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On: 02 February 2012, At: 09:09

Publisher: Routledge

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Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cnap20>

Bosnia remade: ethnic cleansing and its reversal

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Available online: 02 Feb 2012

To cite this article: Matthew Bolton (2012): Bosnia remade: ethnic cleansing and its reversal, *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 40:1, 153-155

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634184>

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BOOK REVIEWS

Faith and fatherland: Catholicism, modernity, and Poland, by Brian Porter-Szűcs, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011, x + 484 pp., US\$55.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0-19-539905-9

In his latest book, Brian Porter-Szűcs offers an engrossing and erudite account of Polish Catholicism's difficult engagement with modernity. Each of its 10 chapters focuses on the evolution of a specific idea integral to Polish Catholicism from the nineteenth to the early twenty-first centuries. The author begins with "Church," a chapter that explores Polish Catholicism's operational ecclesiology, including the traditionally dominant role of the clergy and the possibility of a more inclusive vision of church. "Sin" treats the theological anthropology that has animated modern Polish Catholic life. In "Modernity," he analyzes the degree to which Polish Catholics were capable of embracing a progressive historiography. "Person and Society" considers the shifting significance of social justice. "Politics" details Polish Catholic conceptions of political legitimacy and agency. The heart of the book unfolds over the next four chapters, in which Porter-Szűcs scrutinizes the evolving relationship between Catholicism and Polish nationalism. His concluding chapter focuses on Mary's lofty place in the Polish Catholic imagination.

The book's multiple narrative threads weave together to form a coherent and compelling portrait of modern Polish Catholicism. The long nineteenth century serves as a kind of baseline, against which a number of more recent developments are measured. Its defining features include a hierarchical conception of church, a dim view of human nature, a static philosophy of time, a sense of resignation toward social and economic inequality, allegiance toward traditional political models (monarchy), and opposition to the Polish nationalist movement.

The interwar period, which witnessed the re-emergence of an independent Polish state, gave rise to some fundamental shifts in Polish Catholic sentiment. Porter-Szűcs discerns a more optimistic anthropology, the emergence of formal channels for lay Catholic activism, and the recognition that Catholics should endeavor to make the world a better place. More ominous developments include the church's alliance with the National Democrats and their chauvinistic brand of nationalism. Catholicism was now acknowledged as a bastion of Polish identity in a world teeming with enemies, none more pernicious than the Jews.

In the Communist era, Polish Catholics embraced a progressive social vision as they duelled with the Communists for the hearts and minds of the nation. In a state that was now almost exclusively Catholic, the church grew more receptive to the democratic process, recognizing it as a means of realizing a Christian social order. Vatican II reinforced both tendencies. The identification of Polishness and Catholicism grew tighter still. The church still spoke of sin, but it now tended to be displaced from the individual transgressor to larger outside forces, with the consequences of sin linked to national decline.

Having championed democracy under Communism, church leaders welcomed the 1989 transition to democratic government. They have sought repeatedly to influence policy, but Poland's Catholic majority has proven less malleable than expected. In the most reactionary corners of the church, disillusionment with the political process and

social and cultural trends has given rise to a new round of conspiracy theories, in which outside enemies (the EU, Jews, homosexual activists, etc.) threaten to undermine the Polish Catholic nation. Other voices have summoned the church to move in new directions, away from an excessive nationalism that obscures Catholicism's universal character and toward a faith rooted more in a personalized commitment than in ethnic ties. In recent years church leaders have also publicly acknowledged Polish sins of omission and commission toward Jews.

Faith and Fatherland is well written and draws from an impressive array of sources, including sermons, pastoral letters, devotional books, and online forums. A fair-minded observer of his subject matter, Porter-Szűcs does not paper over more-disturbing aspects of the modern church in Poland (such as the scandalous anti-Semitism of the interwar era), but neither does he sensationalize them. He demonstrates sound insight into the nature of Catholicism as a religious system. Instead of treating it as an active agent in history, he focuses on church members who operate, with varying degrees of fidelity, according to its tenets. These tenets merely establish the outer limits of what can be said and done; within these limits there is ample room for contestation.

The author deftly contextualizes Polish Catholicism within the larger flow of church history. He walks readers through a diverse array of historical phenomena and theological concepts, ranging from the Donatist controversy to social Catholicism. One of the few stumbles in this regard concerns his treatment of Vatican II. Focusing exclusively on the most innovative aspects of the council, he portrays it as a dramatic rupture with the Catholic past. Such an approach obscures the nuances within council documents that offer legitimate support for a hermeneutics of continuity.

Porter-Szűcs displays a confident command of the literature on modern Polish Catholicism and challenges a number of widely held judgments. His most notable revision concerns the centrality of Catholicism to Polish national identity. Scholars commonly trace the origins of this nexus to the seventeenth century and argue that the church played a key role in the preservation of national identity during the long nineteenth century, when no Polish state existed. By contrast, Porter-Szűcs emphasizes the "profound gulf" that stood between the church and the nineteenth-century nationalist movement. "The strong ideological link between faith and fatherland emerged in full force only at the start of the twentieth century," he suggests, "and it would be many decades before it became unquestioned common sense that Poles were necessarily Catholic" (p. 9). His argument is not convincing. He exaggerates the contrasts between nineteenth-century nationalism and the church, equating nationalists with armed insurrection and an interreligious agenda while restricting his vision of church to loyalist or politically passive clergy.

These criticisms aside, *Faith and Fatherland* stands as an important scholarly contribution. It is quite simply the most informative and insightful account of modern Polish Catholicism that currently exists in English. Newcomers to the subject might wish for a more basic, chronological history of the church as an institution, but more-experienced readers will relish the intellectual journey offered by a very talented historian at the height of his powers.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634182>

A long goodbye: the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, by Artemy Kalinovsky, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2011, 320 pp., US\$27.95 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0674058668.

All foreigners enter Afghanistan with expectations of transforming the country in their own image. All leave Afghanistan content to let the Afghans handle their problems in their own way. After a decade in Afghanistan, the United States and its coalition allies have entered this second stage. They seek to find an exit strategy that maintains a stable Afghanistan without their military presence. Kalinovsky's examination of how the Soviets ended their direct involvement is therefore both timely and instructive. However, because the focus of the book is on ideological changes within Soviet leadership that accompanied the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev, Afghanistan's politics and personalities are reflected only through their reactions to decisions taken in Moscow. Despite some breathless blubs that suggest otherwise, comparisons with the current situation in Afghanistan have as many differences as similarities.

The Soviet Union's entry into Afghanistan has been much better documented than its exit. Because reformers were keen to lay the problems of a failed Afghanistan policy upon Brezhnev and his cronies, original documentation and frank criticism was available even before the Soviet Union dissolved in late 1991. By contrast, its withdrawal from Afghanistan was of less interest since Gorbachev was keen to put the issue behind him and – once the Soviet Union was gone – the details of this bloody but stalemated chess match appeared purely academic. Moreover, original archival material that was so plentiful immediately after the Soviet Union collapsed dried up in the years that followed, making it far more difficult to reconstruct the exact “how and why” of the withdrawal. In spite of these difficulties, Kalinovsky has made excellent use of existing original but partial documentation, published memoirs, newspaper accounts, interviews and occasional careful speculation to build a tight book that throws much new light on many issues. For example, he finds no evidence that Gorbachev gave his generals a year to fix Afghanistan by force before then deciding to withdraw. From the beginning, he was determined to get Soviet troops out, but delayed because he feared the impression of weakness it would create among Soviet clients and allies. Indeed Kalinovsky makes clear that Gorbachev did not care whether or not an Afghan socialist government survived a withdrawal (he was surprised when it did) as long as the Soviets could distance themselves from its collapse by at least six months.

Although the Reagan administration was unwilling to believe it, Gorbachev was sincere in wanting a political deal on Afghanistan. He pressured Kabul to accept a junior role in a proposed new coalition government that would include the *mujahideen* leaders fighting within Afghanistan in an attempt to bring the United States to the table. A practical accommodation was potentially in reach once the Soviets were gone because neither the *mujahideen* nor the socialists were particularly wedded to their ideology. However, Cold War suspicion between the two superpowers was too deeply rooted in Washington for this offer to gain any traction. Hard-liners keen to see the Soviets withdraw in defeat failed to appreciate how maintaining a stable Afghanistan once the Russians had departed was in the United States' own best interests. This lapse had tragic consequences. American economic and political support for a negotiated settlement while the Afghan state was still intact would have sidelined the most disruptive hard-line Islamists in Pakistan and undoubtedly preempted the civil war that threw Afghanistan into chaos and led to the rise of the Taliban. Had such a deal been struck, then interest in a case

study of the Soviet Union's withdrawal would be limited to a few specialists. That the topic now attracts a broader readership speaks to the high price paid for this lost opportunity.

