

Byzantine-Rus approaches in his monumentalist contributions to early twentieth century Ukrainian sacral art. Finally, Natalia Dmytryshyn analyzes Galician sacral needlework at the turn of the twentieth century and its search for an authentic expression within a Ukrainian national canon.

*Eastern Christians in the Habsburg Monarchy* leaves an ambivalent impression. The anthology shows its origins in conference proceedings; it is a collage of select facets without an overarching narrative or conclusion. The strong emphasis on works of art, whose analysis fills 60 percent of the combined text, makes much of the volume a study of art history. General history fills no more than 100 pages, which cannot begin to do justice to the many divergent expressions of Eastern-rite life under Habsburg rule. Readers expecting to receive an encompassing overview of the Eastern Christian experience in this part of the world will be disappointed.

Instead, the readers can expect well-researched glimpses of Eastern Christian life in the Danube Monarchy. In combination, these glimpses show the transitional nature of art and society at the intersection of larger cultural realms. At the symbolic center of this cultural world stands the Greek Catholic Church, with its often ambiguous position between Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy and its unique expression of the cultural and religious hybridity that has characterized the region for many centuries. In this manner, the otherwise often disparate contributions regain a unifying theme after all.

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***The Tragedy of Ukraine: What Classical Greek Tragedy Can Teach Us About Conflict Resolution.*** By Nicolai N. Petro. De Gruyter Contemporary Social Sciences. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2023. xvi, 285 pp. Index. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$102.99, hard bound.  
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Instead of blaming the Ukraine crisis on external factors, Nicolai Petro suggests that “paying more, not less, attention to Ukraine’s historical and cultural diversity” is the key to understanding how Europe’s biggest country became its poorest and then descended into war (xiii). To overcome the suicidal policy of integral nationalism that “the mainstream Right after 2014” embraced wholeheartedly (xiv), Ukraine can begin its reconstruction by pursuing an inclusive civic identity.

The originality of this thought-provoking book lies in Petro’s reaching back to the lessons of classical Greek tragedy as a roadmap out of the perpetual cycle of distrust and violence. The first chapter therefore identifies the central lessons of the great Greek tragedians: pity leading to wisdom; compassion breaking the cycle of tragedy; true justice only coming from the triumph of the whole; and compassion leading to true justice and prosperity. “Approaches that focus on single issues—corruption, oligarchical infighting, Russian intervention, Western external administration,” Petro suggests, “treat the symptoms of the disease rather than its underlying causes” (32). The underlying problem is the attempt by to “derive justice for one’s own group at the expense of justice for the Other” (34).

Petro gives a complex historical picture of western Ukrainian (Galician) attempts to forge a non-Russian identity with the original encouragement of the Austro-Hungarian empire. By contrast, the eastern Ukrainian (Maloross) “identity of Left-Bank Ukraine” saw itself as “distinct, but still complimentary to Russian culture” and “rejected the view that Ukraine must chose between Europe and Russia, preferring

instead a partnership with both” (50). The second chapter also gives an in-depth portrayal of the rise of the Ukrainian right, especially the ultranationalist Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), which “was fighting for Ukraine’s freedom to be part of the Third Reich” and “as the Reich began to collapse, they altered this civilizational choice to that of becoming part of the anticommunist West” (63).

Ukraine’s communist past comes out as a complicated, but not entirely negative, experience. Although Stalin would reverse indigenization, later Soviet leaders of the Ukrainian SSR would bring some of its elements back. Ukrainian party boss Petro Shelest (in office 1963–72) “encouraged the elaborate commemoration of Ukrainian literary figures . . . and established national museums for Ukrainian folklore and architecture” (66–67). His successor Vladimir Shcherbitsky (1972–89) “introduced even stricter language quotas in mass media and shifted almost all local television to the Ukrainian language” (67). With multiple Soviet leaders, such as “Brezhnev, Podgorny, Khrushchev, Chernenko” (68) hailing from Ukraine, its population at an all-time high of 52 million, and its industrial base one of the most powerful in the USSR, it is no surprise that “71.5 percent” of Ukrainians voted to remain in a renegotiated USSR when Gorbachev initiated the famous referendum in March 1991 (71). But the August 1991 putsch against Gorbachev made all this moot.

Petro focuses on the “Orange Revolution of 2004” as “an instructive story” about “one of the most persistent tragic patterns in Ukrainian history” of insisting that only “Galician identity [is] legitimate” (79). The Maidan revolution of 2014, which overthrew the democratically elected President Victor Yanukovich “became a watershed moment . . . when national politics shifted from the pursuit of consensus, to the pursuit of explicit Galician political and cultural dominance” (88). During times of political crisis, such as 2004 and 2014, nationalism has “allowed civil society to unite briefly, muster enough support to oppose existing oligarchic arrangements, and reshuffle the political deck” (112). But failing to find a compromise between the western and eastern visions for Ukraine ensured a repetition of the struggle for state capture. The Kyiv-imposed economic blockade on the Donbass contributed to the decline of public support to rejoin Ukraine from “a majority” in 2019 to “only 12 percent” by 2021 (230). Worse, the (Oleksiy) Reznikov Plan for the reintegration of the Donbas would reimpose Ukrainian “as the sole language in all official and public discourse,” lustrate all public servants, offer “no general amnesty or special status,” and abrogate “Crimea’s autonomous status” (244). Approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in August 2021, the plan essentially treated “the Ukrainians in Donbass and Crimea as conquered people” (245).

Petro recommends that Ukraine moves towards reconciliation via dialogue “with a center, not sides” (250) and emulate reconciliation commissions of the South African type in pursuit of “restorative justice” (262) and “cultural security” for all sides (264).

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***Poetik der Grenzverschiebung: Kinderliterarische Muster, Crosswriting und kulturelles Selbstverständnis der polnischen Literatur nach 1989.*** By Karoline Thaidigsmann. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2022. xii, 418 pp. Bibliography. Index. Plates. €59.00, hard bound.  
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In her study, Karoline Thaidigsmann explores the role of crossover fiction in Polish literature after 1989. She emphasizes the crucial function of writing that blurs the