The publication of the English translation of volume 3 of Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi’s monumental History of Ukraine-Rus’ affords historians who do not read Ukrainian access to his interpretation of the role of the Tatars (Mongols) in and influence on East Slavic history.¹ The hybrid structure of volume 3 does somewhat complicate matters. The book contains two narrative chapters on the history of the Galicia-Volhynia and Dnieper regions, respectively, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and two thematic chapters on the political and social structures, and daily life, in Kyivan Rus’ as a whole, primarily during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The volume nonetheless provides more than sufficient material to identify several key aspects of Hrushevs’kyi’s conception of the Tatars. A more comprehensive analysis of Hrushevs’kyi’s treatment of the Tatars would include the relevant contents of volume 2 of the History, currently inaccessible to this author. Given Hrushevs’kyi’s comment in volume 1 about the historical role of Ukrainians as “defenders of European civilization against the Asian hordes,”² one expects greater detail, but no surprises.³

Hrushevs’kyi has been the subject of considerable recent historiographic study, but apparently no one has directly addressed his views of the role of the Tatars in Kyivan Rus’.⁴ Studies usually repeat Hrushevs’kyi’s conclusions, but do not always subject them to critical assessment despite recent research on the Rus’-Tatar relations.

¹ I wish to express my sincerest appreciation to the two anonymous readers for Harvard Ukrainian Studies for their very helpful comments. I am solely responsible for all remaining errors.
In general, in his own research Hrushev’s’kyi had to reconcile his populism with his nationalism and statism, as well as ensure that nothing obviated his scholarly objectivity. However, in addition to being a populist and a Ukrainian patriot, Hrushev’s’kyi was also an educated late nineteenth-century European intellectual. His cultural elitism influenced, for example, his evaluation of the asceticism and “external piety” of Orthodox Christianity. Hrushevs’kyi valued theological “content” above liturgical and behavioral “form” (310–18). In volume 3 of his History of Ukraine-Rus’, Hrushevs’kyi’s Eurocentric prejudice against Inner Asian pastoral nomads affected his analysis. Many educated Europeans in that era were aghast that “barbarian” Asian nomads could conquer, let alone influence, “superior” sedentary, Christian civilizations. Hrushevs’kyi, as no one seems to have noticed, shared this European bias with imperial Russian historiographers, against whom he otherwise fought so strongly on the question of the legitimacy of Ukrainian history. Vasilii Osipovich Kliuchevskii addressed the contradiction between his own bias against pastoral nomads and the fact that they conquered Rus’ by a “division of labor,” mentioning the Tatars frequently in narratives where their role could not be disregarded, but virtually omitting the significance of that role in the thematic lectures of his Course of Russian History. Hrushevs’kyi could not avail himself of the same stratagem in volume 3 of his History because it included both narrative and thematic chapters. In addition, Hrushevs’kyi failed to integrate the conclusions of his narrative chapters with those of his retrospective thematic chapters, and therefore fell into self-contradiction. This element of his historical interpretation has, to my knowledge, never been analyzed, even by historians who disagreed with Hrushevs’kyi’s conclusions on the role of the Tatars in Ukrainian history.

I must begin with a note on terminology. Like all scholars of his time and long thereafter, Hrushevs’kyi sometimes referred to the Juchid ulus as the “Golden Horde” (66 and passim), a Slavonic term invented in sixteenth-century Muscovy. Scholars addressing general audiences still employ it so as not to confuse readers already familiar with it. More rarely, Hrushevs’kyi referred descriptively to the “Tatar Horde” (47 and passim), also absent from contemporary sources. For convenience and consistency in this essay I will refer only to “the Horde,” which is how the Rus’ sources most frequently denoted the
Tatar polity and which is the designation Hrushevs’kyi, following the sources, used most often (11 and passim). Hrushevs’kyi did not approach the Tatars from a misinformed point of view. He took recent scholarship on the Tatars into account in his study (137n114). He appreciated the greater Mongol context of Tatar policy in Rus’ and took events in the Mongol Empire into consideration (see, e.g., 64). However, his application of the insights of studies of the Mongols suffered from the same blinders as imperial Russian scholarship, an inability to draw inferences incompatible with national honor. Despite considerable evidence accumulated by Russian Orientalists that the Horde possessed a state structure, a functioning administrative apparatus, and a flourishing Muslim urban culture, Hrushevs’kyi, like imperial Russian historians, depicted the Tatars as a mob of wild, barbarian bandits. Despite the vast increase in historical studies of the Mongol Empire and other Central Asian societies since Hrushevs’kyi’s time, this limitation of East Slavic historiography about the problem of the Tatars continues to persist.

