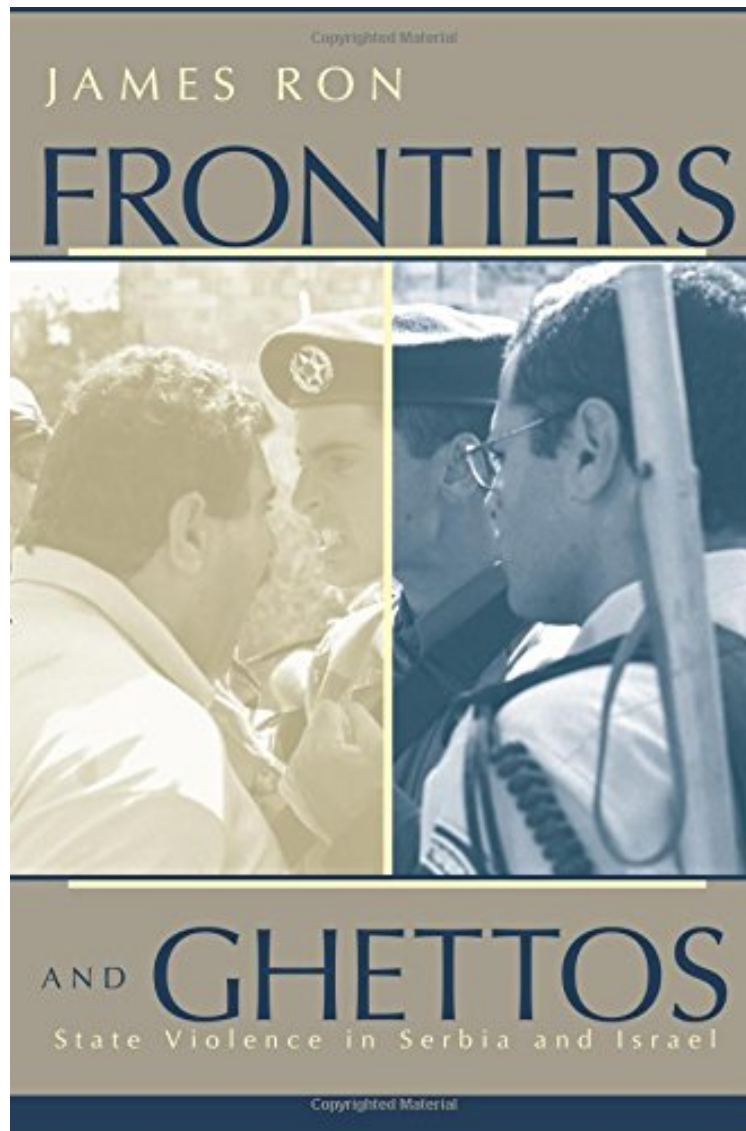


Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Isrl

James Ron

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#2696618 in Books James Ron 2003-05-19 2003-05-19 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .63 x 6.001, 1.17 #File Name: 0520236572286 pages Frontiers and Ghettos State Violence in Serbia and Israel | File size: 56.Mb

James Ron : Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Isrl before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Isrl:

3 of 10 people found the following review helpful. The philosophers have only interpreted the world...By Edward G. Nilges "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it. (Marx 1845 Theses on Feurbach)" I find this book informative but its theorizing useless and strange. It is factually comprehensive as regards state violence in Serbia and in Israel, which, as the author demonstrates, differed in frontier zones (such as

south Lebanon and Bosnia after its recognition as a state) versus internal zones (such as the West Bank and the Sanjak). However, the horrific descriptions of daily life in the West Bank from 1967 to about 2000 only seem to imply that there the Israelis insisted upon a monopoly of force and a formalistic imitation of Western rights which most of the time, but not all of the time, meant that captives were beaten and not slaughtered wholesale. The author actually wants to believe that as a social "scientist" he has discovered an ontological difference between ghettoisation of subject peoples without the rights of the main ethnic group, and their existence in a frontier. Strangely, he does not test this theory against the Holocaust, for the Holocaust falsifies his theory. The Nazis re-created the mediaeval and 19th century ghettos of Poland and other Eastern European countries only as a way station to the Shoah, in which they in fact treated their subject populations (not only Jews but also Roma, confessional Christians, and dissidents) as an internal "frontier". It is true that in incompletely conquered areas of Russia, *einsatzgruppen* carried out crude mass exterminations using a variety of uncoordinated troops including the SS and the regular Army but contrary to the theory here, the Nazis seldom countenanced private armies or subcontracted extermination, while the Israelis, we know, subcontracted the Christian militia of Lebanon to carry out the 1982 massacre and Milosevic aided the Bosnian Serbs. But once it was clear to the Nazi leadership that these actions were ineffective and causing resistance, they ghettoised the subject populations, and proceeded to a step which on Ron's theory wasn't supposed to be taken. Nor does Ron test his theory against the Tsarist oppression of the Jews after the 1882 assassination of Alexander. The Jews were already in ghettos in the Pale of Settlement, but the Tsarist state wanted to wreak vengeance on the "terrorists", and unleashed, IN AN INTERNAL FRONTIERIZATION of lands under the Tsar's control, private armies of Cossacks against the Jews...in mayhem that on Ron's theory never happened, but somehow caused the mass immigration of Eastern Europe's Jews to the USA in the late nineteenth century. There is, in Ron's book, the false humility of the proud pseudo-scientist who has announced his "ground breaking" theory but then proceeds to confess that he isn't qualified to crack a history book or test his theory anywhere but his proper zone of research, which reminds me of what Adorno said about the self-moronization of this type of deliberately narrowed social research. I am certain that variants of Ron's theory were aired in comfortable parlors of the 1930s: give the Nazis the opportunities to create ghettos and they will calm down. This book illustrates Marx's theses on Feuerbach. From a sheerly scientific standpoint, social theory is so self-reflexive, so unavoidably a part of the phenomenon it describes, that it is profoundly UNSCIENTIFIC to pretend to be able to stand off from the world, whether at McGill or anywhere else, and so theorize as to avoid having that theory be used as an excuse or a pretext for mass murder. What this means is that the first duty of social theory is Hippocratic, do no harm, first not by uttering a theory with such a stunning historical counter-example and secondly not by arming the bad guys with an excuse for creating one more ghetto. I am alarmed by James Ron, not because he is from Israel or served in the Israeli army, for he seems to fully realize that Israel is illegitimate all the way down, for it defines full political personhood ethnically. Perhaps there is something ineradicably brutalizing about military training and military service in a situation unjust all the way down, such that in a later career, the foundational brutalization emerges in such an extraordinarily stunning fashion. "Oh, people getting killed...just give the murderers a nice little Guantanamo, a nice little Theresienstadt, in which they can with de facto legitimacy stuff silenced and inconvenient victims so we can all feel good, and theorize, and get tenure". THE POINT IS TO CHANGE IT.

