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Charles J. Halperin

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Discussing the “contest for the legacy of Kievan Rus’” during the medieval and early modern periods of East Slavic history, Paul Bushkovitch opined that this question was “essentially meaningless.” “What does it mean today to claim the heritage of Kievan Rus’, a rather backward early medieval society whose primary cultural products emerged from Orthodox Christianity and a monarchical political order?” Many nineteenth-century scholars thought the issue irrelevant. Nevertheless, Bushkovitch concluded, the quest for answers to that question did produce “some useful scholarship.”¹ Bushkovitch’s opinion is a decided minority, if not a minority of one.² The question of the role of Kyivan (Kievan) Rus’ in schemas of East Slavic history lies at the base of Oleh S. Ilnytzkij’s sharp review of a new anthology edited by Simon Franklin and Emma Widdis entitled *National Identity in Russian Culture. An Introduction* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2004).³ Ilnytzkij’s review elicited a reply by Franklin on the listserv of the Early Slavic Studies Association,⁴ which in turn led to Ilnytzkij’s reply, in which he noted that Franklin had declined an invitation to respond on the pages of *Canadian Slavonic Papers* and extended that invitation to members of the “Slavic interpretative community.”⁵

Scholarly disagreement in and of itself need not be depressing; indeed sometimes it is stimulating and productive. But this non-conversation, non-debate is unfortunate and troubling, not so much because it involves professional scholars but because of its tone. Alas, it has long since become apparent that the break-up of the Soviet Union and the re-establishment of an independent Ukraine have not led to an

¹ Paul Bushkovitch review of Jaroslaw Pelenski, *The Contest for the Legacy of Kievan Rus’* (Boulder, CO, 1998) in the *International History Review* 21.4 (1999): 987-8. Bushkovitch included the Pelenski anthology within “some useful scholarship.”

² Perhaps not: Volodymyr Kravchenko excludes Professor Kohut from those historians who see it as their task “to fight for the half-rotted blanket of the historical and cultural legacy of Old Rus’.” Cf. Volodymyr Kravchenko, “Zenon E. Kohut: Selected Pages of an Intellectual Biography,” tr. Myroslav Yurkevich, in *Synopsis: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Zenon E. Kohut*, edited by Serhii Plokhly and Frank E. Sysyn (Edmonton-Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2005) 7.

³ Oleh S. Ilnytzkij, “A Thousand Years of ‘Russianness?’” *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue canadienne des slavistes* 47.1-2 (2005): 127-38.

⁴ H-EarlySlavic, 21 Oct. 2005.

⁵ This phrase is unknown to me, but I presume I belong to that “community.”

amelioration of the nationalist passion which has long characterized discussions of Ukrainian-Russian relations.

Ilnytzkij's main criticism can be summarized fairly simply. He objects most of all to the conceptual schema of the book, namely its references to a millennium of Russian history and search for national identity, which, seemingly, ignoring the classic objections of Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, confers the scholarly seal of approval on the Great Russian nationalist usurpation of Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'. Ilnytzkij finds that the authors of the anthology use the terms Rus' and Russia as synonyms, thereby excluding the Ukrainians and Belarusians from East Slavic history. Ilnytzkij deems the work not only wrong but also "dangerous" because of the "harm" it would inflict, presumably on unsuspecting students with impressionable minds (p. 128).

I do not propose here to deal with theories of nationalism or the thorny issue whether "national identity" of any sort can be projected onto Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' or early modern Muscovy. I have already expressed skepticism that the concept of the "Land of Rus'" (*rusaskaia zemlia*), which figures repeatedly in the articles in the anthology, reflected national consciousness through the fifteenth century.⁶ But as a reformed sinner in translating *rusaskaia zemlia* as the "Russian Land," for which I am still atoning,⁷ I am motivated to try to contribute something useful on the relevant issues of medieval and early modern history. Franklin describes as "misrepresentations" Ilnytzkij's insistence that the anthology "transposes" Rus' and Russia or makes exclusive claims to Russian succession to Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'. To Franklin, repeating Russian theories of a thousand years of Russian history is not the same thing as endorsing them. There is no guarantee that this "he said/they said" dispute can be resolved; every reader is entitled to interpret the book as he or she sees fit. I hope that by exploring the contents of the anthology on this question at least offers the possibility of shedding some light on the source of the disagreement.