Hrushevs’kyi attributed to Polish historiography the depiction of the Tatars as “Asian savages” (108n6), but himself wrote that the Tatars were noted for their “savagery and generally destructive instincts” (77). For him, the Tatars were an unreliable “elemental force” as destructive of their allies’ lands as of those of their enemies (103), an opinion he held about the pre-Tatar Turkic nomadic neighbors of Kyivan Rus’ as well (255–56).

Hrushevs’ky’s presentation of the Tatar role in and impact on Ukraine can be summarized as follows. He drew a hard contrast between the effects of the Tatars on Galicia-Volhynia and on the Dnieper region. Hrushevs’kyi conceded that the “almost complete lack of information” on the Dnieper region made all conclusions no more than extrapolations (119). Hrushevs’kyi believed that previous historiography overestimated the impact of the Tatars on Galicia-Volhynia (76n263) because it minimized the fact that the indigenous princes remained on their thrones, unlike in Dnieper Rus’. In the former the Tatars did not install basqaqs, their administrative officials, or regularly collect tribute (75–76). Hrushevs’kyi insisted that Tatar rule over Galicia-Volhynia, compared to Dnieper Rus’, was “relatively benign” (76). Hrushevs’kyi invoked the greater “civic sense” of Galicia-Volhynia compared to the Volga cities of the future Muscovy.
to explain the almost hypersensitive “vexation” of Galicia-Volhynia at its far-from-onerous subordination to the Tatars. Hrushevs’kyi also minimized the destruction of the Dnieper region, insisting that the sources exaggerated and that the region recovered in a century. At the same time, he observed that the level of destruction and ability to recover that characterized the Dnieper region also applied to the Volga region in the northeast (106–7). ¹³ The Tatar campaign was not a surprise. While the populations of larger towns might have had a dilemma about retreating to a locked castle or fleeing, the inhabitants of smaller towns, especially given the great mobility of the Ukrainian population, could flee to mountains, caves, ravines, forests, and marshes to hide until the Tatars left. Meanwhile the aristocracy, and the merchants and artisans who earned their living off the elite, emigrated, leaving peasants and small-town working people behind (111–13). Hrushevs’kyi wrote that the “Tatar disaster...dealt a decisive blow to the state life of the Dnipro region” (381). He inferred that residents of the Kyivan region had experienced devastation by pre-Mongol steppe nomads for so long that “even the Tatar destruction probably did not seem all that tragic” (112). That proximity to the steppe was not so “terrifying” was attested by the nonchalant attitude of the population toward the basqaq Ahmad (Axmat) in Kursk: Rus’ peasants voluntarily moved into his tax-free settlements. The Tatar regime might not have seemed “too harsh” for them because the Tatars took care of those who served them (114). Indeed, the absence of princes in the Dnieper region might have put the population there in a more favorable situation than elsewhere, meaning in the princely southwest and northeast. For the mass of the population, Tatar rule was worth enduring if only to dispose of the princes (114). In the Dnieper region, after the princes had fled or been killed, the Tatars supported local antiprincely communities such as the Bolokhiv people, who agreed to pay Tatar tribute directly and were administered by Tatar officials. Hrushevs’kyi discounted assertions in Western sources such as Carpini or a Polish letter to the Pope, or in the Slavonic vita of Mykhailo of Chernihiv written outside Ukraine, that tribute was collected systematically in Galicia-Volhynia compared to the Dnieper region or the northeast, because the authors of these accounts generalized from exceptional or extraordinary local incidents and drew conclusions that did not fit Galicia-Volhynia (123). Instead, Hrushevs’kyi invoked the relative absence of information
about tribute and basqaqs in Galicia-Volhynia (cf. 428–29). In sum, Hrushevs’kyi rejected the view that the Tatar invasion had a “decisive, fatal significance” for Ukrainian history.

