

actors. Political leaders thus use them as clients to patrons to get away with things Romanian villagers, or even national officials, are prevented from accomplishing.

Although his tale is significant, Dorondel's narrative occasionally confuses. The detailed cost accounting he often uses can detract from the subject's larger significance, often leaving the reader unable "to see the forest for the trees." Dorondel's work also suffers from reliance on short vignettes of people engaged in land-related activities whose actions are boiled down to an economic calculus. However, in other Romanian communities forest and land figure strongly in ritual relations, in marriage partner choice, in decisions over family size, and other aspects of life. Dorondel hints at these larger relationships, but rarely explores them. Nonetheless, for those concerned with the transformations of land relations since the fall of socialism and of the mechanisms behind them, this book is essential reading.

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The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine. By Serhii Plokhy. New York: Basic Books, 2015. xxiv, 395 pp. Appendix. Bibliography. Chronology. Glossary. Index. Maps. \$29.99, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2017.108

In his controversial book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, Samuel P. Huntington described Ukraine as "a cleft country" with two distinct cultures. According to his interpretation, a civilizational fault line between the west and Orthodoxy ran "through its heart and has done so for centuries" (165), implying that these divisions determined not only Ukraine's past and present, but will also limit its future options as well. In the wake of the recent Euromaidan Revolution and Russia's annexation of the Crimea, many pundits, journalists, and political scientists have popularized this simplistic, culturalist view of the history of Ukraine.

Serhii Plokhy, the Mykhailo Hrushevsky Professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard, argues that Ukraine's political and cultural identity is far less binary and far more complex than Huntington allows. In employing the "gates of Europe" as a metaphor, he asserts that the relationship between Europe and Ukraine is intimate and long-standing, and that the territories of Ukraine have always played a role either as a barrier or as a bridge between Europe and Asia.

The author admits that the historical questions he poses are "unapologetically presentist," but he does not assign "modern identities, loyalties, thoughts, motivations, and sensibilities back into the past" (xxi). Building on earlier English-language syntheses of the history of Ukraine, such as the late Orest Subtelny's *Ukraine: A History* and Paul Robert Magocsi's *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its Peoples*, Plokhy presents a highly nuanced narrative of this area from the times of Herodotus to the fall of the USSR, from Ukraine's independence in 1991 to the current Russo-Ukrainian conflict. He successfully traces how definitions of Ukraine and the nature of Ukrainian identity have evolved over the course of centuries. At all points, he recognizes the contingency of the choices made. Most importantly, he recounts the flow of the history of Ukraine and its peoples not in a unilinear or teleological direction, but in dynamic, if not turbulent, interaction with various empires and nations. He recognizes Ukraine as a multi-national, multi-cultural, and multi-confessional region and denotes considerable attention to the Jewish population, antisemitism, pogroms, and the Holocaust, as well as the tragic plight of its many other peoples.

Originally a historian of the early modern period, Plokhy describes and examines at length the development of Kyiv Rus' and the concept of the Rus' nation, along with the impact of the evolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth on Ukraine's elites, the importance of the Treaty of Lublin, the Council of Brest, and the Kyiv Mohyla Academy. He also emphasizes the importance of the Hetmanate in providing the building blocks and the architects of the modern Ukrainian nation. He provides an excellent assessment of the evolution of the concept of fatherland for Cossack officers and analyzes the origins and the development of the two competing discourses, the "Little Russian" and the "Ukrainian," which existed into the first three decades of the twentieth century. Plokhy highlights the evolution of the identities and loyalties of local elites and masses in Kyiv Rus', the Kingdom of Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Austrian and Russian Empires, the USSR, Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia in the inter-war period, and in the USSR in the post-1945 era. He underlines how in the age of nationalism the emergence of the Ukrainian national movement threatened the integrity of Europe's multinational empires and how the conflicts of the twentieth century accelerated the expansion of mass demands for home rule and independence. Taking into account the dynamic interaction of state policies, social and economic structures, the human agency of the elites and the masses, and their overall contingency, Plokhy's well-written (yet highly-nuanced) narrative also discusses the incentives, rewards, and sanctions Ukraine's elites and masses encountered in greater detail than any previous survey.

The book includes ten maps, a historical timeline, a chronological who's who of the history of Ukraine, a glossary of terms, and a section recommending English-language books. To this reviewer's great regret, it does not include footnotes, endnotes, or an informal citational system prevalent in many mass-market nonfiction books.

Inasmuch as Ukraine, its elites, and its masses have played a disproportionate role in the rise and fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Austrian Empire, the Russian Empire, interwar east central Europe, and the Soviet Union, every specialist of Russia and east central Europe should read this outstanding, synthetic work, the best general history of Ukraine in English.

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Peasants, Power, and Place: Revolution in the Village of Kharkiv Province, 1914–1921. By Mark R. Baker. Cambridge, Mass.: Ukrainian Research Institute of Harvard University, 2016. Distributed by Harvard University Press. ix, 285 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$39.95, paper.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2017.109

History, M. N. Pokrovskii reminded us, is politics projected upon the past. Mark Baker is aware of this dictum as he confronts two myths: that of Soviet historians portraying a stratified Ukrainian village offering Bolsheviks support from the poor and parts of the middle peasantry, and that of Ukrainian nationalists depicting an all but unified peasantry struggling for the Ukrainian nation against communists and Russians. As demonstrated through a concentration on peasant actions rather than politicians' words, both myths lack support in the historical record.

Baker argues that the peasants of Kharkiv province (and throughout Ukraine) proved through their behavior that they cared little for the concerns of elites,