Readers assuming *A Long Goodbye* will come to grips with America's current problems in Afghanistan will be disappointed. Kalinovsky declares from the outset that he is not an expert on Afghanistan and focuses entirely on Soviet foreign policy decision-making. Still, some of the similarities are immediately obvious. Both the Soviet Union and the US spent a decade in Afghanistan and both were frustrated by their partner governments in Kabul. Both faced an insurgency that had a cross-border sanctuary in Pakistan and growing political dissatisfaction with the progress of the war at home. However, the violence of the Soviet war was enormously greater (one million civilian Afghans dead, three million refugees) compared with the American war with the Taliban (ten thousand civilians killed, no significant refugee flow). While the United Nations annually condemned the Soviet invasion, it gave the American mission its blessing. More significantly, the Soviet Union's withdrawal took place in a Cold War context in which each superpower regularly supported Third World insurgents as part of a larger foreign policy to undermine its rival. However, the once-famous Great Game rivalries of the nineteenth and twentieth century, in which Afghanistan was regularly targeted by opposing international powers, is not much in evidence today. While Russia, as the main successor state to the Soviet Union, is not keen to see American troops in its historic sphere of influence, it shares with the United States an appreciation of the danger of Afghanistan returning to anarchy and once again becoming a haven for terrorists. Despite the occasional *schadenfreude* over America's difficulties in Afghanistan, Russia has opened supply routes from the north that have become increasingly more significant as US relations with Pakistan deteriorate. Indeed the United States' greatest problem is its erstwhile ally, Pakistan – not Russia, India, China, or Iran. Although demanding ever more funding from the United States, the Pakistan military's barely covert support of the Taliban is one of the greatest obstacles to stabilizing Afghanistan and ending the war there.

If there is one relevant aspect of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan that applies to today's situation, it is the nature of political leadership. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries every Afghan ruler installed by an invading foreign army failed; but every Afghan ruler installed by a withdrawing foreign army succeeded. This seeming paradox is not hard to explain. Weak personalities made good clients, but poor leaders; strong personalities made good leaders, but poor clients. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in late 1979, they followed the nineteenth-century British pattern of first installing a weak personality, Babrak Karmal, who never won respect within Afghanistan. In 1986, when they began to plan for a withdrawal, the Soviets (again following the British pattern) replaced him with a strong personality, Najibullah, who was the former head of the country's feared secret police. Although Gorbachev assumed that no Afghan leader could survive without Soviet boots on the ground, Najibullah proved him wrong. He cut enough deals with his enemies to survive, using Soviet aid to keep his regime afloat. Only in 1992, after the Soviet Union itself had dissolved and Russia refused to involve itself further in Afghan affairs, did his own regime collapse. The United States and its coalition allies now face a similar problem. The weak personality they helped bring to power in 2001, Hamid Karzai, cannot survive without their protection, but the presence of foreign troops is itself destabilizing.

As the British and Soviets discovered earlier, the solution to this dilemma is to seek leaders the Afghans themselves respect as independent actors. Since the Afghan constitution requires Karzai to step down in 2014, the time to seek such leadership is now.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634183>

Bosnia remade: ethnic cleansing and its reversal, by Gerard Toal (Gearóid Ó Tuathail) and Carl T. Dahlman, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011, 463 pp., 31 b/w illustrations, 14 tables, US\$39.95 (hardcover), ISBN-13 978-0-19-973036-0

Bosnia Remade is a condemnation of reckless mapmaking and a study of whether its damage can be undone. “Bosnia could only be destroyed,” authors Gerard Toal and Carl T. Dahlman argue, “through cartographic reenvisioning and then the preparation and use of massive violence to realize these cartographic schemes” (p. 92). Both the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the struggle to reverse it, stand in a long European history of ambivalence about the distribution of human diversity in territorial space. Modern European “geopolitics” – the relationship between people, power and territory – is marked by a dialectic between inclusion and exclusion and the exercise of power to realize these competing political visions on “The Map.” In the nationalist mind, people (*ljudi* in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian) who are not included in our People, our Folk (*narod*), belong elsewhere, in a different-colored shape on the cartographic grid. In *Bosnia Remade*, Toal and Dahlman show that bending complex human reality to such “cartographic fantasies” (p. 34) requires the systematic deployment of “radical place-destroying violence” (p. 141). Once the damage is done, undoing it – remixing the human community – is expensive, contingent and complex.

“The rationale for this book,” Toal and Dahlman tell us, “is the contention that both ethnic cleansing and return are unavoidably geographical processes” (p. 9). They approach their study of the Bosnian War and its aftermath from the perspective of critical geopolitics, a broad critique of the social science tradition of accepting maps, borders and geography as unproblematic and “scientific.” For Toal and Dahlman, geopolitics is “less a determining location or a stable hierarchy” (p. 10) than “a culturally embedded practice operating across networks of power” and a “field of competing political constructions” (p. 12). Within the Bosnian context, Toal and Dahlman problematize notions that Balkan borders, politics, ethnicity or conflict are the result of reified “facts of geography” (p. 12) and primordial “ancient hatreds.” Instead, both ethnic cleansing and its reversal were political projects attempting to create a “new order of identity, territory and power” – coerced, negotiated, contested, compromised – through which Bosnia was “remade.”

Ethnic cleansing “attacked and erased” the history, culture, places and people who represented the alternatives – co-existence, hybridity, blurred identities and shared space – and instituted a “new ethnoterritorial order of space” (p. 5). Contrary to the metaphor of the Balkans as a simmering “cauldron,” waiting to boil over into mass violence as soon as “the top came off,” Toal and Dahlman show that ethnic cleansing in Bosnia was not a

spontaneous eruption. It took a concerted, strategic, political effort in which violence created ethnic polarization, not the other way around. A primary step in this process was discursively redefining the shared space of Yugoslavia as a Social Darwinian battleground where competing visions of a “transcendental ethnospace” (p. 64) of “Serb lands” or “Croatian territory” defined some citizens as “The Other,” an enemy to be expelled. Thus, “coloring space” on the mental map “was a prelude to cleansing space” (p. 69). However, the “actually existing” Bosnian human geography (p. 49) – diverse, mixed, tolerant – did not match the nationalist “cartography of the mind” (p. 53). Convincing neighbors that they were enemies required a violent reorganization of local political economy, in which actual homes were burned and looted in the name of the imagined “homeland” and private and public property were redistributed through a new system of ethnocratic patrimonialism. What the nationalist parties trumpeted as the “natural order of things” actually took a phenomenal amount of bloodshed.

Several key efforts to end the conflict, by US and EU mediators, shared with Serbian and Croatian nationalists the belief that Bosnia would need to be “cartographically divided . . . into separable ethnically colored spaces” (p. 149). Despite the fact that “Bosnia’s leopard skin map and historic mosaic of identities confounded the nationalist imaginaries seeking to rearrange it” (p. 151), international mediators “searched for the illusive map that would end the war” (p. 153), portraying their efforts as “realistic” and “pragmatic.” Instead, they only “fueled the desire for ethnic cleansing as a means of establishing cartographic clarity and a stronger negotiating position” (p. 151). The 1995 Dayton Peace Accords which ended the conflict embodied this belief in the “cartographic fix” (p. 149), entrenching the division of the country into ethnicized “entities.”

However, Toal and Dahlman argue the Dayton Accords left an opening for its reversal by endorsing “freedom of movement” and, in Annex 7, recognizing that displaced people “have the right freely to return” to their pre-war homes. Initially, “international incoherence” (p. 178) and a minimalist conception of NATO’s peacekeeping duties squandered the opportunity Annex 7 offered. Efforts to support returnees relied on the very same local ethnocratic structures that perpetrated ethnic cleansing and benefited from its persistence. However, after several political crises in 1999, the international community began “a move away from a short-term reactive posture,” in which the return of displaced people was seen by international officials as potentially disruptive, “to a more strategic vision” that saw reversing ethnic cleansing as important for “the future stability of Bosnia-Herzegovina” (p. 205). Aid to the displaced was transformed from an act of apolitical humanitarianism into a political intervention aimed at undermining the power of the ethnocratic leaders, who were seen as obstructing the peace process.

Toal and Dahlman argue that just as ethnic cleansing was a form of geopolitics, international implementation of Annex 7 also represented the strategic rearrangement of human geographies. They provide richly detailed case studies of the “localized geopolitical struggles” over returns between international and local actors in three Bosnian municipalities: Zvornik, Jajce and Dobojo (p. 256). They demonstrate that “micromanaging returns” (p. 217) required “a level of population management that dwarfed the coercive demographic engineering of ethnic cleansing” (p. 163). In implementing Annex 7, the international community fired and appointed public officials, struck down and imposed regulations and even resorted to the use of force. This produced a modicum of success, with a significant number of people returning to their homes in areas dominated by other ethnic groups. However, it has also raised questions of how far international institutions should intrude into local political life, and how sustainable such efforts will prove. As international interest has declined since 2006, local political regimes have adapted and

found new ways to preserve their hold on power, through “administrative obstruction” and a “normalized corruption of ethnocracy” (p. 243). Toal and Dahlman conclude on an ambiguous note, suggesting that while “ethnic cleansing has not been ‘reversed,’ the ‘unmixing’ of Bosnians into hard-bordered ethnoterritories has not been realized either” (p. 9). Dayton Bosnia has seen a “softening of ethnocracy” (p. 207), if not its abolition.

