

hand, *Over the Edge* answers the call put forth more than a decade ago by Limerick, Cronon, White, Worster, and others for a more inclusive, postcolonial vision of the West. On the other, there is a tendency to deconstruct “the West” — a fundamental questioning of the usefulness of a regional approach to American history. This position, a child of postmodern scepticism, contrasts with the confidence, moral authority, and a commitment to “the Truth” that motivated the generation of New Western (New Left) historians who came of age during the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, the call for an analytical vision beyond parochial, regional, and strictly national interpretations — which echoes Earl Pomeroy’s criticisms of a half-century ago — is particularly relevant as we enter a twenty-first century increasingly marked by transglobal capitalism and consumer culture. Regrettably, despite all the hullabaloo about multiple points of view, the editors and contributors demonstrate a predictable American myopia with regard to Canada and the northern borderlands.

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Bohdan Nahaylo — *The Ukrainian Resurgence*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999. Pp. xix, 608.

During the 1980s and early 1990s, Bohdan Nahaylo was a regular contributor to Radio Liberty’s bulletins on Ukraine and eventually he became the head of the RL Ukrainian Service in Munich, which monitored closely the Russian and Ukrainian media. Thus he was in an excellent position to observe the dramatic changes that occurred after 1985. One result is this superb monograph, which constitutes essential reading for anyone interested in this critical period of Ukrainian history that has seen the re-emergence of the Ukrainian state. It is based primarily on reports from Ukrainian newspapers of the period and supplemented by the author’s own interviews with many of the participants.

The book is long and detailed. At first glance, its title might raise questions. By what precise period is the term “resurgence” defined? The volume encompasses an entire decade, 1985 to 1995, but the events of the last four years have seen the country experience a number of crises. Taken overall, however, the title seems appropriate. For all its economic problems, Ukraine has not compromised on the question of independence, which is more solidly entrenched in 2000 than it was in 1992. Ukraine is now very much part of the international consciousness, even though its identity as a specifically European state remains to be defined.

Nahaylo divides his text into 18 chapters, and approximately four-fifths of the book is devoted to the period prior to the end of the Soviet Union, with the first two chapters examining the historical background (mainly the Soviet era). The emphasis is on political, cultural, and religious events rather than economic and social issues, though very little of significance has been omitted, including the repercussions of Chernobyl and the miners’ strikes and protests of 1989–1991.

There are several notable insights, including Nahaylo’s objective and careful

reappraisal of many leading personalities of the period. Even former Communist Party of Ukraine leader Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, long seen as the archetypal hard-line Communist, emerges as a deeper and conflicting personality.

It is ... surprising that Shcherbytsky's former colleagues speak very highly of him. They consider him to have been a very capable politician and administrator — a dedicated technocrat who understood the workings of the economy and who got on well with the directors of the republic's large enterprises.... They also claim that, compared to many other high-ranking Soviet officials at that time, Shcherbytsky did not tolerate corruption within his inner circle and was relatively modest when it came to accruing decorations and privileges. (pp. 50–51)

Many of the initial steps toward democratization in Ukraine were prompted by the bold stance of another Communist, the writer Borys Oliynyk, whereas the initial founders of Rukh — particularly Ivan Drach — are depicted as cautious and essentially conservative figures, who advanced tentatively while trying to conciliate the CPU leadership. The same applies to Green World founder and future Ukrainian ambassador to the United States, Yuri Shcherbak. This was a time of numerous contradictions, when reformers could be reactionaries on critical issues and vice-versa. This was particularly the case in the Communist camp, which was thrown into confusion by the initiatives emanating from the Gorbachev leadership in Moscow.

Of the portraits developed in the book from the latter, that of Leonid Kravchuk is outstanding. The transformation of the man who most adamantly opposed the formation of Rukh to the figure who became Ukraine's first president and symbol of independence appears truly remarkable, and yet Nahaylo demonstrates that the character of Kravchuk did not change substantially. Kravchuk was a clever political opportunist, and there is no better indication of this fact than the description of his actions during the abortive putsch in Moscow of August 10–21, 1991 (p. 374), when he declined to oppose the plotters openly but was somehow able to justify his actions before harsh critics in parliament in the aftermath of the putsch.

The achievement of independence in August 1991 should not be underestimated. It was not a chain reaction to the events in Moscow. Nahaylo chronicles the major events that brought Ukraine to this juncture: the formation of Rukh and other political groups; the opening of churches, particularly in western Ukraine; the "betrayal" of Shcherbytsky's successor and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Volodymyr Ivashko, who agreed to become Gorbachev's deputy in Moscow in the summer of 1990; the debate over and declaration of sovereignty in July 1990; the debate over the new Union Treaty; and the students' hunger strike in Kyiv in October 1990, which led to the resignation of Prime Minister Vitalii Masol and revitalized the waning campaign of the national democrats.

At each stage of events, the reformers faced formidable obstacles. International leaders who today base their reputations primarily on their roles in helping the West win the Cold War hardly endeared themselves to residents of Ukraine during this critical period. Margaret Thatcher, for example, told Ukrainians in June 1990 that she had no wish to see the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. George Bush's notorious

“Chicken Kiev” speech of August 1991, in which he warned Ukrainians of the dangers of “suicidal nationalism”, is also well known. The CPU was one of the most monolithic and repressive of all republican Communist parties and, as Nahaylo shows, opposed the Rukh and democratization at every step.

