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**Ukraine's Many Faces: Land, People, and Culture Revisited**

This timely volume sheds light on Ukrainian history, national identity, culture, and society from the early modern period to the present. Since the Russian invasion on February 24, 2022, public discussion regarding the future of Ukraine and the entire eastern European region has been prevalent at international political, economic, and security forums. Experts have formed an opinion that partners in Europe and elsewhere lack an understanding of the Ukrainian cultural context, current realities, and the basic history of Ukraine. Therefore, academic publications such as *Ukraine's Many Faces: Land, People, and Culture Revisited* are essential for conversations involving Ukraine's local and global roles.

The editors of the volume seek to illuminate the history of the Ukrainian people and their land, both historical and cultural. The reader gains comprehensive and well-informed perspectives from scholars who live and work in Ukraine, as well as from experts on Ukrainian history and culture working outside the country. Thus, this seminal work offers a professional platform for the academic discussion of Ukrainian studies that responds to a variety of research studies.

The book begins with a landmark article by Olesya Khromeychuk, a Ukrainian history expert and the director of the Ukrainian Institute, London, UK. She addresses the prevalence of myths and stereotypes concerning Ukraine that have long been upheld by Western experts and a wide range of readers. Khromeychuk asks a crucial question: How did the largest country in Europe become the largest blank spot on the mental map of European history? She points out that Ukraine is a full-fledged political actor and the international community needs to be more aware of Ukraine's history and culture. She claims it is therefore important to involve Ukrainian experts in the discussion about the past, present, and future not only of Ukraine but also of the eastern European region in general. The author accurately points out that for decades the history and culture of Ukraine were largely perceived through the prism of Russian history. Western academia has been focused on Russian studies, and the uncritical study of Russian history has left many blind to Putin’s neo-imperialism.

The book is divided into three sections. The volume overall is accessible to everyone interested in Ukraine and Ukrainian studies and offers...
vivid and detailed accounts of the most important topics and milestones of Ukrainian history.

Section 1, “Modernity at the Crossroads of Empires,” examines the history of Ukrainian lands between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. This chapter features three significant texts: the Ukrainian Draft Treaty of 1654; “The Epistle,” by Taras Shevchenko; and the painting Bohdan Khmelnytsky’s Entry to Kyiv in 1649, by Mykola Ivasiuk. This section then continues with two interviews. Ewa Thompson, professor emerita of Slavic studies from Rice University, shares her thoughts on the nature of Pan-Slavic Russian imperialism. In the second interview, Ukrainian literary scholar Tamara Hundorova discusses Ukrainian history through the prism of Ukrainian literature. This section also includes three analytical pieces devoted to the history of Ukraine under the rule of several empires, including the Habsburgs and the Russian Empire. The essays focus on how the empires shaped the trajectory of Ukraine, including the significance of economic colonization.

Section 2, “Ukrainian Selfhood in the Soviet Era,” introduces an interview with Olena Palko, an associate professor of history at the University of Basel. She reflects on the problem of national self-determination of Ukrainians and pays particular attention to the construction of modern Ukrainian identity under the conditions of Soviet neo-imperialist policy and propaganda. This section also contains eight analytical articles focusing on issues related to Ukrainian history during the Soviet period. The authors touch upon such subjects as the construction of ethnic and religious identities, the invention of new Soviet ideals of man and woman, urban life, and Stalinist repressions. Daria Mattingly, studying Stalin’s repressions in Ukraine, notes that the cause of the Holodomor phenomenon should not be sought in Bolshevik ideology or modernization, but rather in the events that preceded the Holodomor, namely the formation of the Soviet Union as such. The national republics, and the Ukrainian SSR in particular, were experiencing centrifugal tendencies, and the issue of national movements remained unresolved. Thus, the Holodomor, with its millions of victims, became an instrument of subjugation of the Ukrainian peasantry, a social group that was most opposed to the new Soviet regime. Another example of persistent repression that Martin-Oleksandr Kisly explores is ethnic cleansing and deportation. His contribution examines the mass movement of Crimean Tatars to return to their ethnic homeland after decades of exile.

Section 3, “Sovereignty Regained: Ukraine in the Post-Soviet Age,” is dedicated post-Soviet Ukraine. The first part of this section includes three documents: the 1990 “Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine,” a poem by Kateryna Kalytko, and Matvey Vaisberg’s 2014 painting The Wall. A combination of historical documents, artistic works, and personal reflections provides a multifaceted approach to understanding Ukraine’s post-Soviet experience, with a specific focus on the challenges and impact of the war with Russia. In the second conversational part, David Marpels, a professor of Russian and eastern European history at the University of Alberta, and Maria Popova, an associate professor of political science at McGill University in Montreal, reflect on the formation of modern Ukrainian identity and national security. This conversation is followed by six essays that reveal a wide range of issues related to the post-Soviet Ukrainian society. These essays provide a comprehensive analysis of diverse aspects of Ukraine’s challenges, including the impact of military aggression, shifts in identity, regional dynamics, gender equality, and the role of creative culture in times of war.

The editors of the volume are highly aware of the challenges that the contemporary scholarship encounters when studying the history of Ukraine. One feature that stands out and which is also a strength is that the historical period covered is rather extensive, allowing readers to gain a comprehensive overview of Ukrainian history, includ-
ing various milestones, developments, and transformations. This can be particularly advantageous for those seeking a broad understanding of the subject. The book seems to adopt a mosaic-like structure, presenting interviews, articles, and sources as individual pieces that contribute to a holistic view of historical processes. This approach can provide readers with a nuanced understanding by incorporating diverse perspectives. However, such a mosaic allows readers to gradually discover new aspects of the formation of Ukrainian identity, state policy, political memory, self-image, and relations with neighboring countries.

An important asset of this publication is the dialogue and discussions it contains. The reader can find answers to current questions of Ukrainian history and the present, as well as formulate new questions and problems that must be further studied, reflected on, or revised. The volume concludes by questioning the responsibility of those shaping Western perceptions and advocating for a new paradigm to understand Ukraine, Russia, and eastern Europe in the aftermath of the war. The metaphor of shattered mirrors in Roman Horbyk’s essay signifies the need for a reevaluation of existing perspectives. *Ukraine’s Many Faces. Land, People, and Culture Revisited* will interest anyone seeking basic knowledge about the country, as well as students of eastern European history more generally and senior scholars seeking to broaden their understanding of Ukrainian history and culture.

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