**Rape as collective amusement? Sexual violence as social and gendered performance on the Eastern Front, 1941-1944 (working title)**

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N.B. 10,000 words, excluding notes ; double-spaced (including notes) ; American spelling and punctuation. The journal relies upon the *Chicago Manual of Style,* 16th edition, and it is advisable. Times New Roman 12 point should be used. Margins should be one inch on all sides.

Please add a line of space before and after titles or subtitles and the main body of the text. Please insert only one space at the end of each sentence. All text, including titles and notes, should be double-spaced and left-justified. Bolding and italicization should *never* be used. All titles of periodicals and books should be underlined.

All **non-English words** should be underlined, unless they have become part of the general English vocabulary (for example, “fiancée” and “Zeitgeist”); see *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition. Unfamiliar terms, if frequently used, need only be underlined at their first appearance. These words must be translated immediately following their first appearance in the text, in parentheses, including titles (but not titles given only in notes).

**Block quotations** should not be used unless the quotation consists of 100 words or more. They should be distinguished from the main body of the text by being indented one full inch from the left margin and should also be double-spaced. There should not be a line of space either before or after a block quotation.

**Introduction** (exploring the potentials and limits of reading this rape photograph)

1. **Reading a \*\* Photograph** (a phenomenological approach**)**
2. **Soldiers, Conquerors, Tourists** (placing the photograph in the larger cultural and political context of Nazism and the war on the Eastern front)
3. **Colonial “Selfies”** (Silvan Niedermeier, amateur photographs as gendered colonial self-sepresentations)

**Conclusion: “Shifting Subjectivities**” (Jennifer Evans)

Michael Wildt, Hitler’s Volksgemeinschaft and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion: Violence against Jews in Provincial Germany, 1919-1939 (New York: Berghahn Books 2011 (German edition 2007).

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**(it’s a first draft of the introduction AND of the article – I have to rework it later, please forgive me to hand yu out such a mess)**

The point of departure for this article is a photograph from the National Archives in Romania most probably taken by a *Wehrmacht* soldier somewhere on the Eastern front during the Second World War.[[1]](#footnote-1) The photo shows a group of fifteen young German soldiers standing in a semi-circle laughing, while one of them jokes around with the corpse of a woman. Specifically, he re-enacts a rape. The photograph has no caption; there is no hint where and in which context this photo was taken precisely. But shall we discard it for that reason? Official documents (legal documents, medical reports etc.) do not always leave adequate traces of social practices and mentalities of sexual violence on the ground. When it comes to sexual violence, we rarely have detailed descriptions of social interaction outside of courtrooms. We have scarce accounts of victims who had been abused, and very often the perpetrator’s narrative is completely missing. This photographic source, a so-called soldier’s snapshot, is a precious source because it gives fragmentary insight into practices on the ground, despite its obvious limitations.

In this article I would like to explore the potentials and limits of reading this rape photograph, drawing from other sources such as Abhörprotokolle of German POWs in UK and USA during WWII, documentary film about the show of the first Wehrmacht exhibition in Vienna in 1995, \*\*other.. . Firstly I will engage in a phenomenological approach in order to decode and discuss social practices, individual agents and group dynamics within the violent moment depicted on the photograph. To use this image as a tool to get insight about power relations between male soldiers at war requires secondly a careful historical contextualization the Wehrmacht’s military culture and its mission in Europe, and especially on the Eastern front. Here we clearly see how war, sex and violence are intertwined. Finally, the depicted moment of sexual violence leads me to a reflection on the multiple meanings and shifting subjectivities of this snapshot in different social and political contexts, an approach that takes into account and combines individual, institutional, and societal logics that shape during time and space.

\*\*The image raises questions about photographs as a historical source: What does the photograph make speakable/visible? What remains silent/unseen? And what does it tell us about gender, sexuality, and war.

\*\***Sexual Vioelence and Genocide** (Elizabeth Heinman/Doris Bergen) [\*\*Did the massive perpetration of violence and genocide radicalize the sexual behavior of the soldiers and spur sexual violence? Or in other terms is Omer Bartov’s brutalization theory valuable for understanding sexual violence and the dynamics on the ground? And how do we correlate sexually violent behavior with the constant evolutions of the war from September 1939 to May 1945? ]

And what role did the confrontation of the Nazi racial ideology – which placed Jews as pariahs of the society, closely followed by Poles and Russians – with an increasingly desperate war on the eastern front have in the production of sexual violence? As I argue, the very fact that ordinary soldiers captured this photo during the war demonstrates that state-imposed ideological restrictions did not always reach into praxis. If the 1990s paradigm of the Nazi “Racial State”showed how the regime carried its values concretely and practically into the domain of the social, we must now broaden our perspective and move “beyond the Racial State”, as Devin Pendas, Mark Roseman and Richard F. Wetzell claimed in a 2009 conference. This does not mean eliminating the question of race-ideology, but rather adopting a different approach: ideology in a social and gendered framework.

\*\***Gender as a tool of understanding**?

1. **Reading a \*\* Photograph** (a **phenomenological** approach**)**

I would like to start with a phenomenological approach and document/reflect on what we see depicted on this black and white photograph.



In the background of the photograph, we see a rustic wooden house, in an eastern European style. We are in the countryside or in a rural town, somewhere in the Nazi occupied Eastern territories. Because the photograph was deposited in the Romanian archives, it was most likely taken in Romania, but it could have taken anywhere between X and X. The image was probably captured in the summertime somewhere between June 22nd 1941, the start of the invasion of the USSR, and the summer of 1944, when the Red Army turned West and liberated Ukraine and Eastern Poland from the Nazi occupation. Fifteen young men are shown in this image. They are wearing the typical trousers and boots of the *Wehrmacht* uniform with casually unbuttoned shirts. Because nobody appears in full regalia, it is impossible to tell whether they belong to the Army or the SS (*Einsatzgruppen*), nor can we discern their rank.

Visibly, these men are in a cheerful mood. Ten men stand together in a semicircle around a female body, lying on the ground. They directly face the camera. One man is on his knees very close to the center of attention. A soldier – we see him from the side – is leaning over the body, almost lying on it, turning his head on the side towards the camera, smiling. He is topless, with his cap and trousers on. One of his comrades stands right behind him, pulling on his trousers, as if to say “it’s my turn now”. In the background are two other men, watching the spectacle; one of them seems far away and a bit distant, the crack on the photograph renders his facial expression ambiguous. On the whole, the soldiers seem to be enjoying themselves, they seem relaxed, and at ease.

What is particularly striking and disturbing about this photo, is that the violence is not evident at first glance. Only upon closer examination do we see a woman on the ground. At first she appears unconscious, but then we realize that she must be dead. Her face is disfigured, her eyes are damaged or missing and she has a big wound on her left cheek and chin. Her mouth is wide open and we see her teeth as if she was screaming. She seems twisted in pain. She must have suffered greatly, while she died. We don’t know if she was beaten up, if it was a weapon that inflicted those wounds. Her legs are spread; her skirt is pulled up so that we see her stockings. We do not know who this woman is, a local woman, a Russian woman working in the Red Army or a Jewish woman. Furthermore, we do not know if she has been raped – most probably she had been – or if this horrific spectacle and moment of collective hilarity is a staging of a rape with the corpse of a woman who had been killed by other means. Either way it is a performance of extreme violence that demands further explanation.

