



Jewish Soldiers in the Collective Memory of Central Europe

The Remembrance of World War I
from a Jewish Perspective

böhlau

Edited by
Gerald Lamprecht
Eleonore Lappin-Eppel
Ulrich Wyrwa



Schriften des Centrums für Jüdische Studien

Band 28

Herausgegeben von Gerald Lamprecht und Olaf Terpitz

JEWISH SOLDIERS IN THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF CENTRAL EUROPE

The Remembrance of World War I from a Jewish Perspective

Edited by
Gerald Lamprecht
Eleonore Lappin-Eppel
Ulrich Wyrwa

BÖHLAU VERLAG WIEN KÖLN WEIMAR

Zukunftsfonds
der Republik Österreich



WIEN
KULTUR



Published with the support of:
Zukunftsfonds der Republik Österreich
Amt der steiermärkischen Landesregierung,
Referat Wissenschaft und Forschung
MA 27, Kulturabteilung der Stadt Wien,
Wissenschafts- und Forschungsförderung
Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz

Deutsche Nationalbibliothek Cataloging-in-publication data :
<http://dnb.d-nb.de>

© 2019 by Böhlau Verlag Ges.m.b.H & Co. KG, Wien, Kölblgasse 8–10, A-1030 Wien
All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by
any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any other information sto-
rage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Cover : Max Liebermann: 'Den Müttern der Zwölftausend', Lithographie, 1924

Lector : Sara Crockett, Graz
Cover design : Michael Haderer, Vienna
Typesetting: Michael Rauscher, Vienna

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage | www.vandenhoeck-ruprecht-verlage.com

ISBN 978-3-205-20842-6

Table of Contents

Gerald Lamprecht, Eleonore Lappin-Eppel, Ulrich Wyrwa Introduction	9
Hillel J. Kieval Conflict Zones Empire, War, and Jewish Destinies in East Central Europe	17
Ulrich Wyrwa The Dialectic of Expectations and Experiences Jews in Europe During the First World War and Beyond	43
 Soldiers	
Jason Crouthamel “Even a Jew Can Fight Back” Masculinity, Comradship and German-Jewish Soldiers in the First World War	69
Dieter J. Hecht Austro-Hungarian Jewish Military Chaplains between East and West Rabbi Bernard Dov Hausner (1874–1938) during World War I	91
Gábor Schweitzer Hungarian Neolog (Progressive) Rabbis During the “Great War” (1914–1918)	111
Eszter Balázs The Image of the Jewish Soldier-Intellectual in <i>Múlt és Jövő</i> , the Hungarian Review Promoting Jewish Cultural Renaissance (1914–1918)	121
Eleonore Lappin-Eppel Reflections on the Jewish War Effort in the Viennese Jewish Press 1918–1938	145

Olaf Terpitz

Literary Notes and Historical Documents

Shimon An-Ski's Yiddish *togbukh fun khurbn* (1921–23) and Simon

Dubnov's Russian *Story of a Jewish Soldier* (1917) 169

Refugees

Gintarė Malinauskaitė

Wandering Lithuanian Jewish Refugees during the First World War

Hirsz Abramowicz and a Jewish Perspective on the War 187

Ines Koeltzsch

Familiar Strangers?

Perceptions of Galician- and Bucovinian-Jewish Refugees in the

Czech-Jewish Press and Fiction during the First World War 203

New Loyalties

Nino Gude

Dual Loyalties of Jewish Soldiers in the Ukrainian Galician Army

1918/1919 225

Ana Ćirić Pavlović

Yugoslavs of the Mosaic Faith?

Public Discourse about Jewish Loyalty in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia,

1918–1941 239

Antisemitism

Thomas Stoppacher

The Jewish Soldiers of Austria-Hungary in the Austrian Parliament

Debates during World War I and the Post-war Years (1917–1920) 257

Miloslav Szabó

“Jewish Reign of Terror”?

Campaigns Against Jewish Officers and Antisemitism in Slovakia

During the Period of the First Czechoslovak Republic 279

Memory

Hildegard Frübis

“To Mothers of the Twelve Thousand”

Max Liebermann and the Commemoration of Front-Line Jewish Soldiers

in the First World War 301

Gerald Lamprecht

Jewish Soldiers in Austrian Collective Memory 1914 to 1938 311

Ljiljana Dobrovšak

Fallen Jewish Soldiers in Croatia during the First World War 331

Veronika Szeghy-Gayer

Jewish War Memory as a Local Community Building Project – the Heroes’

Memorial in Prešov, Slovakia 351

Contributors 371

Gerald Lamprecht, Eleonore Lappin-Eppel, Ulrich Wyrwa

Introduction

After decades during which the Jewish experiences made in World War I have often been marginalized in both historical science and Jewish Studies, it can be stated that the centennial of the beginning of the war in 2014 has triggered new impulses. Research projects were carried out, exhibitions were shown and publications emerged, so that we can now ask what new perspectives the commemoration has opened up, what new methodological approaches have become visible and what new insights have been gained into the historical contexts, backgrounds and consequences of the war.¹

The European Jewish experience in WWI has certainly been the subject of historical research before. A milestone for Germany was the work presented by Egmond Zechlin on German politics and the Jews in the First World War.² Soon afterward, in 1971, the question of the Jews at war was made the topic of the fundamental collection of essays *Deutsches Judentum in Krieg und Revolution* edited by Werner E. Mosse.³ After these two most instructive and inspiring volumes, historical research on this question fell silent for almost two decades. Significantly, the PhD thesis of Stephen Magill *Defense and Introspection: The First World War as a Pivotal Crisis in the German Jewish Experience* under the supervision of Amos Funkenstein remained unpublished.⁴ It was not until 2001 that the issue was taken up again in an inspiring and intellectually stimulating

1 Christoph Cornelißen, “Oh! What a Lovely War!”. Zum Forschungsertrag und zu den Tendenzen ausgewählter Neuerscheinungen über den Ersten Weltkrieg,” *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 65 (2014), 269–83; Ulrich Wyrwa, “Zum Hundertsten nichts Neues. Deutschsprachige Neuerscheinungen zum Ersten Weltkrieg (Teil I–III),” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 62, H. 11 (2014), 921–40; 64, H. 7/8 (2016), 683–702; 65, H. 11 (2017), 955–76; a critical review of national cultures of memory regarding World War I from the perspective of women’s and gender history appears in the issue of *L’Homme. Europäische Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft* 29 (2018), No. 2: “1914/18 – revisited” edited by Christa Hämmerle, Ingrid Sharp and Heidrun Zettelbauer.

