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World War I marks a break in Central European Jewish history. The violent impacts of war, the geopolitical change and a radicalization of antisemitism led to a crisis of Jewish identity. Furthermore, the relationship between Jews and Gentiles as well as the state had to be redefined due to the new political circumstances after the end of the war. This volume collects chapters dealing with Jewish and Gentile debates about the war in general, military service and war memory in Central Europe.

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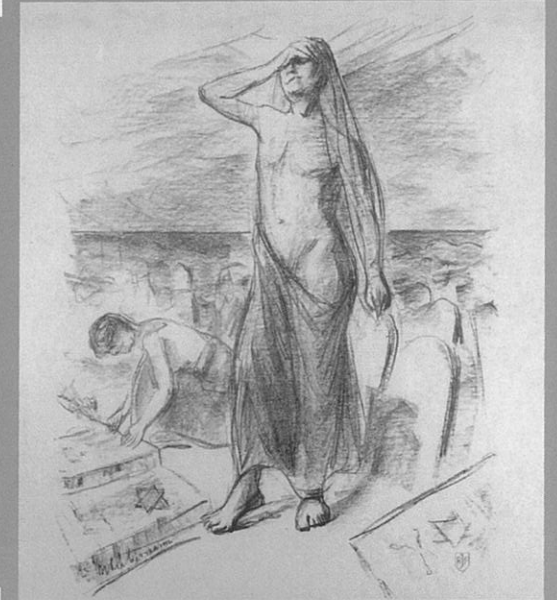
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**Jewish Soldiers in the
Collective Memory of
Central Europe**

**Edited by Gerald Lamprecht
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Jewish Soldiers in the Collective Memory of Central Europe

**The Remembrance of World War I
from a Jewish Perspective**

**Edited by
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Gábor Schweitzer

Hungarian Neolog (Progressive) Rabbis During the “Great War” (1914–1918)

Introduction

The outbreak of war in the summer of 1914 offered an opportunity for the Hungarian Jewry to express their unwavering loyalty to the old Emperor Franz Joseph and their affection for the homeland. Loyalty and patriotism were fully shared values among the different Jewish communities, which had sought different Judaic paths decades earlier, irrespective of whether those communities identified themselves as neolog (progressive), orthodox, or the status quo.

“We full-heartedly connected with our nation. We are flesh of its flesh, so united that speaking of it separately now would be insulting and offensive.” This statement appeared in an editorial of *Egyenlőség* (Equality), the leading political weekly of Progressive Jewry at the time of the outbreak of war¹. The enthusiasm for war and war rhetoric tempted the organs and representatives of the Progressive Jewry. Quite possibly, very few of these might have guessed at the time that the armed conflict would escalate into a prolonged world war, taking huge tolls in terms of human lives worldwide.

In this paper, I would like to demonstrate how Hungarian Progressive rabbis reflected on WWI individually and collectively. Many of these rabbis served as military chaplains in the battlefields between 1914 and 1918, while the others pondered upon war and peace in the hinterland. My intention is to highlight such sources as sermons and other rabbinical articles, reflections and essays which dealt with the delicate issues of war and peace. In 1907, rabbis established an association in Hungary, which was called the National Rabbinical Association (*Országos Rabbi Egyesület*). Major endeavors of the National Rabbinical Association included: 1) fostering religious life; 2) upgrading Jewish religious, educational and philanthropic institutions; 3) asserting the intellectual and moral interests of the member rabbis; and 4) strengthening the authority of the rabbis within the congregation.

Rabbis who joined the Association came typically from progressive/neolog congregations, and rabbis who maintained the status quo formed a minority.

¹ *Egyenlőség*, August 2, 1914, 1.

The initiators and founders of the Association hoped for a while that Orthodox rabbis would also join their ranks due to the objectives of the Association, which addressed the interests of the entire Jewry. This allowing the rabbis to at least bridge the structural divisions that had formed over the last three decades of the 19th century. However, it soon became apparent that Orthodox rabbis would not be engaged in the Association. The Association had an outstanding periodical, called *Magyar Izrael* (Hungarian Israel), which also raised different rabbinical questions in relation to wartime.

