's book, *Broken men: shell shock, treatment and recovery in Britain, 1914–1930* (London, 2010), examines what happened to shell shock victims after the conflict, a history of institutionalization and public stigma, and asks why does shell shock so particularly dominate British memory of the war?[80] How masculinity was constructed during the conflict, a topic pioneered by Joanna Bourke, has also received fresh attention.[81] Above all, wartime medical care and post-war rehabilitation of the body has been the subject of innovative new work. Heather Perry has researched the rehabilitation of disabled German veterans, while Ana Carden-Coyne in her interdisciplinary study *Reconstructing the body: classicism, modernism and the First World War* (Oxford, 2009) explores how knowledge of the classical cultures of ancient Greece and Rome influenced the popular image of the ideal body after the Great War in Britain, Australia, and the United States.[82] Carden-Coyne explores how a belief that the classical body, with its inherent balance and harmony, could serve as a model for restoring peace and improving mankind in the wake of the war, influenced surgeons working on reconstructing facial war wounds, as well as popular consumer discourses, surrounding body-building and kinaesthetics. While this book's coverage of three countries is too broad, its analysis of how the war influenced ideals of masculinity and femininity is fascinating: who knew that American cosmetics manufacturing profits soared during the war from seventeen million to sixty million dollars between 1914 and 1919?[83] Less influenced by cultural

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[79] Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, eds., *Capital cities at war, Paris, London, Berlin, 1914–1918* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1999–2007); Jean-Jacques Becker and Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, eds., *Encyclopédie de la Grande Guerre* (Paris, 2004); John Horne, ed., *A companion to World War I* (Oxford, 2010); Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich and Irina Renz, eds., *Brill's encyclopedia of the First World War* (Boston, MA, and Leiden, 2012).

[80] Paul Lerner, *Hysterical men: war, psychiatry and the politics of trauma in Germany, 1890–1930* (Ithaca, NY, 2003).

[81] Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the male: men's bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, 1996); Lois Bibbings, *Telling tales about men: conceptions of conscientious objectors to military service during the First World War* (Manchester and New York, NY, 2009).

[82] Heather R. Perry, 'Militarizing the disabled: medicine, industry and "total mobilization" in World War I Germany', in Michael Neiberg and Jennifer Keene, eds., *Finding common ground: new directions in first world studies* (Boston, MA, and Leiden, 2011), pp. 267–92.

[83] Ana Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the body: classicism, modernism, and the First World War* (Oxford, 2009), p. 255.

approaches, Mark Harrison's outstanding study *The medical war: British military medicine in the First World War* (Oxford, 2010) concentrates on the medicalization of the wartime body. Harrison analyses the work of the medical services in multiple theatres, the Western Front, Salonica, East Africa, Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Gallipoli, to show how the war drove medical advances, such as preventing bacterial infection of wounds, a major problem on the Western Front due to the richly manured fields of the region, through surgical excision of infected tissue, as well as antiseptics.[84] The war also drove anti-malaria research: in 1917 the War Office estimated 30,000 casualties a month to the disease in Salonica alone.[85] Vaccination too advanced: by late 1914, the British army had grasped the need for widespread anti-tetanus jabs but typhoid vaccination was hampered by the resistance of soldiers, wary of state intervention into their health.[86] For Harrison, the war forced the army to accept for the first time that it had a duty to provide medical care as this was crucial to combatant and public morale.[87] Taken together, all these new studies show how the wartime body came to be seen as a legitimate site of state intervention.

III

Clearly, how we understand the war has dramatically changed as a result of the new range of historiographical approaches. Yet, what has been neglected in this overall historiographical success story? It is clear that economic history remains the poor relation, as does the history of the war at sea. There are a number of exceptions of course: Hew Strachan and Martin Horn have published important works on how the war was financed; Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison have also edited an important new volume, *The economics of World War I* (Cambridge, 2005), while Nicholas Andrew Lambert's impressively detailed study *Planning Armageddon: British economic warfare and the First World War* (Cambridge, MA, 2012) on how the British planned the wartime blockade of Germany is unlikely to be surpassed anytime soon.[88] Nationalist, socialist, and communist visions of revolution between 1914 and 1918 have also received too little attention from cultural historians. Pioneered by Jay Winter, war remembrance has been studied in detail for much of western Europe and Australia, with recent studies by Adrian Gregory, Ken Inglis, Elise Julien, and Stefan Goebel among others; Goebel, in particular, reveals the extent to which comparative approaches matter, showing how medievalism influenced war commemoration in Britain and Germany.[89] However, war remembrance in

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[84] Mark Harrison, *The medical war: British military medicine in the First World War* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 27–30.   [85] Ibid., p. 233.
  [86] Ibid., p. 149.   [87] Ibid., p. 121.
  [88] Hew Strachan, *Financing the First World War* (Oxford, 2004); Martin Horn, *Britain, France and the financing of the First World War* (Montreal, 2002).
  [89] Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and medieval memory: war, remembrance and medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914–1940* (Cambridge, 2007).

eastern and south-eastern Europe remains largely unresearched, but for a handful of exceptions such as the new study of Polish veterans by Julia Eichenberg or Christoph Mick's work on L'viv; the same is true for southern Ireland, despite a recent revival in interest in the long taboo subject of Irishmen who served in the conflict.[90] We also still know shockingly little about Russia's war. In addition, there is, as yet, relatively little research on how the memory of the Great War influenced attitudes and decision-making in 1939–45. Gerd Krumeich's edited volume and Boris Barth's monograph on how the memory of the Great War influenced National Socialism highlight how fruitful this approach might potentially be.[91] Thus, to conclude, as the 2014 cycle of centenary commemorations approaches, new cultural, interdisciplinary, and comparative approaches have radically revised our understanding of important aspects of the war, but despite the vibrant current state of First World War historiography, there is much work still to be done.

[90] Julia Eichenberg, *Kämpfen für Frieden und Fürsorge: Polnische Veteranen des Ersten Weltkriegs und ihre internationalen Kontakte, 1918–1939* (Munich, 2011); Christoph Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen in einer multiethnischen Stadt: Lemberg, 1914–1947* (Wiesbaden, 2010).

[91] Gerd Krumeich, *Nationalsozialismus und Erster Weltkrieg* (Essen, 2010); see also Boris Barth, *Dolchstosslegenden und politische Desintegration: Das Trauma der deutschen Niederlage im ersten Weltkrieg, 1914–1933* (Dusseldorf, 2003).