In the "Preface" the editors assert that questions about what was Russia, who were the Russians, and what was Russianness have been central for a thousand years, "from the very first native literary and artistic endeavours of the 'Rus'" (ancestors of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians) in the eleventh and twelfth centuries" (xi). The book's inside cover, obviously adapted from the "Preface," also refers to "Russian cultural expression over the past thousand years."⁸ To Ilnytzkij, this self-definition of the book's contents irrevocably taints it; to Franklin, this is

⁶ Charles J. Halperin, "The Concept of the *rusaskaia zemlia* and Medieval National Consciousness from the Tenth to the Fifteenth Centuries," *Nationalities Papers* 8.1 (Spring, 1980): 75-86.

⁷ Cf. Charles J. Halperin, "The Concept of the Russian Land from the Ninth to the Fourteenth Century," *Russian History* 2.1 (1975): 29-38; and Halperin, "Novgorod and the 'Novgorodian Land'," *Cahiers du monde russe* 40.3 (Jul.-Sept., 1999): 348 n. 12.

⁸ Ilnytzkij refers to the book jacket, but the copy to which I have access does not have one.

merely a reflection of the claims of Russians, not of the scholarly opinions of the editors or authors. That such expressions of identity might even predate writing among the East Slavs is not so astonishing a notion as Ilnytkyj implies (p. 127), since the legends about the early Rus'—recorded only much later by the Kyivan (Kievan) chronicler, let alone folklore—would antedate the conversion of the East Slavs to Christianity.

I think Ilnytkyj has some justification for objecting that the editors should have qualified their exposition, which superficially subsumes Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' into Russia. I just do not like references to a “millennium” of Russian history. The “millennium” of the baptism of the Rus' in 988 has an objective referent: Vladimir's conversion to Christianity—and both Russians and Ukrainians celebrated it, to be sure almost separately, but at least without rancor.⁹ What is the frame of reference for judging a thousand years of Rus'/Russian history? Certainly it is not from the migration of the East Slavs to the territory of Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'. By the beginning of the twelfth century a Kyivan (Kievan) monastic chronicler, probably reflecting the perspectives of the now Slavized Scandinavian dynasty, dated the “beginning of the Land of Rus'” to the “summoning of the Varangians” c. 860. That would make 1860 the “millennium” of Rus'; Imperial Russia was far too busy recovering from the Crimean War and preparing for the emancipation of the serfs to do much celebrating then; besides which, the Normanist theory was so controversial that it would have been far too provocative to base an official ceremony upon the basis of the chronicle legend.¹⁰ Therefore only in the second half of the nineteenth century could anyone—who believed Russia derived from Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'—speak about an historical “millennium.” As far as I can tell, no one, and certainly no one quoted by any of the authors of the anthology, did so. By now publicists have “missed” the 1100th anniversary of Rus'; I doubt anyone cares. The “millennial” framework contributes nothing to the anthology except perhaps providing a catch phrase to advertise it. Even on its own terms, it would have been preferable to say “more than a thousand years” of Rus'/Russian history.

However, to return to Ilnytkyj's point, the editors' explicit disclaimer that the Rus' were also the ancestors of the Ukrainians and Belarusans at the very least conveys the impression that the editors did not intend to second the Great Russian assumption of exclusivity towards Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'. To his credit, Ilnytkyj cites this passage and sees it as contradicting the anthology's millennial assertions. The weakness of Ilnytkyj's critique is that in that same “Preface” the editors insist they are not dealing with history, but “cultural discourse,” and there is no denying,

⁹ Franklin (p. 105) mentions the Russian celebration but not the Ukrainian.

¹⁰ Of course, nineteenth-century Russian historians and intellectuals made much of the “summoning of the Varangians” as an illustration of the “peaceful” beginning of “Russian” history, compared to violent conquest in Europe, or, to Slavophiles, the renunciation of governmental functions by the “Russian people” (*narod*).

nor anything misleading in stating, that early modern (Muscovite) and modern Russians claimed descent from Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'.

Ilnytzkij cites both title of the book and the book jacket as evidence of its program. Authors do not necessarily choose the titles of their books¹¹—and most definitely authors and editors are not responsible for the prose on book jackets or inside covers. Publishers, sometimes advertising departments, write advertising copy to put on book covers. I can well imagine Ilnytzkij's reaction to post-1991 books in English whose titles read "Russia" but which include Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'; two outstanding examples by impeccable scholars are Janet Martin's history of "Russia" to 1584¹² and John Fennell's history of the "Russian" Church to 1448.¹³ Russian historians writing in Russian after 1991 still sometimes apply the adjective *russkii* to the Kievan period as if it did not mean "Great Russian."¹⁴ Even the awkward circumlocution *drevnerusskii* (Ancient Rus'), which is marred by incorporating *russkii*, or the lengthy but more accurate *vostochnoslavianskii* (East Slavic), would be preferable. One can avoid Great-Russian translations of Rus' as Russia, Rußland, or "la Russie" only by not translating the term at all, but just transliterating it. This is a no-win situation.