What is most interesting for the historian is the insight this photo provides into social dynamics and cultural practices of sexual violence. Among other things, this image allows us to observe how different agents are situated/how soldiers interact in a moment of violence, or better an act of staged violence. It would be misleading/short-sighted to assume that the picture is simply spontaneous; it was captured by a photographer of whom the crowd is well aware. This source clearly shows that we do not only have to consider the performer of the sexual violence and his target (\*\*explain why in the eyes of the perpetrator the person who later, during and after the violence becomes a “victim” is a “target”, Teresa Koloma Beck), but we also have to include a third mode of agency and experience: the observers and bystanders. There are what I would call the leading agents, the three men “on the scene” in the middle of the semicircle. Their joke/fun making had two intended audiences, the peers – the fellow soldiers– to whom the leading agents demonstrated their (heterosexual) masculinity – as “cool”, “tough” or “funny” – and also the person with the camera that captured the “trophy”-moment. Indeed the invisible photographer has a leading role as well. If we look carefully, the center of attention is not only the rape-scene, but also the person – most probably a man and fellow soldier – who took the picture and therefore immortalized the violent moment. Yet, not all men involved are engaged in this joke the same way. The majority of the soldiers are focusing on the camera. Only one man – the fifth soldier from the left in the front row – focuses on neither the rape-scene nor the photographer, and instead looks away. His facial expression remains ambiguous because of the scratch.

At first glance the photograph may manage to convey the impression of a “fun scene”, both for the agents involved and for the viewer, which also includes us looking at this picture in 2015. This is achieved because the photographer and the fun making soldiers rendered the coercive and extremely brutal nature of this violence almost invisible. Once our eyes have spotted and decoded the corps, once we have realized that there are not just nice guys having a good time and laugh with each other about a stupid harmless joke, but that this joke is about sexual violence, we see this image with other eyes and moral premises. Of course, we feel tricked; disqualify the image for moral concerns seem politically correct and respectful for the victim. Hence it also means to ignore an important face of war and human behavior. Analyzing the image, i.e. sexual violence, requires stepping back for a moment from moral concerns in order to have a close look. This close look has a voyeuristic note, and it does not matter if we watch at a picture or read a detailed description. But only if we engage with different perspectives, which means also with the perspectives and subjectivities of the perpetrators (\*\*Jen Evans, Shifting subjectivities), we can learn something about social interaction, about male bonding, about gender, sexuality, and war.

We observe in this photograph an extremely asymmetrical constellation of violence, in which the body of a woman, most likely death, is profaned by a group of fifteen young men. In almost every setting of violence, we have to include a triangular relationship between perpetrators, victime(s), and spectators, because there is almost always a direct or implicit observer. But it is rarely as explicit as in this photographic source. It forces us to consider the audience and its contributing and legitimizing role for the violent dynamic within the violent moment. Violence is a complex act of communication that goes far beyond a one-to-one communication between perpetrator and victim or performer and target (\*\*needs further explanation). Because the violent moment always implies/anticipates the time after the violent moment. To quote the sociologist Teresa Koloma Beck: *“Introducing the “observer” as a third constitutive element (…) has a major implication: it permits us to analytically disentangle the dimensions of the somatic and the social (…) The “observer” breaks the hermetic circle of injuring and suffering, and is associated instead with consideration and decision. (…) It is here that the shift from the transitive meaning of the notion as violentia to its intransitive meaning as potestas takes place”*.[[2]](#footnote-2) It is here that sexual violence becomes power. (\*\*argument to develop and transistion)

There is no doubt that violence has a socializing effect in a very gendered way. The fifteen young soldiers joking around with a corpse transgress moral boundaries, not only via violence and a sexual taboo (rape was a crime in the 1940s German civil society and therefore socially banned) but trespassing also a cultural inhibition; none of these men were likely to have touched a corpse before the war. Yet if we conceive these young German men as gendered beings and further place them in their institutional setting, we might grasp the underlying social dynamics and gender relations of this extremely violent fun-making. Sexueller Eskapismus gehörte in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren zum Alltag vieler Männer, ob es sich um Saufgelage, Bordellbesuche oder Junggesellenabschiede handelte, ganz bestimmt aber war er Bestandteil eines männerbündischen-militärischen Gefüges, wo 20-40 jährige Soldaten an oder hinter der Front zumeist auf engem Raum zusammenlebten. Der Krieg und die assymetrischen Machtstrukturen der nationalsozialistischen Besatzung Europas schufen viele “Gelegenheitsräume” (\*\*Regina Mühlhäuser) für Machtdemonstrationen, sexuelle Ausbeutung und Gewalt. Militärhistoriker und Holocaustforscher wie Sönke Neitzel und Harald Welzer & co sehen in der sexuellen Gewalt zwar wichtige Begleiterscheinungen des Krieges, die sie auch dokumentieren, jedoch erachten sie sie für nicht weiter erklärungsbedürftig. Im Gegensatz dazu halten es feministischer GeschlechterforscherInnen für unumgänglich, die der Gewalt zugrundeliegenden männlichen Vergemeinschaftungsprozessen näher zu untersuchen, in denen einige und nicht alle Männer sexuelle Gewalt ausüben, jedoch alle, wie u.a. das Foto zeigt, zu Mitwissern und Bystandern werden.[[3]](#footnote-3) Geschlecht als Bezeichnung für den Geschlechtern zugeprochene Werte, aber auch als relationale Anaylsekategorie spielt eine zentrale Rolle um die institutionellen Strukturen und unterschiedlichen Machtbeziehungen, in die die Soldaten eingebettet sind, zu verstehen. Erst dann erschließen sich sozialen Dynamiken, die zu Gewalt führen.

Even outside the military context **masculinity** is a very competitive affair as Raewyn Connell has shown for schools/the educational system and the corporative world.[[4]](#footnote-4) (\*\*I might have to develop my argument here) The typology of masculinities that the sociologist has elaborated helps us to frame power-relations and hierarchies based on gender practices that are constantly negotiated between men. It is not only a question of patriarchal dominance of men over women but the shifting (in time and space) power relations where some men with certain qualities affirm power over others. This model differentiates between four types: hegemonic, complicit, marginal and subordinate. Hegemonic masculinity is not an entity but embodies only “currently accepted” strategy, it is hence a historically mobile relation.[[5]](#footnote-5) (\*\*I might link this hierarchies between men with the rape photo)

It is not exaggerated to assume that soldiers are under a particularly harsh/rigourous/challanging social constraint as in the particular institutional setting of the Army there is a constant need to proof their manhood to themselves and to their peers. Within the military the status of a “real” man is particularly fragile which leads, following the political scientist Aaron Belkin to a continuous/never ending/constant **pursuit of masculinity** by the single actors. Understanding military masculinity is not an easy task and Belkin offers a convincing understanding of military masculinity’s contours and operations, and an alternative reading of America’s functionality as an imperial power.[[6]](#footnote-6) He conceives of military masculinity as a set of beliefs, practices and attributes that can enable individuals (men *and* women) to claim authority on the basis of affirmative relationships with the military or with military ideas:

*“For some individuals, power may depend on their own or others’ beliefs that military service certifies one’s competence, trustworthiness, or authenticity. For others, authority may depend on practices that include serving in the military, referencing one’s military record, or promoting martial values. Yet others may depend on physical attributes or embellishments such as muscles or tattoos to enhance their authority. Military masculinity consists of these and other beliefs, practices and attributes which enable individuals to legitimize their claims to authority by associating themselves with the military or with military ideas.”[[7]](#footnote-7)*

Military masculinity is not static but rather socially dynamic and shifting across time and space. It is a set of appropriations of beliefs and of material conditions by the agents and in situ, that translate into concrete practices and attitudes (not sure if this is clear? Belkin p. 17). A soldier does not behave the same in different war context and cultural or social environments. But there is a gendered matrix that lies beneath all actions that is worth to take into account.

