
Tal Tovy

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree

Part of the Religion Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol24/iss6/6
Here, many notable intellectual Jewish figures of the time are spoken of in detail. This is the real highlight of the book, by quoting the sources and presenting his interpretation in the context, many faces and names become conceivable and it fosters the enjoyment of the book.

All in all, Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century is not for the casual reader. Students of Jewish studies, eastern European history and even the Holocaust will find this understandable and useful; to others the information provided may just be too obscure. However, anyone of Jewish or even Eastern European background can definitely find valuable information in Gershon’s book. It is a fitting work done to correct what the author believed to be misconceptions about these once populous, vibrant communities. With Jews in Poland-Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century, Gershon, David Hundert has given a meaningful contribution to the vast history of what was once the epicenter of Jewish life.

Stephen J. Chernoski, M.A.


In this book Shrader examines the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina between the Muslims and the Croats; which was one of the Yugoslavian wars that took place in the first half of the 1990s. Though the conflict between the various former Yugoslavian states has been analyzed, the primary focus has been the matter of war crimes and the world's attitude toward the war. Historians have neglected such matters as the struggle over strategic objectives in Central Bosnia, or the urgent need to care for the many refugees that had fled the fighting in Serbia and in Bosnia. Thus Shrader's book, because it focuses on the military history of one of the central conflicts in the region, provides a different angle of vision on the Bosnian conflict.

Shrader's primary objective is to shed new light on the Bosnian civil war. He proposes to examine the military organization, the strategy, the operative abilities, and the logistical capabilities of both armies. He proposes further to explore the military operations conducted by both sides. By studying these aspects, Shrader wishes to fashion a balanced understanding of the events; one unhampered by myths that have been generated by popularized journalistic writing. To achieve this goal, the author utilizes the official documentation that was presented to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in Hague. The author wishes to present the readers with the facts so that they may reach their own conclusions, unprejudiced.

In addition to the delineation of the military operations, Shrader examines the process by which the two armies were constructed following the disintegration of Yugoslavia. The models he uses can help us understand the disintegration process of a multinational state with a multi-ethnic population. Shrader argues that the Muslims were not 'underdogs,' nor were they innocent victims. The media coverage of the
conflict, he argues, was biased; evident, for instance, from the fact that television interviews were held primarily with Bosnian Muslims. Those who reported the conflict chose to follow rumor, propaganda, and speculation. One of the reasons for this bias, Shrader explains, is the historic Croatian alliance with Nazi Germany during WWII; another reason is that various western European countries, especially France, Germany and Holland, have large Muslim communities.

In the opening chapter, Shrader reviews the historic, ethnic and geographical context of the civil war. This geographical review is crucial for the later understanding of the military operations. In chapters two through four, the author discusses the development of the armies, the development of the command and control systems, the training and logistical systems, and the shaping of doctrine. In these chapters we learn that, contrary to popular belief, the opposing armies were indeed modern armies, rather than chaotic mob-like organizations. They were able to establish modern command and control systems, as well as logistical systems capable of transporting and maintaining field units. In chapters six through eleven, the author analyzes the military operations that were conducted during the war. His conclusion is that though we have been led to believe otherwise, the Muslims were the aggressors in this conflict, and that they were defeated once the Croatian army joined the fighting.

Civil wars are horrible; the civil war that took place in Central Bosnia between November 1992 and March 1994 was no exception. In the heat of the battle, war crimes were committed by both sides, international rules of engagement were violated, and both sides committed acts of massacre and rape of noncombatants.

The author explores the war from a different aspect as well. He analyzes the Muslim-Croat civil war as a post Cold-War conflict. We have seen a frightening array of separatist wars stemming from ethnic and religious violence. In this regard, the war in central Bosnia is an important test-case for the formation of international policy. The international community is forced to deal with an increase in low-intensity conflicts and to send forces on peacekeeping operations. These developments necessitate the creation of specially trained military or paramilitary forces. Niche Wars, as defined by Alvin and Heidi Toffler, necessitate the use of military units able to operate in hostile, protected, or remote environments while maintaining cultural sensitivity for such varied situations as coups, border conflicts, civil wars, and terrorist attacks.

There is one point about which I disagree with the author. Shrader claims that the Bosnian civil war validates the Clausewitzian maxim stating that “war is merely the continuation of policy by other means” (p. 162), because the war began after the attempts to solve the conflict by political means had proved unsuccessful. However, the bloody conflicts in the former Yugoslavian states, the Muslim-Croat civil war among them, demonstrate that the disintegration of Yugoslavia resulted from clashes between ethnic, religious, and cultural groups. The Muslims had attempted to control a certain territory while

---

oppressing or expelling its Croat minority. At a certain point the Croatian army intervened in favor of the Croat minority. Shouldn't we therefore accept John Keegan's thesis, according to which “war is the continuation of culture by other means”?

