



Taras Kuzio and Andrew Wilson. *Ukraine: Perestroika to Independence*. Foreword by Norman Stone. Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1994. xiv, 260 pp. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Select Bibliography. Index. \$34.95, cloth.

The events and processes that led up to the emergence of Ukraine as an independent state will quite likely occupy the interest of researchers for decades to come. This

study, written by two British scholars with a keen interest in various aspects of contemporary Ukrainian affairs, is probably the first English-language monograph devoted to the topic and focuses specifically on political developments in Ukraine.

The book is organized chronologically, encompassing the period 1987–1991, with the initial three chapters serving as an introduction to the body of the study. The first chapter, “Theories of Nationalism and the Soviet Ukrainian Context,” represents an attempt to provide a theoretical framework for what the authors single out as their overriding argument or interpretation—namely, that Ukraine’s independence was made possible by the decisions and actions of two seemingly very different groups of sociopolitical actors: Ukraine’s cultural intelligentsia and the so-called national communists within the Communist Party of Ukraine. And herein lies the problem. Although few would dispute the crucial role played by these two groups (and, one might add, the strike movement of the Donbas miners), it is more than doubtful whether Ukraine would have become an independent state had it not been for the ramifications of developments in Moscow, specifically the conflict between two competing notions: the Soviet Union and Russia. Unfortunately, this aspect of the drama—which has often been simplistically portrayed as a personal feud between Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin—is absent from Kuzio’s and Wilson’s analysis.

Chapter 2 is also an introduction—to Ukraine. Organized under such headings as “Territory and Demography,” “Regionalism,” “Culture and Religion,” “Society,” and “Economy,” readers with little or no knowledge of Ukraine’s geography or modern history will learn something of both. The chapter is intended to show that Ukraine’s diversity in the broadest sense of the term—that is, as a product of historical development, has been a major handicap for nation and state building. The third introductory chapter is devoted to a survey of politics in Ukraine in the pre-Gorbachev period. The authors examine at some length the Shelest and Shcherbyts'kyi periods, and are rightly critical of the mythology that has been spun around Petro Shelest as a national communist. There is also a short discussion of Soviet nationalities policy during the long tenure of Brezhnev as Soviet party leader and a survey of the emergence and development of the dissident movement in Ukraine through the early 1980s, including religious dissent and workers’ groups.

The formation of various opposition groups and, later, fledgling political parties during the *perestroika* period and their programs and activities form a large part of the book. Kuzio and Wilson have clearly done a great deal of groundwork in gathering and synthesizing materials from oftentimes obscure publications in order to present readers with an intelligible overview of the political opposition in Ukraine at a time when such slogans as *glasnost*, “new thinking,” and the “human factor,” now all but forgotten, defined the political agenda in the Soviet Union. It is only in the last two chapters, entitled “Stalemate and the Rise of National Communism (1990–1)” and “From Soviet to Independent Ukraine: The Coup and Aftermath,” that the authors move on from what is essentially a descriptive account of various groups and parties

to something that more closely approximates an analysis of the key events of 1990–1991 which resulted in Ukraine’s declaration of independence.

In this reviewer’s opinion, readers would have been better served by a more thorough and thoughtful discussion of the dynamics and consequences of both the 1989 elections to the USSR Supreme Soviet and the 1990 elections to the Ukrainian parliament, although perhaps someone might find it interesting that the Second Congress of the Ukrainian Christian Democratic Front in April 1990 was opened by two Ukrainian Catholic priests, who “began the congress with a prayer service” (p. 136). Similarly, relatively little attention is devoted to developments within the Communist Party of Ukraine (and still less to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union), whose actions (or lack thereof) were at least equally important to those of the two minuscule social democratic parties or the Democratic Party of Ukraine. The same can be said for the other key problems and issues in 1990–1991 such as the Novo Ogarevo negotiations on a new Union treaty, relations between Ukraine and Yeltsin’s Russia, or the abortive August coup in Moscow and its consequences.

The authors are correct in asserting that Ukraine remains “under-researched,” and this is particularly true insofar as book-length studies of the past ten or so years are concerned. This initial attempt should be welcomed, but we have a great deal more to learn.

A final word on the technical and production aspects of this book, which can only be described as an embarrassment. Computers are wonderful things, but one must keep track of what one deletes and what one inserts. If not, what one gets is missing footnotes, footnote numbers in the text that do not correspond to the actual footnotes, parts of earlier paragraphs that are repeated several pages later, and “Vollhynid” instead of “Volyhnia.” The authors also seem not to have grasped the difference in meaning between “lose” and “loose.” Throughout the text there are words missing (usually prepositions). In some cases, years are missing the last digit. The monthly *Polityka i chas* sometimes appears as no. 8, June 1991 and at other times as 8 June 1991. Borders become “inviabie” instead of “inviolable.” Ivan Pliushch is rendered as Leonid Pliushch. On page 1 we learn that the independence referendum in Ukraine was held on 1 December 1992. Genuine factual mistakes are rare, although obviously there was never a specifically Crimean *Tatar* ASSR.

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David Shavit. *United States Relations with Russia and the Soviet Union: A Historical Dictionary.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994. xviii, 233 pp. Bibliographical Essay. Index. \$55.00, cloth.

Although generally this historical dictionary by David Shavit covers the period from the eighteenth century, when the United States began trading with Russia, to the present, it seems to focus the most on the interwar period, particularly the 1920s and 1930s. A wide variety of individuals are featured here: agricultural leaders, black