

In the seventh essay, Nikolaos Chrissidis reviews the Moscow patriarchate's charitable giving in the year 1661–62, during the patriarchate of Joasaf II (r. 1667–1672), revealing a very narrow geographic focus in and around the Moscow Kremlin and the nearby bridges (where beggars congregated).

Donald Ostrowski argues in the eighth essay that the Russian church did not become an arm of the state, nor did it fall into decline, with end of the patriarchate in 1721, but in fact, the Holy Governing Synod enacted the church's Enlightenment program to better train the clergy, fight superstition, and increase lay piety. The Russian church, in fact, flourished up until the end of the empire in 1917.

Finally, Kevin Kain looks again at art, in particular the Parsuna "Patriarch Nikon with Clergy," a seventeenth-century secular portrait in an iconographic style, and how this particular portrait influenced historic views of Nikon, especially in the nineteenth century.

These essays offer fascinating glimpses at Russian Orthodoxy, the patriarchate, and broader religious and cultural history in the time of the earlier Moscow Patriarchate, adding to our overall understanding of early modern eastern Europe.

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***The Tsar, the Empire, and the Nation: Dilemmas of Nationalization in Russia's Western Borderlands, 1905–1915.*** Ed. Darius Staliunas and Yoko Aoshima.

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Was the late Romanov empire a truly "nationalizing" polity during the early twentieth century? If so, to what extent and in what way exactly? How did it respond to the challenges posed by peripheral national projects while aiming at the consolidation of a hard-to-pin-down "Russian" national core? The emerging historiographical consensus, epitomized, among other works, by the recent broadly comparative volume on *Nationalizing Empires* (2016), edited by Stefan Berger and Alexei Miller, posits that the European continental empires (and the Russian empire, in particular) were quite successful at "taming" nationalism, while appropriating it for their own purposes of political legitimization or state-building.

The collection edited by Darius Staliunas and Yoko Aoshima—a product of an excellent international team of scholars specializing in Russia's western borderlands—engages with and partially amends this view by changing the lens of analysis and focusing on "the response of the empire's ruling elite to the challenges of nationalism in the tsarist regime's last decades" (4). It does so, first, by revisiting the older dichotomy between "bureaucratic nationalism" and the "imperial strategy," formulated by Polish historian Witold Rodkiewicz over two decades ago, and by fruitfully contributing to the current debates on the nature of the relationship between empire and nation in an era of mass politics. One of the core arguments of this volume is that there was a constant tension—which was never actually resolved—between two antagonistic visions of the empire: one that "perceived the empire as primarily an ethnic Russian (*russkii*) state" privileging "the interests of Russians. . . at the expense of non-Russians," and another, which "embraced the idea of imperial heterogeneity" and aimed primarily at "ensur[ing] the loyalty of non-Russians" (2). In his contribution, Staliunas expresses this opposition through making the "distinction between the *imperial* or *pragmatic* nationality policy and

*nationalist* nationality policy strategies” (39). As the editors emphasize in the introduction, one of the volume’s main findings is that neither of these two strategies could claim a decisive victory, not least because “the regime could commit itself completely to neither of them” (13).

Second, the volume questions the established definitions and dynamics of “official nationalism”—rejecting, or at least heavily nuancing, the interpretation put forward by Alexei Miller—by showing the *inconsistent* (even contradictory) nature of the Russian state’s nationalizing efforts. If, as Anton Kotenko claims in his chapter, the Romanov polity was “an inconsistently nationalizing empire that did not pursue a coherent program of making the empire more Russian” (31), does it follow that what historians thought they knew about the tsarist state during its last decades should be revised? In other words, was this “reluctantly” (13) nationalizing imperial formation ever modern, at least with respect to managing difference and seeking to integrate its non-Russian ethnic communities into a larger whole? The contributors to this volume would likely answer this question in the negative, highlighting the inconsistency and “non-simultaneity” of the imperial nationality policies.

Methodologically, the twelve texts included in the volume follow “an intermediate geographic scope by focusing on Russia’s western peripheries collectively” (4). While this “meso-scale” is not new in itself (the earlier works of Rodkiewicz, Miller, Mikhail Dolbilov, or Theodore Weeks readily come to mind), the breadth of the covered topics, coupled with the detailed analysis of individual case studies, is impressive. The collection succeeds in keeping the balance while pursuing several closely intertwined thematic threads. The chapters fall under four main categories, which are reflected accordingly in the overall structure of the volume: the dynamics of imperial nationality policy from the Revolution of 1905–07 up to World War I; the overlapping (and sometimes opposing) trajectories of ethnonational conflict and confessional rivalry in these religiously heterogeneous borderlands; the conundrum of evolving educational policies under the combined pressures of increasingly radical nationalist demands, language dilemmas, and competing definitions of imperial loyalties and the imperial space; and, finally, the increasing mobilization of the Russian nationalist and radical right-wing organizations, which resulted in a bewildering array of exclusionary visions, utopian projects, and occasionally improbable political combinations.

