at cross-purposes and established very distinct relationships with authority, specifically as they debated the role of smoking and drinking in tourist outings. Plum reveals how East German children's camps appealed to conformist youth but, plagued by economic and environmental shortcomings, also became havens for unsanctioned leisure pleasures. In his contribution, Keck-Szajbel explores how Poland endorsed hitchhiking as an inexpensive way to promote modern automobility but thereby also encouraged individualistic escapes from the system.

An intriguing tension exists in this volume, as the authors sometimes neatly divide these territories into conformist and nonconformist spaces and at other times resist thinking in binary oppositions at all. Alexander Vari's essay on nightlife maps out distinct Budapest spaces for foreign tourists, conformist music fans, and rebellious nonconformists. Patrice M. Dabrowski shows how the Polish regime's economic shortcomings helped the Bieszczady Mountains become a "Wild West," in which tourists pursued unsanctioned pleasures. Irina Costache reveals how even committed socialists created autonomous spaces in which they could practice nudism despite the regime's official disapproval, and Caroline Fricke notes that local officials tolerated alternative campsites for heavy metal fans ostracized from officially sanctioned motorcycle races. It is perplexing that none of these essays directly address the existing literature on socialist *niche societies*, a term coined by Günter Gaus. This seems to have been a missed opportunity to establish the unique contributions of *Socialist Escapes* to that historiography, especially since many of the authors here also emphasize how socialist leisure provided geographic spaces of escape.

Other essays focus more on the limits of dictatorship, but in doing so they also identify "niches" less touched by official doctrine. David G. Tompkins shows how Polish festival organizers ignored state directives more often than more ideologically committed East German musicians did, and Giustino reveals how underfunded Czechoslovak castle museums failed to give visitors a consistent ideological message. Were such spaces of escape truly niches, neatly separated from everyday life and from politics generally, as is implied at times by some of the essays in this volume? Could the contributors have said more about the internal conflicts within these spaces, as different social groups, generations, and individuals came into conflict with each other even as they all shared a desire for escape? As Poenaru demonstrates in a contribution about Romanian soccer clubs, soccer matches often pitted powerful institutions such as the police and the military against each other, since they sponsored top teams, and in doing so cracked opened spaces for self-expression among those clubs' fans. If the powerful in Romania lacked a unified voice, how were the leisure participants throughout eastern Europe divided among themselves? When did some leisure enthusiasts rely on state bureaucrats to further their particular agendas at the expense of their neighbors and colleagues?

Even as it answers many questions, this volume inspires even more and thus provides ample food for thought. This highly useful collection will thus make for provocative and instructive reading in either graduate or undergraduate seminars.

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Odessa: Genius and Death in a City of Dreams. By Charles King. New York: W. W. Norton, 2011. 336 pp. Maps. Chronology. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $27.95, hard bound. $16.95, paper.

A quarter century has passed since the publication of Patricia Herlihy's seminal *Odessa: A History, 1794–1914* (1987), and in the interim Odessa has enjoyed the at-

https://doi.org/10.5612/slavicreview.73.2.409 Published online by Cambridge University Press

tention of scholars representing a variety of disciplines and examining the city from a range of ethnic and cultural perspectives. Charles King's book arrives as a kind of capstone on this increasingly imposing scholarly edifice: by 2011, Odessa was ready to be the subject of a popular history in English, and King's book is that and more. Elegantly and evocatively written, with a minimalist and unobtrusive scholarly apparatus, and peppered with interesting illustrations, it vividly retells the story of Odessa from its founding to the present day.

King's particular gift is in bringing to life the city's atmosphere in bygone eras by assembling and interpreting mundane details from economic records and travelers' accounts; the reader is thus invited to tour nineteenth-century Odessa's smells ("the sweet smoke of burning, grass-rich manure mingled in the air with the reek of tallow vats and the sharp odor of tanneries. . . . The blooms of acacia trees and oleander fought back with their own perfume") and sounds ("the curses of carters . . . the lows and screams of cattle . . . the brittle pop of old wheat carts being broken up for firewood") (112). Dramatic historical episodes, such as the Crimean War, are suspensefully narrated, and the many colorful personalities associated with Odessa, from its French governors to its Jewish writers and musicians, each take their turn in the spotlight. Drawing on the memoirs of Odessa's in- and outsiders, King weaves a warm tapestry of personal voices and conveys the diversity of perspectives that is especially crucial for any representation of this multivalent, multicultural city.