According to the author, when independence was declared, it was on the initiative of figures such as Dmytro Pavlychko and Volodymyr Yavorivsky and of the People’s Council in general, but, paradoxically, the declaration provided a way out of a seemingly impossible impasse for the more reform-minded Communist Party leaders after the collapse of the putsch in Moscow. Citing Mykola Shulha’s remark that “We were like blind kittens who had found a way out”, the author illustrates the Great Compromise of Ukrainian politics: the formation of an independent Ukrainian state. In this way, the liberal Communist faction could maintain its hold on power while satisfying all sides other than the hard-line Communists under Stanislav Hurenko.

While narrating this fascinating series of events, the author is at pains to depict external events that influenced the directions being taken in Ukraine. Ukraine is never regarded in isolation from its neighbours, as indeed it could never have acted in isolation. Most frequently, the Baltic states directed the tempo and relations with Russia that provided the impetus. By 1990, however, Ukrainians (like Russians) had become disillusioned with the Gorbachev regime and began to define their own course.

The final chapters of the book represent something of an anti-climax. They provide a condensed portrait of a nation struggling to survive — indeed one section (p. 465) is entitled “On the Verge of Catastrophe” — in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles: the declaration of independence by the Crimean republic, hyperinflation, a financial-energy crisis in 1993, and a gradual but serious deterioration in relations with Russia. The author provides two conclusions, in effect, one at the end of the regular text and one in a postscript. The former maintains that, in spite of various problems, Ukraine has succeeded in achieving and maintaining independence. The latter indicates that, with the approach of the twenty-first century, “Ukrainian resurgence in modern times hung in the balance.”

One could argue that the two conclusions are not contradictory. Independence has been preserved, but the resurgence has ended. Instead, the observer perceives a state that has to deal first with questions of economic reform and standards of living as opposed to discussions on borders, fleets, or nuclear weapons. The key issues are no longer the right to free speech or assembly and the formation of a pluralistic system, but rather the elimination of debt, resolving the question of the shutdown of Chernobyl, and convincing the Economic Union that Ukraine would be a reliable associate (if not a full) member. Ukraine is no longer the breadbasket of Europe or even a powerful industrial base noted for coal, chemicals, and steel. It must redefine its industrial development, its role in a technological age, and its place in the European structures, while maintaining good relations with Russia.

In retrospect, the period of 1985 to 1991 will likely be perceived as the most dramatic and most tempestuous in Ukrainian history. It has elicited more discussion than any previous period, but hitherto no scholarly monograph has described it in

full or chronicled practically all aspects of these turbulent times. Thus, while in future political scientists and historians may question isolated aspects of or statements in Nahaylo's book, they will nonetheless be forever indebted to him for his efforts, his objectivity and balance, and his meticulousness in compiling information, particularly for the years 1989 to 1991.

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H. V. Nelles — *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999. Pp. x, 397.

La jaquette de cet ouvrage attire et intrigue. Elle reproduit deux tableaux évoquant la somptueuse mise en scène des fêtes du tricentenaire de la fondation de Québec en 1608. Ensuite, elle porte un titre équivoque : le livre de H. V. Nelles parle-t-il de l'art politique de fabriquer une nation ou de la production artistique qui symbolise cette nation en construction, ou des deux? Pourquoi aussi distinguer *pageantry* et *spectacle* : le *pageant* n'est-il pas un spectacle? Mais peut-être le spectacle se produit-il aussi en-dehors du *pageant*... Et puis, de quelle *nation* traite un livre sur le tricentenaire de Québec?

Les commémorations qu'étudie Nelles ont eu lieu à Québec à l'été de 1908. Il s'agit surtout du tricentenaire de la fondation de la ville par Champlain en juillet, mais aussi des fêtes du bicentenaire de la mort de monseigneur de Laval, tenues quelques jours auparavant. Si la fête de Laval a respecté une syntaxe traditionnelle (messes, processions et inauguration d'une imposante statue), celle du tricentenaire a été unique en son genre : spectacles historiques (*pageants*) mobilisant des milliers d'acteurs et de figurants (une première en Amérique), revues militaires et policières, visite du prince de Galles et de toutes les personnalités canadiennes de premier plan, mouillage d'une escadre navale internationale, remises de titres et de décorations, banquets, bals et feux d'artifices, le tout léguant au public le parc des Champs de bataille nationaux.

Jusqu'à récemment, cette célébration avait attiré peu de chercheurs et n'avait été l'objet d'aucune synthèse critique. L'étude de Nelles comble donc un vide, en particulier dans le domaine des usages publics du passé, où la production canadienne est indigente. Mais l'auteur ne s'est pas contenté d'étudier un phénomène car, tel un cicérone, il entraîne ses lecteurs vers les archives, fouillant devant eux les boîtes, les spicilèges, les correspondances officielles et privées et les journaux, partageant avec eux son enthousiasme.

Le premier chapitre décrit ces *pageants* qui furent la pièce maîtresse du tricentenaire. Les quatre chapitres suivants décrivent par le menu la transformation en fête canadienne et impériale de ce qui devait être au départ une célébration canadienne-française suscitée par la Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste locale. Nelles souligne l'activité débridée du gouverneur général, lord Grey, auprès des autorités civiles, militaires et religieuses, et l'habileté avec laquelle il convertit la célébration momentanée de la naissance de la Nouvelle-France en une commémoration permanente de sa chute sur