2 Egmont Zechlin, *Die deutsche Politik und die Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969).

3 *Deutsches Judentum in Krieg und Revolution 1916–1923*, ed. Werner E. Mosse (Tübingen: Mohr, 1971).

4 Stephen Magill *Defense and Introspection: The First World War as a Pivotal Crisis in the German Jewish Experience*, Phil Diss. University of California, Los Angeles 1977.

study performed by Ulrich Sieg on Jewish intellectuals in World War I, their war experiences, ideological debates and new cultural life concepts.⁵

Regarding the Central European Jewish experiences in World War I, Hillel Kieval introduced new research questions and methods in 1988 by looking into Jewish identity politics in times of national strife and war. In his monograph in *The Making of Czech Jewry*, he starts his investigations in the year 1870 and closes them after the fall of the Habsburg Empire in 1918.⁶ Kieval's innovation was his close study of the shifts of Jewish national, linguistic and cultural orientations as well as his redefinitions of identities in the face of changing regimes and national allegiances. Some years later, Marsha Rozenblit presented her study of Habsburg Jews during World War I in which she also focused on the adaptation of Jewish identity to the changing national environment.⁷ Kieval and Rozenblit not only introduced new research questions but also new sources by heavily relying on ego documents like memoirs, diaries and letters. At the same time, David Rechter also published his volume on Jews in Vienna during WWI and presented Jewish politics as both fluid and a process of adapting to the changing political and national situations.⁸ The only study that has dealt with the catastrophic experiences made by the Jews living in the region of the Eastern Front was presented by Frank M. Schuster in 2004.⁹

Concerning the Habsburg Monarchy, another academic void was filled in 1989, when the Austrian Jewish Museum in Eisenstadt published a catalogue of its exhibition on Jews in the Habsburg army, which was penned by the military

5 Ulrich Sieg, *Jüdische Intellektuelle im Ersten Weltkrieg. Kriegserfahrung, weltanschauliche Debatten und kulturelle Neuentwürfe*, (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001).

6 Hillel J. Kieval, *The making of Czech Jewry. National conflict and Jewish society in Bohemia 1870–1918*, (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Marsha Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a national identity: the Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

7 Marsha Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a national identity*.

8 David Rechter, *The Jews of Vienna and the First World War* (Oxford-Portland: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2001).

9 Frank M. Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten. Osteuropäische Juden während des Ersten Weltkrieges (1914–1919)* (Köln-Weimar-Wien: Böhlau Verlag 2004). Two years earlier, Joachim Neugroschl had published a translation of S. A. An-Sky's report: "Yiddish togbukh fun khurnbn." S. Ansky, *The Enemy at his Pleasure. A Journey through the Jewish Pale of Settlement during World War I*, ed. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Owl Book, 2002). See also S. A. An-Sky, *1915 Diary of S. An-sky. A Russian Jewish Writer at the Eastern Front* (Bloomington-Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), Simon Dubnow, *Geschichte eines jüdischen Soldaten. Bekenntnis eines von vielen*, ed. Vera Bischitzky and Stefan Schreiner (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2012) and *Carnage and Care on the Eastern Front. The War Diaries of Bernhard Bardach 1914–1918*, ed. Peter C. Appelbaum (New York-Oxford: Berghahn, 2018).

historian Erwin A. Schmidl. This exhibit and the catalogue filled a surprising lacuna in the research of Jews and the war: the history of Jewish military service.¹⁰ This book, too, presents a general overview of Jewish military service in the Habsburg Monarchy, beginning in the 18th century. However, the First World War is a central topic. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that a revised version of the book came out in 2014.¹¹ After this study, it took almost twenty years until Jewish soldiers in World War I again became the subjects of historic studies. The focal points of two newer studies were the notorious “*Judenenzählung*,” the Jewish census taken in the German army. Werner T. Angress had already published essays on this topic in the 1970s,¹² and in 2007, Jacob Rosenthal’s fundamental book on this subject came out.¹³ Both authors stressed the shock felt by the Jewish soldiers, who once again felt segregated from their gentile comrades. This hypothesis, that Jewish soldiers felt generally estranged from their comrades after the Jewish census, was tested in later studies, namely, by the American historian David J. Fine with respect to Bavarian sources¹⁴ and by the British historian Tim Grady, who had conducted two studies on German-Jewish soldiers. In these studies, Grady stressed the commonalities between Jews and gentiles in the German army. In his first study, he pointed out that the joint war experience also resulted in joint acts of commemoration of war victims. In his

10 Erwin A. Schmidl, *Juden in der K. (u.) K. Armee 1788–1918 / Jews in the Habsburg armed forces*. Wissenschaftliche Begleitpublikation zur Ausstellung “200 Jahre jüdische Soldaten in Österreich” des Österreichischen Jüdischen Museums in Eisenstadt (Eisenstadt: Österreichisches jüdisches Museum, 1989). In 2013, Derek Penslar published his remarkable book *Jews and the Military. A History*. In this study, he gives an overview of Jewish militarism from ancient times to the present. Cf. Derek J. Penslar, *Jews and the Military. A History* (Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013).

