
Boris Kršev, *Securitas Res Publica – A Short History of Security*, Novi Sad: Prometej, 2017, pp. 393.

(Boris Kršev, *Securitas Res Publica – kratka istorija bezbednosti*, Novi Sad: Prometej, 2017, 393 str.)

The challenges of the 21st century that we have faced with inevitably put security issues in the focus of scientific research and education. Unfortunately, in our society we have only recently started thinking in that direction so each contribution to learning about all the aspects of the complex concept of security, including its history, is more than welcome. For that reason both professionals and a wider public will undoubtedly find invaluable this comprehensive review of the development of security issues through the history of mankind written by professor Boris Kršev. Because of him our science will be included more intensely in the world trends of extending and redefining the research field of the multidisciplinary security studies, which include law, historiography, sociology, psychology, economy, as well as ecology, geography, meteorology, etc.

Guided by the thought of the famous French philosopher Michel Foucault that security is “a skill and technique of controlling people and things which are organized to lead to a certain goal”, professor Kršev begins his study by describing the primal human community, first forms of religion and primitive law. He continues to lead the reader through the history of mankind and successfully intertwines general and legal security as well as the history of security. In the course of the book we learn about security problems in the states of the Old East, ancient Greece and the Roman Empire, and later in medieval European monarchies (with special reference to the dominant role of the church in the society of the time). What follows is the review of the periods when security was defined as natural law, which is the era of humanism, reformation and great geographical discoveries. As we learn from the chapter dedicated to the revolutionary waves of the 17th and 18th centuries, the further

development of the concept of security was influenced by crucial events in the Anglo-Saxon world and France (1776, 1789, etc.). The Vienna Congress from 1815, as Kršev explains, represented the first attempt to create a system of collective security. In the chapter on the so-called long 19th century, i.e. the period when capitalism became the world system, in addition to security issues in the developed European countries the author writes about the state of security in the Serbia of the Obrenović and Karadorđević dynasties, making a connection with the previous chapters when he wrote about security issues in the Serbian medieval state. In accordance with his own wide scope of scientific research, professor Kršev portrays the economic and geopolitical image of the world in the 19th and even more so in the 20th century as crucial for understanding security systems and services. Even in the chapters dedicated to the tumultuous events of the past century (world wars, the Cold War and integrative and disintegrative processes that followed in Europe), the author conducts a parallel analysis of the security issues in the world and in the region of former Yugoslavia. He pays special attention to the international organs of collective security – the League of Nations, the organization of the United Nations, CSCE/OSCE, and their success and failure in performing their projected role. The last, tenth chapter is devoted to the author’s perception of security in the contemporary, global society of the so-called new world order.

Concluding his not so “short history of security”, professor Kršev emphasizes that “the modern society is almost impossible to understand without knowing its security aspects”, which have, in his opinion, been generated by the sheer human need for self-preservation. Analyzing the phenomenon of security and its development through history, the author notices an evolution in the relationship of the state with its subjects/citizens, which is best reflected in the understanding of the function of security: from the “police state” of Louis XIV and “Leviathan”, through “The Schwabenspiegel” and the American “Declaration of Independence”. The image of security as a condition, system and

function, which was described by Boris Kršev in the period of five millennia (with a focus on those events that left a mark on the era) and which is based on numerous and relevant scientific sources, will undoubtedly help students as well as all interested readers to understand the contemporary state of global security jeopardized by international terrorism, organized crime, etc.

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Niall Ferguson, *Kissinger: 1923-1968. The Idealist*, New York: Penguin Press, 2015, 987 pages.

(Nil Ferguson, *Kisindžer 1923-1968: Idealista*, knjiga 1, Beograd: CIRSD, 2016, 987. str.)

The complexity of researching the history of international relations in the second half of the 20th century is most visible through the example of a biographical overview of one of the most important individuals of that time – Henry Kissinger. Scottish historian Niall Ferguson spent a significant amount of time during 2011 interviewing the doyen of world diplomacy. Walking in Kissinger's footsteps throughout Harvard, his intention was to present, as best and most accurately as he could, the unorthodox life and the role of this diplomat in the American and world politics.

Even though he was not, at first, that much interested in writing Kissinger's biography, he accepted this job and as the main reason for doing so he stated Kissinger's exceptional graduation thesis "The Meaning of History" 388 pages long. In this thesis, Henry Kissinger focused most of his attention on the analysis of three philosophers – Spengler, Toynbee and Kant, who, according to the author, had the most profound effect to the development of Kissinger's political thought.

Today many historians and political scientists describe him as an opportunist, pragmatically applying unethical Machiavellianism, especially when compared to Nixon's and Trump's foreign

policy and relations with the USSR (present-day Russia) and China. During the past 50 years, these two superpowers have interchanged their roles when it comes to their main enemy – the USA. Ferguson does not agree with his critics but believes that it was his mentor professor William Elliott who directed him towards Kant's philosophy. According to him, Kant's work *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* from 1785 had a special influence on him.

The book *Kissinger: 1923-1968. The Idealist* depicts the journey of the American diplomat from Fürth to Hanoi, which he somewhat often underlies with a Latin saying *per aspera ad astra*. It seems that the author wishes to assign (unnecessary) importance to his (already complex) biography, but on the other hand to also justify, through distant past, his "diplomatic chess games" which this philosopher played with his "red" opponents.

Growing up in a small Bavarian town, known only for the significant export of goods *per capita* and the construction of the first German railway on the relation Fürth – Nuremberg in 1835, left a deep trace in the evolution of his personality – from a very radical Jew in the beginning, who became deeply transformed by his escape to the USA and his war experience, in a Nietzschean sense – what did not kill him made him stronger. In times when Nazism flourished, Fürth became a place where power was being demonstrated, a small town in which the old German ideal *Ruhe und Ordnung* lost its meaning and the reflection of the events in Berlin became an inevitable quotidian. Before the elections in 1933 Fürth was known as *Rote Stadt* and *Verjudet*, but shortly after it became a *Judenfrei* town.

The Kissinger family has left Bavaria on 20 August 1938, catching the "last train" and chance for emigration. Ten days later they took a boat from Southampton to New York. It seemed at first that whilst fleeing from one crisis they landed into another. The American society was not overly receptive of new immigrants at the end of the 1930s. Since then a lot of time had passed until Afro-Americans were granted their true rights. Neither were Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, American Indians, Hindus in a better position.