

would help us trace both the roots and the results of the British Jewish community's interaction with Zionism. He also notes the comparative work left to be done, for instance, between Zionism and the various British subnationalisms. Such revisions would have strengthened the analytical and argumentative aspects of the work and made it more accessible to nonspecialists. Similarly, the work would have benefited from a structural revision. Multiple chapters out of a total of sixteen (including introduction and conclusion) are either extraordinarily long or unusually short. For instance, part 1 comprises one chapter of three pages, one of one hundred pages, and one of fifty-eight pages. Parts 3 and 4 are composed entirely of chapters ranging between eight and sixteen pages. The result is an uneven narrative that obscures rather than clarifies the argument. It is to Wendehorst's credit that despite this structural impediment, his work paints a rich and detailed picture of two crucial decades of British Jewish political life.

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EDWARD C. WOODFIN. *Camp and Combat on the Sinai and Palestine Front: The Experience of the British Empire Soldier, 1916–18*. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Pp. 240. \$80.00 (cloth).

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Edward C. Woodfin's history of British Empire soldiers' experiences of the Great War in Sinai and Palestine is informed and interesting. It is the product of the author's mining of the excellent primary source material held in archives in Australia, Great Britain, and New Zealand. (In this regard, the holdings of the UK's Imperial War Museum and the Australian War Memorial in Canberra are exemplary.) High rates of literacy in these countries by 1914 produced a wealth of letters, journals, and diaries by soldiers and officers across all theaters of World War I. Aggressive postwar museum collections policies, especially in antipodean countries for which the war was a crucible in which national myths were forged, have preserved these stories, leaving a rich legacy for the historian to consider. Later projects by the Imperial War Museum and the National Library in Australia to collect oral recordings from surviving veterans have supplemented the traditional record, these oral histories adding human color to soldiers' memories.

Echoing studies such as Tony Ashworth's *Trench Warfare* (1980) and John Ellis's *Eye-Deep in Hell* (1976), Professor Woodfin has fixed on the experiences of ordinary soldiers in the tradition of history from below, but instead of looking at the oft-examined western front, he focuses on a non-European theater of combat. This is to be welcomed. While common themes of fear, death, and sickness emerge that resonate across all the war zones, Woodfin defines three factors that characterized the Palestine front: the unique physical surroundings of Palestine (desert and then mountains), the enemy and the nature of the fighting (the argument here being that mobile contact with the Turks differed from the static war in France; also that the Turks were religiously and culturally distinct from, say, the Germans), and finally, the political-strategic debate in London over the direction of the Palestine campaign that affected the fighting (the idea here being that the generals and politicians did not agree on the value of the war in Palestine). These themes tie together the memories of soldiers on matters as varied as food, sex, climate, clothing, combat, and religion, making for a satisfying read.

There are limitations to the book under review. Woodfin focuses on an Anglo-Saxon slice of the war: white, Christian (Protestant), and culturally British in origin. The result is a partial understanding of the soldiers' experience of the war. Certainly, up until early 1918, the core of the British-led Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) that invaded Sinai and Palestine and

fought Ottoman (Turkish) forces was composed of Australian, British, and New Zealand soldiers. (The Australian and New Zealand troops fought as mounted infantry in a separate Desert Mounted Corps within the EEF.) However, the gap left by the recall of British troops in Palestine to France as reinforcements to tackle the Ludendorff offensives of March 1918 was filled with Indian troops who made up the bulk of the EEF's infantry force by the final British offensive in Palestine at the battle of Megiddo in September 1918. Some 29 percent of the Indian troops were Muslim. What did they think about fighting against the army of the Ottoman sultan, the spiritual leader of Sunni Muslims? Woodfin has little to say about the Indian experience; as he admits, a study of the Indian voices from the war in Palestine is a "very fertile area" for study (4). To be fair, Woodfin can only do so much in one book, but it is worth remembering that the EEF was a multinational, multicultural unit throughout the war. By the summer of 1918 only one division out of a total of eleven in the EEF was primarily British. Beyond the Australians, British, and New Zealanders, the EEF contained Algerians, Armenians, Burmese, Egyptians, French, Hashemite Arabs, Indians, Italians, Jews, Rarotongans, South Africans, West Indians, and others (including a Hong Kong and Singapore unit, Russian Jews, a Canadian construction battalion, and former Ottoman prisoners of war serving with Hashemite forces). There was even talk of Japan sending troops to fight with the EEF, something that the EEF commander Edmund Allenby encouraged, feeling that the addition of Japanese divisions would be a great benefit. The experiences of the men and women who came from elsewhere demand examination. New archives and sources (certainly in India/Pakistan) need to be tapped, if possible. (The same point can be made *a fortiori* about the Ottoman soldiers' experiences or those of the Egyptians who served as impressed labor for the British-led forces.) Instead of doing this, Woodfin's scholarship covers well-worn ground, stories told in different ways—even if only partially—elsewhere.

This is not primarily an analytical book; rather, it is a well-researched narrative that provides insights into the material experiences of soldiers from certain countries. While Woodfin has eschewed traditional methodology in his examination of the war in Palestine—the book has no central thesis—his analysis of higher-level decision making within which the soldiers fought their war provides a useful and more general context for the soldiers' memories of the war that they fought and the lands through which they traveled. Overall, his narrative and the empirical evidence he presents are interesting and stimulating, if not always so novel or cohesive as to make us rethink the war in Palestine.

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