11 Erwin A. Schmidl, *Habsburgs jüdische Soldaten. 1788–1918* (Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau, 2014). See also István Deák, *Beyond Nationalism. A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), including a chapter about Jewish officers and *Jüdische Soldaten – Jüdischer Widerstand in Deutschland und Frankreich*, ed. Michael Berger (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2012); *Juden und Militär in Deutschland zwischen Integration, Assimilation, Ausgrenzung und Vernichtung*, ed. Michael Berger (Baden-Baden: Nomos-Verlag, 2009) and a monograph Michael Berger, *Eisernes Kreuz – Doppeladler – Davidstern. Juden in deutschen und österreichisch-ungarischen Armeen. Der Militärdienst jüdischer Soldaten durch zwei Jahrhunderte* (Berlin: trafo, 2010).

12 Werner T. Angress, “Das deutsche Militär und die Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg,” in *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* 19 (1976), S. 98–105; Werner T. Angress, “The German Army’s ‘Judenanzählung’ of 1916: Genesis – Consequences – Significance,” in *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 23 (1978), S. 117–138.

13 Jacob Rosenthal, *Die Ehre des jüdischen Soldaten. Die Judenanzählung im Ersten Weltkrieg und ihre Folgen* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2007).

14 David J. Fine, *Jewish Integration in the German Army in the First World War* (Berlin: De Gruyter 2012).

second study, he presented German-Jewish soldiers as explicitly and unwaveringly German despite experiencing antisemitism at the front and at home.¹⁵ Most recently, the German historian Hans-Joachim Becker even presented a “re-evaluation” of the ‘*Juden-zählung*,’ but his attempt was strongly criticized because of his apologetic Prussian representation.¹⁶

The 100th anniversary of the Great War considerably stimulated the interest in the Jewish fate during those catastrophic years. Particularly the experiences of German Jews as well as the events on the Eastern Front in this pivotal moment of Jewish history became a topic of extensive research studies, museum exhibitions and special issues of historical journals.¹⁷ In the context of this research, the literary scholar Petra Ernst from the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Graz succeeded in achieving an important methodological extension with her peer reviewed and published first volume of the “Yearbook for European Jewish Literature Studies.”¹⁸ Based on a fundamental earlier essay she had written¹⁹, Ernst’s aim was to illuminate the literary processing of the war experience and, in connection with this, the dynamics of expectations, experiences and memories. In the volume, she examines the complex life situations of European Jews shortly before, during and after the war and addresses the “Jewish (cultural) history of the First World War as an integrative part of the European (cultural) history of war.” In addition, Ernst, together with Eleonore Lappin-Eppel, published the volume “Jewish Journalism in the Sign of the First World War.”²⁰ For

15 Tim Grady, *The German-Jewish Soldiers of the First World War in History and Memory* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011); Tim Grady, *A Deadly Legacy: German Jews and the Great War* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2017).

16 Hans-Joachim Becker, *Von der konfessionellen Militärstatistik zur ‘Juden-zählung’ (1916). Eine Neubewertung*, (Nordhausen: Verlag Traugott Bautz, 2017).

17 See eg. Special issue: Jim G. Tobias, Nicola Schlichting (eds.), *Davidstern und Eisernes Kreuz. Juden im Ersten Weltkrieg*, in: *Nurinst. Beiträge zur deutschen und jüdischen Geschichte* 7 (2014); Special Issue: Rabbis and The Great War: *European Judaism A Journal for the New Europe* Volume 48 (2015) Nr. 1; Markus Patka im Auftrag des Jüdischen Museums Wien (ed.), *Weltuntergang. Jüdisches Leben und Sterben im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Wien-Graz-Klagenfurt: Styria Premium, 2014); Ulricke Heikau, Julia B. Köhne (eds.), *Krieg! Juden zwischen den Fronten 1914–1918* (Berlin: Hentsch & Heinrich, 2014).

18 Petra Ernst (ed.), *Europäisch-jüdische Literaturen und Erster Weltkrieg / European-Jewish Literatures and World War One. Yearbook for European Jewish Literature Studies / Jahrbuch für europäisch-jüdische Literaturstudien* 1 (2014).

19 Petra Ernst, “Der Erste Weltkrieg in deutschsprachig-jüdischer Literatur und Publizistik in Österreich” in: Siegfried Mattl, Stefan Karner, Gerhard Botz, Helmut Konrad (eds.), *Krieg. Erinnerung. Geschichtswissenschaft* (Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau, 2009), 47–72.

20 Petra Ernst, Eleonore Lappin-Eppel (eds.), *Jüdische Publizistik und Literatur im Zeichen des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau, 2016).

the first time, this volume brings together literary and historical contributions, which primarily deal with the First World War from a transnational Central European perspective, using contemporary Jewish journalism and literary works as examples. The region of the former Austrian Empire and Germany, for example, is also analyzed in special issues of *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*²¹ and the Austrian journal *zeitgeschichte*.²²

A global dimension of the Jewish experience is highlighted by Sarah Panter's study "Jewish Experiences and Conflicts of Loyalty in the First World War"²³ and the anthology "World War I and the Jews. Conflict and Transformation in Europe, the Middle East, and America."²⁴

In summary, with regard to these and other publications not mentioned here, it can be stated that the memorial year 2014 brought, on the one hand, a stronger focus on the experiences of Jews during the World War I on the front as well as on the so-called home front. The First World War has emerged from the shadow of the Holocaust and is increasingly being perceived as a turning point in European Jewish history. On the other hand, it has become apparent that the narrow boundaries of national historiography are being abandoned with increasing frequency, and that researchers are now developing a transnational perspective²⁵ and are particularly interested in the roles of minority groups.²⁶ In addition, especially with a view toward Eastern Europe, it has also been suggested that the year 1918 was not the end of violence. Instead, the First World War is to be seen at the beginning of a long history of violence, which ultimately reached its devastating climax during the Holocaust.

At the end of the memorial years, this volume bridges the gap between the war and the post-war period, between the empires that existed during the pre-war period and the successor states. The study focuses on Jewish soldiers in the

21 Petra Ernst, Jeffrey Grossman, Ulrich Wyrwa (eds.), *The Great War. Reflections, Experiences and Memories of German and Habsburg Jews (1914–1918)*, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, n. 9 (October 2016).

