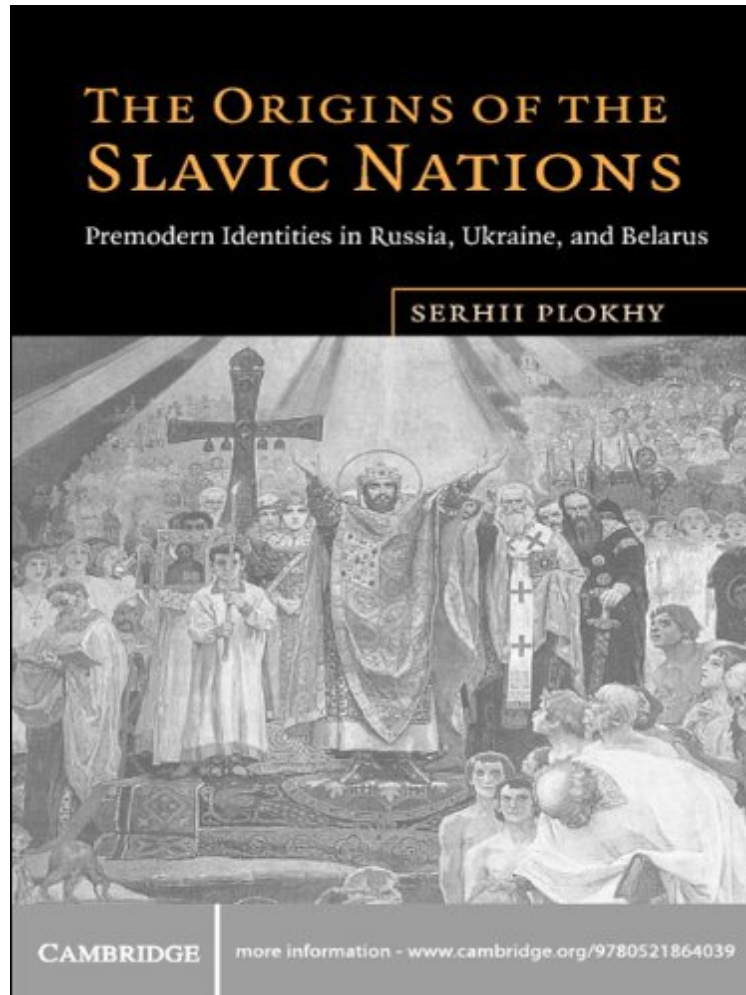


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The Origins of the Slavic Nations: Premodern Identities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus

Serhii Plokhy

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7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Casting Light on a Complicated Subject By Michael Samerdyke This was a very interesting book that made me rethink what I know about Russian history. Plokhy's subject is the development of national identity, and he makes many good points about the development of Russian and Ukrainian national identity, revealing it to be a much longer, much more complicated process than I had realized. A strong feature of this book is the importance of religion in determining identity, showing that even the Reformation and Counter-Reformation had an impact in Eastern Europe. This is not a book for beginners in the subject, but anyone with a serious

interest in the history of Eastern Europe should read this book. Highly recommended. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Great historical research By Orest Balytsky Great for anybody interested in serious detailed work on the history of eastern Slavs. Supported by lots of research. OB 15 of 18 people found the following review helpful. A current understanding of Putin's Imperialist viewpoint. By Peter J. Piasecky I have been reading the History of Eurasia and Central/Eastern Europe for the last 60 years. I have to say that when reading the history of Eastern Europe, it is very difficult to follow the history of any one nation in a linear fashion. This is the best book written on this topic by any historian and believe me I think I have read most of them. The first problem are the histories written by the victors and then histories written by the defeated. Second there is the problem of countries popping up and then disappearing and then popping up and so forth ad nauseum. Third is the problem of multi-national empires. Fourth there are Nations without political borders or a National ruling elite. Fifth the National Elites change their national allegiances. Ultimately we have the book written by Prof. Plokhy and finally all is clear!

This 2006 book documents developments in the countries of eastern Europe, including the rise of authoritarian tendencies in Russia and Belarus, as well as the victory of the democratic 'Orange Revolution' in Ukraine, and poses important questions about the origins of the East Slavic nations and the essential similarities or differences between their cultures. It traces the origins of the modern Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian nations by focusing on pre-modern forms of group identity among the Eastern Slavs. It also challenges attempts to 'nationalize' the Rus' past on behalf of existing national projects, laying the groundwork for understanding of the pre-modern history of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The book covers the period from the Christianization of Kyivan Rus' in the tenth century to the reign of Peter I and his eighteenth-century successors, by which time the idea of nationalism had begun to influence the thinking of East Slavic elites.

"Plokhy offers innovative and convincing reinterpretations of the key controversies in the histories of the national development of the East Slavs....his contribution to the history East Slavic identities is huge. He has, indeed, delivered on his promise to reconceptualize the field. This is must reading for all historians of the East Slavs in the pre-modern period." - H-Nationalism, David G. Rowley, Department of Social Sciences, University of Wisconsin--Platteville "[An] ambitious, revisionist, and impressive monograph.... Plokhy's detailed, sustained interpretation sheds new light on such processes as the gradual alienation among the three East Slavic peoples as their historical fates differed, and such events as the mutual misunderstanding characterizing the 1654 Union of Pereiaslav. Plokhy has set the bar very high for future historians, who will be stimulated by this superb book to address the question of East Slavic national identity." - Canadian Journal of History, Charles J. Halperin "Plokhy has produced an impressive and often persuasive study" Daniel H. Kaiser, Slavic "...In each chapter Plokhy orients the reader by providing a summary of the basic historical facts, as well as a brief discussion of the major issues and controversies involved with these topics, before proceeding to his own analysis....The Origins of the Slavic Nations has several strengths: readers are provided with useful summaries of the basic issues, and Plokhy familiarizes the reader with recent literature in the field, both that produced in the West and in the former Soviet Union. Plokhy also does a good job of distinguishing the different meanings certain terms had depending on the time and place used....The Origins of the Slavic Nations is a valuable treatment of identities in East Slavic territory before the modern era....Plokhy's style is quite engaging and, given his attempts to provide the requisite background information, this book will appeal to more than just a narrow group of specialists. Those scholars who are familiar primarily with the Russocentric narrative will greatly benefit from Plokhy's analysis." --Andrew M Drozd, University of Alabama, Slavic and East European Journal "The result of painstaking research, Plokhy's excellent book succeeds in refuting 'primordialist' attempts to nationalize the premodern past. In its place, it reconstructs the lost structures of group identity among the nations we now know as Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians." -Serhy Yekelchik, Journal of Modern History "This book will become essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the premodern roots of modern divisions in Eastern Europe." -Brian J. Boeck, The Journal of Interdisciplinary History "Plokhy's book is not only a masterful synthesis of Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian national historiography from the medieval chroniclers to the present day...but also represents a major, original contribution to understanding the formation of national identities in the region." -Robert H. Greene, Journal of World History About the Author Serhii Plokhy is Professor of History at the University of Alberta. His numerous publications in Russian and Slavic history include Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History (2005) and, with Frank E. Sysyn, Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine (2003).