Similarly, Hrushevs’kyi doubted that Galicia-Volhynian princes required Horde approval for succession (92), especially compared to the northeast. He speculated that Rus’ princes went to the Horde not because they were required to do so in order to retain their principalities, but because they feared that the khan would grant their principalities to rival princes who had petitioned him in person (118).

Hrushevs’kyi endorsed the chronicler’s horror at the “honor” Batu accorded Grand Prince Danylo Romanovych and repeatedly inferred that Danylo and his entourage felt shame at having to endure such a humiliation, bitter dishonor, and insult (48–49, 51, 61). “Such bitterness is hardly surprising, for due to the savagery and generally destructive instincts of the Tatars, any close contact with them cost every somewhat civilized land very dearly” he wrote (77). Hrushevs’kyi also wrote that the Tatars treated Rus’ princes like commoners, without honor (121), and manifested “a kind of malicious rancor” against the princes (135).

Hrushevs’kyi blamed Grand Prince Danylo’s failure to overthrow Tatar rule on his inability to unite the Rus’ princes, to find effective allies among neighboring Catholic rulers or the papacy, and to rally the Ukrainian populace (48, 67). Hrushevs’kyi never accused him of cowardice for fleeing the Tatars when he feared for his life at their hands, despite the fact that Hrushevs’kyi’s remarks on the lack of courage of hypothetical princes in Kyiv were hardly flattering (126n81). Hrushevs’kyi had little respect for princes who fled from or collaborated with the Tatars, relying upon humility and submissiveness toward the Tatars to enable them to keep their thrones (136). He believed such behavior resulted in their moral degeneration (138). As a result of such degeneration, not only did Tatars kill Rus’ princes, but Rus’ princes killed each other, as they had not done in a very long time (138–39).

Hrushevs’kyi did not need to worry that his criticism of princely vices would impugn the Ukrainian “national character” as cowardly or servile because, as a populist, he considered “national character” to be derived from the “people,” not the princes. Moreover, Hrushevs’kyi did not voice any moral abhorrence at popular murder of a prince (139). In Hrushevs’kyi’s analysis, Grand Prince Danylo was incompetent and
lacking in vision, but not necessarily courage. Hrushevs’kyi shared the chronicler’s opinion of Grand Prince Danylo’s shame at personally submitting, however insincerely, to the Tatars.

Hrushevs’kyi asserted that the Byzantine notion of the sacerdotal authority of the ruler did not take root in Kyivan Rus’ as it did in later Muscovite society (170–71). He concluded that the “direct impact” of the Tatars on the Church was minimal. However, he does state that Rus’ culture, fostered by the Church, declined most where Tatar authority was most direct, that is, in Dnieper Rus’, as compared to, one assumes, Galicia-Volhynia (227).

Hrushevs’kyi similarly sought to undermine assertions of Tatar control: of princes, either Rus’ or Polish or Lithuanian after the indigenous Rus’ dynasty died out, subordinating themselves to the Tatars; of Rus’ regions paying tribute; and of Rus’ or Polish-Lithuanian princes in Galicia-Volhynia performing military service at the Tatars’ behest during the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (83, 85, 90–95, 99n378, 101, 103).

These conclusions about the Tatar influence on Kyivan Rus’ do not exhaust Hrushevs’kyi’s statements on the subject. He was so meticulous a scholar that sometimes he also mentioned considerable additional evidence that contradicted these conclusions without admitting it did. Sometimes he articulated directly contradictory conclusions, and he at times failed to draw conclusions from evidence of which he was aware but he did not present. The result was a coherent conceptual framework resting upon an inconsistent evidentiary base.

Hrushevs’kyi’s premise that the Tatar impact on Kyivan Rus’ was not homogeneous, that the Tatars treated different regions differently, and that the consequences of the Tatar conquest differed for different segments of society deserves considerable praise. Even many contemporary historians specializing in medieval Rus’-Tatar relations persist in drawing conclusions about “the” Mongol impact on Rus’, disregarding geographical and social, let alone chronological, variations. However, Hrushevs’kyi still strove to maintain the same overall conclusion as mainstream Great Russian historiography of his time, that the Tatar influence was either negative or minimal.