22 Gerald Lamprecht, Eleonore Lappin-Epel, Heidrun Zettelbauer (eds.), *Der Erste Weltkrieg aus jüdischer Perspektive. Erwartungen - Erfahrungen - Erinnerungen*, *Zeitgeschichte* 41, H. 4. (2014).

23 Sarah Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen und Loyalitätskonflikte im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014).

24 Marsha Rozenblit, Jonathan Karp (eds.), *World War I and the Jews. Conflict and Transformation in Europe, the Middle East, and America* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn, 2017).

25 Jay Winter, "Jüdische Erinnerung und Erster Weltkrieg – Zwischen Geschichte und Gedächtnis" in: *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Institut XIII* (2014), 111–29.

26 Hannah Ewence, Tim Grady (eds.), *Minorities and the First World War. From War to Peace* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Oswald Überegger (ed.), *Minderheiten-Soldaten. Ethnizität und Identität in den Armeen des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Ferdinand Schöningh: Paderborn, 2018).

various armies of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. The study not only examines their situations during the war, but also the memories of the wartime deployment of Jews in the post-war period. The fate of Jewish soldiers becomes a paradigm for the situation of Jews in their mostly newly emerging homelands. In his introductory article, Hillel Kieval deals with the upheavals that the war brought to the Jewish population of Central and Eastern Europe. He points to the catastrophic consequences of war in Eastern Europe and describes the not always easy, but necessary change in national identity that took place in the successor states of the Habsburg Monarchy but also in the Russian Empire. Kieval traces this change in identity from state-bearing citizens in multinational empires to members of a religious and/or national minority in a successor state, primarily using Czechoslovakia as an example. In contrast to the other successor states of the Habsburg Monarchy, Czechoslovakia was constituted as a nationality state, although the Czech nation enjoyed a clear priority. The situation of Jews in Czechoslovakia was, nevertheless, much better than in most other successor states, which often saw themselves as exclusive nation states in which Jews were primarily seen as foreigners, as the “others.” The recognition of the Jewish nation in Czechoslovakia was, above all, the success of the Czech Zionists, who represented a diaspora-related cultural Zionism of Achad Haam’s coinage, which also corresponded to the national understanding of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the co-founder and first president of Czechoslovakia. In return, however, the Jews were expected to recognize and strengthen the Czechoslovak state. In view of the liberal democratic constitution of this state, showing their loyalty to it was not difficult for the Jews. How unstable their situation was, nevertheless, became apparent after the conclusion of the Munich Agreement, which immediately brought anti-Jewish laws along with it to the rest of Czechoslovakia. Other contributions in this volume for Austria (Eleonore Lappin-Eppel, Dieter Hecht), Hungary (Eszter Balázs) and Yugoslavia (Ana Čirić Pavlović) show that the Zionist organization emerged stronger from the war and became an important political force in European Jewish life. Although the ideological orientations in the individual countries differed, all Zionist national organizations combined Jewish nationalism with state patriotism. The recognition of the Jewish nation by the state, however, remained a Czech peculiarity.

Already during the war and increasingly after the war, Jewish soldiers were confronted with accusations that extended from shirking and cowardice to treason. In Austria, Jewish war refugees in particular, but also alleged Jewish profiteers and price drivers became the scapegoats for the rampant hardship of the last war years and the first post-war years. Antisemitic attacks on soldiers were made mainly in the Austrian press and in parliament, as Thomas Stoppacher and Eleonore Lappin-Eppel show. The Jewish press tried to refute these accus-

ations with facts, but this proved to be unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the ban on antisemitism in the Austro-Hungarian Empire seems to have been a serious blow. It seems to have been largely heeded in the Austro-Hungarian army. Contrary to Germany antisemitism was primarily a phenomenon of the hinterland rather than the army. (Dieter J. Hecht). Jason Crouthamel proves a high degree of mutual acceptance and comradeship in the fighting troops also for the German army on the basis of ego documents from Jewish soldiers. According to Crouthamel, this sense of comradeship was not disturbed by the “*Judenzählung*.” Nino Gude also encountered an unexpectedly high degree of acceptance and sense of belonging to both Ukraine and Judaism when studying ego documents of Jewish soldiers in the Ukrainian army in 1918/19.

The loyalty of Jewish soldiers to their homelands, their courage and their willingness to make sacrifices also served to demonstrate the loyalty of the Jewish population in general to the state. The Jewish press and Jewish opinion leaders also considered this to be an effective means of defending the Jews against antisemitism, as demonstrated in Hungary (Eszter Balázs), Germany (Hildegard Frübis) and Austria (Eleonore Lappin-Eppel, Gerald Lamprecht).

The hero's recollection and the war memory in the successor states was more problematic. This becomes particularly clear in the contribution by Veronika Szeghy-Gayer, who describes the arduous path to the erection of the war memorial in Prešov, Slovakia. The problem was that the area around Prešov came from Hungary to Slovakia only after the war. A monument to the fallen – Hungarian – soldiers, therefore, had the nimbus of Hungarian revanchism. Efforts by the initiators to remove the national (Hungarian) imprint from the monument and make it a supranational place of remembrance failed. Even when the war memorial was finally erected as a Jewish monument, it was distrusted by the police. By this time, in 1937, the Jewish community had already increasingly distanced itself from the Hungarian minority due to increasing antisemitism. War memory was similarly problematic in the multinational Kingdom of Yugoslavia, where Jewish and gentile soldiers had fought in hostile armies. Here, the soldiers of the Serbian army were honored, but those of the Habsburg armies were ignored (Ana Čirić Pavlović). This and other problems led to incompletely records being made of the Croatian Jewish war victims (Ljiljana Dobrovšak). A little-known fact is that there was hardly any antisemitism in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and yet a highly developed Zionism, which did not lead to mass emigration (Ana Čirić Pavlović). Not only in the successor states of the Habsburg Monarchy, but also in Austria, war memories were dominated by questions of rupture or continuity with the monarchy as well as integration into or exclusion from the new national narratives. Many of the Jewish remembrance narratives had their starting point not in the national and social upheavals of 1918, but

rather in the emancipation history of the 19th and 20th century and in the specific Jewish expectations of the war, as Gerald Lamprecht shows in his contribution to war memory in Austria.