It is therefore all the more significant that in his other books, his co-authored textbook and his study of literacy and writing, Franklin's titles say Rus', not Russia.¹⁵ Ilnytzkij recognizes this usage, approving of Franklin's and Shepard's "wise" choice not to say "Russia" (p. 134). It seems to me that Franklin's usage in his other books and numerous articles suggests more than a desire to avoid confusion. His is a scholarly commitment to a non-nationalist interpretation of the Kyivan (Kievan) period. Therefore, *if* in this anthology he equates Rus' and Russia, then such usage contradicts the editors' intent, which is certainly relevant to evaluating the volume.

Franklin and Widdis title their first chapter "All the Russias..." but insist that this title "should *not* [their emphasis] be taken to imply any suggestion that Ukraine

¹¹ Franklin observes (p. 113) re O. A. Platonov's 2000 book *Holy Rus: An Encyclopedia Dictionary of Russian Civilization*: "Still, titles are, in part, marketing devices and should not predetermine one's view of the substance," although in this case a snap judgment about the book would have turned out to be accurate (see pp. 113-15).

¹² Janet Martin, *Medieval Russia, 980-1584* (Cambridge, England, 1995).

¹³ John L. I. Fennell, *A History of the Russian Church to 1448* (London, 1995). Lest it be objected that this posthumous title is atypical of Fennell, cf. *ibid.*, *The Crisis of Medieval Russia, 1200-1304* (London, 1983).

¹⁴ See Anton Anatol'evich Gorskii, "*Vsego esi ispolnena zemlia russkaia...*": *Lichnosti i mental'nost russkogo srednevekov'ia: Ocherki* (Moscow, 2001) pp. 11-23 on Igor' Sviatoslavich of "Novgorod-Seversk" as if he were part and parcel of the "Russian middle ages". See my review in *Russian Review* 61:4 (October, 2002), pp. 641-3 here p. 642.

¹⁵ Simon Franklin, *Writing, Society and Culture in early Rus: c. 950-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); *ibid.* and Jonathan Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus' 750-1200* (London: Longman, 1996).

and Belarus are ‘really’ parts of Russia” (p. 3) and acknowledge that Muscovites later invoked their Kyivan (Kievan) continuity as a program (p. 4). They state forthrightly that Russia was never a “nation state,” “more or less from the start it has been a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual polity” (p. 4). Ilnytskyj faults the anthology for not developing as a theme the Russian appropriation of the Kyivan (Kievan) past, for omitting any discussion of precisely when, where and how Moscow first foisted its appropriation of Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' upon its ideology, for not stating outright that the book’s theme was modern Russian national identities, or national identities in East Slavic culture (p. 132). In this connection Ilnytskyj cites Edward L. Keenan’s assertion that Muscovy did not develop an interest in Kyiv (Kiev) until the seventeenth century (p. 133). Franklin admits that this would be a very interesting topic but demurs that it was not on the research agenda of the volume.

First, Keenan’s revisionism, cited by Ilnytskyj, rests upon a dubious analysis of the attitude of the Muscovite Court to Church ideology and a suspect interpretation of State diplomatic assertions that Kyiv was the “patrimony” (*otchina / votchina*) of the Moscow dynasty. Although argument on this point turns on textual dating from late manuscripts, I believe that Keenan postdates Muscovite interest in Kyiv (Kiev) by at least three centuries, and Muscovite government claims by at least two.¹⁶

Second, “multi-ethnic, multi-lingual” of course applies to Kyivan (Kievan) Rus', which included Scandinavians, Slavs, Finno-Ugric peoples, and Turkic nomads. I would argue that the definition of Rus' was not ethnic but political—all peoples under the rule of the Rus' dynasty. Ironically, the absence of a Rus' nation during the Kyivan (Kievan) period, or even of a Russian nation in Muscovy, does not invalidate notions of national identity. Frequently in the nineteenth century the purpose of articulating national identity was not to recognize a nation, which one would think it presupposes, but to create a nation. The purpose of ideology is to express myths because they are not true, which includes the myth of the Land of the Rus'.