The dilemmas of war and peace

The firm conviction that WWI was legitimate and justified was echoed in the public statements made by many, including Progressive rabbis. There was a need, however, to create a harmony between taking a stance in support of the war, and the commitment to peace, and this need played a key role in traditional Jewish thought. This endeavor was voiced in an editorial of *Magyar Izrael* published in the fall of 1914. Although the author of the article expressed the idealistic concepts that were communicated through the prophets' pro-peace arguments, he still argued in favor of the need to make war sacrifices in the current situation. This commitment was strengthened by his belief in a defensive war, as Hungary hid the truth about the enemies who were attacking the country under the circumstances. "We will come out gloriously triumphant, because violence will not trample the truth, tyranny will not tread down freedom, and barbarism will not overcome culture."² The defensive and, hence, just war, is a recurring motif in the sermons. In one of his sermons, Rabbi Mátyás Rubinstein (1867–1944) argued that "our troops fight for the law, the truth and to restore the integrity of the violated moral order."³ One can find similar concepts in a sermon given by Rabbi Béla Krishaber (1869–1950), delivered on the occasion of Rosh HaShana in the fall of 1914. He also argued in favor of the legality of the war, and added that God was well aware that the truth is on their side (i.e., the Lord endorsed the Central Powers). "This war is about the struggle of morality, education and the love of freedom against evil, savagery and tyranny."⁴ Arnold Kiss (1869–1940), Chief Rabbi of Buda, said that Franz Joseph "was forced by feelings of hostility to

2 Hábortuban. *Magyar Izrael*, 1914. September 1. p. 125.

3 Rubinstein Mátyás, "A győzelemért," in *Háborús imák, beszédek* (Szekszárd: Molnár-féle Nyomdai Műintézet Rt., 1915), 11.

4 Krishaber Béla, "Újév napján. Ros-Hasono. 1914. szeptember 21," in *Világháború. Hitszónoklatok*. (Erzsébetfalva: Erzsébetfalvai Izraelita Hitközség Elöljárósága, 1915) 14.

revert to war defense" in one of his Shabbat prayers, although Franz Joseph was widely considered to be the prince of peace. The Chief Rabbi was convinced that, due to this moral charge, the Lord Almighty would help the truth to triumph – and following the victory of the Empire – bring about peace.⁵

In war sermons, one can occasionally detect evidence of the demonization of the enemy. In the sermons of the world famous Chief Rabbi of Szeged, Immanuel Löw (1854–1944), one can find references to heartless Russians, Serbian assassins, hate-fueled Frenchmen, conniving Englishmen, perfidious Italians and megalomaniac Americans.⁶

The rabbinical literature of the war period dealt extensively with the biblical interpretation of war and peace. In a paper written on the war concept of the Bible, the author, Rabbi Jakab Steinherz (1856–1921), came to the conclusion that a Jewish soldier should never indulge in cruelty or compromise his morals on the battlefields, although the Bible hinted positively at the ideals of Jewish military virtue.⁷

Some of the professors at the Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest were engaged in studying the historical and ethical connotations of war and peace during the period of the Great War. In a paper entitled "The World War from a Jewish Perspective," published in a scientific review called *Magyar Zsidó Szemle* (Hungarian Jewish Review), Lajos Blau (1861–1936) pointed out that Jews did not engage in wars of conquest but coped bravely with wars of defense during the period of the ancient Jewish statehood, except during the age of King David. He also pointed out that, although peace is the ideal of the Jews, it would be a mistake to conclude that Jews lack combat skills and capabilities.⁸ In another piece of writing, published in a Zionist periodical called *Múlt és Jövő* (Past and Future), Professor Blau evoked the image of Jewish soldiers who fought in the armies of ancient empires. These fighters were career soldiers, like the ancient Greeks, with one exception: They differed in their sense of loyalty, as Jewish soldiers did not go over to other armies in the hope of getting more money. History, however, proved that Jews were neither cowardly nor weak.⁹ The past provided guidance for the present.

