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**The Romanian world as reflected in wartime memoirs.  
Society and mores during the German military occupation (1916-1918).**

The wartime years provided the occasion for Europe to encounter Romanian society in a controversial manner. Political interest stimulated the dismantling of old perceptions and the articulation of new ones. After several years of association with the Triple Alliance's sphere of interest, Romania decided to pursue a belligerent policy, on the side of the Entente. The attitudes (positive until then) of the German-speaking world towards Romanians changed. Negative stereotypes arose. The only remaining way for Romanians to access European values, through the traditional friendship with France, remained as strong as in the past, and grew stronger during the war. In response to the German rhetoric expressing decadence and frivolity in Romanian society, the French propagated a rhetoric of audacity and dignity. Descriptions became increasingly more numerous during the German military occupation, a time of reflection as well as of administration.

Bulgaria had attracted the attention of the civilised world during the Balkan Wars. In the same way, Romania, which had been summoned to join the great conflagration, revealed itself to the foreign occupier as weakened yet attempting, in times of hardship, to rediscover itself. For the first time, Romanian society was the object of ample descriptions, generated by the experience of a coalition war. Feelings and thoughts varied according to the nationality of those experiencing them (Bucharest was occupied at the time by Germans, Austrians, Turks and Bulgarians): to their historical experience, their level of education and their current frustrations. The memoirs of German officers preserve the most numerous and most valuable portrayals. What makes them unique lies in the attempt to observe the development of society and mores by measuring it against the influence of the French model.

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