

Igreja and Racin discuss how beliefs in spirits enable victims of Mozambique's first civil war (1976–1992) to deal with past traumatic events and negotiate solutions for contemporary problems. They offer the case of a “traditional” leader accused of failing to bring rain and general bad governance, and state actors denying flexibility to local political practices that could have addressed local grievances in comprehensive ways. Combey highlights the relevance of the socio-religious institution of *Poro* in Sierra Leone. Here, colonialism altered but did not obliterate the system of political checks and balances associated with *Poro*. Meier examines the spiritual background of the conflict in Northern Uganda involving the Lord's Resistance Army.

I think some of the book's approaches to cases where religious beliefs appear detrimental to certain people are debatable. The classical distinction between “emic” and “etic” that is evoked here seems less than useful. As Kirsch indicates, those accused of witchcraft are not necessarily prepared to “consider religion in a subject's own terms,” and religion is often contested within societies. The case of Europe, discussed by Harnischfeger, where witchcraft beliefs seem uncommon, may not be as exceptional as it appears on the surface. For example, Lucia de B. in the Netherlands spent years in prison convicted of murders that were never committed, and on a grander scale, World War II showed the ultimate consequences of suspicion against particular categories of people. Although the cognitive vehicles for suspicion in these cases differed from witchcraft beliefs in Africa and elsewhere, suspicion did involve assumptions about real evil operating through invisible means.

That said, overall this is an illuminating book with an admirable conceptual coherence and broad visions of the relationship between religion and politics. It deserves to be widely read and discussed by Africanists, cross-cultural psychologists, students of conflict resolution, and political scientists and anthropologists. The authors provide thought-provoking alternatives to analyses of postcolonial African politics that, often contradictorily, stress “politics of the belly” or “occultism.”

———André Van Dokkum, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

Robert J. Donia. *Radovan Karadžić: Architect of the Bosnian Genocide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, ISBN 978-1-107-42308-4, 339 pp.

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The name of Radovan Karadžić has become familiar worldwide. As one of the two leaders of the Bosnian Serbs in the early 1990s (together with General Mladić), Karadžić is known as one of the main organizers of the ugly ethnic cleansing campaigns in Bosnia. Apprehended by the Serbian authorities in 2008, Karadžić is standing trial on charges of genocide, crimes against

humanity, and crimes of war before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) at The Hague. Donia's study is the first attempt to write a scholarly biography of the man whom the book's subtitle identifies as the "architect of the Bosnian genocide."

Donia's narrative takes a flashback from his encounter with Karadžić in the ICTY courtroom (where Donia served as expert witness) to Karadžić's childhood and youth. Born into a poor family in Montenegro, Karadžić's prospects were handicapped by the postwar detention of his father as a former Chetnik. Remarkably, Karadžić did not harbor negative feelings toward the communist regime or other Yugoslav nations and his professional career as a psychiatrist and amateur poet in Sarajevo was largely uneventful. Donia traces the factors that enabled Karadžić to become the leader of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), which won the majority of the Bosnian Serb vote in November 1990. Backed by popular mandate, Karadžić bluntly rejected the idea of Bosnia's independence or the transformation of Yugoslavia into a confederation, and insisted on the right of Serbs to live in one state. By itself, this position did not represent an automatic endorsement of "Great Serbia," let alone of ethnic cleansing, and Donia's description of Karadžić as a "naïve nationalist" in this period is telling.

Donia meticulously documents the twists and turns that enabled Karadžić to contain Serb regionalism, forge links with Serbia's president Slobodan Milošević, and ensure cooperation with the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA). According to Donia, by September 1991, Karadžić had undergone "a personal and political metamorphosis" (p. 99), which "was not so much ideological as passionate and personal" (114). His nationalist rage was best exemplified in his notorious statement that the "Moslem nation could disappear" if the Bosnian Moslem leadership pursued Bosnia's independence (118). By the fall of 1991, Karadžić was preparing the ground for the takeover of power in ethnically mixed towns and the consolidation of a Serb state within Bosnia. Donia lays out the constraints that stood in the way of this goal, from the European Commission's resistance to Milošević's refusal to explicitly endorse the Bosnian Serb cause. Remarkably, despite his extensive treatment of the Cutileiro plan which made Bosnia's independence contingent on internal partition, Donia does not tell us who was responsible for its failure.

What is indisputable is that Karadžić had his own plan for Bosnia's partition and that the brutal killing of peaceful demonstrators in Sarajevo in April of 1992 was the beginning of his career as a "callous perpetrator" (187–207). Henceforth, "the municipal strategy" took a bloody turn, with mass atrocities (a term Donia prefers to "ethnic cleansing") followed by systematic expulsions and the takeover of power by SDS officials and the formalization of this goal in official policy (203–7). Karadžić's efforts to legitimize the new reality on the ground as a "duplicitous diplomat" proved unsuccessful, mostly due to his May 1993 rejection of the Vance-Owen plan and his callous treatment of the

“Carter initiative” (208–48). Once the Bosnian Serbs began losing ground to Croat-Bosnian Moslem local offensives in the Spring of 1995, the road was open for Karadžić’s transformation into the primary “architect of genocide.” As Donia makes clear, the road to Srebrenica was conditioned by many factors ranging from Serbian military losses to their worsening relations with international peacekeepers (the UN hostage-taking crisis), the fear of foreign intervention, Karadžić’s growing rivalry with Mladić, and “his unbending determination to fulfill the Bosnian Serb utopian dream” (273). What followed is well known: Karadžić’s fell from grace after Dayton and began his strange career as a “resourceful fugitive” (285–301) who masked as an “occult healer” in Belgrade.

Donia has written a painstakingly documented scholarly biography based on a mountain of sources at the ICTY. His complex portrait of Karadžić contradicts the book’s subtitle because there seemed to be no master plan, but rather a series of contextually based decisions that escalated over time and ultimately led to the tragedy of Srebrenica. Another interesting conclusion is that ideology played only a small role in decision-making, unless the “utopian” (why utopian?) goal of “Serb unification” is understood as something more than the dream of nationalists everywhere. A third interesting finding of the book is that Milošević never espoused the idea of Great Serbia and acted as a restraining factor on Karadžić, even as he offered military support.

Finally, and (inevitably) controversially, Donia applies the concept of genocide only to the case of Srebrenica, reserving the term “mass atrocities” for the war crimes committed by Bosnian Serb forces elsewhere, making the book’s subtitle still more problematic (“architect of the Srebrenica genocide” better reflects the book’s argument). The real moral lesson of Donia’s book, however, lies not in his condemnation of Karadžić’s politics, but in his careful narrative of the psychological transformation of an ordinary middle-class professional into an emotionally driven nationalist extremist and perpetrator of mass crimes in the context of war. This sociologically provocative conclusion is morally unsettling: there is a potential extremist in all of us.

———Veljko Vujčić, Oberlin College