The discussion of the perception of the Jewish war efforts during and after the war serves as an introduction to the investigation of the general constitution of Jewish communities in the years between the two world wars. In his considerations, Ulrich Wyrwa comes to the conclusion that the upheavals caused by the war also led to positive developments. Thus, the Jews in Eastern, Southeastern and Central Europe were granted a greater degree of political participation, so that they initially perceived their situations as positive despite the economic hardships. Rightly so, as Wyrwa writes, because the fascist radicalization process only began during the course of the economic crisis in the 1930s.

Hillel Kieval argues that the new rights granted to the Jews gave them a sense of political strength and self-determination which they ultimately did not have. The same can be said of the war deployment of Jewish soldiers. This, too, promised – at least in the view of the Jews – complete acceptance in general society and the achievement of complete societal equality at the beginning of the war. As the contributions to this volume show, this hope was soon disappointed. Nevertheless, the experience of comradeship and the common struggle of many Jewish soldiers brought them closer to their gentile comrades, a rapprochement that continued to exist even during the time of peace. But the courage and devotion with which Jewish soldiers fought for their homelands was also a source of Jewish self-assurance. In spite of all the antisemitic attacks, they could feel that they were loyal, full citizens. The soldiers' sacrifice also offered the opportunity to praise Jewish civilians as loyal citizens who had sacrificed their sons and husbands, but also their fortunes, and who engaged in charity. The image of the Jewish soldier thus became the counter-proposal of the "Jewish shirker", "coward" and "war profiteer." Therefore, in the 1930s, the honor of the Jewish fallen soldiers and war-disabled gained in importance with the rise of antisemitism, but also with the militarization of society. The Shoah covered up the memory of the Jewish dead and made unconditional Jewish loyalty to the home states appear questionable or misguided. The introduction of totalitarian socialist regimes in Eastern and Southeastern Europe after the Second World War further contributed to the fact that the roles of the Jewish soldiers in the First World War as well as the fate of the Jewish civilian population during and after the war were forgotten. It is a clear merit of the commemoration years to shed more light on the Jewish experience in World War I.

Hillel J. Kieval

Conflict Zones

Empire, War, and Jewish Destinies in East Central Europe

From these and other dismaying reports, we realized that things beyond human comprehension were going on in Galicia. A vast region of one million Jews, who only yesterday, under Austrian rule, had enjoyed human and civil rights, was trapped in a cordon of blood and iron. Severed from the rest of the world, they were at the mercy of Cossack and Russian soldiers provoked like wild beasts. It was as if an entire people were perishing.

S. Ansky, *The Enemy at His Pleasure* (Khurbn Galitsye) (1920)

They have no fatherland, the Jews, but every country in which they live and pay their taxes looks to them for patriotic commitment and heroism, and reproaches them for dying without enthusiasm.

Joseph Roth, *The Wandering Jews* (1927).¹

Introduction

If one were to read the First World War as a *Jewish* experience, what would that entail?

Perhaps, first and foremost, one would want to attend to the story of the Jewish soldiers who fought on both sides of the conflict, easily the largest military engagement in world history that pitted Jew against Jew. But Jewish civilians – from Bukovina to Galicia to the Kingdom of Poland to Lithuania – were no less under attack in the war, and their fates also demand our attention. In the shadow of the Shoah, it is sometimes forgotten that the First World War also brought in its wake demographic catastrophe. Millions of Jews had the distinct displeasure of discovering that their homes, villages, and towns essentially comprised the Eastern Front. They suffered the violence that accompanied invasion, counter-invasion, and retreat; fled as refugees to Hungary, the Bohemian lands,

¹ S. Ansky, *The Enemy at His Pleasure: A Journey Through the Jewish Pale of Settlement During World War I*, trans. and ed. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2002); 9; Joseph Roth, *The Wandering Jews*, trans. Michael Hofmann (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 20.

and Vienna; and endured expulsions and forced evacuations to the interior of Russia.

The war looms large as a political watershed as well, an upheaval with enormous consequences for the Jewish quest for citizenship, the relationship between Jews and the state, and, ultimately, the nature of Jewish collective identity. The mobilization of individuals and communities to tend to the social, medical, educational, and material needs of the Jewish refugees served as one kind of political training field. The Russian revolutions of 1917 and the national uprisings that attended the collapse of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires provided an entirely different set of political experiences. Jewish emancipation throughout East Central Europe (and in the late Ottoman state) had been experienced in a multi-ethnic, imperial context, and the primary political allegiance of Jews had been to the supranational, imperial state. Now Jews faced the need to unlearn, as it were, the nineteenth-century lessons of emancipation. They faced an uncertain future in the necessary quest to recalibrate their political relationship to the state and to reposition themselves in post-war society.²

It says something, perhaps, about the peculiar nature of Jewish attachment to the multiethnic, imperial state that in both Austria-Hungary and interwar Czechoslovakia, Jews acquired (perhaps cultivated?) the reputation of being “state citizens” *par excellence*. The only “true Czechoslovaks” after 1918 – so the quip goes – the only people who identified unequivocally with the new state, created, somewhat artificially, out of the ruins of the Habsburg monarchy, were the Jews. A similar proverb circulates concerning Jews of the former empire: the only true “Austrians” before 1914, we are told, were the Jews.³ Jews, then, of all of the constituent populations of both the pre-World War I imperial states of Central Europe and at least some of their successor states – constructed in theory according a nation-state model – found no difficulty in identifying their

2 For surveys of the Jewish experience under wartime conditions, see: David Engel, “World War I,” *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/World_War_I; Frank M. Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten: Osteuropäische Juden während des Ersten Weltkrieges (1914–1919)* (Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2001); Eric Lohr, “The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages, and Violence during World War I,” *The Russian Review* 60 (2001): 404–419; Tim Grady, *German-Jewish Soldiers of the First World War in History and Memory* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011); and Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz, eds., *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013).

