

Although the introductory chapters throw a welcome spotlight on maritime documents with the intent to clarify and interpret the law, the aim of Marinović's book is not to treat the subject matter scientifically. This edition raises new questions to which the archival sources offer simple and clear answers,<sup>6</sup> but also those of a more complex nature to be resolved by the close study of the legal and economic peculiarities of maritime documents. Although all the sources cited by the author had previously been published (some only in the original Latin and Italian, others in translation), gathered here, they offer a more comprehensive insight into the normative bases of the maritime trade.

Nella Lonza

**Maren Frejdenberg**, *Očerki istorii balkanskog evrejstva*. Tel Aviv: Biblioteka Matveja Černogo, 1998. Pages 122.

Maren Frejdenberg's latest historical survey of the Balkan Jewry is a collection of essays published in the Israeli press between the years 1993 and 1997, in which the author sketches the relations, everyday life and events that marked the Jewish community of the Balkans.

A gifted short story writer, Frejdenberg captivates the general reader with stories of Jews who were fortunate or unfortunate enough to have lived in Salonika, Dubrovnik, Split, Sarajevo, or Maribor. With impressive erudition and journalistic perception, he brings to life past events and emotionally charged true individual histories. In addition to these everyday life narratives of medieval Jewish communities of diverse geographic origin (Greece, Macedonia, Bosnia, Serbia, Slovenia, and Croatia), the first part of the book also contains essays in which Frejdenberg, a historical authority on the Balkans, reacts to the recent disastrous war on the territory of the former Yugoslavia and the brutal devastation of Dubrovnik, that paragon of urban and architectural harmony, sophisticated manners, and civilized customs.

The second part of the book contains a lengthy chapter in which the author, in a most genuine and touching way, recounts the story of his life.

Mihaela Vekarić

---

<sup>6</sup> For instance, the registers of the Ragusan councils dating from the beginning of the 14th century offer well-grounded answers to Marinović's question of whether the ship's clerks had to be recruited from the ranks of the nobility (cf. pp. 133-135 and *Libri reformationum* I, ed. I. Kr. Tkalčić. *Monumenta Ragusina*, Monumenta spectantia historiam Slavorum Meridionalium, X. Zagreb: JAZU, 1879: pp. 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, and further on almost every page).