Hrushevs’kyi’s contrast of “direct” Tatar rule in the Dnieper region and “indirect” rule in Galicia-Volhynia is not convincing, because in the northeast, where according to Hrushevs’kyi the Tatars exercised
greater authority than in Galicia-Volhynia, the Tatars also left the Riurikid princes in place. The absence of evidence of Tatar garrisons in Galicia-Volhynia or even Dnieper Rus’ (134–35) is identical to the situation of the northeast, where Hrushevs’kyi implied they were present. The degree of Tatar influence was not dependent upon the imposition of Tatar garrisons in Rus’ territory. In the Dnieper region, as Hrushevs’kyi failed to appreciate, the narrative of basqaq Ahmad demonstrates that he did not have a local Tatar garrison upon which to rely in his dealings with recalcitrant local princes. His personal retinue was hardly a substitute for a genuine Tatar garrison. Ahmad nonetheless could summon more than sufficient punitive forces from the steppe to defeat his Rus’ opponents.

Nor can the lesser severity of Tatar rule in Galicia-Volhynia as opposed to the northeast be attributed to the greater degree of resistance to the Tatars in the former compared to the latter. Grand Prince Danylo did not fight the Tatars; he either fled or caved in. In 1262 numerous cities in the northeast revolted against Muslim tax-farmers and in 1327 the people of Tver rose up and massacred a Tatar administrative official and his staff. Such northeastern “vexation” at the Tatars surely matched that of Galicia-Volhynia. Moreover, resistance to the Tatars by Grand Prince Danylo utterly failed.

Volodymyr Aleksandrovych rightly accuses Hrushevs’kyi of applying an “anachronistic standard” to explain Grand Prince Danylo’s failure to overthrow Tatar rule. Aleksandrovych did not employ the terms “nationalist” and “populist” to denote that “anachronistic standard,” perhaps because they are so obvious. Aleksandrovych does, however, refer to Hrushevs’kyi’s “modernism” in proposing that Grand Prince Danylo could have relied upon the masses for support against the Tatars.15

Like Grand Prince Danylo, Hrushevs’kyi failed to acknowledge Tatar military superiority. Even if Danylo had carried out to fruition one of Hrushevs’kyi’s hypothetical options, resistance to the Tatars would likely have been futile in the thirteenth century. No one could expect the Poles, Lithuanians, Hungarians, or Germans to make a better showing against Mongol armies after 1240–1241 than they did during the Mongols’ western campaign. Rus’ would not have been more successful at stopping the Mongol advance than China, Central Asia, and Iran, countries with walled cities and populations that
dwarfed those of Kyivan Rus’. Hrushev’s’kyi’s narrative demonstrates that, however regularly, Grand Prince Danylo and then his successors did pay tribute. His dismissing as rhetoric the chronicle account of how Grand Prince Danylo fell to his knees to pay tribute (75n266) flies in the face of everything he could have learned about how the Tatars treated those they conquered. We now know that tribute collection in the Mongol empire in the thirteenth century was directed centrally from Karakorum in Mongolia. It was imposed uniformly on all conquered territories. Moreover, to collect the tribute required a census, also prescribed from Mongolia; otherwise the tribute could not be apportioned. A census resulted in the creation of tumens, not of ten thousand troops, but of taxpayers, headed by Mongol officials. Hrushev’s’kyi did not mention direct evidence available to him that the Horde, via its successor state the Crimean Khanate, not only asserted sovereignty over all of Ukraine-Rus’ but also remembered instituting tumens in Volhynia. If Galicia-Volhynia ever paid tribute, it must have been subjected to this process. The failure of the Galician-Volhynian chronicle to mention basqaqs cannot be decisive; northeastern Rus’ sources are also extremely erratic and incomplete when it comes to the basqaqs. It is impossible to demonstrate that tribute collection was ever regular or annual in the northeast. Galicia-Volhynia must have been subject to the same administration and tribute payment as the rest of Rus’.

Hrushev’s’kyi speculated that the Ukrainians would not have been greatly traumatized by the Tatar campaign of 1239–1240 because they thought they had been through this before with the pre-Mongol Turkic nomads of the Pontic and Caspian steppe. The Rus’ expected the Tatars to leave after 1240, as they had after 1223. The scale of the Tatar onslaught, well beyond the scope of anything the Polovtsians (Cumans) had ever attempted, should have given the Rus’ pause before they took such an optimistic view. The taking of a census and the imposition of tribute, attributes of foreign rule and not raids for ransom and booty, would have given the lie to any such delusions and increased the anxiety level of the Rus’ far beyond anything imaginable previously. The Polovtsians never occupied Rus’; the Tatars did.