The connections between military and masculinity are powerful and momentous/consequential, that is why they ultimately help us to frame and understand the perpetrated violences, sexual or not. I will focus on the German Wehrmacht, the Army of an ultra fascist dictatorship that with the outbreak of the Second World war in 1939 became one of the main executors of the atrocities against civilian population (\*\*references atrocities France, Italy, Poland and Soviet territories), and from 1941 on an executioner of the mass murder on Soviet POWs (\*\*references) as well as an active accomplice of the genocide (\*\*references Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men?).[[8]](#footnote-8) There are obvious and striking ideological differences between the US Army and the German Wehrmacht. But my argument is that the Wehrmacht did not reinvent the Army and that there a structural mechanisms and social dynamics described by Belkin and other gender historians (\*\*Joshua Goldstein) of the military that also apply for the German Army during WWII.[[9]](#footnote-9) **(\*\*Thomas Kühne?**)

One significant pattern of military masculinity is that it draws credibility/significance and legitimacy out of the subservience of women and civil men. As I will argue in the following, the rape photograph in its radical explicity fully reflects the circumstances of the Nazi war in the East. Therefore we have to place the photograph in the larger cultural and political context of Nazism and the war on the Eastern front.

1. **Sex and Warfare on the Eastern Front 1941-44 (\*\*Arbeitstitel)**

In a divided Cold War Europe the imposing, very often also violent encounters of German soldiers with the civilian society stayed out of the general narrative. The crimes perpetrated by the Germans on the Eastern front had no space to be told out of the family memory (Familiengedächtnis), the Stammtisch (how do you translate that?), and various “*Kameradschaftsverbände*” (\*\*translation). Nobody cared about their testimonies/what they had to say, so that we have no interviews with ordinary soldiers. Occasionally, courts judged massacres (\*\*Ulmer Einsatzgruppen Prozess and other????). But it was not until the mid 1990s, that the crimes of the Wehrmacht came into a public awareness.[[10]](#footnote-10) The first exhibit by the Hamburg institute of Social Research “Vernichtungskrieg – Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944” (War of Annihilation. Crimes of the German Wehrmacht 1941 - 1944) travelled all over Germany and Austria in 1995, spurring critical discussions and controversies. Although it had to shut down because of falsely indentified photographs, this first exhibit was a major milestone (\*\*explain the controversy about falsely attributed photographs in the note).

As Regina Mühlhäuser has rightly pointed out, this was for the first time, that sexual violence on the Eastern front became a topic of debate. A dispute between veterans who visited the exhibit in Vienna drew her attention. A group of old men, all former soldiers, got tangled up in a fight over a photograph showing a female soldier of the Red Army lying on the street vor laufender Kamera (translation?) of the Austrian filmmaker Ruth Beckerman.[[11]](#footnote-11) While one man acknowledged the massive practice of rape by the German soldiers, the by standing men vigorously denied such crimes holding up the impeccable reputation of the German army and referring to the Soviets as “brutes”. Yet their language made it very clear that racist anti-Slavic resentments, as well as a misogynist sexist view of the East and particularly the Red Army had endured over 40 years. Watching these stubborn old men in their late 70s and early 80s arguing passionately over the obscenity of the Russian “*Flintenweiber*” (\*\*translation?) one cannot help to think how the depicted group of men in the rape photograph would have argued over their “joke” in the war’s aftermath. Beckermann documented the shooting of the documentary, in her shooting journal:

*“I see the eyes of visitors grown old, the eyes of former soldiers that look at the photos. Look at them again. For they have seen many of those kind of photos during and after the war, looked at them with comrades, collected them in albums…*

***What upsets them so?*** *It is not about knowing the facts. They knew about the facts then and have known ever since.* ***It must be the confrontation with their former feelings; seeing through the eyes of the soldiers who took the pictures back then.*** *For the photos don’t only document the crimes, but also the enthusiasm in the majority of soldiers:* ***laughing soldiers in front of and behind the camera****.”[[12]](#footnote-12)*

Wie **Sönke Neitzel und Harald Welzer** anhand ihrer Auswertung von Abhörprotokollen von deutschen Soldaten, aufgenommen in amerikanischen und britischen in Kriegsgefangenlagern zeigten, empfanden viele deutsche Soldaten Gewalt gegen Frauen und Kinder als beschämend.[[13]](#footnote-13) Doch dies hielt sie nicht davon, schamlos über die Gewalt zu reden, mit denen sie russischen Frauen begegneten, die sie als Spioninen verdächtigten, wie eine von Hauptmann Reimbold geschilderte Szene (I don’t want to use the word: “illustriert” because it feels sesationalist and wrong in this contect):

*“*Reimboldt: *Also, eines kann ich Ihnen direct erzählen, wo nicht ein Gerücht dahintersteckt. In dem ersten Offizierslager, wo ich hier in Gefangenschaft war, da war ein sehr dummer Frankfurter, junger Leutnant, junger Schnösel. Wir saßen zu acht an einem Tisch nd erzähltem über Russland. Und er erzählte: ‘Ach, da haben wir eine Spionin geschnappt, die da in der Gegend herumgelaufen ist. Und da haben wir ihr zuerst mit einem Stecken auf die Äppelchen gehauen, dann haben wir ihr den Hintern verhauen mit dem blanken Seitengewehr. Dann haben wir sie gefickt, dann haben wir sie rausgeschmissen, dann haben wir ihr nachgeschossen, da lag sie auf dem Rücken, da haben wir [mi]t Granaten gezielt. Und jedesmal, wenn wir in die Nähe trafen, hat sie geschrien. Zum Schluss ist sie dann verreckt und wir haben sie Leiche weggeschmissen.’ Und stellen Sie sich vor, es saßen mit mir am Tisch acht deutsche Offiziere, und es gab hallendes Gelächter. Also, ich habe das nicht ausgehalten, bin aufgestanden, und habe gesagt, meine Herren, das ist zu viel.”[[14]](#footnote-14)*

(here too I want to analyze das Gespräch im Gespräch, it is a very rich passage and it says a it about masculinities: the competition of who is the cooler guy. Reimbold has some thoughts about it though, but he too “uses” the story for something, to show off?…)

\*\*The language for rape is multiple, it never names the forced sexual intercourse and the violence but normalizes the rape in casual, macho language as “bürsten”, vögeln”, “hacken” und “ficken”, i.e. as a regular sexual intercourse without much feelings.

\*\*The Wehrmacht had presented them (to the soldiers) the purpose of war to prevent the sexual violence against German women by the Bolshevik “hords” who wanted to invade Nazi Germany. Such propaganda aimed to bestialize and over sexualize the Soviet enemy nurturing deeply routed fears (\*\*WWI) and creating a moral imperative to “protect” the German homeland by attacking the threat as a measure of self-defense and thus good cause.

\*\*Rape of the enemy’s female body becomes the ultimate subjugation of the enemy’s territory and the Wehrmacht made great use of it.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Sex as a trophy of conquest became part of the twentieth-century industrialized-warfare. Following Mary Louise Robert throughout WWII and on all fronts, “command over geographical territories signaled command over sexual territory. (…) The links between sexual and geographical conquest lay at the heart of the male anguish”[[16]](#footnote-16). The sexual abuse of the female combatant body translates male fear of submission and desire of domination, it shows the power of the aggressor, and the humiliation and vulnerability of the aggressed.

