

## LETTERS

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From the *Slavic Review* Editorial Board:

*Slavic Review* publishes signed letters to the editor by individuals with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be restricted to one paragraph of no more than 250 words; comment on an article or forum should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. When we receive many letters on a topic, some letters will be published on the *Slavic Review* web site with opportunities for further discussion. Letters may be submitted by e-mail, but a signed copy on official letterhead or with a complete return address must follow. The editor reserves the right to refuse to print, or to publish with cuts, letters that contain personal abuse or otherwise fail to meet the standards of debate expected in a scholarly journal.

To the Editor:

Bohdan Harasymiw's review of my book, entitled *Cleft Countries: Regional Political Divisions and Cultures in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova*, contains factual misrepresentations (*Slavic Review*, vol. 66, no. 3). He claims that this book tells specialists in the field nothing new about Moldovan and Ukrainian history. But he distorts history and misstates a central thesis of the book by saying that it attributes regional political cleavages and conflicts in both Moldova and Ukraine to historical legacies of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the Russian empire. In fact, Moldova did not belong to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. My study talks about legacies of Romanian and Soviet rule in Moldova. His numerous charges of serious omissions are mostly unfounded. The book provides definitions of "culture" (42–43) and "nationalist" (69). It clearly states that regional divisions in other countries are examined to illustrate the role of historical legacies and to compare these divisions with Ukraine and Moldova (44, 58–59). Differences among various Ukrainian regions and changes in regional divisions in Ukraine over time, particularly during the 2006 elections, are examined in the book and in my other publications (69–89, 97–126, and 209–20). "Heavy reliance on secondary sources" is a misleading claim, because this book is based on original analyses of regional results of elections and referendums and two major surveys conducted in post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova. Harasymiw's comment that my mother, to whom the book is dedicated, was "confused by politics" for "without ever leaving home she managed to live in four different countries under several different regimes," ignores a part of my acknowledgment, which says that she experienced first-hand ethnic cleansing (forcing her to flee Poland), the Nazi genocide, and the Soviet terror. While Harasymiw questions the political role of historical experience transmitted through socialization in the family, this is a central thesis of my book.

IVAN KATCHANOVSKI  
*University of Toronto, Canada*

Professor Harasymiw chooses not to respond.

To the Editor:

Andrea Petó's review of our collection, *Gender and War in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (*Slavic Review*, vol. 66, no. 4) contains significant errors.<sup>o</sup>

Some are gaffes: The book's origin was a conference in Minsk, one that she helped organize; a glance at the contributors would have shown her that many were already well be-

yond graduate studies in 2001. More problematically, Pető mischaracterizes the volume's substance and scope. She describes it as comprising ten "national" case studies, ignoring Alon Rachamimov's study of aristocratic Habsburg nurses tending prisoners of war from Austria-Hungary's *multinational* army. Readers of the review also would not know that the volume addresses both world wars.

Pető deplores the volume's lack of discussion of masculinity, but that is in fact the subject of Maureen Healy's contribution and masculinity forms an integral part of Benjamin Frommer's chapter as well. Since the reviewer finds the "most painful" aspect of the book to be its relativist approach to the Holocaust, we encourage her to reread the introduction.

The most painful aspect of Pető's review is her false assertion that Eliza Ablovatski's chapter on Hungary "does not use any original sources and is limited to sources available in English and an illustration taken from a web site in Argentina." A simple look at that chapter reveals primary sources in Hungarian as well as German.

Reviewers can—and do—provide useful criticisms. The egregious errors made by this reviewer, many of which we have not even mentioned, are astonishing. Worst of all, her groundless and gratuitous attack on Ablovatski calls into question her professional judgment as a historian.

NANCY M. WINGFIELD  
Northern Illinois University  
MARIA BUCUR  
Indiana University

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to Andrea Pető's review of Nancy Wingfield and Maria Bucur's edited collection, *Gender and War in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (*Slavic Review*, vol. 66, no. 4).

I am prompted to write because the review contains numerous factual errors. I am particularly disturbed by these errors because the review contains such strong criticism of the scholarship of an untenured professor, Eliza Ablovatski. I do not know Ablovatski, but I know something of her work and was thus surprised by the review.

Pető asserts that a supposed lack of Hungarian-language sources in the essay indicates that Ablovatski does not read Hungarian. A more careful reading of the footnotes would prove the error of this assertion. Seven different notes offer sources in Hungarian. Pető also chides Ablovatski for using German-language sources rather than Hungarian ones. To do so would have required Ablovatski to use Hungarian translations of the German-language originals, since the sources cited appeared first in German (because the authors were in exile). Finally, Pető criticizes Ablovatski for using a web site based in Argentina, as though this were somehow an example of substandard research practice. The web site in question is based in Argentina because the person on whom the text focuses emigrated to Argentina and thus posted material online there rather than back in Hungary. For all these reasons, the negative review of Professor Ablovatski's scholarship is unwarranted.

MILLS KELLY  
George Mason University

Professor Pető chooses not to respond.