

a result, public confidence in both governments collapsed. Both countries' presidents remained in power for just five years; Yushchenko was defeated in presidential elections in 2010, while Bakiyev was removed in a violent uprising the same year.

In Georgia, by contrast, only five parties formed part of the winning coalition, of these three were minor players and the two main coalition partners, President Mikheil Saakashvili's National Movement and Zurab Zhvania's United Democrats, united to form a single party in early 2004. As a result, few key players defected to the opposition, leaving it dormant for several years. All coalition partners agreed on granting extensive authority to the president, effectively taking the issue of presidential power off the table. The coalition was able to enact far-reaching reforms, tackle corruption and restore the authority of the state. This allowed Saakashvili to win the 2008 elections and see out his two presidential terms.

While the overall argument of the book is convincing, I would question the author's assumption that the fragmentation that undermined the Ukrainian and Kyrgyz governments was due to ideological diversity. Rukhadze tends to label the coalition partners in each country as "left" or "right" without fully interrogating what these terms mean in their contexts. Despite the fact that he laments that "political scientists who study post-Color Revolution Ukraine have completely overlooked the role of [business elites]" (60), he himself does not consider the possibility that the fragmentation he identifies is a result of conflict between competing oligarchic interests or "clans," rather than between rival ideologies.

Despite this, the book offers an interesting and convincing account of why some post-uprising governments survived, while others failed.

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Politics and the Environment in Eastern Europe. Ed. Eszter Krasznai Kovács. Cambridge, Eng.: Open Book Publishers, 2021. 325 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Tables. Maps. £32.95, hard bound; £22.95, paper.
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Politics and the Environment in Eastern Europe addresses persistent divisions between east and west in the more than thirty years since the collapse of socialism. The political ecology approach is particularly noteworthy for a region where legacies of the socialist era still pervade all spheres of life. The literature on the political ecology of the former "second world" remains somewhat underdeveloped, making this volume a welcome and important contribution. In graduate seminars in environmental politics or environmental sociology, this book will offer a lens into an often-neglected part of the world; it is equally well-suited for seminars in Russian and East European Studies that may not usually zoom in on environmental movements.

Part I considers the challenges of formal environmental movements in the region; Part II addresses the politics of lived experiences of landscapes and environments in the face of increasing nationalism; and Part III delves into the effects of environmental policies. The majority of chapters address Hungary, Poland, and Romania, with one chapter each on Czechia and Serbia and a brief mention of the Baltics. More focus on former Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Soviet Union could have helped demarcate how distinct historical-political configurations within the socialist world have led to current socio-environmental relations.

What insights can we glimpse about the politics and the environment in the east, thirty years after its presumed unification with the west? In the introduction, Eszter

Kovács emphasizes that eastern Europe has often been seen as a “laboratory” for social and political experiments. The chapters thus show the effects of being experimental subjects.

The chapters in Part I show us contradictory trends in politics in the region. Kovács and Györgi Pataki trace the strategic dismantling of the environmental sector and political activism in Hungary. Sustained attacks on academia, public figures, the media, and activists left the country at the dual mercy of an increasingly authoritarian regime and its corporate allies in the EU. Arnošt Novák and Mikuláš Černík, however, reveal a more encouraging trend of re-politicization of environmental, and specifically climate change-oriented movements in Czechia and Poland, respectively. Following a fall into liberal market environmentalism and de-politicization in the 1990s, they joined more extreme groups such as Extinction Rebellion to engage in direct action and climate camps, demanding structural and systemic changes. Jana Hrcckova zooms in on urban environmental activists in Warsaw who took advantage of uncertain property relations in urban zones of abandonment to preserve a non-commodified area in the midst of “wild development.” While there is new dynamism in environmental movements in the region, authors caution that these particular cases do not necessarily indicate overall trends, which must make us contemplate how to further enhance such opportunities.

Part II covers an increasingly important, and yet uncomfortable research area. These young scholars are to be commended for facing the intersection of nationalism, environmentalism, and capitalism head-on. Balsa Lubarda reminds us that environmental discourses have more in common with right wing discourses than most people care to admit. Alexandra Cotofană addresses how esotericism and mysticism underpin claims of indigeneity in Romania, reinforcing divides between Romanians and their “others.” Emola Püsők turns to interpretations of time and socio-ecological interactions in the mining-town narratives of Rosia Montana, Romania, where landscapes reflect a loss of the mining futures that older residents once inhabited, belying a generational shift and social rupture felt in the town. These chapters should make us consider, however, that right-wing environmentalism, populism, and political nostalgia are not isolated trends of “backwards” eastern Europe, but increasingly true in “the West” as well.