Among the book’s strengths I would highlight, first, the ingenious and convincing way in which the contributors approach the tripartite dilemma between “the tsar, the empire, and the nation” encapsulated in the title. In fact, the *multiplicity of local, regional, and central actors* vying for power, resources, and loyalties on an increasingly competitive political field is a crucial conclusion supported by all the case studies and defining the specificity of the last prewar decade. The authors show that collective and individual agency—be it of the Catholic and Orthodox clergy seeking to attract believers, the local communities negotiating for better educational opportunities, the politicized teachers attempting to impose their visions of the ideal national territory on pupils and the central authorities alike, or the “atypical” government officials such as Warsaw governor-general Georgii Skalon (67–109) or Vil’na and Kovna governor Verevkin (50–56)—did matter and, to a significant extent, defined the limits of the politically feasible. Second, *the shifting ethnic hierarchies of perceived enemies* and the changing dynamics of these categories structured not only the contested imaginings of imperial space—always plagued by uncertainty and often compounded by the “twofold isolation” (106) of the state bureaucracy in the borderlands—but also had concrete consequences for the latter’s policy goals and priorities. While inconsistent, imperial nationalizing policies resulted in an escalating cycle of mutual radicalization preventing any common ground between

Russians and non-Russians. Third, the collection's focus on the *mobilization of popular Russian nationalism*, as an essential variable in the era's political turmoil, is highly commendable. Although the "Russian right," in all its guises, never achieved a lasting success in the borderlands, it served as a catalyst for fostering non-Russian nationalisms and hugely complicated the task of imperial governance. Thus, far from strengthening the empire, it frequently weakened and subverted it in these "geopolitically sensitive regions" (4).

Given the wide-ranging scope of the volume and its high scholarly quality, I would only make a couple of critical remarks. First, one would wish for (and expect) a somewhat greater interest in the impact of World War I on the region. Second, there are small contextual inconsistencies that are hardly surprising, given the richness of the tackled subject. For example, the periodical *Okrainy Rossii* is assessed by one contributor (Vytautas Petronis) as "moderate, and, to some extent, nationalistic" (316), while Karsten Brüggemann uses much stronger language, calling the same newspaper "chauvinist" (327).

This volume represents a crucial and indispensable contribution to the ongoing debate on the "nationalization" of the late Russian empire, but it goes much further in problematizing the conceptual and practical entanglements between the analytical categories of "nation" and "empire," as such. Therefore, the collection edited by Staliunas and Aoshima will be highly relevant for all students of nationalism and empire in Eurasia.

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**1837: Russia's Quiet Revolution.** By Paul W. Werth. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. xviii, 213 pp. Notes. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Tables. Maps. \$49.95, hard bound.

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While academic histories exist to rupture the condescension of presents about pasts, they are sometimes marred by the presentist pomposities and herd instincts of their academic authors. Paul W. Werth's superb study of a single year, 1837, exemplifies the quest and yet exhibits none of the faults. Beyond its interesting theses, always lightly worn and artfully expounded, this is a work to savor with students, because you can use it to explore how histories are constructed, and what ends they can serve. Werth's skillful research is distilled into a venturesome and ironic narrative.

This book is simply a delight to read: witty, creative, and well-referenced. Werth is deeply informed, but also uninhibited by previous scholarship. He keeps the primary sources front and center. Werth is not persuaded that Hegelian reductionist dualisms of Slavophile and Westernizer really suffice. This is historical scholarship that combines creativity with deep research. While Aleksandr Herzen and Nikoli Gogol', Iurii Annenkov, and Aleksandr Pushkin have shaped most of our views of Nikolaevan Russia, most often to cast it aside much as the Renaissance once berated its merely "Middle" Ages, Werth gently widens our frames of reference and (mostly) re-focuses attention on other venturesome activities of the Nikolaevan state not scripted by Sergei Uvarov or Aleksei Arakcheev.

Along with Leonid Brezhnev's doddery era of stagnation (*zastoi*), Nikolaevan Russia (1825–55) might be one of Russianists' and Slavists' least favored eras for historical inquiry. By way of contrast, Werth shows all sorts of fascinating Nikolaevan