

governmental decrees and multiple direct orders to the military that resulted in deprivation, deportation, and death for hundreds of thousands of Jews. *Romania's Holy War* would be an even better book if written with greater tolerance for the possible validity of *multiple overlapping interpretations* rather than dismissing differing conclusions as mistaken.

In similar manner, the likelihood of *multiple causation* provides appropriate perspective with which to approach the author's hypothesis that Romanian soldiers were motivated principally by ideology. Harward stresses nationalism, religion, antisemitism, and anticommunism as motivators fueling Romania's "holy war." These were certainly central themes exploited by the Antonescu regime and the officer corps in their massive propaganda directed at the population in general and rank and file soldiers in particular. Still, Harward identifies multiple additional factors that kept troops fighting: devotion to comrades; lives already lost; discipline violently enforced; exaggeration of Jewish betrayal in Bessarabia; pressure from German SS units; fear of retribution against one's family if a soldier refused to fight; fear of Soviet revenge killing, mass rapes, abuse of children. There were a myriad of factors at work that kept Romanian soldiers fighting.

This multi-causality necessarily raises the question whether the mass of Romanian soldiers were actually *ideologically* committed. Ideological commitment would imply understanding unusual in a fighting force where one third of soldiers were illiterate and many of the rest had only elementary-level village schooling. The government's propaganda had its impact, for sure. Yet, barraged by propaganda that appealed to patriotism that exploited religious faith with terms like "crusade" and "holy," that stoked scapegoating and prejudice and threatened harm to one's family, most Romanian soldiers could be expected to comply with what was wanted of them. Christopher Browning, in his foundational *Ordinary Men* (1992), demonstrated conclusively that ideological commitment was neither present nor necessary for *German* police and soldiers to perpetrate brutal genocidal crimes. *The same truth applies in the Romanian case.* For many officers and for Iron Guardists freed from incarceration and sent to the front, ideology undoubtedly mattered. But the hypothesis that ideology "pervaded the ranks from top to bottom" (6) is problematic. The many instances of defeatism and resistance to continued engagement cited by Harward further make the point.

There are details in the author's rendition of Romanian history that will be debated, but they do not detract from the importance of this book. The rich new source material brought to bear; the analysis of army culture and the military's view of Romania's ethnic minorities; the extensive information regarding the propaganda machine through which the regime promoted its "holy war"; and the integration of military, political, and Holocaust perspectives: all of these make *Romania's Holy War* a book that needs to be read.

PAUL SHAPIRO

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Everyday Zionism in East Central Europe: Nation Building in War and Revolution, 1914–1920. By Jan Rybak. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. xii, 362 pp.

Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Maps. \$85.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.122

The First World War and its aftermath disabused Jews in east central Europe of long-standing practices of accommodation to the central imperial state they had followed in exchange for protection and the pursuit of their personal well-being. The shiny

brass military uniform buttons oxidized, food supplies ran short, refugees sojourned at the train stations, and violence spiraled. Urgent local everyday needs and concerns consumed their contracted energy. Many felt that the “empire had failed its Jewish citizens” (152). Who would step up to defend, shelter, and care for them? In a world of tumbling hierarchies and social transformation, east central European Zionists did, and they formed a mass movement in the region (287–88).

Jan Rybak is right to bundle these six long years of war and revolution together, eschewing conventional periodization, to establish the continuity of experience that directly shaped the improbable rise of the Zionist movement to a leading role in post-World War I Jewish politics. Rybak’s aptly titled book, *Everyday Zionism in East Central Europe*, is an exceptional study of how the movement achieved political agency pragmatically and locally, rather than ideologically and remotely, in an overdetermined national environment. It advances our understanding of the appeal of a Zionist answer to existential security questions in relation to other strategies, including, above all, the liberation promised by socialist revolution.

Rybak argues that Zionists proved throughout the war that they were the ones able to quickly respond to critical need, and gained Jews’ trust that they would continue to do so in the war’s tumultuous wake. Zionists turned nimbly on a double eagle-headed Austro-Hungarian krone early in the war from traditional work related to acquiring and building a Jewish national home in Palestine to using that money for self-help, refugee care, welfare, and relief efforts in the region. Grassroots relief efforts took precedence over ideological visions (34). Rybak organizes his discussion thematically, as a prism, each chapter illuminating key features of the regionally-focused movement: its national mission, welfare and relief program, childcare and education, anti-Jewish violence and self-defense, national representation, and situating the appeal of local Zionism in relation to the Russian Revolution and to Palestine.