Bosnia Remade is a lengthy and empirically detailed “thick description” of the multi-level political economies of displacement and return. Toal and Dahlman take their own arguments about cartography seriously – their illustrative maps are carefully considered, to provide alternatives to the color-coded cartography that has so dominated visual representations of the Bosnian conflict. The book is rooted in extensive field and archival research, including over 100 interviews with displaced people, local and national politicians and international officials. This provides weighty evidence for their thesis, though it sometimes distracts from the clarity and main thread of their argument. The fine-grained information about events, programs and initiatives sometimes flattens the ethnographic richness. “Returnees,” and the “obstructionists” who oppose them, are often portrayed abstractly; when Toal and Dahlman do use quotes from their interviews, these people are humanized and jump into relief, but we are left wanting more in terms of the *meaning* of return, ethnicity, ethnocracy, and international intervention in the voices of those who experience them. Aside from those minor criticisms, however, *Bosnia Remade* is an important addition to the scholarly literature on the Balkans. For those interested in post-Dayton Bosnian politics it will be required reading. It will also prove useful to those whose geographic interests lie elsewhere, offering theoretical insights into critical geopolitics, forced migration, post-conflict reconstruction, and nationalism.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634184>

Becoming metropolitan: urban selfhood and the making of modern Cracow, by Nathaniel D. Wood, DeKalb, Northern Illinois Press, 2010, xiv + 272 pp., US\$40.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0875804224

“Modern” is back. Boldly facing off the crowds of commemoration and national-identity scholars whose voices rose in the immediate post-1989 era, Nathaniel Wood posits that Cracow’s identity between 1900 and 1915 was primarily one of an aspiring, modern city. Wood’s treatise on Cracow has much to offer the student of urban history, popular culture and Polish identity. *Becoming Metropolitan* is packed with observations, witty anecdotes and insights into a city many love, but, truth to tell, few would recognize. Although Wood has a somewhat ambivalent stance on the viability of national identity as the dominant lens through which East Central European experience ought to be interpreted, he cannot escape the contributions he makes to even this category of history. He reminds readers that, despite a predilection for putting Cracow in the “Polish Athens” cupboard and leaving her there, there is great value in searching for the metropolitan in the medieval. Wood addresses the reader directly in several instances, as when he explains the terminology of his title: “By ‘becoming metropolitan,’ I mean the process of adaptation to modern urban

life, in such a way that one was conscious, even if only indirectly, of one's participation in what contemporaries frequently termed 'modern urban civilization'" (p. 13).

Emphasizing that Cracow was an "unlikely metropolis," Wood offers a counter-argument to those who would relegate Poland's crown jewel to that of a static national symbol of a lost past, rather than as an aspiring, dynamic, urban reality (p. 18). "Modern" meant "European," "urban," "technological," and was formed through electrification, municipal services, and growth. Wood takes the traditional interpretation, even stereotype, of Cracow's place in Poland and turns it on its head. For Wood, Cracow is not the backward-looking dowager of an expired royal family, but a sometimes "shoddy" or "shabby" cousin to other modern "great cities," desperate to be included in the modern club (pp. 6, 203).

Wood builds his argument on a deep reading of the "boulevard press," a gussied-up term for tabloid or popular press, using runs spanning from 3 to 10 years. The papers appealed to the young and to women; they were non-partisan, not overtly anti-Semitic and admittedly "lowbrow" to "middlebrow" in character (pp. 68–69). The author himself acknowledges his reliance on newspaper sources and this is borne out in his notes. While archival sources like tram and electrification plans, police records and prostitute registers also figure, Wood puts memoirs and travel accounts to better use. City management sources, mayoral correspondence, or professorial studies on land use figure less prominently, or not at all. It is not Wood's intention to list for readers the activities or ideals of city managers or elite intellectuals, but to tease out the meaning of the Cracovian self as it related to modernity. There is plenty of room for other scholars to contribute and correspond with Wood's premises, and one can wish for a study of any variety of topics, from cabaret culture to health and hygiene, using Wood's approach. "Selfhood" is manifest in this work through outstanding Polish-language source work and translation, as well as image analysis generously shared in a central photograph section featuring "Cracovian Types" and in illustration analysis which displays a keen eye for gendered messages in the boulevard press (pp. 140–41, 196). Anecdotes pepper the text, and Wood finds insight into Cracow's modern self in the smallest detail: "It was said that Cracovians had a paltry nightlife in comparison with their fellow urbanites elsewhere, because their doormen charged so much to let them in after ten o'clock in the evening" (p. 42).

Ostensibly an introduction to Cracow around 1900, the first chapter of *Becoming Metropolitan* is a delight to read, mapping the city and its uses by street and neighborhood. Though modernity might seem to be masculine, focused on industry and speed, women work in and travel through Wood's Cracow. Tantalizing facts such as the higher population of women (119 to every 100 men in 1900) and its explanation (the high number of domestic servants) reveals how old Cracow persisted while new Cracow, with its population of servants, shopgirls and prostitutes from the countryside, grew (pp. 38–39). Chapter 2, "The Interurban Matrix," discusses Cracow's aspirations to become "great," or at least emulate the tantalizing experience of the big city. In it, Wood demonstrates his ability to build his modernism argument on the backs of those who study identity and nostalgia, as he speaks through one of his beloved boulevard journalists, quoting, "The gleam of culture and civilization does not disfigure old monuments; it does not injure the past" (p. 83).

The next two chapters tell the story of incorporation built on an analysis of the "Greater Cracow" survey series in 1903–1904. Urban selfhood, Wood argues, is manifested through a focused journalistic campaign and earnest research by city employees promoting progress through city growth. One evocative description alludes to the legend of Cracow's founding as it compared the city's canals to "the open jaws of the Cracovian dragon, belching a foul odor into the Vistula" (p. 102). In this chapter, the story of incorporating

suburbs gets a bit muddled and the apathy or ambivalence of Cracow's citizens seems to be transmitted through the popular press. A more explicit comparison with other cities, like Warsaw or Berlin, might help clarify the role of incorporation in defining the modern urban community at this time.

The chapter on technology, transportation and modernity, "Planes, Trams, and Automobiles – The Dangers and Allure of Modern Technology," is reminiscent of David Strand's *Rickshaw Beijing: City People and Politics in the 1920s*. The contradictions and ironies of modernity in an ancient place show through in the sources and the analysis. This chapter is easily the most dynamic in the book, and Wood puts his considerable translation skills to good use. The elegant contrast of two premieres, Stanisław Wyspiański's *Wesele* and the advent of Cracow's electric tramway, is a joy to read. The chapter is further enhanced by a fascinating analysis of modernity, technology, fear and gender.

In his sixth chapter of seven, "Big-City Muck"—Images of the 'Great City' in the 'Gutter Press,'" Wood extends the metaphor of filth as a question of poor hygiene to one of innate corruption and immorality. Residents bemoaned the transition to big-city status as much as they celebrated becoming more European. Wood returns to his premises on modernity and identity in Cracow and completes his argument that "becoming metropolitan" meant becoming European. In the Epilogue, Wood wonders what happened to Cracow after the war, after 1918. In it, he references just briefly the challenges of continuing the rapid pace in the wake of war and under the burden of a new nation. He leaves the description of a contradictory Cracow to a German author from Berlin. In the words of Alfred Döblin, "Confusing, poignant – this proximity of two worlds: electric light, modern promenades, automobiles, and that, the Cloth Gazebo, and also that, the slender church of St. Mary" (p. 205). One is left to ponder the inevitable irony, that Cracow – this most profoundly intellectual, national, yet provincial city – was forced to reshape its urban identity and its relationship to modernity in the next postwar era – and this time, forced to redefine modernity in the light of Communism and the shadow of Nowa Huta.

While Wood brings much energy to his sometimes insouciant analysis and its salacious sources, he does not let his sense of fun interrupt the serious task of re-imagining this most serious of cities. His Introduction makes very clear that he has positioned himself to challenge presumptions on all sides, but has equipped himself well to do so. He successfully challenges the premise that the drive to preserve national identity was the only motivating factor in the shaping and expression of popular opinion and personal identities in Poland's city of intellectuals. He also clarifies a chronological demarcation that comes conveniently at the turn of the century: "If in the second half of the nineteenth century, Cracow was dominated by a conservative historicism that hearkened to the city's glorious past while stressing its importance as a center of Polish culture, the first decade of the twentieth century marked a period of urbanization and modernization that necessitated looking to the outside world for models" (p. 129). By "outside world," Wood means "Europe," or at least the "great cities" of Europe, like Berlin. The author deftly demonstrates his understanding of Eric Hobsbawm, Dennison Rusinow and Benedict Anderson on nationalism and identity. Wood, trained by Maria Bucur, acknowledges the influence of commemoration studies and his dialogue with Patrice Dabrowski on his research, but he moves his interpretation of identity in a new direction, using popular culture and the press as viewed through lenses shaped by Stephen Kern, Jürgen Habermas and Peter Fritzsche (p. 17–18). Stories of place told by Sean Martin, Jeremy King, and Pieter Judson have all informed Wood's interpretations of modern Cracow.