Professor Mihály Guttmann (1872–1942) wrote an extensive paper in which he reviewed the wars of ancient Israel on the basis of the Bible and Talmudic literature. Israeli soldiers – despite its historic task being in stark contrast with the

5 Arnold Kiss, "Péntek esti könyörgés," *Egyenlőség*, August 16, 1914, 10.

6 Löw Immanuel, "A nyolcadik hadikölcsön," *Egyenlőség*, July 6, 1918, 8–9.

7 Steinherz Jakab, "A háború a bibliában II," *Magyar Izrael*, March 28, 1915, 43–47.

8 Blau Lajos, "A világháború a zsidóság megvilágításába," *Magyar Zsidó Szemle*, 1916, 81.

9 Blau Lajos, "Zsidó katonák az ókori birodalmak hadseregeiben," *Múlt és Jövő*, January, 1917, 34.

notion of the war – often found themselves in situations in which they had to draw their swords and interfere in world events with intrepid actions. The people rarely looked for wars, although their history was rich in warfare, because as peace-loving as the people of Israel were, they could not remain unsympathetic observers of bellicose antiquity.¹⁰

The war period had a seminal influence on the Midrashic literature and the interpretation of biblical texts. Chief Rabbi Bertalan Edelstein (1876–1934) of Budapest drew parallels between the past and present in his exegetical writings entitled “War midrashim.” In his interpretation, which was offered in favor of the legitimacy of a defensive war, he argued that the Lord Almighty inscribes his name on the weapons of those who fight for truth and freedom and against oppression. He stated that people, however, who fight for unjust reasons and transgress the law, do call upon God in vain and engrave the name of the Almighty on their weapons. He continued, saying that the Lord would wipe it off and crush their swords and avenge blasphemers.¹¹ According to this Midrash, the war waged by the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its allies was considered a just and defensive war, with the blessing of God. In the context of peace, Rabbi Edelstein quoted a well-known saying by Shimon ben Chalafta, a scholar from the Talmudic age. He said: “The Almighty does not have any other vessel to keep a blessing, but Peace!”¹²

The longer the war dragged on, the stronger the desire for peace became. This desire was expressed with increasing frequency in wartime sermons and writings. Chief Rabbi in Budapest, Illés Adler (1868–1924), published a text to this effect in the summer of 1916 on the occasion of the Jewish festival of Shavuot, which marks the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people. The chief rabbi wrote that the greatest gift of mankind, world peace, and its most precious treasure, the love of humanity, were presented by God on Shavuot. According to Chief Rabbi Adler, the most important task that needed to be accomplished during his time on earth was to regain the lost peace and love of humanity. He also stressed that the Hungarian nation should also regain and strengthen the sense of animated love for fellow human beings, which was indispensable for the progress of the nation, and sustain liberalism.¹³

Also in the summer of 1916, the noted literary historian, Chief Rabbi Ármin Kecskeméti (1874–1944) of Makó wrote about the dilemmas of peace and war and prayed for the coming of eternal peace to create a brotherhood of peoples.

10 Guttman Mihály, “Izrael háborúi,” in *Évkönyv*, (Budapest: Izraelita Magyar Irodalmi Társulat, 1915), 313.

11 Edelstein Bertalan, “Háborús midrások,” *Egyenlőség*, March 5, 1916, 17.

12 Edelstein Bertalan, “Háborús midrások,” *Egyenlőség*, December 19, 1915, 17.

13 Adler Illés, “Az angyalok koszorúi,” *Egyenlőség*, June 7, 1916, 16–17.

The prophets of the Bible also contemplated eternal peace, an age in which “they shall beat their swords into plowshares; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore,” quoting prophet Michah’s prophecy on universal peace.¹⁴

Ármin Frisch (1866–1948), a teacher of Jewish religion in Budapest, argued at length in his text entitled “*The Concept of Peace in Jewish Weltanschauung*” that peace has been a central theme since ancient times in Jewish world view. In Judaism, the idea of peace is not just a belief; it is also a truth. He mentioned that, even if the Bible refers to war sometimes, it is instead to control its course and, to the extent that this is possible, to make it more humane.¹⁵

The National Rabbinical Association and the Great War

The National Rabbinical Association, with approximately 150 members, had many war-time challenges to face. Some of its members served as military chaplains or auxiliary chaplains in the K. & K. Army or in the Royal Hungarian Army during the war. (By the end of the war, altogether 95 rabbis served as military chaplains or auxiliary chaplains in the joint forces and in the Hungarian army!) They shared their war experiences with the public through the contemporary press.

