both situates the pogrom within the longer *durée* of Jewish presence in Turkey (and its Ottoman imperial precursor) and lays out the many complicated cultural and social forces on the ground that contributed to it.

These pogroms were closely linked to the passage of Law no. 2510, the so-called Resettlement Law, in the summer of 1934, which was designed to bring about the assimilation of minorities in Turkey via forced resettlement. The law granted the Turkish Ministry of the Interior the right to forcibly resettle any individuals deemed insufficiently Turkish—removing them from areas where they were isolated in minority communities and placing them instead within the culturally Turkish heartlands. Law no. 2510 is part and parcel of a whole host of policies that characterized eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Levant in this period—most prominent among them the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne—that aimed to "solve" the "problem" of minorities through massive forced population movements. Just as the region was replete with such movements between nations, Turkey (among others) also pursued it at the internal level.

Alongside the local and broader regional frames, Pekesen's study is also interested in a third—that of the longer-term history of Jewish-Muslim relations, first in the Ottoman empire and then in its republican successor state, Turkey. Here Pekesen seems interested—quite properly—in nuancing and, to a good degree, debunking the widely held view that the Ottoman context provided an unprecedented moment of happy multicultural cohabitation between Jews and Muslims. A number of important works in recent years have approached this theme, with varying degrees of optimism and rosiness in their interpretations of just how "happy" those relations were. Pekesen seems to come down quite firmly on the side that argues that, at best, the intercommunal relationship was a complicated one. Indeed, her work shows the tremendous violence that simmered beneath the surface and the ways in which a tremendously delicate communal balance was upset by Kemalist policies—with devastating and bloody results.

The work as a whole is interesting, if disturbing. It would have benefited from a clearer framing; most likely, the best frame would have been that of a sustained study of the Resettlement Law, setting it in the broader context of Kemalist policies of Turkicization. This would have required the author to wade much more deeply than she does into the internal dynamics of modernization (a term the author uses far too generically) and its relationship to nationalization and the creation of a supposedly homogenous nation, among other things. But, as it is, there is lots of interesting material here and many interesting observations, particularly about the different ways in which different "minorities" were understood as either "Turkicizable" or not and what implications that bore for those—like Jews and Armenians—who were the tragic victims of such formulations.

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Zwischen Schonung und Menschenjagden: Die Arbeitseinsatzpolitik in den baltischen Generalbezirken des Reichskommissariats Ostland 1941–1944. By Tilman Plath. Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2012. 502 pp. Notes. Index. Illustrations. Tables. €34.95, paper.

To write about the Holocaust and Nazi terror as local history is a thought-provoking approach. Historian Tilman Plath's focus on ordinary men and women shows how individuals changed roles, from bystanders to perpetrators, according to changing circumstances, and how local animosities of people identifying as Estonians, Latvi-

https://doi.org/10.5612/slavicreview.73.3.670 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ans, or Lithuanians against those identified as Russians and Jews affected the actual course of German terror, especially in the Latvian province of Latgale. The Germans found willing executioners among local people. Plath is careful and does not fall for the Nazi model of targeting categories—that is, insinuating that whole nations have a certain character.

The author has mined the relevant archives and consulted a substantial part of the secondary literature on German warfare, occupation policies, and the Holocaust. He shows how individual perpetrators themselves referred to their prejudices and thus indicated the rationale behind their behavior. Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian antisemitism and anti-Russianism were sufficiently widespread to be helpful in the German annihilation policy—and sufficiently strong not to let the pervasive anti-German emotions disturb those policies.

The German policy of extermination through labor (*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*) was an integral part of the German occupation. Plath's focus on local history makes it possible for him to highlight the central conflict and the polycracy of the German terror machinery. The main conflict between the exploitation of local peoples and their extermination made the latter policy suboptimal. Specialists and skilled workers were murdered because they were Jewish. However, in the course of the war some extermination targets would be allowed to live—for a while—exactly because their skills were deemed necessary for certain enterprises to function.

The polycracy was a result of the tug-of-war between different agencies, each of which was eager to secure forced labor to meet their aims. There were three local administrative levels under the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete) in Berlin. The first was the Reichskommissariat Ostland, which was established after the invasion of the USSR, on 22 July 1941. Thus, a special unit of civil administration of the three occupied Baltic states (and Belarus) was created. Its functionaries, who included those in the two next levels, the Generalkommissare and the Gebietskommissare, attempted to retain both ordinary and forced labor within their realm. The unified armed forces (Wehrmacht) and the General Authority for Labor Deployment (Generalbevollmächtigter für den Arbeitseinsatz) were the second and third central units. The latter was established in March 1942 with special rights to conscript forced labor from the occupied territories. The armed forces also had their own prerogatives. The author depicts a chaotic administration with actors at cross-purposes.

