

the nineteenth-century Czech national revivalists, Tomáš Masaryk's moral realism, and Josef Pekář's scientific challenges to the Masarykian school.

The book is a part of the Václav Havel series of Karolinum Press, which seeks to continue the intellectual agenda of the late president. The authors' main goal was to introduce academic debates about Czech history to a broader Czech public. The book supposes a deep level of knowledge about the intricacies of Czech history. The discussions between Hvižďala and Přibáň move from the tenth-century establishment of the Slavic Přemyslid dynasty, through Bohemia's relationship with the Holy Roman Empire and Habsburg monarchy, to statehood in the twentieth century.

In translation, the book will speak only to academics with a very strong knowledge of both Czech history and theories of nationalism. For scholars specializing in Habsburg and Czech history, many of the topics will be familiar. For example, the writers challenge the idea that the Battle of White Mountain in 1620 ushered in a period of "*temno*" or darkness. They recognize that scholars have long discounted these generalizations, but they remind us that "this interpretation has stuck in the nation's collective memory right up to the present" (114). They also compliment the work of an ecumenical commission on the Hussite legacy, but they show that Czechs still embrace a national myth of a "bellicose and marshalling [Jan] Hus created by the film director Otakar Vávra and the novelist Alois Jirásek." Přibáň explains, "I am confident that a discussion on the 'dark age' could be . . . liberating for our modern national myths and the black-and-white view of our own history" (114).

The book comprises 13 chapters, some with broad themes, such as "Law without the State and State Law: from the Middle Ages to Modernity" or "Intellectuals and Politics." There are also more focused chapters, such as "The Republic of Educated Citizens, or Masaryk's Attempt at a Central European Utopia." Because the book is structured as a series of conversations by two of today's most erudite Czech public intellectuals, the topics covered in each chapter wander quite a bit. The two discuss, for example, Milan Kundera's novels and essays; the political philosophies of Montesquieu, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Alexis de Tocqueville; and the contemporary crises of Brexit, Scottish nationalism, and Vladimir Putin's irredentism. Because of this conversational and meandering style, an index would have been very helpful.

Although both Hvižďala and Přibáň critique the oversimplification of Czech history, they do begin with the premise that there *is* a Czech history about a singular nation. The impetus for the book was the hundredth anniversary of the Czechoslovak State established in 1918 after World War I. The historic German and Jewish populations of Bohemia play only a background role. A conversation between these two brilliant intellectuals that decenters Czech national history in favor of a multiethnic Bohemian history would be most welcome.

doi:10.1017/S0067237823000127

Linden, Ari. *Karl Kraus and the Discourse of Modernity*

Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2020. Pp. 216.

Donald L. Wallace

Department of History, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland 21402-1300, USA

E-mail: dwallace@usna.edu

Over the last decade, a renewed visibility for Karl Kraus has emerged in the Anglophone world, driven by academic research, new editions, new translations, as well as a more public and broader discussion driven by Jonathan Franzen's (with Paul Reitter and Daniel Kehlmann) *The Kraus Project*. Ari Linden's study of Karl Kraus and modernist theory continues the widening aperture on Kraus's

place in Central European thought. The book succeeds, with deep analysis and clear and vibrant writing, in showing Kraus as a modernist writer and theorist, as well as a public intellectual whose work is as valuable as more familiar figures such as Adorno or Benjamin. It is a book that both intellectual historians and historians of public media in fin-de-siècle Vienna and First Republic Austria will find of interest, but is sparse in terms of historical methodology.

Linden's book is first and foremost a book of *Germanistik*. The book "probes the iterations, implications, and rearticulations of Kraus's critical insights into the relationship between mass media, the state, the public sphere, and the modern subject" (4). While the book certainly provides a critical reading of Kraus's use of language "as a social practice and thus a site where political impulses and ideologies coalesce" (4), its examination of historical context in terms of mass media, state, and the public sphere of interwar Central Europe is thin. The book is primarily, as the title suggests, an attempt to position Kraus within the larger intellectual discourse of modernism and to argue that his modernism was an ethical and socially engaged undertaking.

Following a brief introduction, the book is divided into two parts. Part 1, "Satires and Counterdiscourses," provides a close reading of Kraus's three major projects (outside of his primary intellectual commitment, *Die Fackel*): *The Last Days of Mankind* (1918–22), *Couldcuckooland* (1923), and *The Third Walpurgis Night* (written in 1933, but not published until 1952). The three chapters that compose part 1 provide deep readings of the three texts in order to demonstrate the social purpose of Kraus's "language-oriented satire" (8). Linden concludes that in all three works Kraus employs laughter and obscenity in such a way that laughter "draws our attention to the war's seriousness, sensitizes us to its violence, and thereby works against modernity's anesthetizing mechanisms" (12). Part 1 does not fully ignore the social context from which Kraus operates his satire, but overall, the context remains studied only within the texts. Linden does not provide a deep historical reading through other primary sources of the audiences, events, or social dilemmas of First Republic Austria.