Part III covers a broad range of unintended consequences of environmental policies. George Iordăchescu shows how the resilient ecology of rural Romania has paradoxically rendered it exploitable as a conservation policy reservoir “unrecognizable to those who live there” (203). June Brawner discusses how discourses of “terroir” make an awkward fit in the local context of Hungary, requiring a re-education of tastes, a re-spacing of grape vines to fit modern equipment, and a re-examination of how the “mineral” quality of particular soils may actually be related to the chemically intensive agricultural practices of the socialist years. Renata Blumberg calls for a regional political ecology of east European food systems, drawing on examples from the Baltics and elsewhere to show how models such as Community Supported Agriculture cannot be seamlessly transferred without paying more attention to the “invisible alternatives” (251) still practiced by rural residents. Jovana Dikovic argues that official state-led rural development policies in Serbia must be moderated to give space to local values that influence “endogenous” rural development. Particularly noteworthy is Chapter 12, co-written by Éva Mihalovics and Zsüli Fehér, the researcher and a co-founder of a failed cooperative in Hungary. The authors showcase an integrative writing style that remains true to the distinct interpretations of events by each. The two perspectives strengthen the researcher’s claim that development projects must take into account the complicated village-level ethnic, gender, and class issues that may affect the longevity and sustainability of well-conceived efforts at

cooperation. Taken together, we see that little has changed from the early days when ready-made models of “development” from the west were unsuccessfully imposed on the region, but that local reflections on these failures may lead to more informed local policies in the future.

The conclusion, co-written by all the contributors together, is a fresh approach that does not seek to “tie everything up,” rather it sheds light on the struggles the authors feel as young scholars, largely native ethnographers, straddling the activist-engaged researcher divide in their work. This motivates their choice of an open source publisher that would bring their work back to the audiences that matter to them. They note that recent scholarly work focused on “emancipatory politics” tends to “reinscribe somewhat linear expectations and ideas about progressivism, using a language and framework not grounded in most of our interlocutors’ prisms and worldviews, let alone our own personal experiences (312).” This is perhaps one of the more important contributions of the book and could have been highlighted even in the introduction to frame the volume. These insights tell us a fair bit about the continuing significance of the politics surrounding not only the environment, but also scholarship, that needs to find new language to reflect the realities on the ground.

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Succession to the Throne in Early Modern Russia: The Transfer of Power, 1450–1725. By Paul Bushkovitch. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2021. xvi, 397 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$120.00, hard bound.
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This is an important book on an important subject. In all states, the transfer of power from one individual or group to another constitutes a moment of vulnerability to the existing political system regardless of that system’s format, as recent events in the United States have shown. This vulnerability is particularly obvious in a monarchical system such as early modern Russia’s. I agree with the author’s summary that the success of Russian rulers in this matter “contributed as much as the administrative offices or the boyar and aristocratic elite to the stability of the state and to the growing power of Russia” (333). No recent study has addressed this vital but neglected problem as directly and effectively as this remarkable book.

In place of the conventional view that early modern Russian rulers practiced primogeniture (whereby the eldest son of the reigning monarch automatically inherits the kingdom), Bushkovitch proposes a far more flexible, almost improvisatory, arrangement that is hard to provide a good name for. Bushkovitch seems to suggest that, until the era of Peter the Great, “custom,” an inherited (or invented) varied set of tools to ensure a smooth succession, would best serve monarchs and their courts over the roughly two and a half centuries under discussion. Primogeniture seems never to have worked by itself, since its strict operation can almost never be observed. Among these tools were elections, paternal designation, the crowning and/or exhibiting of desired successors to the elite or a broader public by the current ruler, a wide variety of court ceremonies (from coronations to orations to name- and birthday celebrations), loyalty oaths, baptismal records, diplomatic announcements to foreign governments, and even orders to drink to the health of or pray for members of the royal family. The author rightly emphasizes repeatedly that the whole royal family, rather than any one individual within it, was often the focus of these measures, a wise choice given the precariousness of the physical survival of royals at the time. This