

Beyond Inclusion and Exclusion: Jewish Experiences of the First World War in Central Europe. Edited by Jason Crouthamel, Michael Geheran, Tim Grady, and Julia Barbara Köhne. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2019. Pp. 418. Cloth \$135.00. ISBN 978-1789200188.

When thinking about Jews and the First World War in Central Europe, two kinds of evidence typically come to mind. The first concerns the oft-cited Jewish enlistment figures in the German and Austro-Hungarian armed forces: 100,000 for Germany (of whom 12,000 were killed in action) and 320,000 for Austria-Hungary (of whom about 40,000 were killed in action). The second is the infamous “Jewish Census” (*Juden-zählung*) of 1916, based on a survey ordered by the Prussian War Ministry to track the number of Jews serving in the army—a project that emerged from the presumption that German Jews were avoiding front-line service. These are Exhibit A and Exhibit B, if you will, of the conventional wisdom that the war had the potential to further Jewish integration in the two countries but, ultimately, failed to do so because of entrenched anti-Semitic attitudes and behaviors.

The editors of *Beyond Inclusion and Exclusion*—a collection of essays published to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the end of the First World War—question the very dichotomy expressed in the book’s title because, in their words, it “tends to obscure the complex, nuanced experiences of Jewish men and women” (4). The editors write that they are determined to move beyond conventional wisdom and the well-worn tracks of dichotomous analysis in order to consider a wide array of Jewish experiences of war: beyond statistics, to an examination of the multivalent nature of experience itself; beyond the front lines, to the home front; beyond the notion of a uniform Jewish experience, to multiple, and varied, experiences, differentiated on the basis of gender, class, preexisting ideology, religiosity, and acculturation. The editors highlight, as a framing argument of the book, the unobjectionable—if unoriginal—claim that historians ought not to interpret a particular Jewish war experience “solely through the dynamics of antisemitism and Jewish identity.” Both anti-Semitism and Jewish identity need to be understood as “heterogeneous, manifold, highly debated, and historically versatile categories” (2).

The contributions to *Beyond Inclusion and Exclusion* fall roughly into four thematic clusters: minorities and the military; identity and front experiences; representation (in film and literature); and, standing apart, orphanlike, memory and psychology. Individual chapters cover such themes as, among others: German and French Jews during the Wars of 1870–1871 and 1914–1918; Habsburg Jews and the Imperial Army; Jewish women on the German home front; comradeship between non-Jewish and German Jewish soldiers; the Galician war experience as depicted in the 1920s Hollywood and Berlin film industries; the Hebrew writer S. Y. Agnon and the “psychography” of the front soldier; and the cultural position of Jews in nationalist (and National Socialist) war narratives.

I would single out several contributions for special mention. Devlin Scofield’s exploration of Alsatians who fought for Imperial Germany in the First World War, only to return home—to France—at the end of hostilities, is sensitively drawn and reminds one that personal experience in shifting political sands can be disorienting, to say the least. Sarah Panter’s “‘Being German’ and ‘Being Jewish’ during the First World War” not only reintroduces the reader to the anticipated struggles associated with establishing the boundaries of

“Germanness” and “Jewishness” in Germany and Austria, but adds delightful complication to the picture by foraying into unexpected territory: the accusation faced by Jews in Britain and the United States of being “German” and the Jewish refugee crisis in Austria as a catalyst for reassessments of Jewish identity.

I am somewhat more hesitant about Andrea A. Sinn’s “In the Shadow of Antisemitism: Jewish Women and the German Home Front during the First World War.” Though the subject is certainly apt, in the end the author devotes surprisingly little space to Jewish women’s actual experiences and writings. Eventually, Sinn alights upon the lives of five women of various backgrounds, offering synopses of their lives, personal choices, and intellectual as well as emotional responses to the war, and emphasizes what she sees as a “female wartime solidarity that bridged religious spheres that up to 1914 had defined home life” (184).

In my view, the strongest contribution to the volume—both for the quality of the questions that he raises and for the finely drawn picture that he produces—is that of Michael Geheran (“Rethinking Jewish Front Experiences”). Geheran builds his central argument around the claim that individual wartime experiences emerged from a range of social and situational factors, “central to which were a soldier’s expectations in August 1914 and to what extent they were being fulfilled” (114). Thus, Jewish soldiers’ reactions to anti-Semitism, as well as their perceptions of inclusion, “were heavily influenced by their cultural and ideological background”—that is to say, by whether they self-identified as “Germans of Jewish faith” or, principally, as “Jews” (131–32).

The question remains whether the editors have succeeded in their quest to move beyond dichotomous paradigms of inclusion and exclusion; to foreground a wide array of Jewish experiences and responses to those experiences; and to focus on women and the home front as much as the front lines. Have they produced a novel picture of the Jewish experience of the Great War? The answer to this question is probably a modest and qualified yes. The picture is slightly different than ones produced in the past—the frontline has been nudged off the center frame, but nearly half the chapters still deal with Jewish soldiers; more voices have been put in play; and the resulting portrait has a more nuanced, finely grained quality. Derek Penslar, in the afterword to the volume, quips that the contributions display “innovative forms of lumping and splitting” (397). Penslar’s central observation in the end certainly holds true: “The basic story of Jewish participation in the war remains largely intact” (396).

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The Fourth Reich: The Specter of Nazism from World War II to the Present. By Gavriel D. Rosenfeld. New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. 413. Cloth \$29.95. ISBN 978-1108497497.

A leading practitioner of counterfactual history, Gavriel Rosenfeld has produced a fascinating account of the perils and pitfalls of our century-long obsession with the “Fourth Reich.” In