James Ron uses controversial comparisons between Serbia and Israel to present a novel theory of state violence. Formerly a research consultant to Human Rights Watch and the International Red Cross, Ron witnessed remarkably different patterns of state coercion. *Frontiers and Ghettos* presents an institutional approach to state violence, drawing on Ron's field research in the Middle East, Balkans, Chechnya, Turkey, and Africa, as well as dozens of rare interviews with military veterans, officials, and political activists on all sides. Studying violence from the ground up, the book develops an exciting new framework for analyzing today's nationalist wars.

"In the best tradition of social science research, Ron examines state-directed violence to find out not how states ought to act but how they do act. A well-documented study [within a] sophisticated framework."--"Foreign Affairs"
"From the Inside Flap"
Frontiers and Ghettos is based on the idea that when it comes to ethnopolitical conflict, lousy is better than horrible. How outcomes better than horrible arise, despite ideological imperatives, hatreds, and predatory opportunities, is brilliantly analyzed in this empirically rich, vividly written, and provocative comparison of Serbian and Israeli policies toward Croats, Muslims and Palestinians. A terrific book!" Ian S. Lustick, author of *Unsettled States, Disputed Lands*
Abusive governments try to avoid leaving fingerprints on acts of repression, often using paramilitaries or death squads for deniability. James Ron reveals that territorial boundaries can serve a similar function. Abuse is more likely, he shows, as one crosses the frontiers of established state power, obscuring the signature of official action. This original and insightful book encourages us to expose cross-border involvement in human rights violations and re-establish official accountability." Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
"With terrifying lucidity, Ron uses the experiences of Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Israel, and Palestine to examine how a state's definition of the boundary separating its favored population from a different people authorizes, channels,

or inhibits its use of force. This veteran participant-observer uses first-hand observation tellingly."Charles Tilly, author of *Durable Inequality*"Frontiers and Ghettos represents a major step forward in social science's effort to understand state violence. James Ron shows that while all states use violence, they do so differently in their well-policed interiors and at their margins. This book is powerful, timely, and important for both scholars, policy-makers, and those who would advance respect for human rights."Craig Calhoun, President, Social Science Research Council"James Ron has written a strikingly clear and convincing study of the factors affecting controlled and uncontrolled state-directed violence in the current period, with an analysis that adds substantially to the sociology of the state. His book will be important for all those concerned for scholarly reasons and for broader ones with modern confrontations of world norms, state power and human rights. And its gripping accounts will be important for those concerned with the specific violent conflicts it examines, in Serbia and Israel."John W. Meyer, Professor of Sociology, Emeritus, Stanford University"This ingenious and courageous comparison of the types of violence used by nationalist regimes should transform the way we think about borders and state sovereignty. In demonstrating that even the most unsavory governments can be sensitive to international norms and the appearance of legality, Ron also strikes a serious blow at standard policy prescriptions -- from imposing sanctions and isolation on offending regimes to offering autonomy packages and soft borders for ethnic minorities. This book deserves wide circulation and serious reflection."Susan L. Woodward, author of *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War*"As the horrific escalation of violence in Israel and the Palestinian territories grips international headlines, the inability of commentators to locate these tragic events in a comparative analytical frame is striking. This book is an impressive exception. Ron's elegant comparative analysis of Serbia and earlier periods of Israeli-Palestinian conflict makes the dynamics of the present conflict and its future possibilities comprehensible in a way that few others have managed to do. It is a signal contribution to our understanding of modern state violence."Peter Evans, Eliaser Chair of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley