

of propriety. Lanz defied the odds, the authors conclude, on account of her versatility as a mnemo-political vehicle. Her myth found wide acceptance not because it threatened the existing order but rather because “opposition-traditionalists” (a term coined by Claudia Ulbrich) honed in on her defence of the status quo *against* the forces of change.

Although some important analytical observations could have been better signposted to make them stand out from the shrubs of “thick description,” the wealth of material Lanzinger and Sarti present is truly impressive. Almost every conceivable medium, from letters to representations of Lanz on tarot cards, is covered. It is evident that the book is the product of many years of research. Napoleonic-era Amazons have received increasing attention from gender historians in recent years, but the comprehensiveness of this case study is exceptional. One can therefore only hope that *Eine Löwin im Kampf gegen Napoleon?* finds a wide readership.

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Przemyśl, Poland: A Multiethnic City During and After a Fortress, 1867-1939

By John E. Fahey. West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2023. Pp. xiv + 210. Paperback \$54.99. ISBN: 978-1612498096.

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Przemyśl, Poland is once more a key logistical hub in a major European war and the strategic frontline of a military conflict with Russia. John Fahey’s book is a particularly timely study of a city at the confluence of Polish and Ukrainian historical fault lines, a city turned bastion by Austria-Hungary to guard against invasion from the east. While today’s Przemyśl has largely come to grips with the ethnic turmoil of the last century, welcoming thousands of Ukrainian war refugees to the safety of NATO-member Poland, the city’s tortured history is omnipresent. As Fahey notes, Przemyśl was “built as a strongpoint against Russia,” which “straddles a less visible frontier, that between Poles and Ukrainians [Ruthenians]” (1, 107).

This book is the microhistory of an Austro-Hungarian frontier stronghold through its transition to a modest city of a new interwar nation state. It is simultaneously the case study of a “garrison town,” put simply, “where soldiers learned to march, maneuver, and shoot” (129). Fahey sets Przemyśl apart, calling it “a military town on steroids” (13) and a fitting lens through which to inspect the rapidly developing phenomenon of fortress building within late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century East-Central Europe. The overarching themes shaping Fortress Przemyśl, “multinationalism, militarism, imperialism, and urbanism” (8), manifest themselves in Fahey’s attentive treatment of shifting national identities, the dominance of the army over civilians, the growth of mainstream left-wing political parties, and the paradoxical reliance on and resentment of Jewish communities.

The book, concise at 130 pages, proceeds chronologically through five chapters, the later four investigating the timeframe Fahey argues Przemyśl was most consequential, from Austria-Hungary’s *Ausgleich* to the German-Soviet invasion of Poland. The turning point in Przemyśl’s history was its 1871 designation as a fortress by Kaiser Franz Joseph. This

reflected a shifting imperial focus eastward, towards military defense against Russian armies, and projected the Habsburg monarchy's influence in its distant multiethnic, potentially Russophile borderland. Fahey sets a baseline for the ethnic and religious makeup of the city in 1870 as roughly 42% Polish, 19% Ukrainian, and 38% Jewish. Only in the conclusion does Fahey briefly consider Przemyśl as a site of inner colonization – by Austria-Hungary or later interwar Poland. According to Fahey, “The Austro-Hungarian army’s dual missions – providing defense and spreading military culture – transformed Przemyśl and Galicia” (19).

The construction of Fortress Przemyśl concretely tied it to the wider Habsburg Empire: building materials and armaments came “from as far as the Alps and as close as local riverbanks” (33-34). These included artillery pieces from Skoda in Bohemia, granite for armored casements from Prokop and Sanish in Vienna, asphalt and tar from Oswiecim, and iron shutters and gratings from Silesia. Fahey provides ample descriptions of construction efforts, conveying the scope and scale of the endeavor, which he reminds us, “consumed the attention of thousands of planners and workers for decades” (127).

One of the more fascinating dynamics of Fahey’s *fin-de-siècle* Przemyśl is the growth of left-wing politics. As the city’s population grew from 15,000 to 54,000 between 1869 and 1910, newly arrived skilled and unskilled laborers added to a budding social democratic movement. Class and ethnicity overlapped as the garrison grew to roughly 8,000 soldiers, mostly from the region, speaking Polish, Ukrainian, or Yiddish. Socialist papers like *Głos Przemyski* (Voice of Przemyśl) focused on soldiers’ issues within the garrison, from suicide to language rights. *Głos Przemyski* ran provocative articles about Polish soldiers reprimanded by their German-speaking officers for conversing in their mother tongue, encouraging Polish soldiers to identify themselves with a Polish “jestem” instead of the German “hier” in formation.

