Western and Eastern Europe, finishing with a list of recommendations for European states on how to make memory policies less unsatisfactory. For Snyder, the fact that there was the overlap of both Nazi and communist rule in the ‘bloodlands’ serves as a reason to justify the problematic memory politics in these states after 1989. Snyder finishes in controversial fashion by arguing for dropping ‘the taboo on comparing Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union’ (p. 42). This taboo, which is based on the equation of the two regimes in question, continues to pervade the commemoration policies across EU states, while influencing key academic publications, including the volume reviewed here.

In their contribution on the delayed emergence of memory, Eusebio Mujal-León and Eric Langenbacher compare Germany with Spain, Chile and Argentina, and add some considerations on Cuba. They develop a detailed model explaining how memory emerges in some post-authoritarian countries and not in others, and why it does so at a specific juncture. The chapter is theoretically based on the concepts of memory and collective memory. As opposed to that, memory is approached from the top-down perspective, neglecting the plurality of memories and mnemonic agents that exist in each society. This theoretical misconception could be avoided by replacing the concepts of collective memory and delayed emergence of memory with official memory politics and coming to terms with the past that would link to the chapter more accurately. The chapter makes a clear distinction between the ‘unfree’ exclusivist and ‘free’ pluralistic political systems and memory regimes. While the legitimacy of exclusivist memory regimes depends on a specific interpretation of history, the presence of multiple memories is only allowed in liberal democracies (p. 80). By arguing this, the authors ignore the existence of legal and institutional frameworks in the states labelled post-authoritarian in this volume, that not only promote a very specific interpretation of the past, but also often criminalise the interpretations opposing the dominant narratives. The approach to the use of memory politics in relation to legitimacy in post-authoritarian democracies that is not critical enough is the issue of the volume as a whole.

Although the aim of the volume is to examine post-authoritarian democracies with a globalised approach, it is evident that dealing with the communist past in Central and Eastern Europe dominates the contributions’ focus. Other ‘traumatic pasts’ are addressed in a number of chapters, but are more often used as a point of reference or comparison. Depicting the Prague memorial to victims of communism on the book cover is therefore a very telling choice. The volume lacks a conclusion that would bring the numerous contributions closer together, drawing on the aims set in the introduction, providing an outlook and really globalising the volume. Nevertheless, because of the high number of interdisciplinary contributions covering a very wide geographical scope, this edited volume represents a set of case studies that are a valuable source for those interested in the ways the societies facing transition address their recent pasts.

JELENA ĐUREINOVIĆ, PhD Candidate and Lecturer, Department of Eastern European History, Justus Liebig University, Giessen, Germany. Email: Jelena.Dureinovic@geschichte.uni-giessen.de.

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Pål Kolstø & Helge Blakkisrud (eds), The New Russian Nationalism. Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–2015. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016, 436pp., £75.00 h/b.

PÅL KOLSTØ AND HELGE BLAKKISRUD’S EDITED VOLUME IS ESSENTIAL reading for those interested in Russian politics. Nationalism entered the mainstream of Russian political life in 2014, with the annexation of Crimea and the subsequent invasion of Ukraine. The book marks the culmination of a survey project that, throughout 2013, researched public attitudes to nationalism in three different
Russian cities, namely Moscow, St Petersburg and Krasnodar. The data from these surveys have been made freely available on the web; the editors hence deserve special thanks for providing public goods to scholars of Russian politics. While not all chapters in the volume use or directly address the surveys, they offer a range of views and valuable contextual information. Chapters are divided into those dealing with society-level nationalism (Chapters 1–7), and those concerned with nationalism at the state level (Chapters 8–12).

The essays included in the first group point to some important ways in which Russian nationalism differs from its Western counterparts. Pål Kolsto traces the evolution of what he terms ‘ethnic core nationalism’ in Russia, portraying the emergence of ethno-nationalism as the ultimate consequence of the succession process through which the Russian Federation took the place of the Soviet Union. In Chapter 2, Emil Pain examines the development of Russia’s ‘imperial nationalism’, arguing that imperial conceptions of the nation have displaced the more ethnically homogenous and democratic idea of the nation championed by the national democrats and Konstantin Krylov. Alexander Verkhovksy notes in Chapter 3 that the Kremlin’s Ukraine policy has divided radical nationalists (pp. 97–100), with some supporting the Maidan revolution in the hope of bringing it back to Moscow and others leaving to fight on the side of the separatists. He warns, however, that the threat posed by radical nationalist groups has been reduced only temporarily. The essays by Anastasia Mitrofanova (Chapter 4) and Natalya Kosmerskaya and Igor Savin (Chapter 5) offer important contextual information for interpreting nationalism’s connection to religion and the perceptions of Moscow residents respectively. Chapter 6 is a reflection by Mikhail Alexseev into how non-ethnic Russian minorities perceive the new nationalist ideology, arguing, somewhat paradoxically, that ‘Putin’s expansionist policy in the territories of the former Soviet Union under the banner of Russian nationalism … is unlikely to alienate a significant number of Russia’s ethnic minorities’ (p. 186). In this sense, concerns over whether granting ostensible self-determination to Crimeans would lead to reciprocal popular demands from the Chechens appear unfounded, at least temporarily.