While one might expect the work to be colored by the tone of the popular press, Wood tempers source-based sensationalism with wisdom and insight. His workmanlike diligence

with newspapers and translation pays off in a solidly written, quick-paced, and often entertaining tour through turn-of-the-century Cracow. Reaching beyond the provincial Galician neighborhood, *Becoming Metropolitan* should be read by anyone interested in the longings of urban denizens in peripheral places. It joins other newer titles like Cynthia Paces's *Prague Panoramas* and Roshanna Sylvester's *Tales of Old Odessa* in interpreting and re-interpreting urban history, place, and identity. Rather than justifying Cracow as the epitome of modernism, Wood simply offers us this: the contrast and the irony of a place renowned for looking or being backwards but seeking to be forward-thinking. A story about Warsaw or Łódź would have been more self-evident for the "modern" theme, and a story about Breslau or Lemberg would have challenged identity themes and peripheries, but Cracow has a certain romance to it that makes the contrast of urbanism and conservatism all the more striking. So, we will accept it happily, and Cracow watchers and lovers can dip into a study that is as evocative as it is provocative and look forward to Wood's next project as he carves a space out for himself as an interpreter of modernity in Poland and Europe.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2012.634226>

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Peasants under siege: the collectivization of Romanian agriculture, 1949–1962, by Gail Kligman and Katherine Verdery, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2011, 508 pp., US\$39.50 (paperback), ISBN 978-0-691-14973-8

This is a truly impressive study and a remarkable piece of scholarship. It is the fruit, on the one hand, of the authors' individual research in Romania, and, on the other, of a multi-disciplinary collaborative project entitled *Transforming Property, Persons, and State: Collectivization in Romania, 1949–1962*, which they initiated in 1998 with a group of Romanian and other scholars. That project resulted in the publication in 2005 of an eponymous volume in Romanian, edited by Constantin Iordachi and Dorin Dobrinu, and a version in English (*Transforming Peasants, Property, and Power: The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania, 1949–1962*) by Central European History Press in 2009. The Kligman-Verdery volume takes the research findings of that volume, building upon them and shaping and refining them with a sophisticated methodology into the most comprehensive and incisive study of collectivization in Romania in any language. At the same time, at the micro level, they give the reader a sense of the experience of village life during the 1950s.

The collectivization of agriculture was the principal measure taken by the Romanian Communist Party against the peasantry, who formed 80% of the adult population, to

transform Romania, following the Soviet model and employing Stalinist norms and practices. The nationalization in June 1948 of industrial, banking, insurance, mining, and transport enterprises allowed the introduction of centralized quantitative planning but also destroyed the economic basis of those stigmatized as class enemies. Confiscating private share-holdings and threatening their owners was relatively straightforward; agriculture posed more complex problems. On 2 March 1949 the ownership of land was completely removed from private hands. This permitted the liquidation of the remnants of the old landowning class and of the *chiaburi* or “kulaks,” a Soviet term defining as “rich peasants” those who hired labor or let out machinery, irrespective of the size of their holding. The land, livestock and equipment of landowners who possessed property up to the maximum of 50 hectares permitted under the 1945 land law was expropriated without compensation. Virtually overnight the militia moved in and evicted 17,000 families from their homes and moved them to resettlement areas. The confiscated land, totaling almost one million hectares, was either amassed to create state farms or was organized into collectives, which were in theory collectively owned but in fact state-run, since the Ministry of Agriculture directed what crops were to be grown and fixed the prices. Members of the collective were allowed to keep small plots of land not exceeding 0.15 of a hectare.

The majority of peasants, ranging from the landless to those who worked their holdings using only family labor, were organized into state or collective farms. This required extensive coercion. The length of the process of collectivization, covering almost 13 years, illustrates the Party’s inability to bring the peasants into line. Only in 1949 were collectives established without violence. After that, it took ample and systematic efforts over a long period and the use of various techniques of physical coercion and psychological terror, supported by an unusually large system of repression, to force the peasantry to give up their land and join collective farms. Party leader Gheorghiu-Dej admitted as much in 1962 when he revealed that “in the struggle against the *chiaburi* more than 80,000 peasants were sent for trial, the majority of them hard-working peasants, and of them more than 30,000 were tried in public trials.” Virtually all of the latter received the standard sentence of two years in a labor camp. Collectivization was completed in 1962 and its results put 60% of the total area of 15 million hectares of agricultural land in collective farms, 30% in state farms, and left 9% in private hands. The latter was upland whose inaccessibility made it impractical to collectivize.

Kligman and Verdery conceptualize collectivization as a fundamental means for understanding the very formation of the Romanian Party-State, in contrast to its more customary conceptualization as an auxiliary to industrialization and urbanization. The book explores how ill-prepared cadres, themselves unconvinced of collectivization’s promises, implemented technologies and methods imported from the Soviet Union, resorting to the excessive use of force, which Party leaders were often unwilling or unable to control. In addition, the authors show how local responses to the Party’s program of agricultural reform forced the regime to modify its plans and negotiate outcomes.

Addressed in this study are policies and practices at the national level (i.e. property legislation, requisitions, propaganda, and discussion of the form collectivization should take). These are complemented by drawing upon local experience, embracing localities in Transylvania, Moldavia, and southern Romania. That experience includes what the authors term in Chapter 5 “pedagogies of persuasion.” They demonstrate that Romanian cadres used many of the Soviets’ techniques to entice peasants into joining the collectives: various forms of propaganda, denunciations, agitation and persuasion. That is not to downplay the role coercion played in effecting collectivization. Without force, Romanian collectivization would have been impossible.

Yet, as the authors point out, one of the ironies of collectivization is that as cadres strove to wipe out the existing social organization, villagers were often compelled to defend relations that were often harsh and brutal. Not all were willing to do so. Thus the Party was able to recruit from those groups disadvantaged in the pre-Communist order: the poor, Roma, and Jews. Such groups were essential allies in communizing Romania and as Chapter 8 shows, they were among its main beneficiaries.

Kligman and Verdery provide us with a sophisticated analysis of collectivization, of its consequences for the economic situation of the peasantry, and its effects on peasant attitudes towards property and political power. Their analytical acuity and the rigor of the research recommend this study as a fundamental text for understanding not only the communist regime, but also on the impact of property relations after 1990. The research for this volume, based on hitherto-untapped archival and oral sources, offers a yardstick against which further studies on collectivization in East Central Europe will be judged. It represents, in short, a major intellectual achievement.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634185>

Under siege: inter-ethnic relations in Abkhazia, by Tom Trier, Hedvig Lohm, and David Szakonyi, New York, Columbia University Press, 2010, xiii + 159 pp., US\$50.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0-231-70130-3.

The authors of this book are to be congratulated for having written the most meticulous study of Abkhazia available in book form in English. Theirs is a detailed portrait of Abkhazia's society and political arrangements, complete with thoroughly researched data and appendices.

Timing has been unkind to the three authors, however. The majority of their research was carried out before the August war of 2008, Russia's subsequent recognition of Abkhazia as an independent country and the transformation of the republic from an unrecognized blank spot on the international map to a de facto outpost of the Russian Federation. The passages on Russian influence, the economy and the situation in the Gal/i district are already out of date. The spring and summer of 2011 wrought new changes on Abkhazia with the death of its presiding father-figure Sergei Bagapsh and the election of a new president, Alexander Ankvab.

Yet the book is still highly relevant for its nuanced depiction of Abkhazia's complex inter-ethnic politics. Abkhazia is essentially an ethnocracy, with the titular ethnic group dominating the executive, parliament and the most lucrative businesses, with Armenians, the other main ethnic group, most strongly represented in small business. Russians, although the third major ethnic group still residing there, are said by contrast to be a "weak and disintegrated community" of mainly elderly people.

The dominance of the Abkhaz is entrenched in law. The three candidates for president in 2011 underwent the bizarre process of taking an exam in the Abkhaz language on 20 July so as to be eligible for the presidential election on 26 August. A non-Abkhaz may theoretically know the highly complex Abkhaz language; in practice almost none do

and anyway an Armenian or Russian would not dare to challenge the unwritten code by which Abkhazia is run first of all by the Abkhaz themselves.

Changing demographics are at the heart of all discussions of Abkhazia and its disputed identity. The authors take us through the many twists and turn of Abkhazia's population shifts. The ethnic Abkhaz feel vulnerable to what may be called the "seventeen percent question," the fact that they were a distinct minority in their homeland according to the last Soviet census of 1989. They themselves counter that with historical arguments maintaining that this demographic imbalance is a result of historical injustice which marginalized them in their own homeland.

A series of major in- and out-migrations define Abkhazia's history. The first was the expulsion of the mass of the Abkhaz population to the Ottoman Empire by the tsarist authorities at the end of the Caucasian war in the 1860s and 70s and the issue of the right of return of their descendants. The authors write that despite being offered many enticements to come back, as of late 2008 fewer than 3,000 *muhajirs* had actually resettled in Abkhazia in the previous five years. More have certainly settled there since 2008, but not in significant numbers.

Then comes the immigration of Georgians (some would clarify this by saying mostly Megrelians) at the end of the nineteenth century and after the 1930s, such that by the late twentieth century, Georgians constituted more than half the population. In parallel came the immigration of large numbers of Armenians, many of them fleeing massacres in Ottoman Anatolia during World War I. Armenians currently constitute Abkhazia's other large ethnic group.