3 One expression of this point of view can be found in Joseph Samuel Bloch, *Der nationale Zwist und die Juden in Österreich* (Vienna, Gottlieb, 1886). Bloch’s book was an open criticism of those Jews who tried to join one or another national group, such as the Germans, Poles, or Czechs, insisting that the Jews of the “Austrian” half of the monarchy were quintessentially Austrian, hence supranational.

own collective self-interest with that of the country as a whole. In this way, Jews could be seen as – perhaps constructed themselves as – the ideal citizens of pluralist, multi-ethnic empires but also of fragile, post-war, pluralist democracies.

What lies behind both claims, I would argue, is an absence, a lack: the assumption that Jews belonged to no nationality, that they did not challenge the legitimacy of either the imperial or the multiethnic state in the name of a presumptive nation, because they – alone among East Central Europe’s ethnic groups – had none to wield as a weapon. Jews, according to this reading, remained aloof from the nationalist pressure cooker, choosing out of necessity to identify with the state as a supranational construct. The problem for Jews, which they soon discovered in weak or collapsing empires, in revolutionary situations, and in newly-emerging nation states, was that the same aloofness and neutrality that was well-adapted to imperial settings translated for the nationalist as unreliability and disloyalty.⁴ With regard to Czechoslovakia, at least, our proverb suggests a mutuality of interest between the state and its Jewish population that never in fact existed: on the one hand that the state never had reason to regard the Jews within its borders as threatening or problematic and, on the other, that the Jews recognized in Czechoslovakia not a nation-state in the Wilsonian model but another supranational construct – the “nationalities state” that the Habsburg monarchy had claimed to be.

While the aphorism about “true Austrians” and “true Czechoslovaks” may not be very satisfying in the end, it does invite us to look more closely at the effects of war and the collapse of imperial structures on the long-term project of Jewish emancipation in Europe: on conceptions of Jewish citizenship, political and social integration, and collective Jewish identities. This essay considers some of the major transformations and dislocations that occurred in the lives of East Central Europe’s Jewish population during and in the wake of the First

4 There is, of course, much that is wrong with such a one-sided view of Jewish political culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For one thing, it presumes that members of ethnic nationalities in imperial states do not, or will not, identify politically with the state; this is, at best, an untested hypothesis based largely on the political rhetoric of a segment of the nationalists themselves; it represents a position, which for most of the nineteenth century, at least, was not shared by the majority of the population. Marsha L. Rozenblit offers a more subtle formulation regarding the Jews of Austria-Hungary before the First World War. Jews felt deeply loyal to the Habsburg monarchy, she argues, because “the supranational state allowed them the luxury of separating the political, cultural, and ethnic strands in their identity.” With regard to Habsburg Austria, she writes, Jews developed a “tripartite identity,” according to which they identified *politically* as Austrians, *culturally* as German, Czech, Polish, etc., and *ethnically* as Jews.: Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 3–4.

World War: military occupation; refugee movements; the temporary erasure of state boundaries; the political collapse of three empires and their replacement with nation-states; and eruptions of both military and popular violence against Jews. My larger aim is to open up the question of the changing nature of Jewish collective and individual identities in the early decades of the twentieth century, with a focus on the social, cultural, and political implications of the transition from empire to nation-state. Much of my attention will be directed at the territories and populations of the new state of Czechoslovakia, but I hope also to make comparisons to the situation in other East Central European contexts. Jewish memories of the Great War may have originated on the battlefields, in refugee camps, in the urban centers of the German and Habsburg empires, and in the shtetls of imperial Russia; but they were nurtured, cultivated, and expanded in new republics, states which bore the names of “reborn” and newly sovereign nations. What did these memories of destruction, of total war and the collapse of empire, mean for the production of viable *Jewish* identities?

The Shatterings of War

European Jews engaged with the war most directly as combatants and they did so in unprecedented numbers on both sides of the conflict. “Never before in history,” writes Derek Penslar, “had so many Jews been mobilized for battle.”⁵ Over one million Jewish soldiers served in the Allied forces while some 450,000 enlisted in the armies of the Central Powers. The 650,000 Jews who fought in the Russian armed forces constituted approximately five percent of the total number of soldiers in the empire (12 million), while the 320,000 Jews who fought with the Austro-Hungarian army made up four percent of its total (7.8 million). 100,000 Jews wore the uniform of the German army, of whom 12,000 were killed in battle.⁶

5 Derek J. Penslar, *Jews and the Military: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 157.

6 For the numbers of Jews who served in the various armed forces of World War I, see: Elie Barnavi, ed., *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People* (New York: Schocken Books, 1994), 210–211; David Engel, “World War I;” Erwin A. Schmidl, *Juden in der k. (u.) k. Armee 1788–1918 / Jews in the Habsburg Armed Forces. Studia Judaica Austriaca*, Bd. 11 (Eisenstadt, 1989), 144; and Penslar, *Jews and the Military*, 3.

Jewish Enlistment in the Armies of World War I

Triple Entente		Central Powers	
Russia	650,000	Germany	100,000
U.S.	250,000	Austria-Hungary	320,000
France	55,000	Ottoman Empire	18,000
Britain	50,000	Bulgaria	12,500
Other	50,500		
Total	1,055,500		450,500

The memoirs and correspondence of Jews who served in the German and Austro-Hungarian armies reveal various degrees of enthusiasm for the war, little effort to evade military service, and, at least in some cases, a conviction that the campaign against the repressive and antisemitic government of Tsarist Russia was more than justified.⁷ I do not know of any organized effort on the part of Jews to refuse a military call-up because it would have required Jews to shoot at and kill other Jews: thus the emancipation had borne its fruit.

