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The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade, by Philip Jenkins

Brad Carter

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BOOK REVIEWS

WARTIME RELIGION

Jenkins, Philip. *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade*. New York: HarperOne, 2014. 438pp. \$29.95

The roots of today's sectarian-fueled conflicts lie in the First World War. By igniting "a global religious revolution," the "Great War" redrew the world's religious map both figuratively and literally. Modern Islam, characterized as "assertive, self-confident, and aggressively sectarian," is a direct result, but so too are the spread of charismatic Christianity in Africa, an invigorated Zionism that led to the eventual creation of the modern state of Israel, and even the "efflorescence of esoteric and mystical ideas that we often summarize as New Age." So argues Philip Jenkins. Like other recent authors, Jenkins claims that the Great War in effect "created our reality." This book, however, is noteworthy for placing the war's political, social, and cultural elements, and effects, within an explicitly religious context.

Jenkins, distinguished professor of history and member of the Institute for the Study of Religion at Baylor University, has written an ambitious and highly readable book. Synthesizing military, cultural, and religious history and drawing principally from a vast body of secondary literature,

the book is admirable in its reach even when it exceeds the author's grasp.

By focusing on the religious dimensions and consequences of the war, this book fills a historiographical gap, one in which wartime religion is commonly regarded as "irrelevant . . . window dressing" with "each side cynically appropriat[ing] God to its own narrow nationalist causes." Instead, Jenkins takes seriously the decidedly religious worldview that informed the war's belligerents. While there were national and religious disparities (for example, where Orthodox Russians cast the war in traditional "crusade" language, British rhetoric emphasized a "war for Christian civilization"), a common religious vocabulary of sacrifice, holy war, divine mission/mandate, crusade, and cosmic battle, marked by both apocalyptic fears and millenarian hopes, was widely shared across national and faith-group boundaries.

In Jenkins's view, it was these war-fueled expectations and the ensuing wartime cataclysm that fundamentally shaped the postwar world. A more secularized Europe was a reaction to wartime religious excesses, even as that same "rhetoric of

the holy war and holy nation” coupled with apocalyptic ideas to “metastasize” into “Fascism, Nazism, and racial extermination.” So too was the Russian Revolution a religious civil war, the Bolshevik cause as messianic and millenarian in vision as it was antireligious in doctrine. Anti-imperial and anticolonial movements in Africa and elsewhere were also parts of this postwar “worldwide millenarian upsurge.” Similarly, the war led to a proliferation of “charismatic, fundamentalist, [and] traditionalist forms of faith” within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Moreover, the defeat and geographical division of the Ottoman Empire created not only the modern Middle East but also, according to Jenkins, modern Islam. The loss of a geopolitical center and the caliphate resulted in a “postwar search for new sources of authority [that] led to the creation or revival of virtually all the Islamic movements that we know in the modern world.”

Like many of the book’s broadest claims, this last one falls a little short. Still, Jenkins’s book is important and timely. The Great War might not have been a “war of religion” per se, but Jenkins shows how for its participants it was certainly religious. Most of all, Jenkins reminds us, as sectarian fighting continues over national boundaries drawn following that century-old war, of the continued relevance of religion’s global effects.

BRAD CARTER
Naval War College



Manicom, James. *Bridging Troubled Waters: China, Japan, and Maritime Order in the East China Sea*. Georgetown Univ. Press, 2014. 280pp. \$54.95

As the world reacts to an increasingly powerful and assertive China, East Asia’s maritime frontiers are emerging as friction points that threaten regional stability. James Manicom’s *Bridging Troubled Waters* presents a timely analytical history of Sino-Japanese relations in the East China Sea and makes important contributions to understanding the prospects for maritime cooperation. The book authoritatively documents new insights regarding this complex state of evolving affairs, one that has included elements of cooperation, compromise, competition, and conflict. It employs a helpful analytical framework from which to argue for optimism, by demonstrating that Chinese and Japanese leaders have historically been able to manage tensions by decoupling material issues from strategic and symbolic differences. Manicom has a PhD from Flinders University in Australia and is an expert in East Asian security, specializing in maritime issues. A research fellowship at the Ocean Policy Research Foundation in Tokyo and trips to China and Japan positioned him well to deliver this systematic analysis.

Manicom constructs a unique matrix for evaluating the value of maritime space vis-à-vis national objectives and applies this construct to motivations for cooperation versus conflict. Manicom then uses this framework to interpret case studies from the Sino-Japanese maritime relationship, examining the dispute over islands in the East China Sea, fisheries management, agreements governing research at sea, and cooperative arrangements in the Chunxiao gas field. Building on the insights delivered by these case studies, the book’s final chapter and conclusion focus on the current political dynamics in the Sino-Japanese maritime relationship and