\*\***forbidden *and* tolerated**: On the Eastern front the soldiers could count on a relative imputity. **Omer Bartov** writes: “Other than offences against the iron discipline during combat, soldiers were seldom punished for unauthorised crimes against the enemy. For one reason, the superiors were generally sympathetic towards this kind of activities, for another, they presented a welcome release for the anger and frustration that had bottled up in the men due to the stern discipline, the increasing casualties, and the hopelessness of war”. (\*\* reference?). Birgit Beck zufolge wurden Vergewaltigungsdelikte an der Front sowie in den besetzten Gebieten bei weitem nicht als prioritär eingestuft, so dass wir davon ausgehen müssen, dass der Großteil der sexuellen Verbrechen nicht geahndet wurde. Die Dunkelziffer ist folglich groß. Sofern es doch zu Gerichtsverfahren kam, zeigen die Becks Forschungen wurden die Fälle, die vor Gericht kamen als Verletzung der Disziplin und Gefahr für das Ansehen der Truppe gehandhabt. Das Strafmaß variierte je nach Zeitpunkt der Tat, Kriegsverlauf und Standort, in Regel wurde nur in ausnahmefällen die Todesurteile gegen die Soldaten verhängte und auch die vergleichsweise hohen Haftstrafen wurden zumeist nicht abgesessen.[[17]](#footnote-17) Für die Wehrmacht, so schlussfolgert Regina Mühlhäuser, waren die Vergewaltigungen von lokalen Frauen in erster Linie eine “Ehrverletzung”, die dem Image der Wehrmacht schadete und deren Hauptleittragende die männlichen Angehörigen der Opfer seien. Die “geschändeten” Frauen waren überhaupt nicht auf dem Radar der oberen Befehlshaber/des OKW.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Yet even if the punishment of rapist soldiers was not a top priority of the Army command, uncontrolled sexual encounters with enemy or occupied women were a great concern for them. Dem Militärmediziner Dr. Joachim Rost zufolge wird das “sexuelle Problem” im Kriege erst hinter Front akut: “*In der Front steigert sich das DU-Erlebnis der Kameradschaft zu einer Höhe, die es selte erreicht. Außerdem aber bietet sich die Gelegenheit für die Auswirkung des Aggressionstriebes”,* argumentiert der Oberbefehlsarzt im Stabe eines Befehlshabers in einer medizinischen Fachzeitschrift.[[19]](#footnote-19) Der Soldat verfalle in einen Rauschzustand, die für ihn höchst befriedigend seien. In der Etappe aber langweile sich der Soldat häufig. *“Eine Partnerin findet sich für den Geschlechtsverkehr natürlich leicht: zunächst in der Bevölkerung des besetzten Landes.”[[20]](#footnote-20)* Sicherer sex war in den von der Wehrmacht eingerichteten Bordellen zu konsumieren. Aber nicht alle Soldaten hielten sich an die Vorschriften. Rost zufolge sei es ungmöglich das Sexualverhalten der Soldaten zu kontrollieren und die geheime Prostitution in den Griff zu bekommen. Dementsprechend hoch seien auch die Ansteckungsraten mit Geschlechtskrankheiten, mit weitreichenden Folgen für den erkrankten Soldaten, aber auch für sein Umfeld: “*Der Kompagniechef erblickt darin in erster Linie den Ausfall eines seiner Männer vom Dienst, er hat auch vielleicht die Notwendigkeit eines disziplinaren Erledigung zu erwägen. Der Kamerad bedauert, daß ein sonst anständiger Kerl einmal Pech gehabt hat. Die Angehörigen zu Hause erleben das Geschehnis häufig als eine Vertrauenskrise; eine Ehe kann darüber zerbrechen. Der Arzt sieht in erster Linie den Kranken, den er wiederherstellen und damit wieder kriegsverwendungsfähig machen soll.”[[21]](#footnote-21)* Man könne ja nicht einfach ein Verbot der sexuellen Betätigung erlassen,so seine Conclusio, wenn ein altes Gesetz des Krieges sei, dass ein Befehl nur dann Sinn mache, der auch ausführbar sei.[[22]](#footnote-22) It is interesting to note that the German army did acknowledge in medical publications and internal correspondences that its soldiers had a physiological need for (hetero)sexual activity. The vocabulary used by Rost and the Nazi authorities emphasizes not only a scientific character but also creates a legitimacy of sexual activities of all kind, as Nazism was to a certain racially restrictive and heteronormative extend a sex friendly regime in regard to pre- and extramarital sex.[[23]](#footnote-23) Oberste Priorität sei es, die Soldaten im Feld und die Frauen zu Hause zu schützen, durch Aufklärung, Sanierung und Zurverfügungstellung von Safe sex. But as Rost realistically put it, soldiers did not simply obey and very often combined different forms of sex.

*Eigensinn,* which literally signifies “stubbornness”,is a key concept of the history of everyday life or *Alltagsgeschichte,* developed in the 1980s by the German historian Alf Lüdtke.[[24]](#footnote-24) It presents a moment in which the individual engages in willful behavior, briefly distancing him- or herself from the constraints and demands. “Eigen-Sinn” is an individualistic stance, a momentary affirmation of one’s own interests and need. It is a moment of dissent or nonconformity regarding the demands of one’s superiors or the law, which does not fundamentally call into question that subservience. Drawing on Mary Louise Roberts work on the US Army, military statistics on male sexual behavior estimated that 15 percent of the soldiers would obey the orders and contain their desire for sexual intercourse, while 15 percent would be “eigensinnig”and choose having sex no matter what. The biggest group were men that were undecided or rather whom’s sexual behavior was unpredictable and for whom peer pressure played a major role, as the US Army command believed. Those 70 percent of soldiers became the target of the army’s education and surveillance efforts (VD, prostitution, fraternization).[[25]](#footnote-25) If we assume that the German soldier’s sexual behavior/sex drive did not significantly differ from the GI’s, then the Wehrmacht had to deal too with some 60 to 70 percent of unpredictable men.**[\*\*Are there Wehrmacht Reports/statistics on the Wehrmacht soldiers’s SEXUAL BEHAVIOR? \*\*ASK Regina Mühlhäuser]** Thus the biggest question not just the German army, but also was the Americans was: how to manage the sexual desires/energies of its soldiers. It is a problem that all armies have to deal with, before, during and after WWII. In contrast to the US Army, the German Wehrmacht took the offensive and handled the sexuality issue more upfront by making sexual intercourse largely available to its soldiers with an official system of controlled with regular checkups and good medical care for the clients. **\*\*PROSTITUTION** (elaborate \*\*Insa Meinen).

Heterosexual activity was believed to be crucial for the soldiers motivation to fight and to die, if necessary, in Eastern Europe \*\*\* miles away from home. General Patton’s memorable words “if they don’t fuck, they don’t fight” can stand for the entire twentieth century military culture.[[26]](#footnote-26) Male sexual fulfillment was considered the *conditio sine qua non* for male physical vigor and combat spirit. The US Army sold the European, Pacific, and Mediterranean mission to their soldiers as an erotic adventure, releasing a veritable “tsunami of lust”, as Mary Louise Roberts convincingly has demonstrated in her book.[[27]](#footnote-27) Soon after D-day, the military officers in charge realized that it impossible to control the sexual activities of GI’s in France, and later in Germany. There are obvious/striking similarities between the German and the US Army, with one particularity: For the Wehrmacht, the invasion of Poland in 1939 and the Soviet Union in 1941 was a civilisatory (I know, this word does not exist) mission, a battle over race and land, was I will discuss further down (weiter unten). But with ideology alone you can’t keep the soldiers in a fighting spirit (bei Kampflaune halten), especially when on the Eastern front a supposed Blitz turns into a lossy (verlustreich) battle and a supposedly glorious conquest of the sowjetisch Besetzte Gebiete (Jennifer, eigentlich aber auch Yugoslawien, oder?) into a painful occupation (\*\*references). The Wehrmacht therefore offered its soldiers possibilities to have an active heterosexual life, via state run brothels and tolerance for extramarital sexual or romantic relationships, as long as they were with “racially acceptable” women.[[28]](#footnote-28)

