

From Conquest to Deportation: The North Caucasus under Russian Rule. By Jeronim Perović. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN 978-0-1908-8989-0. Illustrations. Glossary. Acronyms and abbreviations. Note on transliteration and dating. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xxiv, 466. \$90.00.

The tumultuous mountain region of the North Caucasus provides Russia a wealth of fluctuating folklore that swings from disdain to admiration and back again. Many of the Caucasus region's historical accounts focus on ethnic and religious variance, while concentrating on the near-endless cycle of resistance, violence, and warfare. Refreshingly, Jeronim Perović, in *From Conquest to Deportation*, goes beyond typical analysis and uses a structural approach to delve into the "hows" and "whys" of the tensions afflicting the North Caucasus region.

Perović argues against a simple regional historiography often characterized by an overarching theme of resistance warfare. He successfully highlights explanatory factors—intra-societal dynamics, traditions, customs, failed modernization, and a disconnected concept of state—as significant catalysts in the complex region. Through the lens of societal interactions, he concentrates on three fundamental questions. First, how do the visions of governance differ between the peoples of the region and their Russian rulers? Second, how do the peoples of the North Caucasus perceive Russian rule? Third, and most poignant, how did these societies adapt to Russian authority? He comprehensively covers these questions and uses first-person accounts to accent and illustrate his argument. Perović uniquely provides a societal perspective that will materially contribute to the literature of Russian and ethnic history, while also providing value in the fields of conflict resolution, political violence, and secession.

As the title implies, *From Conquest to Deportation* takes a novel chronological approach. By targeting the late tsarist period through the deportations of 1943–44, the author is able to concentrate on the most volatile and turbulent historiography of the region. Although this unorthodox temporal approach appears abrupt at the beginning and end, it allows Perović to spotlight the intertwined, multi-actor, societal interactions in detail. Admittedly, the author concentrates his attention on the Chechen, and to a lesser extent the Ingush, societal interactions. He also spends substantial time covering Russian viewpoints, but his coverage of other ethnic populations such as the Avars, Adghe, Kabardians, Balkars, Kumyks, Ossetians, and Terek Cossacks is limited. Thus, these groups' societal foundations are not covered with the same revealing detail as his primary focus groups.

The comprehensive scholarship of the book presents information in a logical, easy-to-follow format. For each chapter, the author provides background, then outlines the major issues or problems associated with particular conditions. He then uses documents, reports, or first-person accounts to announce his perspective. Once his perspective is clear, the author provides a detailed personal account of a figure directly involved. These accounts frame and support, but also "bring to life," the author's perspectives.

While Perović makes a convincing argument on the role of societal factors and misperceptions affecting the dramatic events of this region, he occasionally downplays the heavy handedness of Russian authorities. Most notably, he only once mentions the Circassian genocide. To avoid a direct normative slant, he could have catalogued more ethnic atrocities during this period and let the reader ponder the ramifications. Perović strives to get to the root causes underlying the tensions between the ethnic groups of the North Caucasus and the Russians, but in doing so, the savagery of these incidents is lost. While discussing the Russian Civil War, the author emphasizes that General Denikin's Volunteer Army exercised a heavy hand, and this action negatively affected the mountain peoples' disposition toward the White Army. Yet the author downplays the impact of the Soviets' oppressive collectivization process. It is not until after deportation that Perović mentions a "collective memory of past injustice" as a Chechen response to the Soviets' coercive and domineering approach.

Perović's detailing of the various societal structures encompassing the ethnic groups of North Caucasus region is a significant contribution to the literature. He persuasively argues that these structures differ significantly from those of Russian society. These societal differences form the framework upon which misperceptions and disagreement are built, eventually igniting regional conflict. *From Conquest to Deportation* takes the reader beyond the typical folklore of the resistance fighter and examines the impact of societal structures and interactions that shaped the significant and sometimes tragic events of the North Caucasus.

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Thunder in the Argonne: A New History of America's Greatest Battle. By Douglas V. Mastriano. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2018. ISBN 978-0-8131-7555-3. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xii, 441. \$34.95.

Thunder in the Argonne is an excellent and informative examination of both the American and German perspectives of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the largest American offensive of not just the First World War but, as the author contends, of the twentieth century. Douglas Mastriano is a retired United States Army colonel who received his Ph.D. from the University of New Brunswick and has headed numerous projects for the U.S. Army War College. The author places the campaign as the center point for creating a new American army and key to defining American military action in the twentieth century. His goal with *Thunder in the Argonne* is to provide a comprehensive look at the Meuse-Argonne campaign that lasted from 26 September 1918 through the end of the First World War, and to place the Meuse-Argonne in the center of the American story of the conflict. Mastriano seeks not only to tell the story from both the German and American perspectives; he tries at the same time to capture the stories of numerous

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