

of the republic, specifically of social hardship, re-construction, political terror and changing, unpredictable, often extreme demands upon people from the center. Einax gives a good insight into the conditions of 'everyday Stalinism,' the observations of which are valuable well beyond the confines of the BSSR. The rich scope of Einax' study is not reflected in the title. For example, chapter eight, well over 100 pages in length and over a quarter of the entire book, is a detailed study of the anti-religious campaign initiated in 1959. Its primary research in hitherto under-utilized archives offers detailed insights into the conditions and reactions of religious communities in the republic. Einax looks into the Roman Catholic Church, primarily in the Western part in the republic, as well as Pentecostals, Baptists, Jehovah's Witnesses and other groups regarded as fanatical, reactionary, subversive and anti-Soviet. Einax's inquiry into these non-conformist groups offers fascinating examples of local agency, to date much understudied. As there is nothing in the title that indicates this valuable part of the study, which would be of significant interest to scholars of religion in the former USSR, it unfortunately runs the risk of being "buried."

A broader title, taking into fuller account the scope of the work would have better reflected the breadth and diversity of this original study. Regarding the format, the rather rigorous divisions of the book into chapters and numbered sub-chapters (8.3, 8.4) in combination with extensive foot notes covering more than half of the page, gives the book a distinctive "dissertation" feel, rather typical of German theses and *Habilitationsschriften*. This does not diminish the fact that what Einax has produced is a major contribution to the scholarship of Belarus, based on meticulous primary-source research in multiple Belarusian archives. *Enstalinisierung auf Weißrussisch* is another step towards establishing Belarus on the historiographical map. It makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the late-Stalin and Khrushchev eras in that republic.

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The Baltic: A History. By Michael North. Trans. Kenneth Kronenberg. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2015. xii, 427 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Tables. Maps. \$39.95, Hardbound.

Since the late 1980s, the Baltic Sea region has received more scholarly interest than it during the Cold War. After 1990, the countries on its eastern and southern shore have experienced major political, economic, social and cultural reorganization, engendering transformed university systems, generational changes in academic personnel, the rise of new research centers and programs, and a number of notable efforts to re-conceptualize all the seacoast nations as a region with its own particular characteristics. The book under review, published in German in 2001, is one of those efforts. The author, Michael North, is a history professor at the University of Greifswald, one of the institutions with an established Baltic-area research center and program. In a very readable translation, *Geschichte der Ostsee* is now available to the English-language public in an updated version that lays out the complicated history of a region that from WWII to 1991 straddled the Iron Curtain. A glossary of place names makes clear that we have to think about the countries around the Baltic Sea as a culturally layered region in which, during long stretches of historical time, inhabited places, sub-regions and provinces bore different names in official documents, local vernaculars, and the region's "imperial" languages: Swedish, Danish, Russian, German, and less frequently, Polish. The Baltic region had been not merely a collage of unconnected

microhistories but, as the author sees it, an arena repeatedly “reinvented” by “exchange and encounter” as an internally linked entity (1). This is a history of trade, cultural interaction, regional politics and continuous geographical reconceptualizations. The author makes clear at the outset that the historic behaviors of the peoples around the Baltic Sea were not “determined”—in the Braudelian sense—by their proximity to it; that proximity, rather, set the framework for commercial innovation and repeated expansionist efforts.

The story begins in the tenth century and concludes in the present. In chronological order, the first six chapters deal with the migrations of the Vikings, Slavs, and the Baltic peoples; the Christianization of the area, brought about mainly (but not only) by German-speakers; the development of the Hanseatic League and its rivalry with the concurrent rise of ambitious monarchies; the religious turmoil and cultural flowering in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the ambitions of the leading seventeenth and eighteenth century regional hegemony—Sweden and Russia. The seventh chapter, entitled “Nordic Romanticism,” takes up the nineteenth century and describes not only cultural developments, but agricultural history, industrialization, and the rise of organized movements promoting separate national identities. The last three chapters deal with the twentieth century and describe the revolutionary events before and during WWI and the resulting new states; then the Sovietization of the eastern and southern littoral, and the diffusion of the welfare state idea in the Scandinavian countries and Finland; and finally the post-Soviet changes and the incorporation of the region’s former communist states into the European Union. The author starts each chapter with a capsule description of a city, town, or institution, the history of which, in the period being described, can be seen as iconic. In historic order, the reader encounters Wolin in northern Germany, Eldena Abbey in the same location, Lübeck, Danzig, Stockholm, St. Petersburg, Helsinki, Riga, Tallinn, and, finally, the Øresund Bridge linking Sweden and Denmark.

The book strikes a nice balance between the diversity and the interlocking features of the Baltic Sea region. It also provides, more than other surveys of this type, information on parts of the longer story that usually get short shrift: the economic and cultural influence of Dutch activity (129–32; 135–44); the pre-WWII origins of the idea of the Swedish welfare state (232–33); the nature of the pre-industrial manorial economy (104–10); the symbiosis (rather than culture clash) of Christian and pagan customs during the medieval centuries (50 ff.); the homogenization of taste (1797ff.); and what the author terms “the media revolution of the 18th century,” the proliferation of periodical publications (171–77). There is little doubt that *The Baltic: A History* will become one of the standard surveys in English of the Baltic Sea region, to be used in the future alongside such older works as David G. Kirby’s 1990–1995 two-volume opus on the “Baltic world.”

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“Our Glorious Past”: Lukashenka’s Belarus and the Great Patriotic War. By David Marples. Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society, vol. 124. Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2014. xvii, 403 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. €59, hard bound; €39.90, paper.

David Marples’ theme is not so much history, as the uses of history: less the role of Belarus during the Second World War, than the use that has been made of its participation by the Lukashenka leadership. That leadership’s aim, he believes, has been to