

## **"Societies Under Occupation in World War II: Supply, Shortage, Hunger"**

12-14 March 2015

Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities  
(Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut - KWI) Essen

The exploitation of the occupied territories was a fundamental objective of the National Socialist policy of expansion and conquest in the Second World War. This history has thus far been written above all as economic macrohistory or in relation to the exploitation of workers in the context of forced labour. A third strand, within a field of perpetrator-centred historiography, is research on the so-called hunger plan, according to which the Wehrmacht in the occupied Soviet Union was to be fed "from the land" and "surpluses" of food were to be transported to the German Reich. To this end, the starvation of the local populations under occupation was a willingly accepted consequence. Those who were seen by the occupiers as "useless eaters" – often women, children, the sick and the elderly, but also incarcerated prisoners of war and large parts of the Jewish population – faced extremely poor survival odds.

Whereas the German policies of exploitation and some of the groups most affected by this have been well researched, considerably less attention has been paid to the Europe-wide systems of food allocation and rationing. Put more generally: The ways in which people dealt with shortages which resulted from the conditions of occupation have hardly been examined systematically in research to date. This includes not only how local populations dealt with the occupiers as "rivals" in extremely restricted markets, but also, and above all, the examination of expedient (sub-)economies with their own sites and practices, which included works canteens, the black market, bartering, smuggling and, not least, prostitution due to poverty.

The conference will address these and other questions in a comparative European perspective. In doing so, shortage will be understood as an experience which arose widely across occupied Europe in specific regional forms. Central to the conference will therefore be strategies and practices employed by those affected by shortage and policies of hunger in order to deal with this very situation created by the occupation. Gender- and age-specific aspects will be addressed, as well as forms of (asymmetrical) trade between Jews and non-Jews under the conditions of persecution. The effects of these experiences on the occupied societies as a whole are also of interest.

For more information and to register to take part, please contact [Tara.Windsor\[at\]kwi-nrw.de](mailto:Tara.Windsor@kwi-nrw.de) or [agnes.laba\[at\]herder-institut.de](mailto:agnes.laba@herder-institut.de).

Thursday, 12 March 2015

Registration from 14.00

14.30 Welcome and Opening Remarks by Tatjana Tönsmeier and Peter Haslinger

14.45 Introduction by Tatjana Tönsmeier (Wuppertal/Essen): Supply Situations: National Socialist Policies of Exploitation and Economies of Shortage in Occupied Societies

**15.30-18.30: Practices I**

Chair: Peter Haslinger (Gießen/Marburg)

Dirk Luyten (Brussels): Coping with Food Shortages in Occupied Belgium: Industrial Workers and Miners

Guri Hjeltnes & Ane Ingvild Støen (Oslo): Supplies Under Pressure in Occupied Norway: A Perspective on Regional Differences and Variations Between Different Segments of the Population

16.55-17.10 Coffee Break

**(Practices I cont'd)**

Maren Röger (Warsaw): "With the hope of a piece of sausage or a mug of beer" – Survival Prostitution in Occupied Poland

Jaromír Balcar (Berlin): "Dem tschechischen Arbeiter das Fressen geben" (Reinhard Heydrich). Factory Canteens in the "Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia"

Friday, 13 March 2015**9.15-12.05: Economies of Scarcity and "Ersatz" Sites**

Chair: Agnes Laba (Marburg)

Fabrice Grenard (Paris): "The black market is a crime against community": The Failure of the Vichy Government to Create an Egalitarian Distribution and the Growth of the Black Market in France During the German Occupation (1940-1944)

Jerzy Kochanowski (Warsaw): Black Market in the General Government 1939-1945. Surviving Strategy or (Un)official Economy?

Kiril Feferman (Moscow): Feast Amidst Famine: Private Food Businesses in Enemy-occupied Soviet Territories During World War II

Alessandro Salvador (Trento) & Jacopo Calussi (Rome): Food Shortages and Black Market in Occupied Italy: Population and Authorities.

12.05-13.15            Lunch

### **13.15-15.30 Practices II**

Chair: Karl Christian Lammers (Copenhagen)

Tatsiana Kasataya (Warsaw): The Daily Life of Belarusian Village During the Second World War in Oral History

Violetta Hionidou (Newcastle): Famine in Occupied Greece: an Oral History approach

Irina Rebrova (Berlin): Everyday Life Experience of Children during the German Occupation of the North Caucasus in World War II

15.30-15.45 Coffee Break

### **15.45-18.00: At the Bottom of the Supply Pyramid**

Chair: Włodzimierz Borodziej (Warsaw/Jena)

Natalia Aleksion (New York/Philadelphia): Money, Barter and Compassion: Food Networks of Jews Hiding in Eastern Galicia

Annalena Schmidt (Gießen/Marburg): "Apelujemy do waszych serc o pomoc! Jeść? Jeść! Jeść!!!": The "Jewish Social Self-help" and the Interaction with Poles and Nazis

Anna Hájková (Coventry): The Age of Pearl Barley: Food, Hunger, and Society in the Theresienstadt Ghetto

Saturday, 14 March 2015

### **9.15-10.45: Policies and Local Implementation**

Chair: Tara Windsor (Wuppertal/Essen)

Heike Weber (Wuppertal) & Chad Denton (Yonsei): From Waste to Resources: Nazi Waste Politics in Occupied Europe

Radka Šustrová (Prague): Coercion by Shortage. Social Policy Measures and Strategies of Survival in Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

10.45-11.15 Coffee and Snacks

**11.15-13.00: "Societies under Occupation in World War II: Supply, Shortage, Hunger" –  
Résumé and Closing Discussion**

Chair: Tatjana Tönsmeier

Résumé: Peter Haslinger

Closing Discussion

13.00 End of conference