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struggles and rivalries (which she does discuss) alongside the profound and epoch-making dilemmas with which the Yishuv's leadership was forced to contend.

Porat's essays point to a number of core issues in Zionist history, although some of her formulations and characterizations could be more nuanced (and in certain instances, they are done an injustice by patchy translations). In one discussion of the impact of foundational Zionist ideas on rescue policy, she casts Zionism a bit too unproblematically as a form of Jewish liberalism that "believed from its very beginning in the moral progress of human civilization in general, and in that of the Western liberal world in particular" (pp. 52–53). In fact, Zionism was characterized by acute tensions between nineteenth-century liberalism and a deep disillusionment with it; between the kind of optimistic faith in human progress Porat describes and a deeply pessimistic worldview. This tension is surely an important backdrop for understanding Zionist reactions to the Holocaust.

In her piece on "Diaspora Negation and Rescue during the Holocaust," Porat points to the complexities of Zionist conceptions of exile and Diaspora, as well as to their impact on changing relations between the Yishuv and the Diaspora, and to their historical contingency—particularly in the wake of an event as shattering as the Holocaust. She stops short of a full consideration of the implied issues, and the picture that results is, in my view, not quite as nuanced as it might have been. However, the historiographical importance of the piece compensates for the lack of nuance at least in part; it touches on an issue that is in some sense at the root of all the others and is at the very heart of the historiographical (and moral) debate. Porat's principal goal here is to argue against the notion that the idea of "negation of the Diaspora" led the Yishuv to indifference to Europe's Jews and to a reluctance to rescue those who were not Zionists (such as ultra-Orthodox Jews) or those who did not fit a particular mold of what it meant to be a Zionist (Revisionists, for example). In this piece, as in others, she demonstrates a methodological and epistemological commitment to the careful use of historical evidence, and the picture she presents as a result is of a tragically complicated historical reality in which the Yishuv had few options—and even fewer *good* options. That picture, at least to this reader, is a convincing one.

Arieh Bruce Saposnik
Arizona State University

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A Holocaust Controversy: The Treblinka Affair in Postwar France, Samuel Moyn (Waltham, MA and Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press/ University Press of New England, 2005), xxii + 220 pp., cloth \$65.00, pbk. \$19.95.

In France as elsewhere, memory of the Shoah, memory that went into eclipse after World War II, seems to be at the heart of discussion of that conflict today. The

silence in France after the Liberation, while not unique, is hardly astonishing if one considers the reluctance of the Resistance press and the Free French in London to deal with the persecution of the Jews.¹ Though the shift that began in the late 1970s is well known thanks to the work of Henry Rousso, there remain poorly understood sides of the transition, one episode of which is discussed in Samuel Moyn's study of the controversy that followed the 1966 publication of Jean-François Steiner's book on the revolt in Treblinka.²

Steiner's father was Kadmi Cohen, a radical Zionist who had had a brief flirtation with Vichy, advocated neutrality as a way to garner support for a Jewish state in all of historical Palestine, and ended his life in a Nazi camp. Steiner inherited his father's admiration for a heroism lacking in the received versions of Jewish responses to persecution. The widespread Jewish encomium of the Warsaw ghetto uprising was not enough for Steiner, whose book posited that when the Germans designed the mechanisms of the Final Solution, the Jews were degraded to a complicity that aided the executioners. Steiner did not target the passivity Raul Hilberg noted or the treason of the elites denounced by Hannah Arendt, but rather a broader complicity reflecting a real moral failing. But precisely at the moment of their uttermost humiliation the Jews found the strength to fight back. Challenging the relevance of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, whose sole horizon was heroic death, Steiner focused on the revolt at Treblinka as a manifestation of the Jewish tradition of the duty to survive and to bear witness. Precisely this tradition enabled the turn from complicity to resistance: here was a case of specifically and authentically Jewish heroism.

Steiner made extensive use of testimonies but encountered protests by witnesses accusing him of manipulating or even falsifying their statements in order to represent the victims as complicit with the murderers. Nor were Steiner's interviewees the only ones. During the scandal both sides would focus on the same issue. Even before publication, an interview that Steiner granted the right-Gaullist weekly *Le Nouveau Candide* triggered early responses when it appeared behind a provocative cover featuring a huge swastika and the title, "The Jews: What None Dared Say Before." But the interview was only the opening salvo. It was around the hypotheses presented there that Steiner's supporters and opponents faced off.