The National Rabbinical Association demanded on several occasions that the military should employ a sufficient number of qualified rabbis, in connection with the operation of the Jewish military chaplain corps.¹⁶ The accounts of military chaplains revealed that Jewish soldiers in the front lines wanted to participate in more regular religious services. They also wanted these services in order

14 Kecskeméti Ármin, “Örök harc – örök béke,” *Múlt és Jövő*, July, 1916, 262–265.

15 Frisch Ármin, “A békeeszmé a zsidó világszemléletben,” in *A Magyar Zsidó Hadi Archívum almanachja 1914–1916*, eds. Hevesi Simon, Polnay Jenő and Patai József. (Budapest: Magyar Zsidó Hadi Archívum – Országos Magyar Izraelita Közművelődési Egyesület, 1916), 122–124.

16 In times of peace, Israelite soldiers, due to their small population, had no institutionalized chaplaincy services, they were under the spiritual care of the rabbi responsible for the area. Prior to the Great War, new Jewish chaplaincies were organized, employing rabbis who were in draft age. During the Great War, the military chaplaincy at the army command consisted of a Catholic High Priest, a Protestant Chaplain and a Rabbi. Two chaplains served at the military divisions, and only 1 at lower rank military troops. Stencinger Norbert *Honvéd tábori lelkeszék szolgálata az I. világháború frontvonalában*. See: Stencinger Norbert: *A Magyar Királyi Honvédség tábori lelkesz szolgálata 1868–1918 kiemelten az I. világháború időszakában folytatott tevékenységére*. PhD-Dissertation. Budapest, Zrínyi Miklós Nemzetvédelmi Egyetem, 2011. 29., 50. (download 8.1.2019, <http://ludita.uni-nke.hu/repozitorium/bitstream/handle/11410/10310/Stencinger%20Norbert%20%3%a9rtekez%3%a9s?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>).

to be able to recite the traditional Jewish prayer, the Kaddish, for their dead fellow soldiers or to memorialize their deceased relatives. These accounts of the military chaplains shed light on the fact that pastoral and spiritual care were offered to injured soldiers. This care included officiation at the funerals of fallen soldiers, regardless of the religious affiliation.

In the course of 1915, the association published 30,000 copies of a Hebrew-Hungarian prayer book to cater to the spiritual demands of the soldiers. The slim prayer book entitled "Shield and Armour. Prayers for Israelite soldiers" contained prayers that were appropriate for war situations, such as a prayer made before battle, a victory prayer, a prayer for a sick fellow soldier, or a prayer for the funeral of a fellow soldier, in addition to the traditional prayers. In this same year, another war prayer booklet was published, although not by the rabbinical association.¹⁷ The tri-lingual Hebrew-German-Hungarian booklet was compiled by Arnold Frankfurter (1881–1942), head chaplain of the Viennese Jewish military chaplaincy, in cooperation with Rabbi Ernő Deutsch (1886–1950) from Karánsebes, Hungary, who had also served as a military chaplain.

Another, halachic question related to the war concerned how to find potential solutions for the *agunah* problem ("the chained wife") and, namely, solutions for the treatment of women whose husbands were missing (probably dead) in action or in a prison camp. The major issue was to define the halachic terms under which a missing person could be pronounced dead, subject to an official confirmation or a credible witness testimony. The wife of the soldier would subsequently be declared a widow under Jewish law and would be permitted to remarry. The problem of the *agunah* had been a long-standing problem, dating back to the Talmudic age, but several such cases emerged over the course of the war. Although individual members of the National Rabbinical Association published their opinion on the *agunah*, the Association did not take a stand on it in any official form. The rabbinical opinions tended towards the more humane interpretations, which allowed the wife of a missing husband who presumably died during the war to remarry.¹⁸

The National Rabbinical Association encouraged rabbis in the hinterland to devote special attention to the war, as rabbis were compassionate soldiers of the holy war. An editorial of *Magyar Izrael* in 1915 dealt extensively with this subject.¹⁹ The author of the editorial called on his fellow rabbis to deal thematically with the war in their sermons. He suggested that they should encourage, animate

17 Arnold Schlesinger, *Andachtsbüchlein für jüdische Krieger im Felde – Hadbavonult izraelita katonák imakönyve 1915*. (Wien: Jos. Schlesinger, 1915).