Some of the most traumatic effects of the war were felt by civilians living in the line of fire and, subsequently, under military rule, and Jewish civilians bore a disproportionate brunt of the burden. As noted, much of the fighting on the Eastern Front – the borderlands of the Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian Empires – took place squarely within the heartland of East European Jewry, areas with a combined Jewish population of more than four million. The production of refugees took shape in various contexts and stages: 1) the initial Russian invasion of Galicia, Bukovina, and East Prussia in the fall of 1914; 2) Russian military rule in the western provinces of the empire and in occupied Austrian territories; 3) the hasty retreat of Russian forces in the spring and summer of 1915; and 4) the 1916 Russian counter offensive. Tens of thousands of Jews from Galicia and Bukovina fled to other parts of Austria-Hungary already in advance of the invading Russian army in the fall of 1914. And for good reason. The Russian forces left death and destruction in their wake: Jewish home towns were turned into battle fields; many were burned to the ground. Echoing the contemporary reportage of S. Ansky, David Rechter writes that looting, violence, rape,

7 The Leo Baeck Institute in New York houses scores of unpublished memoirs, many of which detail the author's military service. Marsha L. Rozenblit writes about a number of these in *Reconstructing a National Identity*, 82–105. See also Tim Grady, *German-Jewish Soldiers of the First World War in History and Memory* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011) and Schmidl, *Juden in der k. (u.) k. Armee*, 142–145.

and the burning of homes began as soon as Russian troops entered Galician and Bukovinian territory.⁸ So, too, did expulsions and forced evacuations: their use as a military tactic did not begin with the Russian retreat of 1915; even the motives behind them predated the war. Russian government officials and military commanders had long expressed deep suspicions regarding Jewish loyalties in what were to become the main areas of combat. In addition, as Alexander Prusin has argued, ideology crucially informed the conduct and policy of the Russian army during the war. In late imperial Russia, the army made increasing use of statistical data regarding the ethnic and religious composition of separate areas of the empire in order to determine the loyalty and reliability of various populations. These assessments were then projected onto areas targeted for military occupation; Jews ranked very high among potential enemies.⁹

The Russian military predicted, among other things, that Galician Jews would form the backbone of any resistance to the Russian occupation by virtue of the fact that, as an emancipated population, they had enjoyed demonstrably better living conditions in Austria-Hungary than Jews had in Russia. Such ascriptions of hostile intentions, Prusin writes, “were bound to evolve into a self-fulfilling prophecy, especially when combined with the spy-mania that from the war’s outset pervaded the Russian military and society.”¹⁰ Russian forces initiated large-scale expulsions of Jews from cities and towns, including, for example, the entire Jewish population of Przemyśl. Violent attacks on Jewish areas often accompanied the Russian entry into Galicia, of which one of the most deadly took place in Lwów in September 1914, where local residents followed Russian troops into Jewish residential neighborhoods and together looted homes, murdered somewhere between 20 and 50 individuals, and left hundreds wounded.¹¹ With the establishment of Russian military administration in October 1914, however, the series of improvised pogroms, evacuations, and executions of the previous weeks

8 David Rechter, *The Jews of Vienna and the First World War* (London, Portland: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2001), 69. The fact that some attacks were perpetrated in the first instance not by invading Russian troops but by civilians seeing an opportunity to loot complicates the picture. See Alexander V. Prusin, “A ‘Zone of Violence’: The Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Eastern Galicia in 1914–1915 and 1941,” in Bartov and Weitz eds., *Shatterzone of Empires*, 367.

9 Prusin, “A ‘Zone of Violence,’” 367; see also Peter Holquist, “To Count, to Extract, and to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia,” in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, eds. Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 111–119; and Schuster, *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 166–168.

10 Prusin, “A ‘Zone of Violence,’” 368.

11 Prusin, “A ‘Zone of Violence,’” 369. Schuster surveys other first-hand accounts of violence at the hands of Russian and Cossack troops in *Zwischen allen Fronten*, 169–179.

and months were replaced by what Prusin calls “a more systematic persecution consistent with the official anti-Jewish restrictions in Russia proper.”¹²

With the German and Austro-Hungarian counter offensive of the spring and summer of 1915, Russia was forced to beat a hasty retreat from Galicia and Bukovina, while the Central Powers took temporary control of all of Congress Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and parts of Volhynia and Belorussia, bringing some forty percent of the Russian Empire’s Jews under their wing.¹³ It was under the conditions of retreat that a new wave of reprisals and pogroms occurred. S. Ansky complained that “every commander and every colonel who made a mistake had found a way to justify his crime, his incompetence, his carelessness. He could make everything kosher by blaming his failures on a Jewish spy.”¹⁴ Nine Jews were hanged in Radom for “welcoming Germans in a friendly way;” seven were hanged in Zamość, and four in Krasnik, including the government-appointed rabbi.¹⁵

Practices such as these reached their peak between March and September 1915, when, as German forces advanced deep into Russian territory, more than *half a million Jews* were expelled from frontline areas, including all of northern Lithuania and much of Latvia. The mass deportation of Jews from the Kovno (Kaunas) province began in early May and resulted in 150,000 deportations within two weeks, the property left behind by those expelled often looted or destroyed. A report by the American Jewish Committee on the situation in the war zone in June 1915 estimated that 600,000 Jews (in retrospect an underestimate) had been left “homeless” and “ruined” in the Polish lands and the northwestern districts of Russia.¹⁶ A devastating situation to be sure, one that put tremendous strain on Jewish relief committees and welfare organizations. More than 80,000 Jewish refugees had congregated in Warsaw by 1915 while an additional 22,000 Jews had settled in Vilna (Wilno).¹⁷

The only bright spot in this storm of despair was perhaps the fact that, as an unintended consequence, the mass expulsions precipitated the *de facto* abolition of the borders of the Pale of Settlement. In time the war forced the Tsarist government to recognize that it could no longer continue to sustain the Pale, that

12 Prusin, “A ‘Zone of Violence,’” 369. On Russian military policy toward Jews, see also Lohr, “The Russian Army and the Jews, 404–419.