Beside the fear of homosexuality or better same sex activities, what the German Army cared and worried most about was not so much moral issues than the medical safety of its soldiers who should not contract any sexually transmitted diseases.[[29]](#footnote-29) To address the problem of VD, the Wehrmacht handed out educational pamphlets, posters, and Aufklärungsfilme (\*\*Annette Timm[[30]](#footnote-30)). In this view women available for sex were agents of infection, a nötiges Übel (\*\*translation? *ich meine, dass die Frauen, die zu Sex bereit ware nein nötiges Übel für das OKW waren*) that had to be controlled. By issuing pamphlets and other educational material, the Wehrmacht clearly played with the soldier’s fear and implanting ideas in their heads of women as poisonous sources of danger and death. This way of thinking had of course a backlash and influence on their extremely violent behavior in the occupied eastern territories. Hence, before becoming infectious the women had been infected by someone, and this clearly had to do something with the German occupation (\*\*Mühlhäuser).[[31]](#footnote-31) Blinded by the army’s strategy did rarely occur to the soldiers to question the male role in the transmission the soldiers and to blame the local women. Yet the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht knew that fear was not sufficient to keep them from having clandestine sex with local women. It issued free **condoms** (\*\*reference? Regina Mühlhäuser/Dagmar Herzog).[[32]](#footnote-32)

The Army command also did not only trust in prevention, but also in post coital prophylactic sanitary stations where soldiers could get an immediate treatment.[[33]](#footnote-33) In this “Sani-Stations”, as the 24 year old German POW Günther Schramm, a former Marineleutnant zur See, casually referred to it, soldiers could get immediate medical treatment without fearing any sanctions.[[34]](#footnote-34) Finally, the German Army health service also performed prophylactic injections of sulfonamides, a precursor to antibiotics.[[35]](#footnote-35) Thus we can speak of a policy of tolerance and many concessions to soldiers “needs”. Only in cases of serious infraction (same sex activities, rape reported by comrades, extraordinary cruelty) did soldiers risk sanctions and a trial (Birgit Beck/Isabel Heinemann?).[[36]](#footnote-36)

Yet the strict racist mission to annihilate Jewish life in Eastern Europe and enslave the Slavic population, put the sexual transgressions in an even more serious light. The Oberkommando der Wehrmacht made it very clear from the beginning that the war in the East was about the racial subordination of Eastern Europe. More than in any other Einsatzorte racial boundaries lay at the heart of what was the war about. In this struggle over the subordination of people and territory, sex had an eminent political and ideological meaning. Therefore, forbidden sexual relations were not only a question of sexually transmitted diseases, sex with racially outlawed Jews or inferior “races” became a matter or “purity and danger”[[37]](#footnote-37). (\*\*here I would like to elaborate a bit on the concept of pollution and taboo, Mary Douglas) One great fear of the Nazi Regime was that the sexually active soldiers impregnated local, “racially inferior” women.[[38]](#footnote-38)

However knowing that obedience was not paramount when it came to sex **(\*\*Eigensinn),** the policy/attitude of the Wehrmacht command on the spot was contradictory bricolage of forbidding and tolerating. The Wehrmacht’s policy on sexual intercourse with “non-Aryans” fluctuated between official regulation, punishment, and unofficial disregard. The result was a “set of contradictions”[[39]](#footnote-39): German soldiers having sex with Slavic women was forbidden, but largely tolerated (\*\*reference Regina Mühlhäuser). The Army did worry about news on promiscuity spreading in the Reich and the reputation of the soldiers at the home front/back home that had to support military mission. However, it was out if its reach to control it (Roberts, p. 186). It might not surprise that the Gestapo registered the sexual activities of the women at home who started to worry the authorities because it distracted the husbands and fiancés at the front. German women had sex with Slavic men less in the occupied East as within the Reich (\*\*Cornelie Usborne/Birthe Kundrus). This racial and gender transgressing sex was sanctioned, but the lethal/death sentence was only for non-German men whereas an Aryan women was certainly punished with prison, but protected by her racial supremacy. Sex with Jewish women was a clear taboo within the Reich and on the occupied countries but this did not prevent German men to sexually abuse them. Im britischen Abhörlager Latimer House erzählte der U-Boot-Matrose Horst Minnieur (21 Jahre) seinem Kameraden, dem 23-jährigen Mechanikermaat Helmut Hartel wie er im litauischen Wilna Zeuge bei “Judeneraktionen” wurde und dabei auch eine junge, bildschöne jüdische Frau erschossen wurde, die seine Kaserne saubermachte. Wie der Dialog zeigt, geht es nicht nur um das Befremden gegenüber Massenerschießungen von Frauen, es geht auch um Erotik und Sex. Sehr präsent ist der voyeuristische Blick:

Minnieur: [die Juden, EM ] *Mussten sich ausziehen bis aufs Hemd und die Weiber bis auf Sclüpfer und Hemd und dann wurden sie erschossen von der Gestapo. Da sind sämtliche Juden hingerichtet worden.*

Hartelt: *Im Hemde?*

Minnieur: *Ja.*

Hartelt: *Warum denn das?*

Minnieur: *Na ja, damit sie keine Sachen runternehmen. Die Sachen wurden aufgehoben, sauber gemacht, gestopft. […] Wir haben einmal zugesehen da beim Erschießen.*

Hartelt: *Mit der MG erschossen?*

Minnieur: *Mit der MP. […] Und wir sind noch da gewesen, wo ein hübsches Weib erschossen wurde.*

Hartelt: *Schade drum.*

Minnieur: Alles ratzekahl! *[…]*

Hartelt: *Ist sie denn noch in ihren Kleidern hingegangen?*

Minnieur: *Ja, war so fesch angezogen. Bestimmt schneidiges Mädel.*

*[…]*

Hartelt: *Hat die denn irgendwie was vorher gesagt? Waren Sie mit der zusammen noch einmal?*

Minnieur: *Ja, wir waren ja den vorletzten Tag noch zusammen, den anderen Tag wundern wir uns, sie kommt nicht mehr. Da fuhren wir weg mit der Maschine.*

Hartelt: Ja, hat die mitgearbeitet? *[…] Straßenbau?*

Minnieur: *Nein, Kaserne saubergemacht bei uns. […]*

Hartelt: *“Da hat sie sich auch gewiss hacken lassen noch?*

Minnieur: *Hacken lassen hat sie sich, aber man musste sich vorsehen, dass man nicht gekriegt wurde da. Das ist ja nichts Neues, die sind umgelegt worden die Judenweiber, dass es nicht mehr schön war.*

Hartelt: *Hat sie denn gesagt so, dass sie -?*

Minnieur: *Gar nichts. Ach, wir haben uns unterhalten, […] in Göttingen war sie auf der Universität.*

Hartelt: *Da hat sie sich zur Hure machen lassen!”[[40]](#footnote-40)*

Dear Jennifer, this is a weird conversation and I guess not easy to translate. I’d like to analyze this dialog in a second step, what I find interesting is how the boys meander from one think to the other, coming always back to the sexual. I also see a lot of power asymmetries, the Jewish girl is a student whereas the marines are Handwerker. Even though they say pretty all about a “typical” genocidal massacre, what the two young men talk about is adventure, guns, and sex.

Ein Eintrag aus einem amerikanischen Abhörprotokoll verstärkt die These, dass in Gefangenschaft ausgiebig über Frauen, Sex und Kriegsabenteuer gesprochen wurde. Offensichtlich nicht an den Männergesprächen interessiert, ging es ja vornehmlich um die Erkundung von Kriegsverbrechen und Ausspionierung von Kriegsgeheimnissen, notierte der Abhöroffizier lakonisch:

“18:45 Women

19:15 Women

19:45 Women

20:00 Women”[[41]](#footnote-41)

As Regina Mühlhäuser has shown, it was a common practice to rape and then kill the “*corpus delicti*” after intercourse.[[42]](#footnote-42) Another taboo were same sex activities, German men having sex with Slavic men was harshly sanctioned on both sides (\*\*reference? Kühne/Giles). We clearly see that within these contradictions there are grey zones (heterosexual sex with racially inferior Slaves) and off-limits (same sex activities with racially inferior men, sex with Jewish women).