Moyn analyzes the controversy, including its international ramifications. Eventually the debate would involve journalists bent on the sensational, publishers eager to promote books, philosophers exercising their brains, militants of the left and right eager for political gain, Holocaust survivors wounded in their memories, and Jews and Gentiles preaching universalism or searching for their identity. The greatest merit of Moyn's book lies precisely in his study of the reception of *Treblinka*, a survey that runs the gamut of reaction up to and including the Yiddish press. He hangs his argument on the central thesis that the controversy marked a key step in the emergence of Holocaust consciousness in France: "the shift in

post-Holocaust culture” from a universalist (or “antifascist”) paradigm incorporating the Holocaust among other Nazi crimes to “a new regime of Memory in which the Holocaust received specific attention as a phenomenon in its own right” (p. 2).

In the *Nouveau Candide* interview, Steiner asserted a clear distinction between *l'univers concentrationnaire*, which had given rise to so many studies, and the death camps per se. Establishing a direct link between the ghetto and the death camp, he accentuated the Jews' particular experience. He distinguished between the military hostilities among states and the Nazis' war against the Jews (characterized as a war of the death principle against the life principle [*Treblinka*, p. 38]). The proportions assumed by the controversy—the book's very success—allowed Steiner's issues to reach a large public in whose eyes the victims of the Second World War had previously remained an undifferentiated mass.

The entire controversy cannot be reviewed here. But the stakes were especially dramatic in the Jewish world. Arnold Mandel, one of Steiner's supporters, had written as early as 1947 that “the extermination of the Jews of Europe during . . . the Second World War is not an incident or one aspect of that war; rather, it constitutes a war within the war, conducted against the unarmed Jews by a Germany armed to the teeth and won by it, thanks to its many allies, and the scrupulous attitude of non-intervention adhered to by the major neutral powers. . . .”³ Mandel therefore applauded the book. But the Zionist, Bundist, and Communist left, which fervently celebrated each anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, was indignant at the implication of complicity. Moyn interprets the opposition as generational; postwar France was marked not so much by silence as by a failure of transmission: “What is to be found . . . is an older Jewish generation that failed to transmit its memories and its identity to a wider public and a subsequent generation” (p. 103). Can this “failure” really be imputed to the older generation, which then became jealous of the “success” chalked up by Steiner? Perhaps French society blocked such a transmission: non-Jewish reactions to Steiner's book shed light on the question. Not surprisingly, the antisemitic Far Right expressed delight at seeing the Jews accused publicly—and by a Jew—of complicity in their own destruction. In her preface Simone de Beauvoir plastered over the particularism of the book in an existentialist interpretation (one of the forms of exploitation analyzed by Moyn). Elsewhere, though, the issue of purported Jewish collaboration held sway.

One of the most interesting reactions belonged to David Rousset, who helped lay the foundations in France for the universalist interpretation and in whose eyes the Jews' experience constituted merely the pinnacle of the Nazi system but was not of a different order. Rousset was put off by Steiner's particularizing interpretation and addressed the question of Jewish collaboration from his own position: It would be antisemitic “to pose the critical problem of cooperation with the SS as if it were exclusively or principally a Jewish phenomenon” (Moyn, p. 60). Rousset grounded his position on the work of Joseph Billig and Georges Wellers, whom he thereby

brought to wider public knowledge; these two historians had researched the Holocaust as a specific phenomenon long before Steiner, and were now exhumed to clear the Jews of the charge of collaboration (even so, many years had to pass before their work was truly integrated into French historiography).

