

at the expense of public interests have produced two revolutionary cycles in Ukraine: in the early 2000s and again in the 2010s, and “[s]ince 2014, a third cycle appears to be under way” (321). The Chapter explains what factors can lead to its outburst and what factors can prevent this from happening.

Since February 2022, Ukraine has been demonstrating continuous resilience against Russia’s fully-fledged invasion. Arguably, this reflects the people’s collective effort that has not been observed before. Unlike before, it has become crystal clear to the Ukrainians why their collective interests can matter more than private ones. I believe that academics and policy-makers can understand how much this fundamental change matters only after having reinvestigated Ukraine’s contemporary history.

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The Frontline: Essays on Ukraine’s Past and Present. By Serhii Plokyh. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, distributed by Harvard University Press, 2021. xv, 400 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Plates. Maps. \$64.00, hard bound; \$22.45, e-book.
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“The Muscovite tsar, being an intransigent foe of all the nations on earth and desiring to make them bend to his yoke, having subjected the Cossacks as well to his dishonorable bondage; despising, revoking, and annulling all your rights and freedoms established by solemn agreements and treaties with you, has forgotten and shamelessly contemned gratitude itself, held sacred by all nations, which is owed to you Cossacks and the Rus’ nation [Ukrainian nation] by Muscovy. . .” *History of the Rus’*, cited on page 77 (*Istoriia Rusov, ili, Maloi Rossii; Sochinenie Georgiia Koniskago, arkhiepiiskopa bielaruskago* [Moscow, 1846]).

This proclamation, before the Battle of Poltava in 1709, was attributed to Charles XII of Sweden. However, in this compendium of essays, Serhii Plokyh ably shows how these words were actually invented by an anonymous early nineteenth-century historian. Plokyh’s masterful analysis—in this essay and throughout the volume—throws into stark relief how myth, memory, history, and historiography have long been battlefields in the war over independence for Ukraine from Russia—or, in earlier parlance, “the Rus’ nation” from Muscovy. Reading these words in June 2022 gives this interpretation of the Battle of Poltava a connection to the present that is undeniable and even chilling.

These types of connections form the backbone of this essay collection; they are the product of Plokyh’s own search to document new developments in Ukrainian history. More importantly, they represent his search to explain and contextualize those recent developments to himself and others. Plokyh published these essays together to provide an “answer to the question of why Ukraine has been central to the East-West confrontation of the post-Cold War era and has commanded world attention more than once during the past decade” (xv).

Plokyh’s timing for this publication was (unfortunately) perfect, coming as it did just months before Russia’s latest imperialist invasion of Ukraine. He has admirably achieved his goal of answering “Why Ukraine?” for himself and other scholars of Slavic Studies. However, this is not the book to recommend to those without professional knowledge. For non-specialists, Plokyh’s *The Gates of Europe*:

A History of Ukraine—the best history of Ukraine published in English to date—should be the go-to book. Conveniently, the revised edition of *Gates* came out in paperback just a year ago. However, Plokhy's apparent audience for *Frontline*—scholars and graduate students, the readers of *Slavic Review*—would do well to own and read this companion volume. Plokhy even provides endnotes in this book (unlike in *Gates*).

Plokhy here includes twenty-one short essays, divided into four main sections. In the first, he covers many of the controversial issues in the history and historiography of early Ukraine, including the legacy of the Kyivan Rus' and the myth of the Battle of Poltava. In the second section, he includes an essay on the multi-ethnic revolution that we call "The Russian Revolution," some of the early conclusions of his Institute's important Digital Map of Ukraine Project, a pithy analysis of the origins of the Cold War, and an important contribution to the study of the Soviet aggression against Poland at the start of WWII.

In the penultimate section, Plokhy walks his readers through the collapse of the USSR, including serious essays with fun titles like, "The Empire Strikes Back." In the final section, Plokhy explains how the pan-Russian idea cannot serve as an adequate foundation for a modern Russian state, explores Ukraine's quest for Europe, and re-describes and reimagines eastern Europe and the continent as a whole.

Whatever the topic, every essay is thoroughly researched. As a bonus, a maps section includes historical cartography as well as current trends. As a whole, the volume can be read chronologically or as needed for additional context on a particular subject. It is the erudite work of a master scholar at the height of his career.

Indeed, Plokhy is currently the most decorated scholar of Ukrainian history in the west (Mykhailo Hrushevsky Professor of Ukrainian history at Harvard), and he heads the most prestigious institute in the field (Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute). However, he grew up in Zaporizhia, did his bachelor's at Dnipro University, and completed his studies at Peoples' Friendship University in Moscow. His 1983 dissertation was titled, "The Ukrainian People's Liberation War, 1648–1654, in the Latin-language Historiography of the Mid-seventeenth Century." The search for a useable past for independent Ukraine has been his life's work; this volume is just the latest chapter in a longer story—a story that needs to be told and retold, now more than ever.

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Haiku—Epigram—Kurzgedicht: Kleine Formen in der Lyrik Mittel- und Osteuropas. Ed. Christine Gölz, Alfrun Kliems, and Birgit Krehl. Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa, Band 55. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2021. 270 pp. Notes. Illustrations. €45.00, hard bound.
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The title of this compendium rendered in English would be *Haiku—Epigram—Short Poem: Small Forms in the Lyric Poetry of Central and Eastern Europe*. The articles that make up the volume treat short lyric forms as they occur in German, Polish, Russian, Slovak, Czech, and Hungarian poetry. One could argue that the work is esoteric, given its focus on less commonly practiced poetic forms produced in less commonly taught languages. In fact, the volume is unabashedly esoteric, but by no means irrelevant. In the realm of culture, the authors grapple with concepts of minimalism and the avant-garde in relation not only to the written word, but also to the image: photography,