The Bosnian civil war also falls under Samuel Huntington's concept of "Fault Line Wars." Huntington's concepts would enable us to broaden the theoretical framework of the research. According to Huntington, fault line conflicts are communal conflicts between states or groups from different civilizations. Various groups may partake in these conflicts, whether from the same or from different geographical areas. In the former, historically strained relations may erupt violently, especially when new states are being formed and the physical borders are being redrawn. The Yugoslavian wars demonstrate the applicability of Huntington's theories to civil wars in the post-Cold War era.

Basic ethnic issues are difficult to resolve through political negotiations, and such agreements, even if they are achieved, do not last long. War is, therefore, a continuation of culture rather than a continuation of policy. Fault Line Wars are usually fought between people from different religions. Those deep rooted differences usually aggravate and intensify the conflict. Huntington believes that the former Yugoslavia was the scene for one of the most complex systems of a Fault Line War. The lines that had been drawn in the world during the war reflect the cultural characteristic of the war. Christian states (Catholic and Protestant alike) intervened in favor of Croatia, Russia and Greece sided with the Serb Orthodox, and various Muslim countries intervened for the Bosnian Muslims (Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Libya).

Shrader's intention was to present the reader with an objective perception of the war. Broadening the theoretical framework of the research could have added further points of reference. Regardless, the current research is, indeed, a major contribution to the study of the complex struggle that took place in the Balkans during the 1990s.

_Tal Tovy, Bar-Ilan University, Israel_

---

IN PREVIOUS ISSUES

Volume XXIII, Number 6 (2003)
Religious Studies in Post-communist Ukraine
by Lyudmila Filipovych & Anatoly Kolodny
Religion in Estonia, Research in English
by Janis Cakars
Mongolia: Religious Freedom Oasis?
by Geraldine Fagan
The Cat-and-Mouse Chase: Moonies in Bulgaria
by Archimandrite Pavel Stefanov
Communism and Religion - Telling the Story for the 21st Century
by Mark Pargeter

Volume XXIV, Number 1 (February 2004)
Public Theology in Central Europe
by Charles C. West
Theology Between Yesterday and Tomorrow
by Milan Oppenski
In the Name of God? The Problem of Religious or Non-religious Preambles to State Constitutions in Post-atheistic Contexts
by Konrad Schmid
The Church and Democracy in Central Europe
by Tamás Kodácsy
BOOK REVIEW:

Volume XXIV, Number 2 (April 2004)
Church in Democratic Transition Between the State and Civil Society
by Vedran Horvat
Schism in the Bulgarian Church and its Repercussions on Religious Developments and the New Law of Confessions
by Janice Broun
Is Religious Freedom Possible?
by Gordana Živković
BOOK REVIEW:
Timothy Byrnes, Catholicism in Postcommunist Europe. Reviewed by Joseph Loya
Anne Marie Augaard and Peter Bouteenff, Beyond the East-West Divide: The World Council of Churches and “the Orthodox Problem”. Reviewed by Paul L. Gavrilyuk.

Volume XXIV, Number 3 (June 2004)
Czech Protestants Between Socialist Czechoslovakia and European Union
by Petr Pokorný
Slovak Lutheran Social Ethics
by Vasil Gluchman
Orthodoxy in a New Europe: Problems and Perspectives
by Bishop Hilarion (Alfeyev)
Overcoming the Totalitarian Past
by Sergey Averintsev
Orthodoxy in America: Diaspora or Church?
by Leonid Kishkovsky
BOOK REVIEW:
Munevera Hadžišehović, A Muslim Woman in Tito’s Yugoslavia. Reviewed by Melissa Bokovoy.

Volume XXIV, Number 4 (August 2004)
Reflections on the Contemporary Religious “Revival”: Religion, Secularization, Globalization
by Nonka Bogomilova
Theologies of Church Government in the Hungarian Lutheran Church During Communism (1945-1990)
by Tibor Fabiny
What does it Mean to be a Missionary Church Today?
by Janos Pasztor
Book Review
“Eastern Orthodoxy through Western Eyes” through Eastern Eyes: An Eastern Reflection on Donald Fairbairn’s Eastern Orthodoxy through Western Eyes - by Walter D. Ray

RELIGION IN EASTERN EUROPE XXIV, 6 (DECEMBER 2004) page 43.