

THE EMERGENCE OF UKRAINE: SELF-DETERMINATION, OCCUPATION, AND WAR IN UKRAINE, 1917–1922. By Wolfram Dornik, Georgiy Kasianov, Hannes Leidinger, Peter Lieb, Alexei Miller, Bogdan Musial, and Vasyl Rasevych. Trans. Gus Fagan. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2015. xxx, 441 pp., 5 illustrations, 7 maps, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN (paper) 978-1-894865-40-1.

*The Emergence of Ukraine: Self-Determination, Occupation, and War in Ukraine, 1917–1922*, is a collection of articles by scholars of history that provides a thorough evaluation of the formation of the Ukrainian state in 1918 and the fundamental role played by foreign powers in its development. While the book's focus lies with the actions of the Central Powers and Russia, other important topics, such as the role of Poland and the Entente powers as well as the fate of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic, are also examined. This ambitious study of the interplay of international forces which affected—or as the authors would argue, determined—the fate of Ukrainian statehood is strengthened by the diversity of the historians engaged in the analysis, hailing from Ukraine, Germany, Austria, Poland, and Russia. The authors analyze multiple documents from national, government, and military archives, elite correspondence, and secondary sources. The work is a solid contribution to the study of Ukrainian history and the history of the eastern front of World War I, while providing rich data for social scientists to further analyze developments in Ukraine during 1917–1922.

The book's significant achievement is a detailed account of the German and Austro-Hungarian occupation of Ukraine after the Brest-Litovsk treaty, a topic that has been previously understudied. First, the authors provide an in-depth discussion of the goals and tactics pursued by the Central Powers throughout the occupation. On the one hand, mercantile pursuits seem evident in the request for Ukraine to deliver one million tons of grain to Germany and Austria-Hungary, in the overthrow of the Ukrainian Central Rada, and in the setting up of a puppet government and martial courts. These actions were accompanied by instances of brutal suppression of revolts as well as the burning of villages to punish peasants who refused to deliver grain. A

convincing analysis of archival documents, however, leads the reader to agree with the authors that the objectives pursued by the Central Powers changed over the period of occupation and, in fact, were intended to promote a strong independent Ukrainian state. Initially, the goals of the various groups within the German government ranged dramatically from support for Ukraine's independence to the design of "projects" that would eventually lead to reunification with non-Bolshevik Russia (pp. 59-65). While also divided, the Austro-Hungarian government instructed military commanders not only to secure the delivery of grain and raw materials, but also to encourage Ukrainian national tendencies in order to counteract Russia, and to support the Ukrainian elite to "lead an orderly state" (p. 70).

The authors argue that a lack of coherent strategy within the German government empowered its military commanders, who saw an independent Ukraine as a key to weaken Bolshevik Russia and who believed that the presence of German forces was necessary to promote a viable state (p. 65). After the Ukrainian political and economic elite requested the assistance of the Central Powers to fight against the Bolsheviks, and railroad workers helped occupation forces in their railroad advancement into Ukraine, the Austro-Hungarian army commander issued instructions for "peaceful support for the new and unconsolidated state," which "under no circumstances [should] lead to hostilities" (p. 157). Similarly, German soldiers were directed that they were "in a friendly country," and were to "behave according to the appropriate rules, whatever the requirement. This is the only way to maintain the trust of the population or to win it where it does not yet exist" (p. 164). Major aggression was targeted toward Bolshevik insurgencies. In these operations, German forces violated the laws of war, identifying Bolsheviks "not as soldiers but as robbers and murders" (p.172), resulting in several mass crimes and killing of prisoners. Since the Bolsheviks were indistinguishable from civilians due to a lack of army uniforms, civilians undoubtedly suffered from these hostilities. While documenting these crimes, the authors also show that such crimes were not characteristic of the occupation. Lieb and Dornik's study of military archives shows that orders were issued and that German soldiers did attempt to distinguish between Bolsheviks and uninvolved civilians (p. 177). Moreover, while legal violations were acknowledged by the German government in regard to soldiers' treatment of civilians, the authors conclude that there was no intentional terrorization of the population (p. 165). In fact, closer to the end of the occupation, German and Austro-Hungarian policy approaches became less divided in their position on an independent Ukraine. German commanders called for a state restructuring according to the will of the Hetman government, suggested Ukraine's membership in the League of Nations, and advocated strong support for the country as a necessity, "so that this friendly nation is never again abandoned to anarchy" (p. 73). These findings contribute

significantly to a scholarly understanding of the formation of independent Ukraine in 1918 and the effects of the occupation of the Central Powers.

The authors' revision of the role of the Russian Bolsheviks and the effectiveness of their ideology in the trajectory of Ukraine's political development also provides a significant insight as it is placed in the book's broader view of global and internal factors. First, based on an examination of archival documents, Kasianov points out that a majority of the political and social elites in 1917 were inclined towards autonomy and declared their wish to remain within the Russian federation to both the Provisional Government and the Bolshevik government of Russia (albeit with more autonomy). It was the Russian Bolshevik government's ultimatums and military support for Ukrainian pro-Bolshevik forces that pushed the Ukrainian Central Rada to issue its Fourth Universal, which declared the independence of the Ukrainian People's Republic. After Soviet forces occupied Kyiv, the Central Rada signed a peace treaty with the Central Powers and requested military assistance against the Bolsheviks. Second, Leidinger shows that the Bolsheviks' ideological propaganda among the Ukrainian population in 1919 was more effective than that of the Whites. For example, Bolsheviks invested in "reeducation" of insubordinate soldiers, whereas White forces had them killed (p. 26). Perhaps more importantly, the Whites dismissed the national and cultural aspirations of the Ukrainian movement. This resulted in locals identifying the Whites as their primary enemy. The Bolsheviks' strategic promotion of national cultures, the so-called *korenizatsiia* policies adopted in 1923 lowered the revolutionary potential of the Ukrainian nationalists (p. 30).

What can the authors' findings teach us about Ukraine's current potential for becoming a strong independent state in the face of Russian aggression? Dornik asserts that two major factors diminished Ukraine's capacity to sustain its independence after 1917–1918: a lack of global allies and an underdeveloped national movement. On one hand, Russia was determined to regain its control over Ukraine. On the other, the Central Powers as well as the Entente states undervalued the importance of Ukraine's independence and lacked military resources to support it. The potential for Poland's support evaporated with its bloody battles with Ukraine over territorial claims. The United States apparently saw its federal model to be applicable to a multinational Russia, which would encompass Ukraine. Perhaps, even more importantly, the Ukrainian national idea was predominant among the elites, whose legitimacy was heavily questioned by the population. While future research is needed to understand the development of social movements in Ukraine at the time, we can safely assert that contemporary Ukraine fosters a far stronger and more coherent national movement. The current commitment of Western powers to support Ukraine's sovereignty, however, remains uncertain. If we were to draw lessons from *The Emergence of Ukraine*, we would conclude that unitary policy and

the determination of Western powers to support Ukrainian statehood against Russia's fortitude is a necessary condition to maintain an enduring independent nation.

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