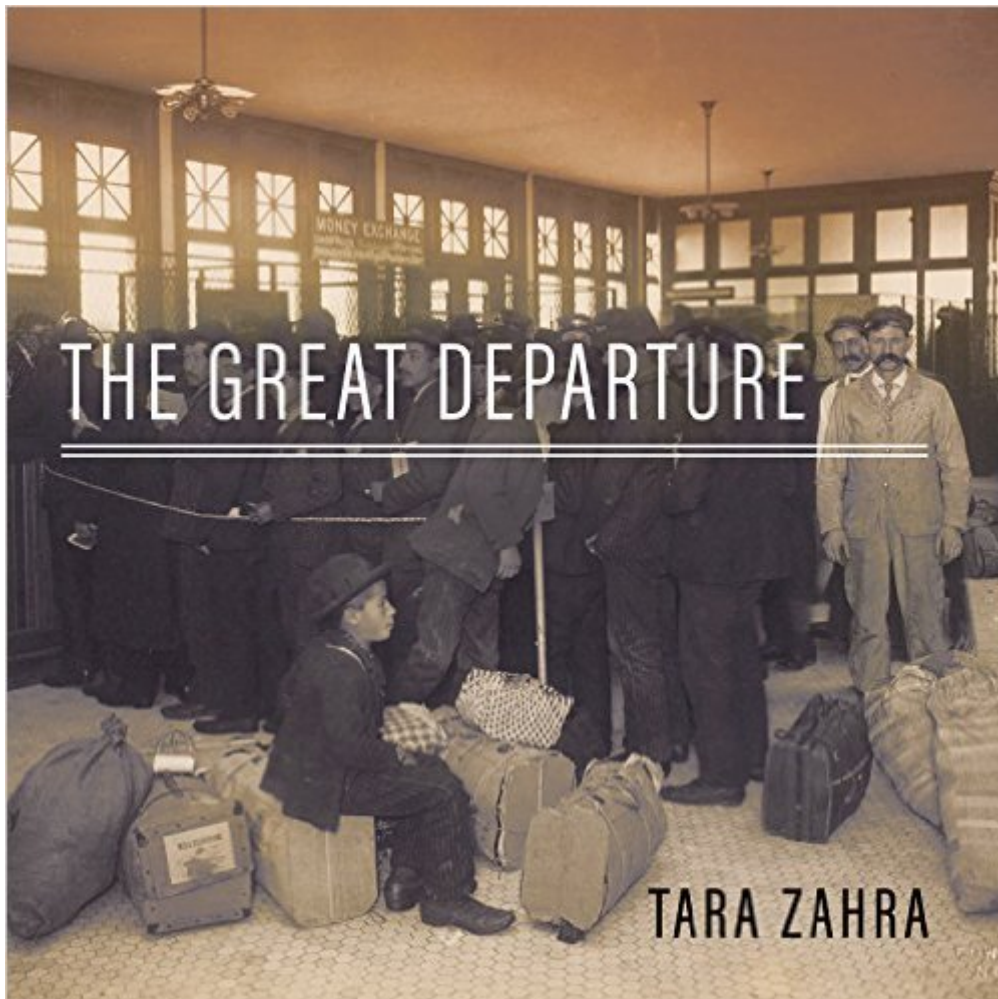


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The Great Departure: Mass Migration From Eastern Europe And The Making Of The Free World



Synopsis

In this riveting book, Tara Zahra takes the story of immigration that Americans know so well and weaves it into a larger story of emigration that we have long neglected. Full of hope and promise, of desperation and tragedy, it is perhaps the most important story of the twentieth century. With all the drama of a novel and all the nuance of history writing at its best, *The Great Departure* is a must-read. (Alison Johnson, Harvard University) In this spare, deeply researched, and unfailingly analytical book, Tara Zahra frees the great migration of Eastern Europeans to the West from romantic myth and dissects all its human and moral complexities. (Robert D. Kaplan, of *In Europe's Shadow: A Journey Through Two Cold Wars in Romania and Beyond*) With a combination of deft historical analysis, sparkling prose, and careful attention to individual stories, both poignant and instructive, Tara Zahra systematically deconstructs the myths surrounding emigration, escape, and deportation from Eastern Europe since the late nineteenth century. *The Great Departure* is brimming with important and suggestive lessons from the past for thinking about the worldwide dynamics of emigrants and refugees in our own day. (Norman M. Naimark, Stanford University) Meticulously researched, *The Great Departure* shows mass emigration from all sides, including individual stories of poverty and maltreatment--but also positive changes emigration brought to women. This book is equally relevant for Americans, showing why and how many of their ancestors left their countries, and for Europeans, confronted with an unprecedented wave of immigrants today. (Slavenka Drakulic, author of *A Guided Tour through the Museum of Communism*)

About the Author Tara Zahra is a professor of Eastern European history at the University of Chicago and the author of two award-winning books, *Kidnapped Souls* and *The Lost Children*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When Americans think about migration from eastern Europe, I think we concentrate on the immigration of people from there to here. Millions of people left eastern European lands and moved to the United States in waves basically beginning in the 1840's. We know what they were looking for when they came here, but what were they leaving behind in the places they emigrated from? And what were those places like after great swathes of people left? In her new book, "The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World", University of Chicago professor Tara Zahra has produced an elegant piece of historical writing explaining what the effects were on the places and the people "left behind". Please remember that Tara Zahra is only writing about the emigrants from eastern European countries. Those from the UK, Scandinavia, France, etc, are not referred to here in her book. Their experiences - both in the places they were leaving and the places they were going - were largely different from those from the eastern European countries and Russia. In the 1800's and up to the early 1900's, Christian emigrants were looking for economic prosperity in the United States; the same reason for Jewish emigrants, who were also fleeing anti-Semitic pogroms. What they found here was not always the "Golden Medina"; rather it was a land where the immigrant had to work hard to get ahead. In the countries they had left, often villages and city areas were left empty by those who had left seeking a better life. After the First World War, the reasons to leave became more political as the world-wide Depression and the repressive regimes gave rise to wide anti-Semitism.

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