By the end of the war in late 1993, almost all Abkhazia's Georgians had been forcibly expelled or fled. They still form the majority of the internally displaced community inside Georgia (more than 200,000 people), and the question of their right of return is a central one in Georgian–Abkhaz dialogue. The partial return of the Georgians to the Gal/i region of Abkhazia presents, depending on whom you are talking to, an example of Abkhazia's tolerance or a case of discrimination against a grudgingly accepted community. The recent Human Rights Watch report on Gal/i, *Living in Limbo*, fills in this picture with more detail.

All of these issues are properly covered in this book by Trier, Lohm and Szakonyi. To this list I would add another out-migration which they barely touch on, the Stalinist deportation in the 1940s of Abkhazia's Pontic Greeks, which was not only a human tragedy in itself but deprived the republic of a group who were active urban citizens of Sokhumi/Sukhum and played a bridging role between Abkhaz and Georgians.

If I miss a major theme in this book, it would be an analysis of what Abkhazia's unrecognized (now partially recognized) status means for its citizens. This fact actually permeates every feature of everyday life. To name but a few examples it means that, until recently, all economic transactions, including those of the Central Bank, were conducted in cash; that Abkhazia has no internet domain of its own; that its sportsmen do not take part in international competitions; that Abkhaz face significant problems traveling abroad. This is the context in which soft annexation by Russia is more or less welcomed by a mass of Abkhazia's residents.

The authors have obviously spent a lot of time in Abkhazia and I would also have appreciated hearing more of the voices of those whom they have talked to. (This is the value of perhaps the most insightful book on Abkhazia, the shrewd French-language political travelogue entitled *Improbable Abkhazie* and written by the pseudonymous Léon Colm.) Occasionally, a human story slips into the text which illuminates the realities of life in Abkhazia, but too rarely.

For example, to substantiate their observation that “ethnic identities often appear to be situational,” the authors tell a revealing story of a mother and child travelling from Abkhazia’s Gal/i region to Zugdidi in western Georgia. The mother told the daughter to speak in the Megrelian language at the Abkhaz border post but in Georgian in Zugdidi. Before they entered a pharmacy in Zugdidi, the girl asked, “Mum, what language should I speak in when we are in the pharmacy?”

An update would be very useful. It would reflect the fact that the situation for the Georgians of Gal/i is even more difficult than before, as they have to negotiate a reinforced border between Abkhazia and western Georgia and face pressure from the authorities to take Abkhazian passports. On the other hand, as the economic situation improves, I have also heard reports of Megrelians working in other parts of Abkhazia and of the Megrelian language being heard on public transport. The demographic situation is also undoubtedly changing as many people who left Abkhazia during the 1992–93 conflict are resettling there and the birth rate has gone up. The census conducted in early 2011 by the Abkhazian authorities put the population at 242,826 (which however is still less than half the prewar number).

In their conclusion, the three authors write about the unhealthy dominance of Abkhaz as an ethnic group to the exclusion of others, of how the “passivity” of the other ethnic communities contributes to this problem, and of how the international isolation of Abkhazia reinforces this unhealthy situation. As Russia increases its de facto control over the republic, a question to be considered is how the agenda of Armenians and Russians, who are more disposed to Russian rule, clashes with those Abkhaz, who see their tutelage of their own republic as being threatened by Moscow.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634186>

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The civic foundations of fascism in Europe: Italy, Spain, and Romania, 1870–1945, by Dylan Riley, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010, xiii + 258 pp., US\$55.00 (hardcover), ISBN-13 978-0801894275.

Dylan Riley’s original, ambitious and conceptually sophisticated sociological analysis and synthesis introduces us to a fascinating approach to the study of interwar European fascism and related phenomena. The growth of civil society in Italy, Spain, and Romania starting around 1870 was not propitious for the development and consolidation of liberal democracy in these countries. The regimes were liberal, parliamentary, and pluralistic, but also corrupt, patronage-based, and inefficient, as well as initially oligarchic and, after the introduction of universal suffrage, with oligarchic tendencies. As a result, these three

predominantly agrarian, relatively underdeveloped countries did not mature into stable democracies.

Instead, these patterns facilitated the emergence of authoritarian dictatorships of fascist (according to Riley's definition) or kindred varieties. Riley's book is a major contribution to the debate about the origins of fascism, in the tradition of macro-sociological studies such as Barrington Moore's *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. It is also connected to neo-Tocquevillian works, such as Robert D. Putnam's *Making Democracy Work*, which argue that a strong civil society facilitates the emergence and consolidation of a liberal democracy. Riley finds all of these at most partially useful. He amends the Tocquevillian perspective with the insights drawn from Antonio Gramsci regarding intraclass hegemony, interclass hegemony and counterhegemony.

Riley's thesis is generally persuasive and supported by a great deal of evidence, much of which is included in the book. The fascist membership and successes before Benito Mussolini's 1922 March on Rome were in Italy's most civic areas. The rebel, Nationalist camp in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) was most popular in the areas with a strong Catholic peasant civil society organized with input from the clergy. Romania's fascist Legion of the Archangel Michael, founded in 1927, performed electorally the best, particularly in the last relatively free interwar elections of 1937, in the areas where civil society among the ethnic Romanians was the strongest. The author's argument is based on extensive interdisciplinary research in secondary sources as well as valuable work in the Italian archives.

Riley's Gramscian mechanism might also have been reframed to present the same (I believe correct) pattern in terms of Robert Dahl's analysis of the survival of democracies in *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* in terms of the chronological development of contestation and representation. The proper early development of contestation in liberal states, before the later expansion of the right to vote, was a successful recipe for the consolidation of democracy in the polities of northern and western Europe. Yet the patterns of contestation in the deficient "liberal" regimes in the three countries discussed by the author were seriously distorted due to Italian *transformismo*, Spanish *caciquismo* and the Romanian "electoral dowry of the government." These practices are discussed by Riley, even though he does not label the Romanian practice with the term from that respective period. The growth of civil society right before, and soon after, the introduction of universal suffrage made the oligarchic tendencies, patronage and corruption harder to stomach by more of the public than previously.

In my formulation, the author seems to emphasize social class rather than the level of intensity of nationalism as the independent variable with the most explanatory power. He brings in not only the crucial civil society as the intervening variable, but also other variables such as the level of religiosity, as well as ethnicity, regional nationalism, particularism and region in Spain, and the anti-Jewish attitudes, collective action and movements in some parts of Romania. I believe that Riley's model explains very well the Spanish case, including the regional variation, as well as the patterns in Italy and Romania between their pre-1918 borders, prior to their territorial enlargement.

Yet the autonomous role of the anti-Slav nationalism in Venezia Giulia, where fascist squadrist violence emerged before anywhere else in all of Italy (p. 52), and the anti-German nationalism in Trentino and South Tyrol, was also significant. It facilitated the growth of a nationalistic civil society that locally fueled Mussolini's Italian fascism. This has been discussed more explicitly in other works, such as Dennison Rusinow's *Italy's Austrian Heritage 1919–1946*. The role of the "arcașii" (crossbow warrior

groups) founded before 1918 in recruiting a very large number of Legionary converts in ex-Austrian interwar Bukovina in Romania was also conspicuous. The role of anti-Hungarian feelings in Greater Transylvania in making many cast ballots for the fascist Legion of the Archangel Michael was key, but the role of already-existing nationalistic civil-society organizations is less clear (see Rus 2009).

The author's definition and conceptualization of fascism stimulates controversy, which should be welcomed. Dylan Riley identifies fascism as "authoritarian democracy." One does not need to share or use this definition to accept that he describes a sometimes (though arguably not always) very real mechanism of fascist legitimacy, popularity and rhetoric in favor of the "public good." Mussolini and Hitler certainly labeled their regimes as in some sense democratic. Yet perhaps "majoritarian authoritarianism" might be a more accurate label. Moreover, the Romanian Legionary leader Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu openly rejected the idea of democracy in any form, and not merely the practice thereof.

The definition of fascism used in the book is more inclusive than those used in many other works, and will hopefully stimulate debate about specific cases. Franco's regime, and King Carol II's royal dictatorship in Romania (1938–1940), are labeled as fascist. Yet Ion Antonescu's pro-Axis military dictatorship (1940–1944), after the end of his partnership with the Legion in early 1941, is classified as ambiguous. In a book characterized by clarity, the author could have been more specific about whether the National Christian Party, which formed Romania's minority government in 1937–1938, during the period of imperfect democracy before the royal coup d'état, should be labeled as fascist or not. The support for this anti-Jewish, reactionary, nationalistic, but, in my opinion, non-fascist party was particularly strong in the less-civic, but highly anti-Semitic, Bessarabian and northern Moldovan (between the Prut and Carpathians) regions.

In addition to the three cases that are covered in greater detail, the author also shows the applicability of his model to Germany and Hungary. The coverage is again very good, but the author does not discuss the period of fascist rule in Hungary in 1944–1945.

