Andreas Kappeler. ***Die Kosaken: Geschichte und Legenden.*** Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2013. 127 pp. 20 illustrations. 2 maps. Index. Paper.

Andreas Kappeler has done it again! Over twenty years ago, he published a brief history of Ukraine, in which he managed to pack the most important parts of the history of the country into a mere 286 pages. Not only was that work brief and to the point, but it also held to a relatively high level of scholarship and made a number of interesting and well-grounded generalizations. In that book, Kappeler anticipated the longer and more detailed work of Paul Magocsi by experimenting with a multinational and polyethnic history of the country.

In the present work, Kappeler is equally brief and to the point and has again produced a well-thought-out and serious history, this time of the Cossacks, and he has again included some important generalizations. Although in this volume, the multinational and polyethnic elements are not quite so prominent, he does make note of them, and, in particular, he compares the Ukrainian and Russian Cossacks on several different levels.

Kappeler begins with geographic and geopolitical factors and notes that both the Ukrainian and Russian Cossacks originated along rivers—the Dnieper and the Don, respectively—as defenders of the local Slavic population against the Tatars and the Turks. He describes the successful Ukrainian Cossack revolt against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and what he calls "the Golden Age of the Dnieper Cossacks" under their leaders, or hetmans, Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi and Ivan Mazepa; and then the eventual absorption of their polity, the Ukrainian Cossack Hetmanate, into the Russian Empire. This is followed by a description of the Don Cossacks and their revolts against Muscovy-Russia. He notes the general failure of these latter revolts, which he attributes to the weaker demographic and geopolitical position of the Don region as compared to Ukraine vis-à-vis Poland, and then describes the transformation of the Don Cossacks into suppliant tools of the Russian Empire. Unlike the internationally-oriented Ukrainians, the Don Cossacks never concluded any formal legal treaties with Muscovy, which ostensibly would have guaranteed their rights.

Thereafter, two important chapters follow on the Cossacks in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in which much attention is paid to the Cossacks as a kind of "shock troop" reserve for the Russian police, helping to put down various opposition movements in the empire, and later, for the most part, trying to defend the old monarchy at the time of the Russian Civil War. As to Ukraine during this period, Kappeler stresses the "symbolic" value of the Cossack ethic, its importance to the Ukrainian national poet Taras Shevchenko; to the Ukrainian national awakening of the nineteenth century;

Volume III, No. 2 (2016) DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.21226/T21P42

to the Ukrainian national movement of the early twentieth century; and during the Revolution of 1917-21.

But, perhaps, the most moving part of the book is Kappeler's description of the fate of the Russian Cossacks during the Soviet period, the brutal "de-Cossackification" that followed the revolution and served as a model for the later, and equally brutal, "de-kulakization" (which affected both Ukraine and the Don). This was integrally linked to the mass repressions that led large numbers of Russian Cossacks to eventually collaborate with the Germans during the Second World War. Kappeler ends the narrative part of his book with a description of the rebirth of the Cossack movements in Ukraine and Russia at the time of the Gorbachev reforms and the subsequent collapse of the USSR. Throughout this part of the book, Kappeler manages to mention all eleven Cossack hosts, or armies, that existed in the Russian Empire prior to the Russian Revolution. These he divides into the original hosts, which arose on their own (the Don Cossacks, the Terek Cossacks, and the Ural Cossacks), and the hosts established by the Russian government from above—(in the eighteenth century) the Orenburg and Black Sea Cossacks and (in the nineteenth century) other Cossack hosts further east, such as the Amur and the Ussuri hosts facing China and the Sea of Japan. He notes that in the nineteenth century, the Black Sea Cossacks were transferred to the Kuban Region, where they existed until recent times as the only active Cossack host to preserve the Ukrainian language and some of the traditions of the Zaporozhians of earlier days in central Ukraine.