18 "Izrael elhagyott leányai," *Egyenlőség*, July 8, 1916, 11.

19 "Papi munkánk a háborúban," *Magyar Izrael*, March 28, 1915.

and give confidence to the worshippers. Simultaneously, rabbis were required to intensify their pastoral care activities. A priority was given to providing support for encouraging the emotionally distressed and making visits to hospitals. In later years, the Association provided guidance on how to restore religious life after the restoration of peace by offering many rabbinical activities, with a view toward rebuilding what had been destroyed in the war.

Kashrut, Shabbat and Rosh HaShana on the front lines – as seen by military chaplains

Although the observance of the Jewish religious dietary laws (i.e., Kashrut) on the front lines was obviously difficult, the National Rabbinical Association and individual Jewish congregations urged persistently and successfully that enough unleavened bread or matzah should be available for the eight days of the holiday for those Jewish soldiers who demanded it, at least on the occasion of Pessach.

Observance of Kashrut required discipline from the military chaplains. Rabbi Lipót Fischer, who served in the joint forces in the theater of war in Galicia, wrote that he lived on bread and water for weeks to comply with the dietary rules, as even eggs and butter were in short supply. The army doctor then decided to commandeer a *shochet* (a person certified under Jewish law to slaughter cattle and poultry) and a Jewish cook from a nearby village to cater to the wishes of the military chaplain, but they provided the entire unit with delicious fare to comply with the Jewish dietary laws.²⁰ In another war report, Lipót Fischer reported that he provided spiritual solace, regardless of the religious affiliation of the wounded, which was probably not an isolated phenomenon.²¹

In 1917, several Jewish congregations requested that Jewish soldiers receive kosher food. The Ministry of Defense permitted that units with more than one hundred Jewish soldiers could have kosher food prepared under the supervision of the military chaplains. The dishes required for the transportation of kosher food had to be provided by the Jewish congregations.

Like the observance of Kashrut, the observance of the Shabbat – the day of rest – was equally difficult. Rabbi Ödön Kálmán (1886–1951) of Jászberény, Hungary, who served as military chaplain in the Galician theater of war, reported that some of the rabbis in Galicia suspended the ancient provision on the

20 Fischer Lipót, "Egy magyar tábortábori rabbi jegyzeteiből," *Egyenlőség*, July 25, 1915, 17.

21 Fischer Lipót, "Egy magyar tábortábori rabbi jegyzeteiből," *Egyenlőség*, July 25, 1915, 9, 17.

observance of Shabbat in the interest of the motherland.²² When he realized that a bakery was open in a shtetl, he was informed that “*unser Rebbe hat den Sabesz bótl gemacht*” (the rabbi had suspended the Shabbat). Later, the Rebbe himself informed Rabbi Kálmán that the special case of *pikuach nefesh* [saving a life] applies in war situations, which breaks the Shabbat, as the defenders of the homeland need to be provided with food and drink. We should not jump to general conclusions on the basis of this individual case, but it is an indication that the war even disrupted the traditional value system in the shtetl.

The observance of the day of rest and the ban on travel also applied to the Jewish High Holidays. On the first day of Rosh HaShana in 1914, Rabbi Gábor Schwarcz (1872–1942), a military chaplain in the Serbian theater of war, confessed that he used an automobile in Mitrovica in order to get to the synagogue, which was strictly forbidden in times of peace. “*God should forgive me this sin, but I wanted to get to the synagogue...*”²³ This case is also a good example that demonstrates how ancient laws and traditions were rewritten under extraordinary circumstances as a last resort.