Third, even if Muscovy was not a “nation state,” any more than any other country in early-modern Europe,¹⁷ it might have claimed to be. The tension between self-perception and reality illuminates much Muscovite history, but again, that story is not part of this anthology.¹⁸

Finally, some late-Soviet and post-Soviet Russian scholars seem to wish to terminate the umbilical cord tying Russia to Kyivan (Kievan) Rus'. Gumilev, in his

¹⁶ Charles J. Halperin, “Kiev and Moscow: An Aspect of Early Muscovite Thought,” *Russian History / Histoire russe* 7.3 (1980): 312-21; Halperin, “Ivan IV and Kiev,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, forthcoming.

¹⁷ Treating Muscovy as a typical early-modern European “new monarchy” facilitates comparative exploration of the issue of a “nation-state.”

¹⁸ See Paul Bushkovitch, “The Formation of a National Consciousness in Early Modern Russia,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 10.3-4 (1986): 335-76.

fantasy theory of the evolution of an ethnos and “passionate energy” from outer space, assigned the birth of the Russian ethnos to 1380,¹⁹ and Iurganov dates the beginning of Russian culture to the Mongol period.²⁰ I expect such re-appraisals of the roots of Russian history to continue to surface.

An anthology (which Ilnytkyj recognizes this volume to be [p. 128]) does not offer the opportunity for comprehensive or systematic exploration of all aspects of its theme. To some extent Ilnytkyj is criticizing the editors for not writing a different book. Book reviewers always have to be cautious not to review the book they would have wanted to be written on a topic rather than the book the author(s) wrote. I believe that readers, especially students, would have a hard time extrapolating from this anthology a clear chronology of Russian attitudes toward Kyivan (Kievan) Rus', a point which could have been made without attributing unconscious Great Russian chauvinism to the editors. Ilnytkyj decries the absence in the volume of any conception of “protonational, supranational, nascent, shared or hybrid identities/cultures” (p. 128), which is partially inaccurate, since Orthodox Christian identity was supranational (see pp. 96-9).²¹ The omission of reference to the other types of identity/culture on Ilnytkyj's list is a result of the thematic rather than chronological nature of the volume, in which relatively little space was devoted to Muscovy, as Ilnytkyj correctly observes (p. 129). Which is to say that an anthology is not a monograph, but no more. Franklin does refer to the “assumed continuity between Kyiv (Kiev) and Moscow (p. 23) in the next chapter.

In “Russia in Time” Franklin emphasizes, “The Land of the Rus' [*rusaskaia zemlia*—CJH] is not—one should stress—modern Russia,” it is now European Russia, Ukraine and Belarus (p. 12). Obviously Ilnytkyj would have preferred the sentence to read that the Land of the Rus' was *never* Russia; as if the adjective “modern” does not sufficiently explain that difference. But Franklin goes on to assert that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' writers set the agenda for discussions of identity that were repeated for a half-millennium,

¹⁹ See Charles J. Halperin, “The Six-Hundredth Anniversary of the Battle of Kulikovo Field in Soviet Historiography,” *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 18.3 (1984): 303. For an extensive but uncritical presentation of Gumilev's ideas, see Bruno Daarden, “‘I am a genius, but no more than that’: Lev Gumilev, Ethnogenesis, the Russian Past and World History,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* N.F. 44.1 (1996): 62-82.

²⁰ See Charles J. Halperin, “Cultural Categories, Councils and Consultations in Muscovy: A. I. Filiushkin, *Istoriia odnoi mistifikatsii. Ivan Groznyi i ‘Izbrannaia Rada’*,” A. L. Iurganov, *Kategorii russkoi srednevekovoi kul'tury*, Sergei Bogatyrev, *The Sovereign and his Counsellors: Ritualized Consultation in Muscovite Political Culture, 1350s-1570s*,” *Kritika* 3:4 (Fall, 2002): 653-64, especially p. 660.

²¹ So is the concept of Slavia Orthodoxa, not mentioned in the anthology or review. See for example Riccardo Picchio, “Models and Patterns in the Literary Tradition of Medieval Orthodox Slavdom,” in *American Contributions to the Seventh International Congress of Slavists, Warsaw, August 21-27, 1973*, v. II, *Literature and Folklore*, edited by V. Terras (The Hague, 1973) 439-67.

through the fall of Constantinople in 1453 (pp. 13-15). Ilnytzkyj objects that the very title of the chapter, "Russia in Time," vitiates the non-Russianist disclaimer. My objection would be that the identities adumbrated by Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' authors and later articulated by Muscovite ideologues were never "national"—they were dynastic, religious, historical, perhaps even cultural, but never "national," since "nationalism" was never an element of their worldviews.