Fahey describes the growth of socialism in Przemyśl as a reaction to a “militarized” city, yet never defines militarization as a term. Perhaps taking this as self-evident, Fahey states, “As it was a militarized city, officers were very visible and went out of their way to promote discipline and order. For example, General Gagóty [X Corps Commander, 1891-1905] enjoyed walking around the city and correcting anyone, including civilians, in incorrect uniform” (42). Yet there is never a sense in the book that the civilian population in Przemyśl willingly adopted or was forced into any enduring martial attitude, especially politically. Fahey asks, “Would the city be a subservient fortress town, or would the new and modern political parties and ideologies triumph?” (56). The answer rang out in the 1907 election of Social Democrat Herman Lieberman, who represented Przemyśl in the Viennese Imperial Parliament. In 1914, Lieberman unexpectedly found himself in solidarity with the monarchy as Austria-Hungary entered the First World War.

The war quickly turned against Austria-Hungary, as Przemyśl was put to brutal siege from September to October 1914 and from November to March 1915. Chief of Staff Conrad von Hözendorff futilely ordered his armies over the Carpathians in winter, to break the second siege, resulting in 680,000 casualties. With rescue not coming, the garrison’s soldiers destroyed their artillery pieces, blasted their earthworks, and surrendered 120,000 strong to the Russians. Przemyśl was wrecked when German troops recaptured it in June 1915, to which Fahey concludes, “Fortress Przemyśl died a violent death” (73).

The city’s multiethnic character eroded, too. Tens of thousands of Ukrainians were evicted to improve the fortress’s fields of fire, and another 20,000 allegedly Russophile Ukrainians were arrested and interned at camps in Thalerhof and Theresienstadt. Under Russian occupation, all Jews were expelled, leaving one Polish resident to declare, “Jews are no longer here” (90). After the fort was liberated in September 1915, Ukrainians suspected of treason were marched through Przemyśl and attacked, leaving forty-four dead. Ethnic violence escalated as imperial control waned, pitting Polish nationalist against Ukrainian for the city’s future, leaving Jews scapegoated for perceived loyalty to either side. Fahey’s work complements that of Kamil Ruszała, who highlights the “administrative

catastrophe” (372) exposed in Galicia by Austrian authorities who failed to address mounting civil crises (*Galicyski Eksodus* [2020]).

Fahey grounds this history through the personalities he follows, like Herman Lieberman, the social democratic parliamentarian who left Vienna for Przemyśl on November 1, 1918, to join the new city council in anticipation of Polish independence. Lieberman then represented the city in the Second Polish Republic’s Sejm before escaping to England, serving as the justice minister of the Polish government-in-exile, watching from afar as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Line divided Przemyśl along the San River between Germany and the USSR. Yet, in such a sustained and obvious treatment of Lieberman and social democratic politics in Przemyśl, there are noticeably few voices of the unskilled laborers, construction workers, and lower-ranking enlisted soldiers who made the garrison town and its politics what they were. John Fahey’s *Przemyśl, Poland* is nevertheless a well-researched, easily readable microhistory, heavily supported by archival sources from the State Archive in Przemyśl, the Austrian State Archive in Vienna, and the Central Military Archives in Warsaw. Those interested in the histories of Austria-Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, the First World War, and social military history will find this an insightful study.

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Desert Edens: Colonial Climate Engineering in the Age of Anxiety

By Philipp Lehmann. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2022. Pp. x + 244. Cloth \$39.95. ISBN: 978-0691238289.

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Drawing on the now-considerable historical literature on declensionist environmental narratives that developed in the context of European colonial expansion, Philipp Lehmann explores how growing concerns about desiccation, environmental degradation, and climatic shifts generated significant anxiety and debate from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century among German and French planners, explorers, architects, and geographers. He argues that this led some of them to propose ambitious engineering projects designed to ameliorate landscapes, to address these issues and to promote settlement for Europeans, in the case of Africa, and for Germans, also in the case of eastern Europe. However, the projects that Lehmann describes, with the exception of those in eastern Europe, were never realized. As Lehmann himself admits, this forces him “to stay in the realm of ideas” (9) and does not allow him to assess local responses and consequences or economic, social, and political contexts in any empirical sense. This book’s inclusion in a series entitled *Histories of Economic Life* is therefore somewhat curious, because this is really an intellectual history and one primarily concerned with exploring how French and German planners wished to press technologies into the service of new utopian “environmental imaginaries.”

The book consists of seven chapters and an epilogue. Chapter 1 examines nineteenth-century concerns about climate shifts and how the Sahara desert became a central focus of research and fascination for Europeans. Lehmann highlights the work of the German explorer Heinrich Barth, who never reached the “airy heights of nineteenth-century