For the first two-thirds of the book King draws mainly on these memoirs and published accounts by other scholars; his original contribution as a historian is largely confined to the book's final four chapters, which deal with the city's fate during and after World War II. These bleak years of occupation, ethnic cleansing, and decline have hitherto received comparatively little attention, and King covers them unflinchingly and with a good deal of fascinating human-interest detail gleaned from letters, reports, and other documents in the State Archives of Odessa Oblast and the U.S. Holocaust Museum. He has also taken care to foreshadow, in earlier chapters, the outbreaks of deadly intolerance that marred the second century of Odessa's existence: for King, the raucous, vibrant diversity of the mythologized Odessa is like one side of a delicately balanced coin, whose obverse was comprised of pogroms and denunciations.

The desire to connect everything, from plagues to jazz to mass executions, back to the essential "Odessa-ness" of the city produces some intriguing narrative links but also some analogies that appear a bit far-fetched, such as the comparison (concluding a discussion of Il′ia Mechnikov's research on germs) between "the city's founders" and "Mechnikov's energetic phagocytes," who are supposed to have shared the common goal of "consum[ing] difference without being destroyed by it" (149). Similarly, not all readers will see the modern state of Israel as obviously reflecting the Odessa milieu that nurtured the Zionist Vladimir Zhabotinskii. While Odessa unquestionably provided individuals from various walks of life with both the opportunities and the inspiration they needed to thrive, it is possible to overstate the connection between the city and the particular forms taken by the "genius" it fostered. The effort to cover the full sweep of two centuries of urban history while also giving due space to all these cultural "greatest hits"—all in under three hundred pages and with minimal endnotes—produces some oversimplications and a few outright inaccuracies. For example, Isaak Babel′, born, though not raised, in the Moldavanka, was not in any meaningful sense "from the city's most squalid and storied neighborhood" (187)—though he later made a concerted effort to create this impression. King's account of the Babel′ family's suffering in the 1905 pogrom and seeking shelter with "Christian neighbors" (184) also appears to be taken from Babel′'s fiction rather than reliable biographical sources.

https://doi.org/10.5612/slavicreview.73.2.409 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Despite these objections, however, King's *Odessa* is a lively account of a fascinating city and a pleasure to read. Appealing enough for a general audience, it may also be profitably assigned in whole or in part to undergraduates. It does not supplant the more detailed and rigorous works produced by specialists in the area but rather supplements, integrates, and celebrates them.

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The Traditions of Invention: Romanian Ethnic and Social Stereotypes in Historical Context. By Alex Drace-Francis. Balkan Studies Library, vol. 10. Leiden: Brill, 2013. x, 310 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. $149.00, hard bound.

In eleven essays (some original, some previously published or expansions of conference papers), Alex Drace-Francis approaches questions of modern Romanian cultural history from a variety of perspectives. He is concerned with how Romanians identified themselves, how foreigners viewed them, and how Romanians judged foreigners. What also emerges is the role of "Europe," that is, the west, as a touchstone of Romanian essences and a measure of Romanians' intellectual and material progress.

Five chapters deal with Romanian identity. In one, the concept of *the peasant* raises important questions, especially about how the peasant could evolve from low-born and ignorant in the seventeenth century to a model of simplicity and purity and the foundation of the nation in the nineteenth. Drace-Francis discerns the influence of European romanticism on Romanian intellectuals. Here, of course, is precious background for the later debates among Romanians about national identity and paths of development, especially the place of rural society and agriculture. Drace-Francis pursues this theme in his study of Mihai Eminescu's national ideology. He points to Eminescu's antisemitism and his attachment to the ideas of Arthur Schopenhauer, but he finds Eminescu's recognition of the peasant as the embodiment of the true Romanian essence to be the foundation of his political thought. An essay contrasting Eminescu's and the dramatist and short story writer Ion Luca Caragiale's views on the nature of the Romanian language is useful in exploring identities. Whereas the former sought purity and unity, the latter reveled in its heterogeneity and complexity. In the course of his comparisons Drace-Francis provides a sensitive interpretation of Caragiale's famous short story "An Easter Torch." Eugène Ionescu represents an intriguing case study of Romanian identity, and Drace-Francis examines his career as a famous European playwright from the angle of his "Romanianness." To do so he investigates Ionescu's participation in 1930s Bucharest intellectual life, a previously neglected aspect of the writer's career, and estimates its influence on the themes and characters explored later in his plays. Another innovative approach to matters of identity is Drace-Francis's use of travel accounts by Romanians between 1750 and 1840, not as records of what they saw, but as reflections of self and thus as a gauge of romantic influences.

Four chapters analyze how foreigners reacted to Romanians. Noteworthy among these is the author's perceptive assessment of the effects of the Romanian language and literature on the work of Nobel Prize–winner Herta Müller. Born to German parents in the Banat, Müller learned Romanian in school as a foreign language, and, as Drace-Francis makes clear, her bilingualism moved her to think deeply about the nature of language and the relationship between words and things. A study of Ignaz von Born's 1779 text, "A Curious Account of Wallachia," raises questions about how western Europeans at that time represented Romanians. Drace-Francis points out

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