Chapter 7, written by Alexseev and Henry Hale, is perhaps the book’s most interesting, if only because the authors commissioned more data collection, to take place immediately after the annexation of Crimea. The chapter offers before-and-after snapshots of Russian attitudes to nationalism, offering a critically important interpretation of the momentous events of 2014. The annexation did not radicalise nationalists in Russia; the authors found ‘relatively little change in patterns of ethnic pride and xenophobia’ (p. 216). What was new, however, was the willingness of Putin to openly champion these nationalist causes. Arguing that Putin changed international tone for domestic reasons, the authors agree that the annexation was ‘largely consistent with diversionary theories of war’ (p. 217). These findings contribute to other key debates in Russian politics, including those focusing on whether the Crimean crisis was driven by NATO expansion or by developments internal to Russia, while delving further into the nature of the Russian regime.

This latter proposition captures the purpose of the second half of the book (Chapters 8–12). Following on from his earlier work, Hale shows how nationalism became the legitimising mantra of the ‘patronal presidency’ that Putin launched in 2014. Helge Blakkisrud’s chapter complements Pain’s earlier chapter, by demonstrating the overlapping uses of the terms Russki and Rossianie, which usually translate as ethnic and civic conceptions of the Russian nation. A key implication of this finding, frequently mentioned at the Tallinn launch of this volume, is that Putin’s use of the term Russki in his speech to Russian lawmakers on 18 March 2014 may not be as significant as it seems at first sight. Chapter 10 sees the prolific Marlene Laruelle contributing with a chapter on how Russia defined itself ‘as the other Europe, making it possible to reject Western liberalism while claiming to be the authentic Europe’ (p. 295). The conservative turn in recent Russian lawmaking reinforces the impression of a civilisational gulf between Russia and the West, something attested to by Russia’s recent proposal to decriminalise domestic violence. Chapters 11 and 12 feature Stephen Hutchings and Vera Tolz analysing television narratives around the Crimean
crisis to reveal ‘a deeply insecure regime’ (p. 332) and Peter Rutland analysing the place of economics
in the ideas of Russian nationalists respectively. The variety of perspectives and volume of material
covered make this work essential reading for anyone interested in the development of nationalism in
Russia prior to the annexation of Crimea, as well as laying the groundwork for a second volume, which
promises to be just as insightful and illuminating.

RICHARD ARNOLD, Associate Professor of Political Science, Muskingum University, USA.
Email: rarnold@muskingum.edu.

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Andrei V. Belyi, Transnational Gas Markets and Euro–Russian Energy Relations. Basingstoke:
Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, xiii + 217pp., £68.00 h/b.

ANDREI BELYI’S LATEST BOOK OFFERS AN IN-DEPTH AND WELL-INFORMED analysis of international
gas markets, with a focus on EU–Russia energy relations. The book tackles the topic from the disciplinary
perspective of international political economy (IPE). Chapter 1 outlines the conceptual background and
addresses the main IPE debates concerning energy politics. The practical functioning of gas markets
is explained in detail in Chapter 2, a must-read for students and scholars who are interested in truly
understanding the subject—and thus in going beyond the popular, but rather superficial, analyses that
reduce gas trade exclusively to geopolitics or pipeline politics. In this context, Belyi highlights the
structural limits posed by inter-fuel competition and market logic to the political use of gas (p. 50). He
also argues that there is no linear link between energy dependence and energy security considerations.
This insight contributes to explaining why, for instance, Germany is not particularly concerned about
its gas dependence on Russia, which is viewed primarily as a commercial relationship. On the other
hand, energy dependence on Russia is considered a security issue in some Central European countries
where gas trade has become the subject of political contention. In these cases, negative interdependence
crystallised a scenario in which both customer and supplier are tied into a commercial relationship by path
dependencies and market conditions but would like to extricate themselves from it for political reasons.

In Chapter 3, Belyi highlights the paradox of EU–Russia energy relations, arguing that ‘EU–Russia
energy interdependence developed during the Cold War period, but negative energy interdependence
only began after the bipolar ideological divisions between the East and the West had come to an end’
(p. 72). In order to substantiate this line of argument, the author tracks the history of Europe–Russia
energy relations since the 1960s, when the first gas contracts between the Soviet Union and Austria,
West Germany and Italy, were signed. Here, the book provides a nuanced assessment of the double
nature of gas trade, involving both economic and political factors. Hence, Belyi argues that ‘Gazprom’s
export monopoly has provided the Russian state with the opportunity to exercise either real or potential
leverage on these countries [former Soviet satellite states]’ (p. 97). At the same time, he acknowledges
the importance of economic considerations in Gazprom’s strategy—for instance, when he argues that ‘the
rationale of the Nord Stream project is to link Russia to Europe’s largest consumer, Germany’, ‘avoid
having to enter into complex negotiations on transit agreements [with other countries] and negate the
risk of theft from the pipeline’ (p. 97).

In Chapter 4, the book describes the ongoing harmonisation of energy policy within the European
Union, including its impact on Gazprom’s modus operandi in the EU market. It shows that the European
Union’s liberal approach has led the company to renegotiate long-term contracts, offering more flexible
conditions and lower prices to its customers. However, the new rules also led to disputes between