

Reiches, pp. 167–350), zum Ausdruck gebracht werden. Ganz im Gegenteil verdienen diese allesamt größte Aufmerksamkeit und stellen z.T. erhebliche Bereicherungen auf den in ihnen berührten Gebieten dar. Für den Rezensenten ist hierbei vor allem der großartige Aufsatz von D. Theodoridis von Interesse – berührt dieser doch zugleich mehrere der Gebiete, denen das Augenmerk des Rezensenten gilt.

Göttingen

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LENKA J. BUDILOVÁ, MAREK JAKOUBEK: *Bulgarian Protestants and the Czech Village of Voyvodovo*. Sofia: New Bulgarian University 2017. Pp. 144. ISBN 978-954-535-000-9.

*Bulgarian Protestants and the Czech Village of Voyvodovo* is a book written by the Czech anthropologists Lenka J. BUDILOVÁ and Marek JAKOUBEK, and it investigates the Protestant religion of the inhabitants of the only Czech village in Bulgaria – Voyvodovo (p. 9). This book is along the lines of their previous publications on topics such as migration (BUDILOVÁ 2011) and identity (JAKOUBEK 2009), based on the data from the same community. The book under review is the result of the authors' joint fieldwork, which is described in the introduction.

Part 1 of the book offers an introduction to the Protestant mission in the Balkan region, mainly in Bulgaria. The authors also put the Protestant religion into a political and historical context, and discuss as well other religious groups such as the Orthodox Church and American missions (the latter started in Bulgaria and other parts of the Balkans and Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). It also provides us with information about the differences between various factions and how they shaped the religious life of those people. The first part of the book also analyzes the influence of religious groups in the European regions of the Ottoman Empire as it relates to the forming of national identity, language, and schools (p. 19). We also learn about the relation between the state and religion during the Second World War and during the communist era when many Protestant pastors were arrested and sentenced in Bulgaria. This first part helps the reader to better understand the overall political, historical and social situation in which the Czech Protestants moved to the Bulgarian village of Voyvodovo and sets the scene for the second part of this study.

Part 2 deals briefly with the history and arrival of the Czech people in Voyvodovo, which was prompted by the introduction of a new Bulgarian law, the so-called 'Law on Populating Uninhabited Lands' (p. 51). It also focuses on the ethnic and multi-confessional religious background of the village of Voyvodovo. The authors ask what their religious belief was like and look at the organizational principles of the village and the religious commitments of its inhabitants, which we read '*had a central position in this community*' (p. 64). When it comes to the history and early background of Voyvodovo, we learn that the majority of the village's inhabitants originally came from the Czech village of St. Helena. Other nationalities among them included Slovaks, Serbians and also Bulgarians, all of whom resided in Voyvodovo together. Apart from factual information, readers also learn about various religious figures such as the preachers, teachers and other significant people who shaped this community. For example, a Czech teacher Jan Findeis provides details of the reli-

gious beliefs of this community which had a direct impact on their day-to-day lives and (when based on today's modern western standards) could be viewed as very ascetic. One of the examples mentioned was the forbidding of music and dance, not only during a typical day but also during special ceremonies such as weddings (p. 54).

There was also a number of controversial figures whose behavior was either positive, leading the village forward, or negative, causing strife in people's personal lives and generating conflicting views with regards to the religious and moral code they preached. Among them the authors mention the Slovak preacher Martin Roháček, or another strong character was a Lusatian Sorb preacher named Gottlob Kowal. We also hear directly from the inhabitants who grew up in the village, such as A. Hrůzová and Š. Hrůza, from whom we learn how they viewed their religion and the community. A. Hrůzová for example, in her memoirs in connection with Roháček, states that 'the morale and glory of our village rose to the highest level! But alas! The fall was even greater! (p. 80). We get a lovely picture of various events organized in the village and how religion and its developments shaped these people and became part of it. The previously mentioned Roháček and his successor Kowal started a rift in this community which resulted in social fragmentation and the split of the former Methodist camp in 1925 and leading to the establishing of a new congregation of Darbyists. The main reason behind this was the feeling that among some of the inhabitants, Kowal's preaching was too different from what they knew in relation to their faith. As Š. Hrůza said. 'We have our father's faith! Our fathers had faith and we inherited that from them!' In the chapter called '*The situation after the split*' we read that Protestants (Methodists) in the original sense had 'competition' from the new movement called Darbyist. This impacted this small community and influenced how people themselves viewed this situation.

Budilová and Jakoubek further explore this issue and go into more detail in chapter 4, entitled '*Faith in Voyvodovo*'. In this chapter the authors also discuss the main differences between the Methodists and Darbyists in regard to both belief and religious practice, with baptism being the 'representative symbol' of the conflict (p. 102), which is all quite interesting. Towards the end of the book, the authors look at the religiousness of Voyvodovo villagers upon their return to the Czech Republic which began in 1949–1950 and at the situation in Voyvodovo after their departure. After the conclusion there is a short addendum which gives a brief overview of the topic followed by a summary in English and Bulgarian. The authors wrote this book in English despite being both of Czech descent, which, however, has no impact on its style or readability. Apart from the actual texts there are also citations and passages from people who were interviewed by the authors during their fieldwork and also photos, which help the reader to create a picture of the village and its people.

The book *Bulgarian Protestants and the Czech Village of Voyvodovo* may not be an obvious choice for a reader who is not interested in religion or specifically in the lives and beliefs of the inhabitants of the only Czech village in Bulgaria, Voyvodovo. In fact it is much more than that. The first part of the book gives us a general overview of the era which has an important place in world history and as such it will enrich the knowledge of everyone who reads it, whilst not being overpowering in academic details. On the other hand, it is a lovely introduction to the second part that makes reading the second part a natural progression. Part 2 of this book reads like a

story thanks to the citations and narration of the people's lives while still keeping in mind the main focus of the book, that of the Protestant religion of the villagers.

I would recommend this book not only to anyone who has an interest in Protestant religion, history, as well as anthropology, but also to anyone who is just looking for a pleasant but informative read. The book is both captivating and easy to read so it does not feel like a textbook or a chore to read, but at the same time it does inform the reader about the main issues raised in the study and provides the reader with a satisfying conclusion. While still being an academic study that has great scholarly value, it does not suffer when it comes to readability and enjoyment, which texts of this type often do. To summarize, a brief but enjoyable read with both interesting and factual elements.

#### Works cited

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