As a result of these competing motivations, the armies created a system that was inherently contradictory. Mary Louise Roberts accurately states that military organizations, in her case the US Army in liberated France, were sending out mixed messages**:** “*Issuing free condoms, providing pro stations, not penalizing diseased soldiers – such policies had the effect of normalizing the promiscuity the military was suppressing – in other words, encouraging the problem they were created to manage.”*[[43]](#footnote-43)By this ambivalent posture, i.e. the fluctuation between strict official regulations and somehow lax semi-official disregards/attitudes the military affirmed and encouraged heterosexual male libido (Roberts, p. 175).

Yet the Wehrmacht did not have the same moral issues of legitimacy that the US Army dealt with as its mission was clearly not rescue nor to protect the invaded European countries but to conquest, to economically exploit and to dominate/germanize them. **Germanization** meant violent explusion of Poles and Slavic popuation and resettlement of ethnic Germans (\*\*my book), multiple hierarchies of racial and ethnic inferiorities and a clear German supremacy. Mary Fulbrook talkes about a colonial racism in the occupied East. “Kolonialrassismus, was nicht dasselbe ist wie Goldhagens “Ausrottungsantisemitismus”, war [in den besetzten Gebieten im Osten, EM] ein Schlüsselelement für die Entwicklung der Vorbedingungen des Völkermordes.”[[44]](#footnote-44)

Deutsche Soldaten zwangen Frauen, aber auch Männer, sich vor ihnen zu entkleiden, sie nutzen Leibesvisiten, um diese Menschen an ihren Geschlechtsorganen zu befingern, sie fotografierten sie nackt, witzelten und spotteten über sie. Sicherheitspolitik (Partnisanenbekämpfung, sowjetische Spione) gaben genügend Anlass für sexuelle Übergriffe, die so nicht vorgesehen waren. Es lag schließlich im Deutungsrahmen eines jeden Soldaten, wie die Befehle ausgefürt werden sollten. Okkupation mündete vielfach in sexuelle Ausbeutung, Folter und Vergewaltigungen.[[45]](#footnote-45) Interestingly enough, a significant alteration of the criminal law occurred on 4 September 1941, just after the invasion of the Soviet Union, which permitted capital punishment for so-called moral offences (crimes under §§176-178 of the criminal code). Citizens of the Reich, i.e. members of the *Volksgemeinschaft,* were given a new status with regards to sexual violence. Sexual assaults on German women and on German children under the age of fourteen could lead to a death sentence “if the protection of the community or the need for just punishment demands it” (*Gesetz zur Abänderung des Strafgesetzbuches*, 4 Sept 1941)[[46]](#footnote-46). While the German women at home got protected, the European women under Nazi legislation became a sex toy/an inferior object to exploit.

[\*\*SV = multicausal explanation for rape: pressure of combat, fear of death, ideological despise, or the simply by fact that in this particular setting, it was possible (Michel Foucault).] While the sexual violence might have served, in the logic of the Wehrmacht soldiers as a tool to demonstrate their supremacy/power to subjugate the Eastern Europeans, for the local population, the rapist German soldiers became violent, terrorizing intruders that undermined, even in the eyes of anti-communists and anti-Russians, their legitimacy.

If we frame sexual and gender relations as power relations (\*\*Joan Scott, Michel Foucault), also non-violent access of Wehrmacht soldiers to local women becomes to symbolize the German’s domination and the Easter European’s defeat where the women’s body becomes a merchandise to trade (cf. Roberts p. 110). Historians Regina Mühlhäuser and Anna Hájkóva have enriched our perception of sexuality during wartime in Nazi occupied Europe. Both plead for a large and open definition of commercial or instrumental sexthat they do not necessarily define as prostitution. Rather, their **concept of sexual barter** grasps a give-and-take logic by acknowledging the asymmetrical power relations between the \*\*Anbieter (how do I translate the person who “offers” or providers?) and \*\*Nachfragender (and the person who requests?). In wartime, during occupation as well as in ghettos sex becomes a tool of negotiation, the concept then allows us to differentiate between different types and degrees of sexual bartering, such as commercial sex or prostitution (sex for money or material resources), sex trade (sex for food or protection), or long-term consensual or romantic relations that in the specific context of war and occupation however intersect with trade and economy. The umbrella concept of sexual exchange thus stresses out the fluid boundaries between consent and coercion, between domination and subjugation, between exploitation and dependence. However, even though extremely asymmetrical power relations and the scarsity/shortage of food supplies forced women into sexual trade/slavery, this concept also underlines the agencies of the local women, who by their gender and race clearly are in a structural disadvantaged position, their capacities to act and to survive in such extreme living conditions. (\*\*Regina Mühlhäuser …). Sexual barter as a form of instrumental sex demands a serious reevaluation of our understanding of consent and of choice. Or asHájkóva put it: “*The inmates in Theresienstadt still had choices, even if they were very limited; in refusing them the possibility of choice, we refuse them agency.”*[[47]](#footnote-47)

\*\*transition (Mary Louise Roberts:“While France was a battlefield, it was also an unknown place, and as such, experienced by the GIs in terms not unlike those of a tourist”, Roberts p. 19)While the Soviet Union was a zone of combat (linked with battlefield, danger, fear), it was also an exotic place and as an occupied territory, it became a zone of recreation and tourism.

**3. Soldiers, Conquerors, Tourists: Colonial “Selfies” on the Eastern front** (Silvan Niedermeier[[48]](#footnote-48), amateur photographs as gendered colonial self-representations, \*\*Regina Mühlhäuser und Petra Bopp)

Being at war also means moving through countries, it thus also **travel and** **tourism** (\*\*Roberts p. X, Mühlhäuser p. X). Numerous young soldiers left Germany in 1939 for the first time, first to rush in a victorious Blitz trough Poland, Western, and Northern Europe, then, to get stuck on the Eastern front. While France had the reputation of an eroticized country of a land of wine, women, and songs, the image of Eastern Europe was more spröde (\*\*translation?) and hostile image.[[49]](#footnote-49) But even though the invasion of the Soviet Union wasn’t an easy take from the beginning, it undisputedly had an adventurous touch, at least until the Stalingrad debacle (\*\* reference?!).

What became the Nazi East were Eastern European countries (Poland, Ukraine, Belarus \*\*) that \*\*\* rural, polulation/economy … .

[\*\*I NEED A **NEW** MAP Here]



Already during WWI German soldiers considered these Eastern territories as remote and foreign.[[50]](#footnote-50) In the first half of the twentieth century, Eastern and East-Central Europe were the regions upon which Germany projected its fantasies of a “German East.”[[51]](#footnote-51) These imperialistic images of the “East” that had their origins in the First World War and the interwar period were later repeated in the National Socialist slogan that the Germans were a people without space, and used to justify the conquest of neighboring nations, which were to become German living space (*Lebensraum*).[[52]](#footnote-52) Germany’s belief in its cultural superiority over the “Slavs” (the Russians, in particular), already characterized by racist overtones, existed prior to and during the First World War.[[53]](#footnote-53)

For the men and women deployed during WWII as administrative stuff, security or colonial counselors in the occupied Eastern territories the contrast with the technologically advanced/modern Germany was even more drastic in the light of Nazi ideology and particularly its “racial theories”. In their autobiographical accounts they describe and remember the East as remote and primitive (\*\*Elizabeth Harvey, Women in the Nazi East + other references)[[54]](#footnote-54). **\*\* QUOTES from Harvey?** Nevertheless, more than tourists the Germans were colonizers, part of a big but later abandoned plan to reorganize and Germanize Eastern Europe (\*\*Generalplan Ost).