Ilnytzkyj's utilization of the chapter title to undermine some of its contents seems excessive to me. Whether one believes that there was any continuity between Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' and Muscovy or not, it remains to my mind irrefutable that Muscovy cannot be understood without access to Kievan antecedents. On this feature of Muscovite culture Franklin is absolutely right. He is not above reproach, however, for not delineating more precisely that the material from Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' might be seen as background, not as an earlier phase of "Russian" history. Thus in his discussion of 1991 Soviet postage stamps, Franklin observes that Cyril and Methodius "had nothing directly to do with Rus'/Russia" (p. 21), in which I hope the meaning is Rus' OR Russia.

Perhaps here the methodology of the volume is at issue. Ilnytzkyj refers to the anthology's approach as postmodern, poststructuralist (p. 129), which is probably true. However, one would not infer that Simon Franklin was a postmodernist from any of his previous publications; his use of this methodology here may be no more than situational. My own training in pre-post-modernist historiography might be influencing my reaction to the anthology.

Franklin now turns directly to Ukrainian data, but not early modern. He declares that it is not "perverse" to include 1991-96 Ukrainian bank notes in his discussion because "Ukraine is not Russia, but in a sense it is at least partly *Russia* in the old Latin sense, since part of Ukraine, like part of Russia, fills part of the space once covered by the Lands of Rus'. Thus, as we shall see, a story of Ukraine in time overlaps with—and in some versions directly challenges—a story of Russia in time." The appearance of Kyivan symbols, Vladimir (in Ukrainian, Volodymyr), and the trident on Ukrainian currency contested Soviet usage of the same images by insisting that Ukrainian Statehood derives from Kyiv, the Ukrainian *hryvnia* from the *grivna* of the *Rusaskaia pravda* of Kyivan grand prince Yaroslav. For extra emphasis the Ukrainian bills painted Volodymyr with the drooping mustache of a Ukrainian hetman. These bank notes constitute, in Franklin's apt phrasing, a claim to a "thousand-year-old tradition of Ukrainian statehood" (pp. 24-8).²² Ilnytzkyj devotes serious attention to this section, objecting, rightly in my mind, to the glib invocation of the Latin name for Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' as irrelevant to issues of native identity, but Ilnytzkyj's following remarks bespeak volumes about his reaction to the anthology as a whole. "As it stands, the book offers very little insight

²² Since one thousand from 1991-6 leads us to the meaningless starting point of the 990s, I hope this is just an expression here.

into Russian-Ukrainian ‘interrelationships’” (p. 136). Exactly—because the book is not about Russian-Ukrainian relationships, it is about Russian national identity, and Ilnytzkyj cannot imagine a book on the latter that does not devote more space to the former. He is entitled to wish that another anthology called “National Identities in Ukrainian Culture” had also been written—so do I—and he is entitled to make the case that the issue of Ukraine is far more important to that of Russian identity than the anthology allows, which is worth discussion. However, devoting less attention to Ukraine than Ilnytzkyj would have hoped does not make the authors or editors guilty of being parrots of Russian chauvinism.

Widdis, in a chapter entitled “Russia in Space,” observes that originally the Rus'/Rhos was multi-ethnic, but none of its constituent elements was “Russian.” Again, as a dedicated non-post-modernist, I would have added, “nor could they have been, because Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusans did not yet exist; there were only East Slavs at the time.” Widdis also records the twelfth-century expansion of the Land of the Rus' to include Galich [Halych] “in what is now Western Ukraine,” the fourteenth-century incorporation of Kyiv (Kiev) and the “western lands” into Lithuania, later the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (pp. 33-35) and that Moscow “subsequently claimed to inherit the status and prestige of Kiev” (p. 37). She notes the anomaly that Kyiv (Kiev) “is now the capital of Ukraine, not even a part of modern-day Russia” yet it was the “founding space” of one of principle narratives of Russianness concerning Vladimir’s conversion (p. 38). An explanatory, heuristic comment on the conflicting Ukrainian and Russian claims to Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' would definitely have been in order here.

