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Review of *The Last Treaty: Lausanne and the End of the First World War in the Middle East* by Michelle Tusan

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extreme punishments. One of the major arguments of the book is that the British state failed to meet the needs of veterans, thus bearing some of the responsibility for the 'horrible peace', but Wilson does call attention to the benefits and allowances available to families of many servicemen, the pensions that were provided for many (if not all) veterans, and the general attitude in Britain that veterans merited special assistance. The consequences of these developments were not limited to the military. In Britain, as in other countries, improved benefits for veterans caused by wars have been harbingers of measures to assist larger populations. As Wilson puts it, pension schemes developed during the Napoleonic Wars 'suggested that the state had the capacity and perhaps even the responsibility to fund welfare as well as warfare' (p. 274).

A major strength of this book is that it places the experiences of sailors and soldiers in the social and political history of the period. I must admit that I was a little frustrated that it was not until page 147 that he turns his attention directly to these experiences. Still, this is an outstanding book that offers much to a wide audience.

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Michelle Tusan, *The Last Treaty: Lausanne and the End of the First World War in the Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. Notes, Index, 323 pp. 20 figures, 3 maps, ISBN: 978-1009371063 (hardback). Price £30.00.

The past 10 years have seen an abundance of public attention, commemoration, and discussion of the First World War, marking centennial dates and anniversaries of events throughout the conflict. 2023 brought perhaps the final centenary, with the signing of the concluding treaty that settled the war with the former Ottoman Empire. Michelle Tusan's *The Last Treaty* certainly argues that case, challenging narratives that see the First World War as having concluded in 1918, and of the Middle Eastern Front being merely an appendage to a more significant European War. Its release comes alongside other monographs and scholarly works that demonstrate a growing appreciation given to the Treaty of Lausanne as an overlooked event in both the history of the First World War and the history of the Middle East, as well as work by organisations such as the Lausanne Project (of which the author of this book is a member). A few notable examples would be: Johnathan Conlin and Ozin Ozavci (eds.),

They All Made Peace – What is Peace? The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne and the New Imperial Order (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2023), Gürol Baba and Jay Winter, 'The Wilsonian Moment at Lausanne, 1922-1923', *Journal of Modern European History*, 20, 4, (2022), pp. 536-553 and Ilia Xypolia, 'Imperial Bending of Rules: The British Empire, the Treaty of Lausanne, and Cypriot Immigration to Turkey', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 32, 4, (2021), pp. 674-691.

The work makes several main arguments. Firstly, it refocuses and reorients the events in the Middle East as an integral part of the First World War, challenging our understanding of both the traditional narrative of the War and periodisation of the 'interwar years'. Rather than seeing the Middle Eastern fronts as a peripheral sideshow, Tusan situates them within nineteenth century British involvement in the Ottoman Empire as well as the growing role small nations and minority populations played in British international and imperial policy. This is a valid argument in its own right – ample (and in many cases justified) historical attention is given to the interwar Mandates of the Middle East, but comparatively little is given to the First World War, especially of the humanitarian crisis within the Ottoman Empire. This reassertion of the independence of the Middle Eastern theatre of the First World War is the backbone of the remaining parts of the book.

Alongside this, *The Last Treaty* makes a compelling argument that it is impossible to separate the birth of the humanitarian system from the military exigencies of the First World War. Utilising a thematic structure, the piece breaks down the period in a way that still conveys narrative and continuity, but without becoming bound by a linear chronology. Tusan's exploration of the network of refugee centres and their relationship to Ottoman death camps of the Armenian Genocide connects this with Allied desire to control civilian population movement in a theatre of operations. Utilising extensive archival research, she examines how the camps existed in an unusual limbo between Allied civilian and military administrations and how this affected both the experiences of refugees and the long term plans for displaced civilian populations. Bridging the gap between military operations and the movement of civilians in wartime goes hand in hand with the book's stated goal of examining the murky ends and beginnings of the war and interwar period. The reductive narrative assuming that the war ended neatly upon the signing of treaties is convincingly dismissed simultaneously with the idea that civilian and military experiences of the First World War were independent of one and other. By doing this, *The Last Treaty* makes the case that the process of signing a final peace treaty, and the Turkish War of Independence, should be seen as part of the First World War. In many fields of historical study historians make effort to distend and re-arrange the time frame of conflicts and events to suit the idea of a supposedly new or innovative thesis, often in ways that are not convincing. In this case however, Tusan makes a strong argument for considering the events in Turkey (both military and humanitarian) as a key part of

the First World War, once we divorce ourselves from Eurocentric narratives that revolve around German defeat and the subsequent rise of Nazism. Drawing on ideas developed in the field of global histories, *The Last Treaty* places Lausanne at the centre of a re-imagined idea of nationalism, empire and ethnicity, as well as the form of emergent post-war internationalism. The Ottoman Empire and Turkish Nationalist movement during this period are skilfully repositioned in the analysis in such a way that challenges older, Eurocentric perspectives that treated them as an appendage of the German Empire.

This book is an excellent choice for any person, academic or not, interested in any aspect of the end of the First World War in the Middle East. I would also make the case that it is an strong starting point for the study of modern humanitarian institutions and how we in the twenty first century make assumptions about refugee crises and their solutions. Particularly interesting is the exploration of film and its role in the early humanitarian movement. The current situation in Gaza and the mass displacement of Palestinians creates deeply unsettling comparisons to the displacement of Armenians in the aftermath of the First World War. It is broken down thematically in a way that creates an engaging narrative but eschews the drawbacks of an exact chronology, allowing aspects of the themes to dictate the flow of writing. It is particularly of relevance to those studying the political formation of the modern Middle East, providing excellent insight into what Tusan describes as 'the blurry edges' of the First World War and the interwar period.

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Doris L Bergen, *Between God and Hitler: Military Chaplains in Nazi Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. xix + 322 pp. 2 maps. ISBN 978-1108487702 (hardback). Price £30.00.

The title above reflects the post-1945 view that German military chaplains had of themselves: men trying to carry out a difficult duty, caught between remaining true to their Christian faith on one hand and the Nazi regime on the other, thereby casting themselves in as positive a light as possible. In in this well-researched and extremely readable book, Doris L Bergen deconstructs this self-created myth and lays out a