World War and Antisemitism

In spite of the Jewish war effort, antisemitic symptoms appeared early on. A number of baseless accusations were hurled at the Hungarian Jewry: the number of Jewish soldiers who fell on the lines was proportionately too low, too many Jews received unjustified exemption from service and there were too many military millionaires among the Jews. Such views were spread not only among members of antisemitic political and social circles. Professor of Law Péter Ágoston (1874–1925) of Nagyvárád, was a social democrat with ties to the freemason secret society. In his unpublished diary, he made the following entry on July 7, 1915: “... *it is generally seen that the Jews try in every way possible to avoid military service in the front lines. Non-Jews try to do the same, however, they have fewer tools to succeed.*” This also holds true for profiteering, he continues. According to the accusations, the Jews engaged in profiteering, but non-Jews did the same.²⁴

The diary entries of Professor Ágoston are quite remarkable, not only because he recorded the critical voices echoed in the public discourse, but also because he,

22 Kálmán Ödön, “A felfüggesztett szombat. Egy tábori rabbi feljegyzéseiből,” *Egyenlőség*, November 22, 1914, 3.

23 Schwarcz Gábor, “Levelek a déli harcterről,” *Magyar Zsidó Szemle*, 1915, 70.

24 Ágoston Péter naplója. 1915. január 22. – 1915. December 20. Politikatörténeti Intézet Levéltára, 689 f. 4. ö. e.

as a social democrat and freemason, described himself as the friend of the Jewry. These accusations indicated that the Jews engaged in profiteering, but non-Jews did the same.²⁵

Naturally, Jewish community leaders and members of the Jewish press had to respond to the allegations. The progressive *Egyenlőség* weekly set up a special column dedicated to the heroism of Jewish soldiers and the commitment of the civilian population. The creation of the Hungarian Jewish War Archives (*Magyar Zsidó Hadi Archivum*) served a double purpose: In addition to documenting the war efforts of the Hungarian Jewry, it had to refute anti-Jewish allegations.

Even in their festive texts published on the occasion of Jewish holidays, rabbis had to react to these accusations made against the Jewish population. In the second year of the Great War, Chief Rabbi Illés Adler refuted the false allegations in his piece of writing, which celebrated the Passover (*Pessach*). According to these common allegations, Jews were cowardly and stayed away from the war. Among the many accusations directed against them, only one was omitted: namely, that they had gone over to the enemy’s side. Elderly Jews who stayed in their homes were also not spared: They were accused of profiteering and usury. The Chief Rabbi pleaded with those spreading the accusations to listen to the prayers in the synagogues resounding for the homeland, the king and the army, and visit the ever growing number of graves of the Jewish war heroes. He stated that statistics would ultimately do them justice.²⁶

It was quite rare for rabbis to enter the firing line. One of these rare occasions occurred in the case of military chaplain Adolf Kelemen (1861–1917), Rabbi of Fogaras, whose heroic death was contested in the press. Rabbi Kelemen volunteered for front service at the outbreak of the war – he had served as military chaplain before. The three year-long service on the front lines had harmful effects on the health of this middle-aged man, and he died in the Italian theater after contracting pneumonia in 1917. He was buried with full military honors. Lajos Szabolcsi, editor of *Egyenlőség*, reminisced in his memoirs on how this was criticized in the “*right-wing press*,” in which journalists argued that the Chief Rabbi had died due to heart failure rather than by cannon balls.²⁷

25 Ágoston Péter naplója. 1915. január 22. – 1915. december 20. Politikatörténeti Intézet Levéltára, 689 f. 4. ö. e.

26 Adler Illés, “Nagy idők, nagy kérdések,” *Egyenlőség*, április 16, 1916, 17.

27 Szabolcsi Lajos, *Két emberöltő. Az Egyenlőség évtizedei (1881–1931)* (Budapest: MTA Judaisztikai Kutatócsoport, 1993), 199.

