***Protected Children, Regulated Mothers: Gender and the "Gypsy Question" in State Care in Postwar Hungary, 1949–1956***. By Eszter Varsa. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2021. 244 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Figures. Tables. $75.00, hard bound.
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*Protected Children, Regulated Mothers* is a well-written book that insightfully explores practices of child protection in early state socialist Hungary between the late 1940s and the mid-1950s. Departing from the accounts of state care being merely a tool of political repression in Stalinist societies, the author shows that child protection practices cannot be reduced to cases of children who ended up in state care due to their parents' politically motivated arrests alone, as these children were only a minority of those in state care. Moreover, contrary to the widespread claim that the foster parent system was dismantled during state socialism, the author notes that foster care has always co-existed with institutional care. However, institutional care was prioritized under state socialism.

The book puts child protection in the context of women's rapidly rising employment, industrialization, and assimilationist policies toward those labeled as "Gypsy" in early state socialist Hungary. The author argues that there was a great deal of continuity between pre-war and state socialist child protection—especially regarding the approaches to the Roma, since there were efforts to remove Romani children from their families for "re-education" and assimilation in Europe since the eighteenth century. She also finds continuity in the retention of moral and material endangerment as the two primary justifications for the placement of children in state care. However, she also finds a novelty in state socialist Hungary (as compared to pre-war Hungary) in that both mothers and fathers were supposed to be employed under the state socialist regime.

The author bases her research on various sources, including policies and regulations for child protection. Her main sources of data, however, are case files documenting the placement of almost 800 children (including 100 children identified as "Gypsy" in the case files) in residential institutions in Hungary between 1949 and 1956. She also analyzes more than thirty interviews with former employees of child protection institutions and pupils raised in these institutions. Since the interviews provide retrospective accounts of institutional care, she pays attention to the role of post-Stalinist and post-socialist framings of the state socialist past in shaping respondents' memories.

At the beginning of state socialism, women's employment rapidly increased, but daycare and afterschool clubs remained largely unavailable. Moreover, many unskilled workers lived in workers' hostels that did not allow the presence of children. By discussing children's case files, the author demonstrates that when daycare was unavailable, the institutionalization of children of single mothers served to enable single mothers to take up paid work. They had to be employed for financial reasons, but also to avoid being labeled "work-shy" and thus being considered to be morally endangering their children by reproducing "work-shyness." Due to prejudice against the Roma, this labeling was especially frequent in cases involving Romani women. Assimilation through institutions was to be pursued by teaching children work habits in the institutions and pressuring their parents to be employed if they wanted their children back. Even if employed, single mothers were at risk of having their children labelled as lacking suitable childcare that the state considered to result from these women not being married. The author thus argues that children's placement in state care was also used to pressure single mothers to marry and to control Romani women's sexuality to reduce their presumed "work-shyness."

Eszter Varsa's book is a high-quality contribution to welfare state studies, the historiography of state socialist societies, and the study of Roma exclusion in east central Europe. The book contains numerous valuable citations from the analyzed data sources and contextualizes these sources. It also contributes to feminist scholarship on state socialist gender regimes: it highlights that education in children's residential institutions remained gender-differentiated and that the emphasis on containing women's sexuality within the boundaries of marriage was retained even when authorities encouraged all women (including mothers) to participate in paid work in the first decades of state socialism.

The book could have gone further in suggesting the similarities and differences in child protection in the later decades of state socialism or compared to other (neighboring) countries. Further studies should consider applying a cross-national comparative approach.

Overall, this is a well-written book that is of high value not only for specialists in welfare state studies and studies on state socialist societies but also for those new to these study areas.

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***Romania's Holy War: Soldiers, Motivation, and the Holocaust***. By Grant T. Harward. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021. xviii, 342 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Maps. $49.95, hard bound; $29.99 e-book.
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*Romania's Holy War* makes a significant contribution to understanding World War II and the Holocaust in Romania. Grant Harward perceptively points out that military history and Holocaust history developed along separate, often conflicting tracks in Romania, and he proposes to integrate the two. He reviews key findings of other scholars and challenges many of them. Finally, and hence the title of his book, he finds that neither military nor Holocaust historians have examined carefully Romanian soldiers' motivation during the war, and he undertakes to do so. The hypothesis that most shapes Harward's study is that "Romanian soldiers were highly motivated, primarily by ideology, on the eastern front" (2). Each of these aspects of *Romania's Holy War* merits comment.

The core chapters of the book focus on integrating the Romanian army's military performance with its involvement in atrocities against Jews and others during three years of war alongside Germany and convincingly demonstrate the benefits of bridging the gap between military and Holocaust history. These are chapters in which Harward's citation of hitherto unexplored archival material, in particular from the Romanian National Military Archives, is most intense and revealing. Not every linkage between military events and Holocaust crimes is as direct as Harward sometimes argues, but his effort to integrate the trajectory of military events with the course of Holocaust atrocities is effective and instructive.

Harward is too abrupt in dismissing the work of some other scholars. Not every aspect of this history is as clear as he suggests. It is true, for instance, as Harward argues, that Romania shared certain ideological predispositions and interests with Nazi Germany, but that did not alter the reality that by late 1940, fearing national disintegration, Romania joined the Axis "under duress." Similarly, while it is true that antisemitism was broad-based in Romania, this does not alter the reality that Ion Antonescu was an antisemite, too, who exercised dictatorial authority and issued