However, the most analytic part of the book is probably its very beginning, where Kappeler summarizes Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish historiography on the Cossacks. Regarding the Russian tradition, he identifies five main points made by Russian historians:

1) Russian imperial historians stressed Cossack services to the empire, both as defenders of the borderlands and as pioneers of Russian expansion eastward and southward;

2) The Russian liberal and revolutionary intelligentsia and their historians saw the Cossacks as the leaders of popular revolts against a reactionary Russian monarchy;

3) Soviet Russian historians stressed the "sins" of the Cossacks during the Russian civil war;

4) Russian émigré historians adhered to the imperial tradition, but then also added a stress on Cossack autonomy and strivings for an independent "Cossackia," or an independent Cossack polity: "[*Sie*]...*träumten von einem Kosakenstaat*" (8);

5) Post-Soviet Russian historians also returned to the imperial tradition and added a new chapter on the positive value of the Cossacks as a counter-revolutionary factor in the Civil War. They also carried their history over into

the Soviet period and described the sufferings of the Cossack population under the Soviets.

Kappeler then contrasts this varied Russian Cossack historiography with what, he believes, is a more unified Ukrainian interpretation of Ukrainian Cossack history. Without mentioning Ivan Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi by name (who made the point very clearly in the 1970s), he acknowledges that the Cossacks play a central role in Ukrainian history while only having a peripheral role in Russian history. But he especially stresses that most Ukrainian historians see the Ukrainian Cossacks as freedom fighters and builders of a "protonational" state, which they call the "Hetmanate." Missing from this summary is the sharp debate stretching back as far as the nineteenth century, when the conservative Ukrainian historian Panteleimon Kulish saw only the "town Cossacks" as constructive and the "country Cossacks," or Zaporozhians, who lived further down the river, as anarchic and destructive, while by contrast, Kulish's scholarly opponent, the populist Ukrainian historian Mykola Kostomarov, stressed the positive achievements of both elements. Similarly, the heirs of these two historiographic traditions, consisting of later historians like Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi (conservative) and Dmytro Yavornyts'kyi (populist), also go unmentioned, and the relative merits of their positions are not discussed. However, the greatest of all modern Ukrainian historians, Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, is mentioned, although his work as a synthesizer of these two important traditions is ignored.

As to Polish historiography, Kappeler paints Polish historians as generally stressing the "wild" and unruly element in Ukrainian Cossackdom, which they feel was, in part, responsible for the decline and fall of the once great Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Though in his book Kappeler addresses Cossack myths and Cossack émigrés, one of the greatest of these émigrés—Michał Czajkowski (or "Sadyk Pasha," as he was known during his many long years as an exile in the Ottoman Empire), who dreamt of an independent Cossack Ukraine, revived in friendship with a resurrected Poland—goes completely unmentioned. Czajkowski's career, which is well known to Polish historians, clashes with Kappeler's oversimplification of Polish historiography on Ukraine, as does the fact that some Polish historians (like Zbigniew Wójcik) are less severe in their treatment of the Ukrainian Cossacks, while others (like Franciszek Rawita-Gawroński and, most recently, Edward Prus) are simply furious in their hostility to them. Consequently, Kappeler's treatment of the Russian Cossacks and their relations with Russia seems to be much better informed than his treatment of the Ukrainian Cossacks and their relations with Poland-Lithuania.

Finally, Kappeler ends his book with a recognition of the unrealistic nature of the current Cossack movements in both Ukraine and Russia. There is, at present, no possibility for the creation, in either country, of either a

special Cossack social stratum or a specifically Cossack state, though Cossack symbols regularly appear on Ukrainian currency and banknotes and the Cossack theme remains active in Russian folk songs and festivals. Paintings like Ilya Repin's *Zaporozhian Cossacks Writing a Satirical Letter to the Turkish Sultan* remain important for the Ukrainians, and Vasily Surikov's Cossack paintings *Yermak* and *Stenka Razin* remain important for the Russians. But in the end, they represent little more than memories of long-past events.

Much more relevant for contemporary events is the relationship between Ukraine and Russia. Perhaps east European Cossack history says something significant about this relationship, but as Kappeler clearly states in his final paragraphs, it is quite telling that Frederick Jackson Turner's "frontier thesis"—which postulated that in North America, the frontier determined the entire American national ethos and character—remains much more important and more applicable to Ukraine, where the frontier tradition affects the entire national identity, than to Russia, where such an influence competes with other, more salient, factors (such as the role of the tsar) and, in the Turnerian sense, simply does not apply. We may conclude that despite a certain shared Cossack experience, this fact about the influence of the frontier points to the integrally different historical traditions of these two important Slavic polities—Ukraine and Russia; and for pointing this out so clearly, Professor Kappeler deserves full credit.

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