Plath gives many examples of both man-hunting and the conscription of forced labor. He points out that *Schonung* (mercy)—toward Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians—was a matter of expediency, not German policy as such. Mercy was a minor feature of the whole German policy. Reports of instances of mercy are surrounded by the author's thick descriptions of the German occupation's everyday practices. While Plath's detailed account gives rich empirical evidence of the actual, obscene murdering of Jews, he also gives a horrific account of the enslavement of Russians and Poles by local German authorities. The lower-level administrators, the Generalkommissare and the Gebietskommissare, stand out as especially notorious in their harassment of the Russian- and Polish-speaking inhabitants and of Russians brought from the interior of occupied Russia. This practice was made easier by the callous attitudes of bystanders. Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians, to a certain degree, harbored anti-Russian (and antisemitic) sentiments as a consequence of the memory of the Soviet deportations of their peers in June 1941, in the final days of the Soviet occupation.

It is typical of Plath's careful treatment of sensitive issues that he quotes an important observation in a recent book by the Latvian historian Elmārs Pelkaus. Pelkaus noted that the proportion of Jews among those who were deported by the Soviet au-

https://doi.org/10.5612/slavicreview.73.3.670 Published online by Cambridge University Press

thorities in June 1941 was disproportionally high, an empirical fact that refutes the thesis of a Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy—a historical fact, not the imagined "truth" that persists among some people even today. Plath concludes his book with the assertion that the historical memory of today differs among the relatives of those who were shown "mercy," those who were hunted, and those who were exterminated.

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Becoming Soviet Jews: The Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk. By Elissa Bemporad. The Modern Jewish Experience. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013. xiv, 276 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Maps. Paper.

With this history of Jewish Minsk, the distinguished roster of books on Soviet Jewry has acquired a new and endlessly rewarding addition. Elissa Bemporad's focus on this single, once largely Jewish, city gives us both the local picture and the larger one. The time frame is small, from the immediately prerevolutionary years through the complex re-posturing of the 1920s and 1930s. What we see in total—a mix of hope, delusion, and compromise—is not unexpected. But the details are fascinating, and the author's analysis is nuanced and respectful of human limitations.

At the onset of Soviet power, Minsk was Jewish both in population (slightly over 50 percent) and culture. If it lacked the rabbinical preeminence of Vil'na or the cultural exuberance of Odessa, it made up for that with the sheer number of its Yiddish speakers and their political engagement. All of this came at a cost. In the years between 1917 and 1921, when power seesawed between imperial Russia, Germany, Poland, and the Soviet Union, Jews found their political and religious affiliations going, starkly, in and out of favor, with personal safety always at risk.

In the first phase of Bolshevik rule, the socialist Bund was in, despite its vehement opposition to the October revolution; among Zionist organizations, Poale Tsion (Workers of Zion) alone proved tolerable. Both groups joined the Red Army as the Poles approached, though in separate units. Under the Poles, everything reversed. Judaism returned to the public square and Zionism flourished, but as the Poles retreated, a devastating pogrom struck the city itself.

Following the Bolsheviks' return, Zionism and Judaism were suppressed, along with the Hebrew language, which both shared. A Jewish cemetery in the city was requisitioned as a field for goats (one and a half rubles per goat). Minsk's Bund was taken over by the Evsektsiia, an event marked by a ceremony similar to the capitulation of a defeated army. But the defeat was more symbolic than real: the Evsektsiia would be run by Bundists. The names of the Bundist club and newspaper remained unchanged until 1925. The editor of that newspaper, Elye Osherovitsh, became secretary of the Evsektsiia. This kind of continuity, Bemporad tells us, was not replicated in other cities of the former Pale.

Another feature of Minsk exceptionalism was the assertiveness of its Jewish groups. Despite its tutelage under the Moscow State Yiddish Theater, GOSET, Minsk's BelGOSET took a different path, preferring general political programming to dramas infused with Jewish themes. BelGOSET didn't need a Jewish subtext: its world was Jewish enough already. Similarly, despite pressure from Moscow, the Minsk Jewish leadership was unexcited about Birobidzhan. Bemporad explains these deviations as a byproduct of Jewish geography—in Jewish space, Minsk was the center and Moscow the periphery—reinforced by the Bundist idea of *doikayt* (hereness), which focused on Jewish life where Jews lived. Another factor was a certain independence among

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