Moyn similarly analyzes the reactions of Christians such as Edmond Michelet who universalized a vision of the Jewish people's mission. Jacques Maritain and François Mauriac praised *Treblinka* but gave its singularizing vision a Christian reading. Moyn rightly argues that they pioneered a significant perception of the unique nature of the Jewish genocide, all the more so as Maritain formulated it before the war had even ended. It was undoubtedly that "Frenchest of French Jews" Pierre Vidal Naquet who steered the debate (before subsequently taking issue with Steiner) toward what underlay *Treblinka*: no, the death camps could not be assimilated to the concentration camps; no, the annihilation of the Jews was not like other massacres; yes the uprising in Treblinka was specifically Jewish and could not be reduced to an "antifascist" manifestation. But one has the sense that Pierre Vidal Naquet was, basically, the only one to place this dimension at the center of his interpretation of the book. However, Steiner's singularizing of the Jewish genocide rested on an essentialist vision and a singularizing of the Jews moral stance—premises that created confusion and diverted the debate.

One may wonder whether the shift in awareness of the Jewish genocide was quite as significant as Moyn maintains—especially as this was not the first Holocaust controversy in France. It had been preceded by a debate started by André Schwartz-Bart's *Last of the Just*, which won the prestigious Prix Goncourt in 1959.⁴ This bestseller too addressed the extermination of the Jews; it too set off a fierce polemic involving both Jews and non-Jews; and it too reflected on Jewish nonviolence. But its answer was the opposite of Steiner's, for Schwartz-Bart's point was to honor the dignity of the martyrs. We cannot avoid being struck by the parallels between the two *affaires* that raged far beyond the Jewish press. Both books dealt more with Jewish response than the Holocaust itself. The discourse became Christianized according to Schwartz-Bart's critics; for Steiner, however, the issue of Jewish complicity was a prism through which to contemplate the unique nature of the Shoah. Today we wonder at the exclusive and problematic angles from which the French intelligentsia of those years took up the Jews' unique tragedy. Yet even if one cannot totally agree with Moyn about the importance of *Treblinka* for the future evolution of intellectual discourse,⁵ one admires his research and vigorous analysis.

Notes

1. See my *Propagandes et persécutions: La Résistance et "le problème juif"* (Paris: Fayard, 2008).

2. *Treblinka* (Paris: Fayard, 1966; English-language edition New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967).

3. Arnold Mandel, *Chair à destin* (Paris: Cooped, 1947).
4. Francine Kaufmann, "Les enjeux de la polémique autour du premier best-seller français de la littérature de la Shoah," *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah/Le Monde juif* 176 (September–December 2002): 68–99.
5. Moyn views the controversy as the origin of all subsequent debates about the Holocaust as well as the inspiration for Emmanuel Levinas' first text on Holocaust memory.

Renée Poznanski

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Translated from French by Lenn Schramm

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Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine, Omer Bartov (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), xvii + 232 pp., \$26.95.

Erased is likely to surprise readers familiar with Omer Bartov's previous works on the Holocaust and its perpetrators. In contrast to those works, this one is highly personal; as he explains in the introduction, it is the product of a middle-aged man whose childhood memory subtly directed him "to look back and listen to the inner voice of his past, to ask the questions that had never been posed: where, when, why, how?" These questions induced him to travel to what was for him "a white space on the map": the towns of eastern Galicia, including his parents' hometown of Buchach (Buczacz). This was, he writes, "a journey into a black hole that had sucked in entire civilizations along with individuals and never-to-be-met family members, making them vanish as if they never existed" (pp. ix–x). Thus, we are presented with a narrative about the victims of the Holocaust, the places in which they were murdered, the neighbors who collaborated in their destruction, and the erasure of their existence and culture in present-day Ukrainian Galicia. In telling his "story of discovery" (p. ix), Bartov moves seamlessly between personal observations and penetrating analysis.

The book is part history, part travelogue, part biography, and part contemporary Ukrainian politics of national identity. In this respect, *Erased* belongs to the growing body of literature about the East European borderlands during the interwar period. It bears a striking resemblance to Modris Eksteins' *Walking Since Daybreak* (1999) and Kate Brown's *A Biography of No Place* (2003). Both authors traversed the borderlands in their quest to comprehend the interethnic violence and nation-building experiments of the early twentieth century. As Eksteins puts it, in these lands "the Holocaust was a state of mind . . . before it was Nazi policy." More specifically, though, Bartov endeavors both to recover the lost memory of "*Jewish Galicia*" and to critically explicate the selective memory of "*Ukrainian Galicia*."