

with the Romanian state provoking an Old Calendarist movement, especially in Moldavia and Bessarabia.

The Orthodox Church also faced challenges from the emergence of Adventists, Brethren, Pentecostals, and Baptists among groups Clark describes as “repenter churches.” While these groups remained a marginal demographic presence, their evident piety and moral commitment crystallized concerns among some about the character of religious life of Orthodox communities. There were repeated claims about the failings of Orthodox clergy to provide adequate leadership and about popular religious apathy and immorality. Clark analyzes attempts that were made to revive Orthodox spirituality and piety during the 1920s. He examines, for example, the Lord’s Army movement led by Iosif Trifa from Sibiu in Transylvania. This movement produced newspapers (including *The Light of the Villages*) that were aimed at a popular audience. Trifa thought that the new Romanian state needed not only political but also moral renewal. The Lord’s Army declared spiritual warfare against alcoholism in a campaign that was in part promoted through antisemitism. By the mid-1930s, Trifa claimed that 100,000 supporters had signed a declaration to join the Lord’s Army. After a dispute between Trifa and the Transylvanian metropolitan Nicolae Bălan, leadership of the Lord’s Army passed to Bălan. Mass meetings of the Lord’s Army supporters were held and the movement became increasingly associated with ultra-nationalist politics. Clark argues that the Lord’s Army shows how Orthodox leaders were “transforming their church by drawing on spiritual practices they had discovered in the West” (166). Clark also assesses a renewal movement based in St. Stefan’s Church in Bucharest (known as the Stork’s Nest) led by parish priest Teodor Popescu. Popescu preached on the need for individual conversion experiences and moral renewal among the faithful. The movement was in part inspired by a new Bible translation completed by Dumitru Cornilescu. However, opponents claimed that sermons delivered in the Stork’s Nest were influenced by foreign ideas. Both Popescu and his opponents claimed to be working for the salvation of Romania, and both sides accused each other of being in league with Jews. A 1923 heresy trial concluded that Popescu’s teaching was infected by Protestant beliefs.

While many Orthodox clergy were convinced of the need for religious renewal both for the sake of the faithful and to save the Romanian state, there were unresolved tensions within Orthodoxy over what renewal meant while remaining within the boundaries of tradition and acting in the interests of Romania. Clark’s thoughtful analysis draws the attention of readers to the significance of the place of the Orthodox Church in Romanian society and examines critical questions about Romania’s cultural and political history in the interwar period.

GRAEME MURDOCK
Trinity College Dublin

In the Midst of Civilized Europe: The Pogroms of 1918–1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust. By Jeffrey Veidlinger. New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company, 2021. 449 pp. Notes. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Maps. \$35.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.27

“If you gaze into the abyss,” wrote Friedrich Nietzsche in 1886, “the abyss gazes into you” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, Aphorism 146). Scholars like Jeffrey Veidlinger who study the history of human violence need no explanation of this weighty sentiment, and we are deeply indebted to him for his sustained gaze into the horrific

pogroms that soaked Ukraine in blood during the years of civil war following the collapse of the Romanov dynasty. His erudite work, a comprehensive analysis based on detailed archival study and a century of secondary sources written with complex entropic political tendencies, promises to be the definitive study of the period.

The great paradox of the period is the disconnect between the unprecedented nature of the pro-Jewish policies of the nascent Ukrainian experiment in statehood on the one hand, and the eruption of horrific attacks on Jews and other minorities on the other. It is noteworthy that a plurality of those attacks were carried out by forces ostensibly loyal to the very same Ukrainian government that was printing money with Yiddish inscriptions and supporting a Ministry of Jewish Affairs. Veidlinger takes us through this complex history from the late tsarist period through the Paris trial of Shalom Schwartzbard (who assassinated the Ukrainian leader Symon Petliura as revenge for the antisemitic attacks) and connects the persistence of lingering hatred to the Holocaust itself.

His focus, however, never strays from the pogroms themselves. The most challenging part of this volume is his street-by-street, hour-by-hour account of several of the most horrible examples, relying on the first-person pogrom testimonies held in the Tcherikower Archives of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, documents in Ukrainian archives, and the secondary literature in Yiddish, Russian, and other European languages. Veidlinger provides a nuanced portrait of the varying nature of the pogroms, with qualitative differences emerging from the range of perpetrators: pro-Directory forces, the Whites under Anton Denikin, and various warlords. I would have liked to read more regarding the pogroms visited upon non-Jewish populations such as the Mennonites, but Veidlinger does an admirable job tracing the long-term impact to the pogroms on its Jewish victims, following the refugees, and sketching their experiences after leaving Ukraine as well as outlining the responses of US-based and European relief organizations. Veidlinger has a fine sense for non-textual data as well, and provides useful examples of period artwork and propaganda, from the initial memorial books (*Yizker-bikher*) dedicated to the pogroms to the noxious anti-semitic broadsheets produced by the Whites in particular.

In the Midst of Civilized Europe is not only a must-read for anyone seeking to understand the maelstrom of post-Romanov Ukraine, it is also provides invaluable insight into the much larger violence of the Holocaust, a connection rendered explicit by the subtitle, *The Pogroms of 1918–1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust*. Veidlinger explains the impact of the pogroms on the local Jewish populations, specifically their attraction to the much more orderly Red Army under the Jewish Lev Trotskii, the decades of seething Ukrainian resentment against communist rule that followed, and the widespread association of Jews with that Soviet abuses that persisted long after the Stalinist purges. This hatred of the imaginary *Judo-kommuna* was instrumental in feeding the hatred that the Nazis exploited with genocidal efficiency.

In another century, the pogroms of 1918–21 would have received a great amount of scholarly attention. Overshadowed and overwhelmed by the Holocaust just twenty years later, they have unfortunately receded in memory. Veidlinger's masterful treatment of this crucial period has brought the pogroms back into the forefront of our vision, describing how essential these attacks were in forming the rest of the last century and its bloodlust. We owe a debt of gratitude to Veidlinger for staring into the abyss, and describing what horrors he saw there.

HENRY ABRAMSON
Touro University