The work departs from related recent scholarship on the early twentieth century political, social, and cultural history of Jews in east central Europe in its expanded geographical scope, including lands of both the Central and Entente powers, and consequently broader archival examination in its consideration of questions of security in the radically transformed European environment. Rybak delineates his region of study as a territory extending “from Vienna to Wilno (Vilne/Vilnius/Wilna/Vilna)” and “from Prague to Pinsk,” or the Austrian half of Austria-Hungary and parts of the Kingdom of Poland and the Russian Empire that Germany occupied during the war (2). The Kingdom of Hungary and its successors, however, are notably absent from the story, save for a brief cameo appearance, without explanation. This is nevertheless a masterfully researched study, drawing on materials from thirty-one archives in six countries in German, Hebrew, French, and Polish, in addition to a broad examination of the relevant periodical literature.

Particular strengths of the book include Rybak’s compelling attention to nuances of geographical context, age, class, gender, and rights as decisive factors in shaping a transformed mass Zionist movement in east central Europe. For example, he explains how Zionists during World War I established their own organizations in opposition to traditional Jewish community leadership in the Generalgouvernement, while in the Ober Ost they gained an administrative foothold in existing structures, and in East Galicia their efforts were chiefly local and individualized (96, 84, 97). He shows how those who had expressed the greatest enthusiasm for the war, namely young middle- and upper-class urban men, comprised the core demographic of the pre-war Zionist movement, and their conscription into the army ended the traditional variety of Zionist activity (30–31). This opened up space for a “New Zionism” built by women’s activism, including childcare, welfare efforts, and refugee aid (67). Rights form a constant organizational theme throughout, as Zionists, similar to other nationalist

movements in the region, built their nations on platforms of cultural and education rights, autonomy, and political voice in civil society spaces (5).

This is not “a story of triumph,” Rybak concludes, but it is one “in which activists fought to change the world and the fate of the Jewish people” (245). This book helps us to understand ways they sought to navigate “that colossal madhouse,” and maybe make the world a bit better.

REBEKAH KLEIN-PEJŠOVÁ
Purdue University

***From Europe's East to the Middle East: Israel's Russian and Polish Lineages.* Ed.**

Kenneth Moss, Benjamin Nathans, and Taro Tsurumi. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021. 396 pp. Notes. Index. \$75.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.123

The present volume results from two scholarly gatherings in Tokyo in 2015 and one year later in Baltimore. The fourteen individual contributions to this transregional compendium are divided into four thematic sections and are mainly written by historians from Israel, Japan, and the US; there is only one east European (Polish) scholar. Moreover, Yuri Slezkine's seminal work *The Jewish Century* (Princeton, 2004) is not mentioned once in it—even though one strand of his tripartite argumentation is devoted to the Zionist movement and Jewish migration from Russia and the Soviet Union. This may be because of the essayistic approach Slezkine took in his much-praised (but also sharply criticized) work, which is literary-critical, anthropological, and exceptionally well written. An imposition on classical historians, it seems. Despite this limitation, the present volume is an excellent example of a transregional approach, highlighting movements of ideas, peoples, and practices across conventional areas and nation-states. It is highly recommendable for anyone dealing with Jewish history, the history of Zionism, eastern Europe, Palestine, and Israel. The editors and authors of this volume deliberately distance themselves from the prevailing “west-fixation” of many transnational studies that still tend to feature the presence of central Europe/the west as one constant variable when analyzing contacts across areas.

In their contributions, the authors explore the historical continuities and disruptions in eastern Europe and the east European heritage and its influence on and entanglement with the Jewish societies of Ottoman and British Palestine and Israel. They trace the impact of imperial and national east European political settings and ideological formations on Jewish intellectuals, settlers, communities, and various religious and political groups and organizations. The central question is about the relationship between east European (namely Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian) Jewry and the consequences of shifting Zionist ideas and practices from an east European environment to the Middle East on Jewish political culture, networks, and institutions. Following the three editors of the anthology, these questions are crucial for understanding the historical developments in Palestine and Israel, but remain largely neglected in the academic and general perception of Israel.

Most of the contributions deal not only with the fractured and violent past of eastern Europe and Russia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and with the “turbulent and entangled history of Eastern European Jewry” (14), but also with the changes in these ideas and social orders in their new environment in Palestine/Israel. In doing so, they offer fascinating insights into Jewish life and thought in imperial and post-imperial eastern Europe/Russia. All contributions deal with the period