Seldom are authors as up-to-date in all the aspects of their topics as is Riley in this case. The data that he does not include (see Rus 2011) support the argument in the book. Those who are interested in following in Dr. Riley's footsteps would also find a great deal of useful information in the numbers of *Sociologie Romaneasca* and other Romanian sociological studies from the 1930s and early 1940s.

The book, or, in some contexts, some of its parts, would be appropriate for at least graduate classes in sociology and political science, as well as history. It is an enormous improvement over, for example, Barrington Moore and other staple course readings. Significantly, it is usable not only for the study of Europe, but also of the developing world. Within the scholarly and advanced-teaching context, Riley's book seems to be one of the best books dealing with European fascism, and possibly the one that promotes "thinking outside the box" the most.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634187>

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Evolving nationalism: homeland, identity, and religion in Israel, 1925–2005, by Nadav G. Shelef, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2010, 283 pp., hardcover US\$69.95, ISBN 978-0801448706, paperback US\$24.95, ISBN 978-0801476754

While the researchers on nationalism often note the existence of ideological changes, they rarely give a full analysis of the possible causes. For those who conceive of nationalism by emphasizing the classes or distinguishing the state/official ideology from the popular, the changes naturally result from the tension between the political elite and the masses. For those who think of national identity in terms of civic or ethnic membership, the ideology stands in its environment but cannot ignore important exogenous transformations. These two explanations – elite imposition and rational adaptation – influence the author's own idea of nationalism: on one hand, nationalism can appear so fragile that it may be reinterpreted from above; on the other hand, so strong that only an external shock could shake its foundations. Criticizing the limits of these approaches, the author proposes a third explanation: the evolutionary dynamic which, following the constructivist methodology, replaces the nationalist ideology, its leaders and adherents, with the influence of political, historical and social changes.

Zionism/Israeli nationalism is the object of this study. Moreover, the author places his demonstration on the level of the three most important Zionist movements: the Labor, the Revisionist and the Religious Zionist movements. For each one, he compares the three potential explanations – rational adaptation, elite imposition, evolutionary dynamic – to understand how changes took place in their vision of the homeland's borders (part 1: "Where is the Land of Israel?") and the national mission (part 2: "Destiny and Identity"). His research, which covers a large period – from 1925, the date of the Revisionist scission, to the disengagement from the Gaza strip in 2005 – is based on an important archival material: speeches and electoral propaganda, but also the pedagogical material of the nationalist Zionist youth movements. The diplomatic archives were not consulted; a lacuna, if we consider that the question of borders has been the stake of international negotiations since the beginnings of Zionism. However, the objective of the author is to focus on domestic policy, precisely on the interactions between the nationalist movements, from which results the majority of their ideological transformations.

Surprisingly, according to the author, neither the Holocaust nor important upheavals in Zionist/Israeli history – the establishment of the State in 1948, the first Arab–Israeli War that followed, the 1967 War during which Israel conquered the West Bank, the Gaza strip, the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula, or the traumatic failure of the Yom Kippur War in 1973 – triggered changes in the main dimensions of nationalism. Still, the author notes one exception: the Labor Zionists’ acceptance of the 1949 Armistice lines. But the demonstration is quite problematic. Originally, the author reminds us, the Labor Zionist movement placed the Israeli border within Jordan, the length of the Hedjaz Railway; after 1949, the East Bank was excluded on its map’s image. In fact, as early as August 1946, the movement of David Ben-Gurion gave up the ideal of the Biblical Land, voting for a partition plan of Palestine during the Congress of the Jewish Agency’s Executive. The book never mentions this plan, which is considered a Copernican revolution in Zionism. The decision taken by Ben-Gurion and his entourage revealed their pragmatism in the context of international negotiations, the very same one that would induce them to accept the 1949 Armistice lines. For the same pragmatic reasons, notes the author, the movement accepted a partition in the mid-1970s, after the 1967 conquests challenged the idea of an effective and democratic state. The fact that the Jewish population was reduced to a minority in the West Bank did not fit with the spirit of Zionism, said the Labor leaders, who added a moral argument: the injustice caused by the rule over Palestinians. The process was achieved in the 1980s when, following other leaders, Shimon Peres argued that the Palestinian territories “were not really Israeli” (p. 48). This example shows what effect an external shock such as the 1949 Armistices (but also the post-Holocaust reality and the independence of Transjordan for the 1946 partition plan) could cause on nationalism. However, the way the author emphasizes the temperament of the Labor leadership and its gesture in each step of the process proves how difficult it is to minimize the influence of political elites. The unique example of elite imposition presented in the historical changes of Zionism is also complex: the subordination of the “State of Israel” to the “Land of Israel” by the Religious Zionists in order to legitimize their refusal of a withdrawal from occupied territories. Even if the author abandons other explanations for lack of evidence, the coincidence of the process with external or internal shocks, which could have radicalized the Religious, is troubling: the shift began after 1967, reached a turning point in 1973, and was complete by 1977, after the historic electoral victory of the Revisionists, which was a political answer to the failure of the Yom Kippur War.

Except for these two cases, the author demonstrates that all the transformations that took place in Zionism/Israeli nationalism were the products of tactical adjustments inside political alliances; that is, the evolutionary dynamic. His analysis of the Revisionist ideology is fascinating. The movement originally refused any concession about the borders of Israel “on the both sides of the Jordan,” corresponding to the 1919 British Mandate. Its founder Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky even composed in 1930 a hymn for the East Bank on the model of the antique Jewish prayer for Jerusalem: “if I forget the left bank of the Jordan / May my right hand be withered by the Lord” (p. 82–83). Nevertheless, Jabotinsky always denied that religion went beyond the private sphere and might play an official role in the future state. In his will to fight the religious who reduced the nationalist aspirations of Zionism to a sectarian perspective, his son Eri Jabotinsky would go so far as proposing that the Knesset cafeteria serve non-kosher food (p. 130). However, to put an end to its marginal position in the political spectrum, the Revisionist movement under the leadership of Menahem Begin progressively softened its territorial claims as well as its secular principles. It moved in 1960 from “both banks of the

Jordan” to the “whole state of Israel” – a concept ambiguous enough to allow alliances with parties who used to ostracize Revisionists, and to keep vivid the Jordan’s heritage internally. It was only in 1982 that Begin finally renounced the old map image. As the author clearly indicates, “the once tactical variation became the new ideology orthodoxy” (p. 80). In the meantime, the tactical rapprochement with the Religious Zionists engaged the Revisionists to accept the existence of a religious role in the public realm. Their alliance with the Gush Emunim in 1973 was so successful that it became less costly to exclude their representatives of the secularist wing than to return to the original ideology. But the process was quite predictable: when the Labor Zionist movement needed the support of the Religious Zionists in the ’40s and ’50s, it also had to make short-term concessions about the role of religion in the state which became a principled stance, even after the collapse of their alliance.

By underlining the importance of the evolutionary dynamic in the history of Zionism/Israeli nationalism, the author proves that far from being a unique case, Israel has a lot in common with other deeply divided societies which built themselves on internal fights and compromises. His analysis of the practice of negotiations, which is rarely a win-win relationship, allows him to make some pertinent suggestions about the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, and especially to point out the risks of a dialogue with the fundamentalist movements: “ideological change may have to begin before peacemaking can succeed” (p. 208). But the evolutionary dynamic does not explain everything, and the author admits that it only corresponds to one of the three ongoing transformations in Israeli nationalism, even if his interpretation of the shift in the Revisionist movement under the leadership of Benyamin Netanyahu from “the whole state of Israel” to the acceptance of the 1949 Armistice lines is still a subject of debate. In any case, the very fact that the author tries to find theoretical reasons for Zionism’s changes by introducing the evolutionary dynamic as a major factor in comparison with rational adaptation and elite imposition makes his empirical research a turning point in Israeli historiography, which should inspire other studies on nationalism.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634188>

Of Khans and Kremains: Tatarstan and the future of ethno-federalism in Russia, by Katherine E. Graney, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2009, 189 pp., hardcover US\$70.00, ISBN 978-0739126356, paperback US\$29.95, ISBN 978-0739126363

The subject of Graney’s work relates to the sovereignty drive of the Republic of Tatarstan, a constituent member of the Russian Federation. This important and serious scholarly study contributes significantly to the academic literature and has considerable implications for the stability of not only Russia but also other multiethnic states.

Graney’s research is driven by three interconnected goals: to detail, describe, and analyze the sovereignty project in Tatarstan; to evaluate its impact on the development of Russian federalism; and to draw valuable inferences that this experience might entail

for understanding the interethnic relations and autonomy conflicts in multiethnic states. These goals are accomplished in a longitudinal study, which depicts relevant details of the sovereignty project and intertwines them in a well-informed analysis. The body of the book is structured chronologically, starting from the eras prior to the onset of the sovereignty demands and finishing with Putin's tenure in office as the Russian president.