Part 2, composed of two chapters, examines the intellectual affinities and relationships of Kraus to other modernist thinkers (chapter 4, Kierkegaard and Benjamin and chapter 5, Adorno and to some degree Heidegger). Both chapters in the second half of the book are about what Linden calls "dialogues." By this, he means to distinguish the study of patterns of influence or historical and personal interactions from his more ahistorical reading through "reciprocal illumination." By this method, "Kraus's work—examined . . . more for thematic consonance and less stringently with respect to its chronological appearance—can be understood as something of a cipher in relation to these other figures" (13). The result for the Kierkegaard "dialogue" is that it comes off as a bit forced; Kierkegaard appears more as a historical legacy for Kraus to engage with than as a direct participant in a conversation. Overall, there is an unevenness to Linden's concept of "dialogues." Perhaps in a theoretical, timeless, space this has little effect on his argument. But the fact that Kierkegaard comes to Kraus, as Linden shows, through Theodor Haecker, exposes a key difference between the Kraus/Kierkegaard dialogues and those of Adorno, Benjamin, and Kraus. The latter three experiencing the "modern," in vastly different ways than Kierkegaard's "critique of modernity." The technique of reciprocal illustration does allow Linden to Europeanize Kraus within a wider arena, but it seems to me that Linden's argument that Kraus radicalizes Kierkegaard's idea on subjectivity and the press/public opinion have much more to do with Kraus's lived experience of the fin de siècle, world war, and the rise of fascism. In a book this focused and short, such historical experiences are absent. In the end, Linden builds a series of interactions with modernist critical tools and convincingly argues for the placement of Kraus amongst the key figures of Central European critical modernism. For historians, however, the conclusions remain primarily outside their concerns.

The relationship of part 1 to part 2 is not as fully integrated as one would like. Though the exposition of Kraus's modernism through satirical "counterdiscourses" provides some depth to Kraus as a critical theorist, the two halves of the book remain alienated in terms of book level organization and thematic focus. In the end, Linden's book is a nice addition to the growing discussion of Kraus beyond the limits of Vienna. Readers will be rewarded most with a deeper understanding of Kraus's satire and the importance of media to the political conception of modernity, not only in early

twentieth-century Central Europe, but also in our contemporary world. The book ends with a “coda” that emphasizes, perhaps unnecessarily, this very fact.

doi:10.1017/S0067237822000820

Person, Katarzyna. *Warsaw Ghetto Police. The Jewish Order Service during the Nazi Occupation*

Translated by Zygmunt Nowak-Soliński. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021. Pp. 248.

Joshua Zimmerman

Yeshiva University, New York, New York, USA
E-mail: zimmerm@yu.edu

Katarzyna Person’s study of the Jewish Police in the Warsaw ghetto, translated from the 2018 Polish edition, is a major contribution to Holocaust Studies literature. Based on exhaustive archival research, including hundreds of unpublished diaries and testimonies housed at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, documents from Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the Yivo Institute in New York, and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, this unique portrait of the Jewish Police in the Warsaw ghetto also includes stunning, rare archival photographs of ordinary Jewish policeman.

The book begins by chronicling the early history of the Warsaw ghetto’s Jewish police force from its establishment on 20 September 1940, to its dissolution on 30 April 1943, when its last dozen or so members were executed. Person’s study constitutes the most in-depth, detailed examination of this sensitive topic in Holocaust Studies touching upon Jewish agency and Jewish cooperation with the German authorities to facilitate mass Jewish deportations from the Warsaw ghetto. The book’s use of archival photos of ordinary Jewish policemen humanizes a story that is often told in the abstract and which heretofore has only discussed the top police chiefs.

The Jewish Police’s first chief, Józef Szerynski, was not Jewish. He was a Roman Catholic convert who qualified as Jewish by race under Nazi race laws. We learn from Person that Szerynski was only offered the position after two men turned down the offer (12). Szerynski was unknown in the Jewish community, “a man from nowhere” (14).

Of the 7,000 applicants for employment in the Jewish Police, 1,000 were initially approved in November 1940. Applicants had to be at least 5’ 7”, have a high school diploma, be physically fit, and have no police record (17). Person demonstrates that the initial 1,000 policemen came from a Jewish milieu, that they were not particularly assimilated, and many spoke Yiddish (23). Her findings go against the common perception that the Warsaw ghetto police were either converts or wholly assimilated. This perception likely derived from the fact that police chief Szerynski chose several fellow converts as his close collaborators. The Jewish Police force rose to its peak of 2,000 men by November 1941. Among them were an estimated 200 Jewish Gestapo informants placed there by the German authorities (31).

How, then, did the inhabitants of Nazi Europe’s largest ghetto view the Jewish Police by the end of 1941? Person maintains that Warsaw ghetto dwellers regarded the Jewish Police “as a criminal organization ... as people with agency, who chose to carry out orders against the interest of other Jews” (76). Accounts preserved in the Ringelblum Archive demonstrate that Jewish policemen in the Warsaw ghetto were not regarded as real Jews. But as Person argues, “[i]n reality, there were not many converts among the police and not all of them came from strongly assimilated homes” (80).

Person’s findings provide a significant corrective. She cites Emanuel Ringelblum noting that two of his assistants working on the underground archive were Jewish policemen. But it is true that the head