Ilnytzkyj asserts “that reading between the lines, it seems doubtful that the editors would be prepared to make such generous allowances for, say, Ukrainians or Belarusans, if either nationality were to claim a thousand-year old identity.” Yet that is exactly what Ilnytzkyj has described Franklin as doing concerning the 1991-96 Ukrainian bank notes. Imputing interpretations to the authors by “reading between the lines” must take second place to reading what they actually wrote. If I were to apply the same methodology, I would wonder how indulgent Ilnytzkyj would be to the notion that Ukrainians did not begin claiming political legitimacy from Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' until the seventeenth century. It would be just as inaccurate to equate Rus' and Ukraine, *pace* Hrushevs'kyi, as it is to project “Russia” onto Rus'. Besides, during the Kievan period most of the territory of modern Ukraine was occupied by Turkic nomads, not Slavs.

Anthony Cross, in an article Ilnytzkyj singles out for praise, “‘Them: Russians on Foreigners,” talks of the various transformations of the Russian state, as if they ambiguously included Kyivan (Kievan) Rus' (p. 76). I’d have expected such loose terminology to have caught Ilnytzkyj’s eye.

In “Identity and religion,” Franklin defines “early Rus” as “roughly from the end of the tenth century right through the seventeenth” (p. 100), which is consistent with his discussion of the baptism of Rus' under Vladimir (pp. 95-100) but not necessarily with his reference to the relationship of religion and national identity,

presumably at the same time, in “Russian culture” (p. 100). I would have preferred terminating “early Rus’” with the Mongol conquest.

In another article Ilnytzkyj specifically praises, Marina Florova-Walker’s “Music of the soul?,” she declares that “Russia, of course, received its original corpus of Orthodox chants [the *znamenyi* chant tradition] from Byzantium” (p. 123). Again, I would have expected Ilnytzkyj to object to the absence of an additional clause, “via Kyivan (Kievan) Rus’.”

Boris Gasparov, in “Identity in language?,” impeccably maintains the distinction between the East Slavonic vernacular and Church Slavonic, never once letting any notion of the “Russian” language intrude into Kyivan (Kievan) Rus’. Ilnytzkyj rightly lauds Gasparov’s linguistic analysis, but laments missed opportunities to highlight the evolution of both Slavonic and East Slavic in early modern Ukraine and Belarus. Yet even Gasparov identifies Church Slavonic as the linguistic foundation of Russian cultural history (pp. 146-7), obviously via Kyivan (Kievan) Rus’. Given that the volume, which is devoted to Russian culture, slights Muscovy, how fair is it to lament gaps in its discussion of early modern Ukraine?

In sum, I believe the authors of *National Identity in Russian Culture* do a fairly decent if not perfect job of distinguishing Rus’ and Russia. Could it have been better? Certainly. Could it have been much, much worse? Absolutely. There is no way this volume can be equated with the Soviet abomination of a *drevnerusskaia natsional’nost’*. When the authors adhere to definitions of Rus’ which Ilnytzkyj shares, he dismisses these paragraphs as “backtrack[ing] from their more extravagant initial claims (p. 127), or “semantic fudging” leading to a “general tendency” to confuse the terms Rus’ and Russia (pp. 130-1). Ilnytzkyj minimizes, marginalizes, and dismisses all passages—which he does conscientiously quote—which attest precisely to the multi-East Slavic identity of the legacy of Kyivan (Kievan) Rus’ and to the contested nature of Russia’s claim to an exclusive inheritance.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that Ilnytzkyj and Franklin *agree* that Kyivan (Kievan) Rus’ should not be considered the exclusive property of Great Russian national identities. For Franklin we know this from his earlier publications, from what he writes in this anthology, and from his response to Ilnytzkyj’s review. Therefore, if the book fails to present that argument clearly, then it is a failure of execution, not intent. A failure in execution should not be evaluated as if it were a failure in intent. Given the stated positions of the authors, it is safe to conclude that any students they teach using this anthology will neither be misled nor confused by any gaps in its presentation of this issue. Finally, although Ilnytzkyj raises some legitimate concerns, objections, and criticism, his remarks would have been more effective had they been presented differently. Scholars more interested in Ukraine than in Russia might—I repeat, might—describe the anthology as wrong, incomplete, or at worst insulting to Ukrainian sensibilities, but there is no way it can legitimately be described as “harmful” or “dangerous.” *Mein Kampf* was a

dangerous book; *National Identity in Russian Culture* is not. Vladimir Putin is not going to use it to justify invading Ukraine or annexing Crimea from Ukraine. Had Ilytzyk refrained from such passionate prose, perhaps his review would have generated less heat and more light.