Contrary to the Westfeldzug (\*\*translation?) and the invasion of France in June 1940 (\*\*Franka Maubach?, \*\*references TOPO?), the German soldiers showed less joy. Or put it differently, while it was a widespread custom to slip „souvenirs“ into the pocket, the emotional component of such material appropriations and trophy hunting had a different intensity. Judging from the photographs the soldiers took **\*\* COMPARE TO PHOTOGRAPHS of Western and Eastern Front.[[55]](#footnote-55)** What was tolerated in the East was not in the West, sexual violence and rape were far more by the military authorities in the eastern occupied territories then in the western. This demonstrates the dichotomy of the eastern and western front and the racialization of the conflict.

**\*\*Knipser/Amateurphotographen** (how do I translate “Knipser”?)photography & technical progress **WWII:** The creation of the thirty-five-millimeter camera with its fast shutter speed and very handy size allowed Wehrmacht soldiers to document the war they fought. The Second World War was the first war in history to be covered to such a large extends by the ordinary soldiers on the ground, who became private amateur photographers. Thousands of soldiers took snapshots, as photographic albums largely document (\*\*Petra Bopp, Ulrich Prehn).[[56]](#footnote-56) This individual use of photography gives us a private view on the “Vernichtungskrieg” (\*\*translation?) and occupation of Eastern Europe. Some of these captures were shared with friends, others with family. Because of this large casual use of photography that paired with a playful and exhibitionist \*\*Selbstinszenierung (translation?), Silvan Niedermeier called the photographs taken by US soldiers during the Philippine War **“colonial selfies**” (\*\*I want to elaborate on this, reference Niedermaier etc.). The same applies to the amateur photography of German soldiers during WWII.

The Wehrmacht soldiers had no or little recognition for the foreign culture and religious difference of these countries. \*\*find photos to discuss, Petra Bopp and Katalog erste Wehrmachtausstellung: Private photos show half naked soldiers in very remote Eastern European villages, their nudity strikingly conflicted/conflicts with Christian orthodoxy and Judaism. Religious Jews were a particular source of fun making, photos show soldiers getting a kick out of cutting off or pulling out the beards of old Jews or setting it on fire. And finally, the soldiers also mocked the resistance, laughing soldiers posed in front to hanged partisans. \*\*The Germans soldiers inszenierten sich as conquerors, reducing the Slavic Eastern European population as subaltern/subordinate race (work slaves) and the Europeans Jews as parias. What we see are arrogant, self-imposing, and mocking postures.

\*\***body language** and **the performative character of sexual violence**: Dealing with sexual violence necessitates a distinction between different forms and levels of violence, and moreover with an eye to their cultural meaning. Especially excessive violence claims for the decoding of the gesture-based language of violence. The soldiers used the bodies of the enemies’ to send messages. As the Archaeologist Maud Gleasonstates referring to Josephus’ writing and the Jewish War, body language and gesture constitute a non-verbal form of communication. It demands the understanding of the semiotic context, “of the ways the human body functioned as a signifier in that time and place”[[57]](#footnote-57). The gestural repertory of violence and especially so-called excessive violence is rich and polysemous, because it is impossible for the perpetrators to control the meaning of their violent gestures. **\*\*elaborate on photos once I have chosen some** These images cultivate a self-confident masculine appeal of the soldiers whereas letters and diaries also document insecurity, fear, and to some extend also doubt (\*\*reference?). The rape photo is unusual for its explicit sexual and violent content. For very obvious reason it most probably was not destined for the eyes of a domestic and especially female audience at home, neither during nor after the war. The sheer demonstration of power/supremacy it depicts translates the sexual exploitation of East European women and the German arrogance.

\*\*an important question then is: **who get’s to see what image?** The Wehrmacht did everything to protect the families at home from the spectacle of the soldiers’ violences and promiscuities at while exposing the local families on the spot inescapably to sex and sexual violence. Here race, class, and gender intersect, as the regime made may efforts to spare German women at home were from VD and exposure to their husband’s infidelity, at the expense of a local women in occupied Eastern Europe. After the German defeat, the beginning of the Cold War facilitated to keep the silence. Nobody talked about German crimes and sexual violence on the Eastern front, what forged/coined/framed especially the West German collective memory were the crimes of the Red Army, especially the rape of German women in 1944 and 1945.[[58]](#footnote-58) But considering that, after all, fore some/many of these soldiers the war experience in the East could haven been also a “good time”, these photographs made it into private photo albums. Probably the ones that one kept locked for “special occasions”, such as a *Stammtisch[[59]](#footnote-59)* meeting. Even the gruesome rape photograph has to be considered as a souvenir. It was mend to “freeze” (\*\*Susan Sontag) a shared moment of male bonding. Yet it is not only about silly soldiers united in a boyish joke, silencing the violence of the joke. The very fact that they dare to fool around with a corpse and to capture it in a picture of this “joke” is a sign of how confident they are of their power/supremacy, as if they were saying: look, we can do what we want.

**Conclusion: “Shifting Subjectivities**” (\*\*Jennifer Evans)

[\*\* transition In an age where digital self recording is ubiquitous this photograph shot in WWII shows us a very modern abuse of photographical recording and the banality of sexual violence. \*\*Lyndie England photo posture is torture AND fun, the college rape video (ask Debra Bergoffen)

Building upon work by the historian Jennifer Evans, this contribution valorizes the fluctuating, subjectively perceived social realities, which Evans calls “shifting subjectivities,” of this source.[[60]](#footnote-60)]

\*\*As we have seen, the German Army’s policy was also clearly designed to prevent same sex activities, the great fear of every army. But in resolving one problem, another was created: the largely controlled military brothels (in the German case) and uncontrolled sexual activities (clandestine prostitution, fraternization, sexual barter, sexual violence) evoked the spectre of rampant VD, which had to be prevented at all costs.

\*\*Sexual practices, including sexual violence, remained publically denied but were in effect socially affirmed and enacted and hence unofficially condoned. This state of affairs reinforced a longstanding political and social understanding of male sexuality as driven and impetuous, reconfirming a man’s “social right” to sex with women, especially during wartime and the immediate aftermath of war.

Mary Louise Roberts: “*To* ***understand the mercilessness of*** *GI* ***condescension*** *here, we have to* ***keep in mind that manliness was a premium in the army at the same time that it was threatened****.”[[61]](#footnote-61)* We have to take into account that there are hierarchies between men and that within any social constellation, but especially within the army, power relations between men are though **(\*\*Connell/Belkin**) The gendered and social role of a man (and of a woman) is never achieved and always in motion/in becoming. War features multiple chances to showcase an excellent performance of what is conventionally understand as virility (bravery, fighting skills, fierce determination, capacity to obey and to subjugate, camaraderie etc.), yet the concrete experience of fear, of life-threatening danger, of uncertainty and massive violence also challenges self-perceptions and gender roles. There are moments when soldiers who in the face of danger are in control of their body anymore and literally piss in their pants/urinate in their skivvies, as Joanna Bourke has brilliantly reflected on in an article.[[62]](#footnote-62) What we usually do not see in the heroic plots is anxiety and insecurity. There is a psychological dynamic that soldiers do compensate these very destabilizing emotional states with alcohol, aggression and sexual relieve (\*\*references? SVAC, Aaron Belkin?)