13 Engel, “World War I.”

14 Ansky, *The Enemy at His Pleasure*, 5.

15 Ansky, *The Enemy at His Pleasure*, 5.

16 Lohr, “The Russian Army and the Jews,” 410. The AJC report (*The Jews in the Eastern War Zone* [New York, 1916]) is cited in Rechter, *Jews of Vienna*, 68. Rechter notes (p. 70) that the Austrian record in Galicia was also marked by atrocity although to a lesser degree.

17 Engel, “World War I”.

it was more important to defeat the real enemy than to maintain administrative controls over the Jewish population. As the liberal-minded Minister of Agriculture A. V. Krivoshein (1858–1923), put it: “one cannot fight a war against Germany and against the Jews.” Certainly, Jews continued to suffer all manner of harassment and physical abuse at the hands of the Russian army. Yet once it became clear that their movements could no longer be policed by the state, the Pale of Settlement essentially dissolved itself. In August 1915 the government reluctantly conceded that, “Jewish war sufferers” should be allowed to settle in provincial towns but not in Petrograd or Moscow. Consistent with pre-war Tsarist policy, Jews were forbidden to settle in villages; all the same, two-fifths of all Jewish refugees moved to areas of the Russian Empire that had previously been closed to them. The consequences were unsettling. The use of Yiddish in public places led some Russians to think that German was being spoken, and this compounded the fear of Jewish cultural difference.¹⁸

Practical Work in the Present: Jewish refugees from Galicia and Bukovina

Accounts vary widely as to the total number of Jewish refugees uprooted by war in Galicia and Bukovina – with estimates ranging anywhere from 200,000 to as high as 450,000 – also as to their places of destination.¹⁹ It appears that most of the refugees headed for Hungary, Vienna, or the Bohemian lands. Austrian government statistics published in the fall of 1915 put the number of Galician Jews entering Vienna during the months of the Russian advance at 77,000, while another 75,000 had found refuge in Bohemia and Moravia. By early 1915 as many as 30,000 Jewish refugees may have been living in Prague, with several thousand more in other parts of Bohemia. In Budapest, meanwhile, where au-

18 Peter Gatrell, “Refugees,” in *1914–1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, eds. Ute Daniel et al., issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2014–10–08. DOI: 10.15463/ie1418.10134.

19 Engel cites both the lower and the higher figure. Rechter writes that “perhaps as many as 400,000” made their way to Hungary, Vienna, and the Bohemian lands. Beatrix Hoffmann-Holter cites a report from the Vienna that refers to some 600,000 refugees, a high percentage of which were Jews. If one accepts the figure of 450,000 as correct, it would have represented over half of the total prewar Jewish population of Galicia (872,000 in 1910). See Beatrix Hoffmann-Holter, *„Abreisendmachung“: Jüdische Kriegsflüchtlinge in Wien 1914–1923*, Wien, Köln, Weimar Böhlau, 1995. Peter Gatrell notes that around 200,000 Jewish refugees fled Galicia and Bukovina in the first year of fighting, but this figure does not include those who were resettled within the region, dispatched to the Russian interior (perhaps as many as 50,000), or fled at a later date. See Gatrell, “Refugees”.

thorities appear to have been much less forthcoming in providing aid to Jewish refugees, there were approximately 20,000.²⁰ These figures are most likely incomplete, as they do not account for all Galician Jews who fled to the Hungarian areas of the Habsburg Empire, nor for the many who were housed in refugee camps in Styria and other Austrian provinces. By the end of 1915, at any event, at least 340,000 refugees from Galicia were living in Austria, two-fifths of whom were Jews, while many others scraped by in Hungarian territory, some of them in designated refugee camps.²¹ Unofficial surveys from the period identified more than 130,000 Galician Jews in Vienna alone. Several thousand other Jews, mainly from Bukovina, fled to Romania. Many refugees returned to their homes with the Austrian recapture of the contested areas in the second half of 1915, but some were forced to flee again during the 1916 Russian offensive. At the close of the war, an estimated 20–25,000 Galician Jews, and perhaps as many as double that number, remained in the Austrian capital.²²

The need to feed, clothe, educate, and find shelter for arriving refugees stirred a variety of different Jewish organizations to mobilize. In Prague these included the Praga and Bohemia lodges of B'nai B'rith, the *Zentralverein zur Pflege jüdischer Angelegenheiten*, the *Jüdische Volksverein*, and various Jewish confraternities. The Austrian government ordered the construction of provisional refugee camps in Nikolsburg/Mikulov, Pohrlitz/Pohořelice, and Gaya/Kojetín in Moravia. The organized Jewish community of Prague, together with representatives from nineteen Jewish welfare organizations, established an umbrella *Hilfskomitee* to oversee the distribution of aid, headed by the young Zionist leader Chaim

20 The figures are derived from Engel, "World War I"; Gatrell, "Refugees"; and Jiří Kuděla, "Die Emigration galizischer und osteuropäischer Juden nach Böhmen und Prag zwischen 1914–1916/17," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 23 (1989): 125–126. As the Galician refugees were Austrian citizens Hungary considered them "foreigners" and refused to take responsibility for them.

21 Engel, "World War I"; Gatrell, "Refugees"; Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung*.

22 Engel, "World War I"; Schmidl, *Juden in der k. (u.) k. Armee*, 145, where he cites a police report from autumn 1915, which put the number at 137,000. Beatrix Hoffmann-Holter, *Abreisendmachung: Jüdische Kriegsflüchtlinge in Wien 1914–1923*, Wien, Köln, Weimar 1995. It should be noted that fighting on the Western Front produced its own, general flow of refugees. Upwards of 400,000 people fled from Belgium to Holland in the first three months following the outbreak of war. This was only the beginning of an enormous upheaval. An estimated 200,000 Belgian refugees arrived in France in the aftermath of the German invasion. Around 160,000 refugees remained on UK registers at the end of 1916, the number dropping only slightly before the war ended. According to the Ministry of the Interior, the total number of French refugees who were internally displaced reached 150,000 by the end of August 1914. By the first of January 1915, the number exceeded 500,000 and by the end of the year it hovered at about 910,000, after which the growth rate subsided. (Gatrell, "Refugees.")