

**John Paul Himka, *Education: Grassroots Origins of the Ukrainian National Movement, 1840-1914*. 358 pp. Appendices. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Bibliography. Index. Hard bound.**

In *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the Nineteenth Century*, John Paul Himka sets out to provide a "bottom-up" view of the Ukrainian national movement in Austrian-controlled Galicia. In contrast to historians who have traditionally focused on the role of intellectuals and urban elites in national movements, Himka stresses the role that peasant activists played in shaping the development of the Ukrainian national movement. In order to explore the various contours of the national movement, Himka adopts several chronological frameworks, including a broad frame-

work that covers events and trends from 1772 to 1914, and a more narrow one that concentrates on letters written by peasants to the national populist newspaper *Bat'kiushchyna* in 1884 and 1885. By using multiple frameworks, Himka provides the reader with both a snapshot of the national movement at a critical moment and a larger narrative of the Ukrainian national movement from 1867 to 1900.

For Himka, the emergence of the Ukrainian national movement cannot be understood without first appreciating serfdom's impact on Galician society. Even after the Emancipation of 1848, the legacy of serfdom continued to shape the landscape of Galicia. One episode which testified to the power of this legacy occurred in the 1850s when landlords ignored servitudes—peasants' customary rights to use forest and pasture lands. The ensuing conflict over servitude rights not only forced peasants to seek outside help in order to navigate their way through a world of letters and litigation, but it also convinced them of the value of literacy. The legacy of serfdom thus determined the configuration of social alliances that later formed the backbone of the national movement. Between 1848 and 1900, Ukrainian peasant activists found themselves fighting an old foe—Galicia's Polish landlords. The struggle between peasant and manor strengthened horizontal (class) ties within the largely peasant national movement. The post-Emancipation period also witnessed conflicts with Galicia's Jewish population, when the rise of a money economy aggravated traditional animosities between Ukrainians and Jews.

Himka places the spread of national consciousness in the context of a larger transformation of peasant culture. The rise of a money economy and a print culture perpetuated the national movement, and the national movement itself "went hand in hand with the formation of a network of rural institutions . . ." such as "cooperative stores" and "volunteer fire departments."

According to Himka, the national movement displayed a certain inner tension. In their letters to *Bat'kiushchyna*, peasants often complained about village notables who consistently obstructed the movement. Peasants denounced local priests who failed to support reading clubs and they lambasted local officials who had sold their votes in taverns. Ultimately, the peasants' letters ". . . allowed the city-based national movement to keep informed of the mood of the countryside." Based on a reading of these letters, Himka concludes that in many cases local officials actually restrained the spread of national consciousness by slowing the growth of literacy and self-government. Himka's description thus contradicts more traditional interpretations of nationalism in which local officials are portrayed as harbingers of the national movement. Himka's arguments are convincing. He marshals a wide body of evidence to support his contentions about Ukrainian peasants in Galicia. In addition to the letters in *Bat'kiushchyna*, he utilizes documents held in the Central State Historical Archive in L'viv and he draws extensively from the large body of historical literature on nineteenth century Galicia. Nevertheless, it is difficult to get a sense from his book of how many Galician peasants came to know themselves as "Ukrainians" and what this meant.

*Galician Villagers* could also benefit from a stronger comparative framework. Himka insists on placing his work within the existing historiography on nationalism and national movements, but his study, with its concern for peasant attitudes, clearly stands out among studies on nationalism and national movements. Himka also puts his study into the context of scholarship on peasant societies in transition, adhering to the scheme of modernization presented by Eugen Weber in *Peasants into Frenchmen*. This study, however, would have benefited from a broader reading of comparative history, especially works on village discourse and peasant reading.

John-Paul Himka has provided a challenging and insightful study for all scholars interested in nationalism and peasant societies in transition. Meticulously researched and carefully conceived, *Galician Villagers* serves as a clear reminder to scholars that national movements were not simply the products of elites; they depended heavily on local activists and specific social conditions.

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