Conclusion

Not long before the end of the war, a sharp remark was made by members of the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament, which was also aimed at rabbis. During the debate that took place over the suffrage bill in July 31, 1918, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Székesfehérvár, Ottokár Prohászka, an outstanding personality of political Catholicism and even political antisemitism in Hungary²⁸, launched an attack against the Social Democrats, which was an extra-parliamentary party at the time. The bishop alleged that Hungarian Social Democracy abused religion, as they constantly “hurt the Christian religion.” He claimed that, while they sent the priest to the bedside of dying Christians, nobody had ever heard of a rabbi being sent to the bedside of a dying Jew.²⁹ Rabbi Illés Adler refuted the insulting remarks in a lengthy article. The article basically summarized the contributions that the rabbis had made during the Great War on the front lines and the hinterland: in words, in their texts and with their deeds. Rabbi Adler stated that the rabbis always met their calling vis-à-vis the king, the homeland, the worshippers and their fellow human beings. He described how they viewed the devastations of war, the people in frenzy and weeping mothers with bleeding hearts and torn souls. He concluded his statement, writing that they wept with the grieving while giving encouragement and inspiration to all, prayed for victory and the glory of weapons “and still remained the apostle of peace following the spirit of the Bible.”³⁰

28 See: Bettina Reichmann, *Bischof Ottokár Prohászka (1858–1927) – Krieg, christliche Kultur und Antisemitismus in Ungarn*. (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2015).

29 *Az 1910. évi június hó 21-ére összehívott Országgyűlés Főrendiházának naplója. V. kötet* (Budapest: Athenaeum Irodalmi és Nyomdai Rt., 1919), 215.

30 Adler Illés, “Mi, a Magenduft Jakabok,” *Egyenlőség*, September 5, 1918, 21–22.

Eszter Balázs

The Image of the Jewish Soldier-Intellectual in *Múlt és Jövő*, the Hungarian Review Promoting Jewish Cultural Renaissance (1914–1918)¹

Jewish participation in WWI was of great importance in every belligerent country: due to the general conscription process followed in most of these countries² and enthusiastic volunteering that took place during the early period, many young Jews went to the front and, at the same time, Jewish groups and individuals thought that their war effort – whether on the battlefield or on the home front – would strengthen or even extend their citizen’s rights.³ Approximately 1.5 million Jews were under arms in Europe; in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, they numbered 320,000, and every eighth of these died on the battlefield.⁴

In this paper, I aim to show the representations of the Hungarian Jewish soldier-intellectuals through the Hungarian Jewish cultural review *Múlt és Jövő* [Past and Future], which was launched in 1911 with the purpose of representing all aspects of Jewish culture. The editors of the review strove to create a strong sense of modern and secularized Jewish consciousness through the literature

1 This paper was supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. I’m also very grateful to Miklós Konrád for his fruitful advice as well as András Zima for his help. The term Soldier-Intellectual is an extension of the expression Soldier-Poet and refers to writers and intellectuals turning into a soldier during WWI. A voir Nicolas Beaupré, « Écrivain combattant », *Témoigner. Entre histoire et mémoire* [En ligne], 118 | 2014, mis en ligne le 01 octobre 2015, consulté le 05 octobre 2016. URL: <http://temoigner.revues.org/1261> (accessed December 11, 2018); DOI: 10.4000/temoigner.1261.

2 In the lives of many Jews (including Hungarian Jews), WWI was the same as the *levée en masse* was to the French in 1793 (and which, therefore, served as a model for Europeans): the population of potential soldiers was supposed to be conscripted or become volunteers, and they became citizen-soldiers, a very important step forward to reinforce their citizens’ rights.

3 See, for example, Christard Hoffmann, “Between integration and rejection: the Jewish community in Germany, 1914–1918,” in *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War*, ed. John Horne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 89.

4 Péter Róbert, *Egyenlő jog a hősi halálra. Magyar zsidók az első világháborúban* [Equal Right to Death: Hungarian Jews in WWI] (Budapest: MTA-OR-ZSE, 2010). Before WWI the rate of Jews in the k. und k. army used to be 1,3% for their proportion which is much less than in the case of the majority population (6%). The proportion of the professional officers was very low among them, however the representation of Jews as reservist officers was quite high. (Róbert, *Egyenlő jog a hősi halálra*, 20–21.).