War offers sexual opportunities and we all know that it is impossible to control the sexual activities at the front and in occupied countries, but also at home. Sex is always eminently political but in wartime it becomes vital for asserting racial and ideological supremacy/power over others and to negotiate gendered and social power relations with the enemy community but also within one’s own community. As we have seen, it is not a one-way enterprise but “fassen” (\*\*translation?) multidirectional interactions/relations with multiple constellations: Throughout war, conquest is sexualized. But what is the distinctly sexual nature of rape/SV? (cf. Roberts, p. 247)

1. The National Archives of Romania, The Photo Section, File Horrors of the Second World War, F I, 7789 (18). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Koloma Beck Teresa, “The Eye of the Beholder: Violence as a Social Process,” International Journal of Conflict and Violence, Vol. 5 (2011) 2, 345-356, 350. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Sönke Neitzen and Harald Welzer, Soldaten. Protokolle vom Kämpfen, Töten und Sterben (Frankfurt a. Main: Fischer 2011), 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. R.W. Connell, “Swots and Wimps: The Interplay of Masculinity and Education,” Oxford Review of Education*,* vol. 15, no. 3 (1989), 291-303; R. W. Connell , “The Social Organization of Masculinity,” in, Connell R. W., Masculinities (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press 2005 (1995), 67-86. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “The concept of ‘h**egemony**’, deriving from Antonio Gramsci’s analysis of class relations, refers to the **cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life**. At any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted. **Hegemonic masculinity** can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which **embodies the currently accepted** **answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy**, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) **the dominant position of men and the subordinate position of women**.” R. W. Connell , “The Social Organization of Masculinity,” in, Connell R. W., Masculinities (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press 2005 (1995), 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Aaron Belkin, Bring Me Men. Military Masculinity and the Benign Façade of American Empire, 1898-2001. (New York: Columbia University Press 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Belkin, Bring Me Men, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See for example Felix Römer, Der Kommissarbefehl. Wehrmacht und NS-Verbrechen an der Ostfront 1941/42 (Paderborn: Schöningh 2008); Babette Quinkert, Propaganda und terror in Weißrußland 1941-1944. Die deutsche “geistige” Kriegsführung gegen Zivilbevölkerung und Partisanen (Paderborn: Schöningh 2009); \*\* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Joshua Goldstein, War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Sabine Moller, Karoline Tschuggnall and Harald Welzer, „Opa war kein Nazi“. Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
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12. Ruth Beckermann, East of War. Shooting Journal, 1996, translated from German by Monika Nowotny, http://www.ruthbeckermann.com/home.php?il=53. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Sönke Neitzen and Harald Welzer, Soldaten. Protokolle vom Kämpfen, Töten und Sterben (Frankfurt a. Main: Fischer 2011), 197-200, 217-228. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Sönke Neitzen and Harald Welzer, Soldaten. Protokolle vom Kämpfen, Töten und Sterben (Frankfurt a. Main: Fischer 2011), 197-200, 228/229; Room Conversation Müller – Reimbold, v. 22.3.1945; **NARA, RG 165, Entry 179, Box 530**. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Regina Mühlhäuser, Eroberungen. Sexuelle Gewalttaten und intime Beziehungen deutsche Soldaten in der Sowjetunion, 1941-1945(Hamburg: Hamburger Edition 2010), 73-155. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Mary Louise Roberts, What Soldiers Do. Sex and the American GI in World War II France (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2013), 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Birgit Beck, Wehrmacht und sexuelle gewalt. Sexualverbrechen vor deutsche Gerichten 1939-1945 (Paderborn: Schöningh 2004), **427, 308-325**; David Raub Snyder, Sex Crimes Under the Wehrmacht (Lincoln, NE: XX 2007), 137f. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
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19. Dr. Joachim Rost, “Sexuelle Probleme im Felde, Medizinische Welt, No 15/16, 15 April 1944, 2-6, 3. Bundesarchiv Berlin Lichterfelde, NS7 – 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Dr. Joachim Rost, “Sexuelle Probleme im Felde, Medizinische Welt, No 15/16, 15 April 1944, 2-6, 5. Bundesarchiv Berlin Lichterfelde, NS7 – 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
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23. Dagmar Herzog, Sex After Fascism. Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany (Princeton : Princeton University Press 2005), chapter one. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Alf Lüdtke, *Eigen-Sinn: Fabrikalltag, Arbeitererfahrung und Politik vom Kaiserreich bis in den Faschismus* (Hamburg: XX 1993); Alf Lüdtke, The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*.* Edited by Alf Lüdtke Translated by William Templer. (Princeton : Princeton University Press 1995 (1989). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Roberts, What Soldiers Do, 165, see NARA, RG 311, Entry 65, Box 7, memo dated 22 April 1944. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
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27. Roberts, What Soldiers Do, 9, see especially chapters 2 and 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Mühlhäuser, Eroberungen, 141f. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. The history of same sex encounters and sexual violences between men is relatively unknown, see Geoffrey Giles, “A Gray Zone Among the Field Grey Men. Confusion in the Discrimination Against Homosexuals in the Wehrmacht, Gray Zones. Ambiguity and Compromise in the Holocaust and its Aftermath (New York: XX 2005), 127-146. On the handling of prostitution by the US Army in France see Roberts, What soldiers Do, chap. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Annette F. Timm, The Politics of Fertility in Twentieth-Century Berlin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. For the US Army see Roberts, What soldiers Do, 166 and 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
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33. Even the US Army installed such stations near brothels and army camps in French cities, Roberts, What Soldiers Do, 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
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36. Isabel Heinemann, „Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut“ Das Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS und die rassenpolitische Neuordnung Europas(Göttingen: Wallstein 2003); Birgit Beck, Wehrmacht und sexuelle Gewalt. Sexualverbrechen vor deutsche Militärgerichten 1939-1945(Paderborn et. al.: Schöningh 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
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41. Ibid., 224. Room Conversation Kruk – Böhm, 12.6.1944 ; **NARA, RG 165, Entry 179, Box 504.** [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
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43. Roberts, What Soldiers Do, 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Mary Fulbrook, “Nazis mit reinem Gewissen?,” in Ideologie und Moral im nationalsozialismus, eds. Wolfgang Bialas and Lothar Fritze (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2014), 129-151, 150. **Topo Co Bia** [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
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49. \*\*reference ? For the GI’s perception of France in 1944-46 see Roberts, What Soldiers Do, 15-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
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51. See Jürgen Zimmerer, “Die Geburt des ‘Ostlandes’ aus dem Geiste des Kolonialismus. Die nationalsozialistische Eroberungs- und Beherrschungspolitik in postkolonialer Perspektive,” in: *Sozial-Geschichte*, 1 (2004), pp. 10–43; David Furber, Going East: Colonialism and German Life in Nazi-Occupied Poland, Ph.D. Thesis, SUNY Buffalo, 2003; David Furber, “Near as Far in the Colonies: The Nazi Occupation of Poland”, *The International History Review,* Vol. 26, No. 3 (Sep., 2004), pp. 541-579. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
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54. Elizabeth Harvey, Women in the Nazi East: Agents and Witnesses of Germanization, (New Haven/London: Yale University Press 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. \*\* See also **How to See Paris: For the Soldiers of the Allied Armies (Paris: Commissariat Général au Tourisme, 1945?), 32, Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, Série 30, Fonds actualités, Box 35, Guerre 39-45.** [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. See also Roberts, What Soldiers Do, 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Maud Gleason, “Mutilated Messangers: body language in Josephus”, in: Simon Goldhill (ed.), Being Greek

    under Rome. Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Delevlopement of Empire, (Cambridge: Cambridge

    University Press, 2001), pp. 50–85, p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Atina Grossmann, “A question of silence. The rape of german women by occupation soldiers,” October vol 72 (1995), vol. 72, 43-63; Elizabeth Heineman, “The Hour of the Woman: Memories of Germany’s “Crisis Years” and West German National Identity,” The American Historical Review*,* Vol. 101, 1996, No 2, 354-395. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. A particularity of grandpa’s war album is that many German photo albums have missing – torn out – pictures, or missing pages. Sometimes, people just cut out the insignia of the uniform, in order to dismiss proof of affiliation to Nazi organizations (reference Petra Bopp?). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. \*\* Jennifer Evans [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Roberts, What Soldiers Do, 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Joanna Bourke**, “**The Killing Frenzy. Wartime Narratives of Enemy Action”, Alf Lüdtke, Bernd Weisbrod (ed.), No Man’s Land of Violence. Extreme Wars in the 20th Century(Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag 2006), 101-125, 104/105. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)