

Zenon E. Kohut. *Making Ukraine: Studies on Political Culture, Historical Narrative, and Identity*. Foreword by Frank E. Sysyn. Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2011. xv, 340 pp. \$34.95 paper, \$59.95 cloth.

In the recently published third edition of his book *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation* (2009), Andrew Wilson justifies his use of the term “unexpected” in the subtitle. Many “chancelleries, universities and boardrooms in the West,” he writes, were surprised by the rise of an independent Ukraine in 1991. Due to its “pronounced patterns of ethnic, linguistic, religious and regional diversity” in the past, Ukraine was not considered a suitable candidate as a new nation. “However, an unexpected nation is still a nation,” states Wilson, “no more and no less than many others.” He concludes that with the passage of time “we will get used to Ukraine,” as we did to other countries, such as Belgium, Turkey, Kuwait and Slovakia: “Barring catastrophes, it is here to stay” (p. xi).

In this book, designed primarily for the English-speaking public, Zenon Kohut shows the broad process and various evolutionary stages in the “making” of Ukraine. He does this with fifteen studies published between 1977 and 2006, all of which stress significant developments in Ukraine’s politics, historiography, and identity. While some of these studies feature updated texts and footnotes, all of them contain standardized spelling and transliteration. Earlier Kohut produced a similar book for Ukrainian readers: *Korinnia identychnosti: Studii z rann'omodernoï ta modernoi istorii Ukraïny* (Kyiv, 2004).

The studies cover many topics and a lengthy chronological period, from the emergence of Kyvan Rus' to the close of Leonid Kuchma’s presidency. The stress in them is on the eighteenth century, which has been Kohut’s main period of research. Since all of these studies cannot be discussed in this review, I have selected the following four for comment: “The Development of a Little Russian Identity and Ukrainian Nation-Building” (pp. 36–58); “The Problem of Ukrainian Orthodox Church Autonomy in the Hetmanate (1654–1780s)” (pp. 135–50); “The Development of Ukrainian National Historiography in the Russian Empire” (pp. 186–217); and “The Khmelnytsky Uprising, the Image of Jews, and the Shaping of Ukrainian Historical Memory” (pp. 242–70).

In the first study Kohut shows that the development of a “Little Russian” identity—as called by contemporaries and subsequently referred to by historians as the “Hetmanate”—“was indisputably a prelude to modern Ukrainian nation-building.” The second study demonstrates clearly that by the close of the eighteenth century “the Orthodox Church in the Hetmanate had been completely integrated into Russian state Orthodoxy.” The third reveals that various stages of Ukrainian national historiography “parallel and are much part of the evolution of a modern Ukrainian identity.” Two historians are extremely significant in providing an identity for Ukrainians. The first, Mykhailo Hrushevsky (1866–1934), “replaced a paradigm in which Ukrainians played virtually no role in history, even on their own

territory, with one in which they had an ancient past.” The second, Viacheslav Lypynsky (1882–1931), succeeded in reintroducing a revolutionary impulse in Ukrainian historiography by providing “the concept of territoriality and the study of state structure and elites in Ukrainian history.” In the fourth selected study, Kohut patiently unravels the genesis of problems associated with two stereotypes: Ukrainians as “fundamental” if not “biological” anti-Semites; and Jews as “rapacious, deliberate exploiter[s] of the Ukrainian people.” The author blames both sides: “Ukrainian historians [who] have shown little empathy for the tragedy that befell the Jewish community” during the Khmelnytsky uprising, and the “Jewish commentators [who] have frequently presented the massacres” of Jews during the uprising as a “uniquely anti-Jewish phenomenon.”

The publication of this collection is most welcome, for the search for Zenon Kohut’s individual essays in the various periodicals where they first appeared would be a difficult and time-consuming task. His essays reveal, without a doubt, that Ukraine—notwithstanding its troubled historical process—has the right to issue a claim for recognition as a historical nation. Through this collection readers will be able to evaluate the author’s major contributions to Ukrainian historiography, especially those relating to the early modern period of Ukrainian history. They will also note that Kohut has a unique talent in providing simple, clear, and fair explanations of certain complex historical developments. It is for these reasons, as well as others, that *Making Ukraine* is highly recommended to readers who are interested in learning about Ukrainian history.

Andrew B. Pernal  
*Brandon University*