

***Ukraine After the Euromaidan: Challenges and Hopes.*** Ed. Viktor Stepanenko and Yaroslav Pylynskyi. Bern: Peter Lang, 2015. 276 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Illustrations. Plates. Tables. \$87.95, hard bound.

“While you are arguing, Moskals will come and kill everybody.”

A participant in a Kharkiv demonstration quoted by Sergiy Klymovskiy (213).

Experts are one of the fruits of war: professionals previously uninterested in the people and places in question are drawn to them in a time of violence—perhaps by the opportunities that wars offer for some outside observers, perhaps by the excitement that violence seems to generate for those untouched directly by it, or perhaps by genuine concern—and use their authority to comment on contexts about which they may know little. The current conflict in the Donbas is no exception. This book, written about post-Maidan Ukraine by Ukrainian scholars based in Ukraine, offers one antidote to such commentary. Its authors, to be sure, articulate perspectives that cohere around just a few of the many points of view about Maidan that can be found among people living in Ukraine. But the volume is rooted in the authors’ deep, lived familiarity with the subject and their professional knowledge of Ukrainian politics and society. As such, this volume will be an indispensable reference for readers seeking to understand domestic sources of and reactions to the recent transformations in Ukraine.

This volume, written and assembled with heroic speed in the months surrounding the summer 2014 expansion of the conflict in the Donbas, offers a snapshot of Ukrainian politics and society in the wake of the most rapid changes in Ukraine since its declaration of independence from and subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union. Some contributions provide information and analyses that will transcend the current moment, such as Sergiy Klymovskiy’s intriguing chapter on “Donetsk-style communism.” Others may more likely serve as primary sources—records of how particular epistemic communities understood an evolving situation at a specific historical moment. This observation should not be read as a critique: the authors who contributed to this volume analyze moving targets amidst major societal transformation and war. This context suffuses the text: much of the book must be read through the passion that animates its authors and, at times, causes analysis to slip into polemic or slide into reification.

In this volume, linguistic and ethnic identity as an explanation for conflict gets exactly the treatment it deserves, which is to say not much. Language politics are an important part of the political landscape in Ukraine, but in themselves they explain neither contemporary divisions in Ukrainian society nor the conflicts along the border with Russia. Happily, the contributors to this volume do not reify epiphenomenal issues of language or ethnic identity that have been so popular in foreign analyses of Ukrainian politics and society. This volume turns its attention elsewhere—to Lyudmyla Pavlyuk on media representations and vocabularies of war; to Andriy Portnov and Tetiana Portnova’s excellent and meticulous reconstruction of Maidan events; to regional public opinion, as in Ilya Kononov and Svitlana Khobta’s illuminating analysis of questionnaires in Halychyna and Donbas in 2013–2014; to Sergiy Glebov’s contribution on the significance of post-Maidan events for the international system; and to Petro Burkovskiy and Olexiy Haran’s observations on the unintended social consequences of Russian armed operations in Ukraine, among many worthy others.

There are at least three areas that this volume leaves open for further research, and for which readers seeking a more complete understanding of post-Maidan Ukraine may wish to seek complementary reading elsewhere. First, the volume does

not extensively treat the extra-institutional interweaving of politics and economy in Ukraine. At the time this volume was conceived, it was already clear to many that, despite the sigh of relief felt around the country with the successful execution of presidential elections in May 2014, little was bound to change in political and economic spheres: the underlying system in place when Viktor Yanukovich exited the stage was in many respects still operative. The dynamics of this fact deserves further attention by scholars. Second, the volume does not extensively address the presence, roles, or strategies of right-wing political groups during or after Maidan or the longer-term consequences of the nation-shaping policies and discourses of the Viktor Yushchenko period. Third, the volume privileges perspectives rooted in in Ukraine's capital and central and western regions. There may be good reasons for the relative absence of contributions from scholars in the borderland regions in the east and south: readers should understand that this book was produced at a moment of extraordinary uncertainty about the short-term fate of those regions, and that scholars working in those areas take real risks when they commit words to paper.

Despite these undertreated areas of possible inquiry—no book can address every subject—the editors have compiled a varied and interesting set of contributions, presented from Ukrainian vantage points, that will be of interest to readers seeking better understandings of regional and crosscutting cleavages in Ukrainian society. The book also contains an emancipatory interpretation of difference, in which the enthalpies of cleavage, if channeled properly into what the Portnovs prescribe as Ukraine's "full recognition of its hybridity as autonomous complex subjectivity" (71), lead not to destruction at the hand of an external foe but to vibrant pluralist democracy.

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***Through the Window: Kinship and Elopement in Bosnia-Herzegovina.*** By Keith Doubt. Budapest: CEU Press, 2015. xviii, 158 pp. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Tables. \$60.00, hard Cover.

The task that Keith Doubt sets for himself with this book is to rescue knowledge about common ethnic trans-cultural heritage in Bosnia Herzegovina. That kind of knowledge, argues Doubt, is a necessary precondition for developing an integrated, multi-ethnic and mono-national state. He focuses specifically on elopement and affinal kinship organization—two closely related customs practiced by all three major ethno-religious groups (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) in rural Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Relying on literary sources, earlier ethnographies, and in-depth interviews with women, the author paints a vivid and exciting picture of elopement from a gender perspective. Additional sources of information are two surveys conducted for this research. With a relatively small number of presented cases, the reader is introduced to varied forms of elopement—from borderline bride abduction to couple-initiated marriage whose elopement is not much different from an average Las Vegas elopement in the United States. Doubt presents elopement in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a rite of passage and as expression of women's action. Comparing elopement in Bosnia-Herzegovina with the same practice in other parts of the world, Doubt argues that "women in Bosnia-Herzegovina articulated a strong sense of agency when recounting their elopement as an important event in their lives. Their free will was emphasized, even idealized and romanticized" (4). Unfortunately Doubt himself seems to fall prey to those idealized and romanticized representations, failing to contextualize sufficiently individual cases. Cases are rather all lumped together without accounting for specific socio-historical circumstances which in different ways influenced women's