In my view, Graney's scholarly contribution is important in at least two major respects. First, even though much has been written on the impact of Tatarstan's drive for greater autonomy on the various aspects of the Russian state and nation-building, her book provides probably the richest and most comprehensive academic account of the sovereignty project in the Russian republic of Tatarstan available to date. Second, and equally important, Graney's theoretical analyses, conclusions, and policy implications fly in the face of a large body of scholarly work on federalism, center-periphery relations, and ethnic politics in Russia. Specifically, unlike much of the extant scholarship, she argues that Tatarstan's experience has positively contributed to the building of a genuine Russian federalism.

Among other laudable points is the fact that Graney surveys multiple theoretical literatures, including ones on sovereignty, multiculturalism and ethnic justice, and federalism. These reviews are accomplished elegantly and succinctly in a 189-page book. The book is well written, and with its style can appeal to wider audiences, in addition to the narrower circle of field experts. It is also noteworthy that the author is one of the handful of American social scientists who use the Tatar language in their fieldwork. This in itself is likely to have opened for her doors to numerous data sources and intellectual insights that would not be available otherwise.

The book delivers well on the goals stated but also raises a number of implicit questions, which could be addressed in subsequent editions of the book or in separate studies. One of such questions relates to the (re)establishment of the Tatar statehood by the Soviets in the form of the Tatar ASSR in the 1920s. Graney points out that "the creation of the Tatar ASSR is an extremely complex and interesting" story which justifiably "can only be addressed in the briefest detail here" (p. 8). Yet, why was it founded as a second-level (and second-class) autonomous republic (ASSR), as opposed to a higher-status union republic (SSR)? How was this move justified by Moscow? This is especially interesting since "the Tatar community of Kazan and the Middle Volga region flourished and became the wealthiest, most well-educated and socially-advanced Muslim group in the entire Russian Empire by the beginning of the twentieth century" (p. 8). Even though they overwhelmingly supported cultural autonomy over territorial, once the territorial one was to be formed why did they contend with the lower status of an "autonomous" republic?

Another question deals with a more recent move on the part of the Putin administration to curtail the rights and freedoms enjoyed by the republics within the Federation in the 1990s. To be precise, the author makes it clear that Putin's moves were much more nuanced and not entirely anti-region in nature; further, the assault on the republics was already there under Yeltsin. However, it is interesting why the lion's share of the centralizing policies in Russia come to the fore during Putin's tenure in office. Is it primarily explained through the factors related to his personality, such as professional socialization and upbringing, or are there structural imperatives for that?

An important portion of the book is allocated to economic and social policy of the republic and the successful realization by Tatarstan of its sovereign powers within these issue areas. While space limitations might have made it difficult, this part could be further connected to the theoretical literature that examines socioeconomic benefits of

decentralization, such as Oates's *Fiscal Federalism* (1972) and Weingast's "The Economic Role of Political Institutions: Market Preserving Federalism and Economic Development" (1995).

In addition to economic and social policy, Graney focuses on other critical policy areas, such as state symbolism, education strategy, and international relations. While seemingly less salient than these, one could also add environmental policy to this list. Environmental policy is a largely unexplored part of Tatarstan's sovereignty project, which can potentially be a fruitful academic endeavor. After all, Tatarstan is presently one of only two regions in Russia with an environmental police force and was the sole such region throughout the 1990s. Moreover, the grievances over the environment are likely to persist, in part because Tatarstan occupies the 30th position in the federal ecology rankings (see "Ekologicheskii reiting") and due to the concerns that "nuclear power plants are surrounding Tatarstan" (see "Tatarstanni atom"). As environmental policies benefit both ethnic Tatar and Russian populations, their implementation by the Tatarstani government is also likely to contribute to the government's legitimacy and to the strengthening of civic Tatarstani identity.

While most Tatarstanis support the sovereignty project in the republic, it has been chiefly advanced by strong personalities, such as President Shaimiev. While Graney acknowledges this, many fear that in the absence of such strong leaders the prospects of the subsequent survival of Tatarstan's sovereignty are much gloomier than the author (and myself) would hope for. The post-Shaimiev period (which is outside the book's scope) seems to be proving less and less radiant as far as the sovereignty project is concerned. In the sphere of education alone, Russia's Unified State Exam is conducted only in the Russian language, disadvantaging the graduates of Tatar schools in the university admissions process. Further, the educational optimization program has disproportionately reduced the number of Tatar schools. As of July 2011, 112 Tatar schools have shut their doors, 78 of them permanently (see "112 tatarskikh shkol"). Moreover, there were at least three protests in spring and summer of 2011 against the mandatory education of the Tatar language (see "Protesters Demand Greater Role").

Yet the points raised in this review should not be read as diminishing the intellectual appeal and policy contribution of this book. This is certainly a must-have book for anyone interested in the questions of federalism, multiculturalism, and sovereignty in the context of Tatar and Russian studies and beyond.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634189>

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Purifying the nation: population exchange and ethnic cleansing in Nazi-allied Romania, by Vladimir Solonari, Washington/Baltimore, Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009, xxviii + 451 pp., US\$65.00 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0801894084.

Purifying the Nation is a historiographical milestone. As Irina Livezeanu pointed out in her essay, “The Romanian Holocaust: Family Quarrels,” far too much time and energy has been spent shouting at the sea: in focusing on proving the Romanian Holocaust actually happened, the argument never gets carried forward by the analytical wind to explain why and how it unfolded, but remains lost in the din of waves of denial crashing on the shore. As Vladimir Solonari asserts, “In order to avoid entrapment in similarly sterile polemics, I decided to avoid engaging nationalistic historians altogether” (p. xvii), and the result is a deeply researched and provocative study that significantly contributes to our understanding of this tragic event.

In one sense, this book deals with the murderous, anti-Semitic obsession that swept Romania in the 1930s and 1940s, which, combined with the opportunities afforded by Adolf Hitler’s own genocidal mania, made the Holocaust possible. As such, it provides for example the best account yet of the killing actions perpetrated by Romanian armed forces in the former Romanian territories of Bukovina and Bessarabia, and of Romanian-occupied southern Ukraine. Yet the book’s ambitious scope yields a far more expansive horizon, offering an analysis of the intellectual and political forces that shaped not just the persecution of Jews, but of other groups as well. This particular Holocaust was but one facet of a larger project to cleanse, or as the Romanians themselves put it, “purify” their nation of *all* “foreign” elements, creating an ethnically homogeneous state. Indeed, the policies of Antonescu’s regime did not constitute a radical break from the interwar period, but rather were the result of a trajectory already set in motion in previous decades. For some minorities, such as the Bulgarians and Turks, technocrats envisioned this purification taking shape in the form of population exchanges. Such a vision already possessed antecedents in the results of the Romanian War of Independence in 1877–1878, when Romania was awarded northern Dobrudja, after which the government began a campaign of colonization and resettlement, intermittently pursued from the 1880s through 1929, only to be taken up again in 1940. As for the onerous matter of Transylvania and its large Hungarian minority, fantasies of sending them over the border seemed feasible in the interwar years, only to diminish after the Second Vienna Award (1940) when the province was effectively split in half. As neither party wished to lessen its claim to the whole of the region, population exchange became a dead letter.

For diasporic minorities without the benefit of an external patron-state, and deemed a greater threat to the security and health of the Romanian nation, population exchanges did not present a viable option. Thus, to radical eugenicists such as Sabin Manuilă, the director of the Central Institute of Statistics, deportation to Transnistria provided the only, albeit temporary solution. For both Jews and Roma, these deportations were selective, targeting only those who posed the greatest danger: the Jews of Bessarabia, Bukovina, and Dorohoi

County, for their supposed infection with the Bolshevik disease; and for Roma, the nomads, seen as carriers of plague, as well as settled Roma with a criminal background or a “parasitic” means of existence.

A signal contribution of this book is to demonstrate the degree to which radical eugenic thinking contributed to the legitimization and the formulation of plans for ethnic cleansing via population exchange, deportation, and murder. One of the most distinctive features of Romanian eugenics was its “racism without race”: because the Romanian nation was popularly conceived as being the descendent of a mixture of Roman conquerors and autochthonous peoples, eugenicists could not argue for the existence of a pure Romanian race; instead, leading eugenicists such as Iuliu Moldovan and others seized upon the convoluted schema, first proposed by Ovidiu Comșia, of a pure *ethnicity*. This ethnicity, or *neam*, was not strictly reducible to biological content, but included spiritual and cultural components that themselves were intrinsically Romanian, and thus in need of defending against latter-day intrusions by dysgenic elements. In the end, this tortuous iteration of a “community of blood” may have provided eugenicists with a way to reconcile national history with racist ideology, but their basic attitude to national minorities mirrored that of their confreres elsewhere: as threats to the body politic, minorities must be excised, preferably by their complete expulsion.

As Solonari shows, one of the reasons the eugenic conception of *neam* proved such a welcome catalyst for repression was that the political establishment was already searching for explanatory models to legitimize the exclusion of minorities. The central irony of Romania’s immense success in gaining territories after World War I was that no sooner did the government decree the creation of Greater Romania than the country immediately devolved into a siege mentality, as its minority population swelled from 8% to 30%. In conceptualizing their new state, the political elite adopted the concept of the national state. In its most benign formulation, the national state held the interests of the majority as paramount; in its more radical phrasing, the national state existed only to care for the ethnic majority, and minorities were held as inherently inimical to the state’s interests. Even the most liberal statesmen, such as Iuliu Maniu, accepted the concept of the national state as sound and reasonable means of building their nation, and thus, by the time Antonescu seized power, policies of exclusion and repression aimed at minorities already enjoyed wide currency. Indeed, this book offers a stunning indictment of nationalism’s seductive power to lure even the liberal-minded into condoning unspeakable atrocities.

Throughout the book Solonari repeatedly emphasizes the agency of Romanian perpetrators, who formulated and enacted policies absent any prodding from their erstwhile Nazi allies. As with Holly Case’s recent monograph *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during World War II* (2009), this book reminds us that internal policies and external ambitions cannot be divorced from the broader diplomatic and military theatres of the war; each component informed the other, creating opportunities or circumscribing them as fortunes changed. Due to Germany’s dependence on its various Central East European partners for resources and manpower, these states enjoyed considerable freedom in – as but one example – formulating their own national solutions to the “Jewish question,” either by openly defying pressure to hand “their” Jews over to the Nazis (Hungary until 1944; Bulgaria and Romania throughout the war) or engaging in the deportation and/or murder of Jews in territories under occupational administration (Bulgaria in Thrace and Macedonia; Romania in southern Ukraine). While Romania’s absolute responsibility in the murder of Jews is of paramount importance, it is also not a particularly new insight: indeed, this is something that is taken for granted in the émigré and foreign scholarship. Such an argument, then, can

only be construed as being meant for a Romanian audience still wrestling with the difficult legacy of the war years, and as such, Solonari somewhat betrays his opening gambit, albeit never at the expense of critical analysis.

Recent studies such as this one, Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands*, and Father Patrick Debois's *The Holocaust by Bullets* shunt the center of Holocaust historiography from Berlin and Auschwitz to the periphery: to small states, and the area Snyder refers to collectively as "the bloodlands." If we wish to understand how the Holocaust transpired, bullet by bullet, then this periphery must become the new center of research. This book makes a valuable contribution to that end, to our understanding of the Romanian Holocaust, and to studies of nationalism and minority policy in Eastern Europe.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634190>

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Why do Uzbeks have to be Muslims? Exploring religiosity in the Ferghana Valley, by Irene Hilgers, Berlin, Lit Verlag, 2009, Piscataway, NJ, Transaction, 2011, US\$49.95 (paperback), ISBN 978-3643101761

Irene Hilgers was a research student at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology. She had completed fieldwork in Tashkent and Kokand in 2003–2005 but not yet finished her dissertation – which was the material for *Why Do Uzbeks Have to Be Muslims?* – when she returned to Uzbekistan in 2008 on what was intended only to be a short personal visit. Tragically, she did not survive this trip; and though it does not compare in any way to the loss suffered by her family and loved ones, the field of Central Asian studies and particularly the study of religion in Uzbekistan lost a deeply promising young scholar at only thirty-three. The manuscript was far from finished, but editor Chris Hann has done an excellent job supplementing it with copious footnotes and material from extant notes and outlines, sometimes reconstructing the direction her writing and theoretical work appeared to be going.

Although Hilgers' conclusions and the location of her work in the literature of anthropology, sociology, and Central Asian studies were somewhat skeletal and incomplete, the core of the book is a group of chapters that contain her fieldwork results from her exploration of the contemporary religious environment in Kokand. This core ethnography makes the book a valuable contribution to the field and makes clear what a great loss we suffered in losing her voice.

The study, and even more the popular understanding, of life and religion in Central Asia and in Uzbekistan's Ferghana Valley in particular have long suffered from the continued dependence on literature written in the Soviet period by scholars who made

assumptions and deductions about the lives and attitudes of Muslims and religious minorities in the region from afar. Though these approaches have been widely critiqued by Central Asianists and long superseded by better-informed work – by anthropologists like David Abramson, Johan Rasanayagam, Maria Louw and Kristina Kehl-Bodrogi, all of whom Hilgers clearly admired and cites frequently – fieldwork on religion in Uzbekistan is still quite difficult to do because of its political sensitivity.

When scholars have been able to complete fieldwork, their conclusions are often overwhelmed by the deafeningly loud voices of the popular authors who approach religion as a security issue, interested only in religion-as-politics, and with the assumption that when it comes to Islam – and the Ferghana Valley – religion is politics. As Hilgers' introduction states, much of this literature on the Ferghana Valley imposes absolutist interpretations on the population, describing only the poles of tradition and modernity, Islamism and secularism, Soviet atheism and “re-traditionalization” – all of these categories that Hilgers interrogates, challenges and problematizes throughout the text.

Though the limited ethnography done in the region has provided a much more nuanced picture of religious life, Hilgers gently challenges even some of her colleagues for often limiting their work to highly gendered approaches that led to somewhat startling arguments that, for example, religion was primarily or exclusively a female domain during the Soviet period, or even limiting approaches to Islam only. Hilgers was one of very few scholars to seriously examine and thickly describe the whole spectrum of religious beliefs in a single Ferghana Valley community, from reformist Muslims to Evangelical Christians and Hare Krishnas. It is perhaps her most unique contribution that Hilgers seriously examined what it means to cross all social boundaries for Uzbeks who convert to another religion entirely while still trying to maintain their own culture, citizenship, and family ties. In each faith community, she queried what it meant to negotiate the tensions between national and universal religious identity and the pressures of community and the state that constrain the agency of individual actors as they explore the divine for themselves.

In her first two chapters, Hilgers summarizes the groups of erstwhile and genuine ideological battles, like the debates between reformers and “traditionalists,” and the often-overlooked efforts of the Uzbek state to instrumentalize religion in creating a national ideology, covering material from an article she had already published (Hilgers 2006).

These chapters and her earlier work are both notable for the attention she gives to the way the Uzbek government shapes the religious landscape not only by persecuting forms of which it disapproves, but also by actively promoting selective institutions, practices, and doctrines that it weds to “authentic” national identity. Here too, her important contribution is to focus not only on the state, but also on actors within it and in society who engage in these processes of persecution and promotion in an attempt to actively shape the country's religious landscape.

The core of the book is divided into five chapters that contain her fieldwork results from Kokand – a description of the religious field in Kokand that may appear surprisingly diverse to readers who know the city only from previous literature on the Ferghana Valley – an overview chapter on the various ways of conceptualizing *musulmanchilik* (Muslimness, or “being Muslim”) that her main informants described; a full chapter on a wedding and the thicket of debates about how to properly conduct a celebration that is sufficiently both “Uzbek” and “Muslim”; a chapter on shrine practices and gendered dimensions of religion among Muslims; and finally a unique exploration of an unusual Uzbek Evangelical Christian community in Kokand.

The richness of these chapters and their willingness to challenge (stereo)typical conceptualizations of religious life in the Ferghana Valley with the rich stuff of everyday

life and its myriad contradictions make the book an important addition to the field in spite of its tragic incompleteness. In sharp contrast to the frequent descriptions of the Ferghana Valley as a “hotbed” or a pot of something-or-other that “seethes” or “boils” or otherwise threatens, Hilgers’s descriptions of her interlocutors and their communities are warm and real and full of nuance and surprise.

For instance, Hilgers describes the way the strictness of the *Islomiy to’y* (Islamic wedding) breaks down by evening as the boys creep around the wall of the courtyard to flirt with the girls. The girls in turn all wear their headscarves and dresses in various ways and are punished or rewarded in the gossip mill, which has almost as much power as the authoritarian government in these narratives, and which continues to approve and chastise long after the wedding is over.

The group of women she accompanies to visit a shrine as part of their neighborhood “pilgrimage club” describe their motivations in so many different ways – some of them seek healing and miracles, others are excited just to have a picnic and rest from household chores for a day, and for most their motivations are some mix in between. After performing their shrine rituals, all of them dance to Uzbek pop tunes from a boom box nearby, and some later return to its walls to perform *namoz* in public (an act permissible at the shrine but seemingly unthinkable in any other public space).

One of the Christian informants, a female pastor, narrates a surprising nighttime visit from Christ himself that she believes changed her life and inspired her to leave Islam entirely. Non-Uzbeks are not welcome at her church, where music at services is played only on Uzbek traditional instruments and parishioners often dress in traditional Uzbek clothing as part of their concerted if experimental effort to create an Uzbek Christianity that would, contrary to the title claim, still be authentically Uzbek even if no longer Muslim.

All of these informants and their families live very consciously in the shadow of the state, with its inflexible and often unpredictable boundaries, and with the memory of real violence that has occurred in the past along both religious and ethnic lines when the community’s self-policing mechanisms were not enough to constrain violent actors within it. Thus the tensions and the extremes (and extremists) are here in these narratives; they are not avoided. But Hilgers reminds us that most of the people of the valley or anywhere else are somewhere in between those extremes, together trying to negotiate the right balances in their families and communities, working out what it means to be traditional, modern, Uzbek, Muslim or anything else in a constant inter-subjective negotiation. The humane and empathetic view that Hilgers gave us into how this process works in Kokand, when so many others give us only eternal battles between impersonal abstractions, is her legacy to both scholarship and the people of the Ferghana Valley.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2011.634191>

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