We know of more northeast Rus’ princes going to the Horde for patents or for confirmation of their accession than southwest Rus’ princes because there were more northeast Rus’ princes. Even for
Vladimir-Suzdal, the chronicles do not attest that every northeast prince traveled to the Horde. Hrushevs’kyi concluded that Batu’s support of Grand Prince Danylo enabled Danylo to win his battle for succession to his throne (13) and raised his status in Western Europe. King Bela of Hungary “was afraid of Danylo” because he had visited the Horde, so Bela offered Danylo a Hungarian dynastic marriage for his son (49). Despite Hrushevs’kyi’s claim, there is no way to separate Grand Prince Danylo’s obeisance to Batu from his acknowledgment of Tatar suzerainty (48). Hrushevs’kyi conceded that Batu greeted Grand Prince Danylo’s obeisance to Batu from his acknowledgment of Tatar suzerainty (48). Hrushevs’kyi conceded that Batu greeted Grand Prince Danylo graciously, hardly as a commoner, but added the comment “for someone of his customary behavior” (48), meaning, no doubt, for a barbarian. Hrushevs’kyi also recounted how Prince Volodymyr Vasyl’kovych specifically brought Tatar envoys to attend the announcement of his testament so that the Horde would know whom to support as his successor, Prince Mstyslav Danylovych. More to the point, this gambit worked, because Mstyslav’s rival dared not challenge the succession for fear of Tatar reaction (76). Volodymyr would not and could not have acted thus if Tatar confirmation of succession were not part of the political culture of the period. While in his narrative Hrushevs’kyi tried to impugn the systematic nature of Horde approval of Rus’ princely accession, in his overview of the Rus’ political structure he conceded that the procedure of a subject prince attending the khan to confirm his accession and receive a patent to his throne was systematic (138).

Hrushevs’kyi could not have endorsed the horror of the Galicia-Volhynian chronicler at the honor bestowed upon Grand Prince Danylo by Batu if Batu had not honored him, and if Batu had not treated him differently from the way he treated commoners. Hrushevs’kyi was far too knowledgeable not to know that Grand Prince Danylo was not unique in receiving a friendly reception by Batu. Hrushevs’kyi must have been acquainted with the description of Batu’s gracious treatment of Grand Prince Alexander Nevskii of the northeast when he visited the Horde. The Tatars were hostile to rebellious princes or those they deemed disloyal. They bore “princes” per se no rancor at all. It is legitimate to ask how “antiprincely” the Bolokhiv princes were, when they were princes, and allied themselves with a Chernihiv prince, Rostyslav Mykhailovych, against the princely Danylovyches. Consequently, Hrushevs’kyi’s attempts to present the Bolokhivs as not princely were little
more than an argument from silence and confusion (116). Even if the Bolokhiv princes were not princes, the actions of the Bolokhiv “people” would still demonstrate their flexible approach to different Rus’ princes, supporting or opposing them based upon political criteria. After Grand Prince Danylo declared himself a Tatar “slave” it seems unlikely that he obtained a “temporary truce” (49) with the Tatars; the Tatars did not agree to “truces” with their subjects. Hrushevsky should have been more skeptical that Batu would label Grand Prince Danylo “one of us,” a Tatar; the Tatars were the rulers, not the “slaves.” Besides, Batu was a Chingissid, a male descendent of Chinggis Khan, a member of the Golden Kin (Altan uruk). Batu’s elitist conception of “us” could not possibly have included Danylo as an equal.

The Mongols removed rebellious princes, often with extreme prejudice, but in their great empire from the Pacific Ocean to the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, why they sometimes left the local political infrastructure intact and at other times liquidated local dynasties has not been sufficiently studied. The Mongols appeared to have had no trouble finding royal collaborators when required. Whether they bothered to do so might have been based upon a variety of factors, including strategic value, ecology, and priorities. Where the local princes had disappeared, as in Kyiv and much of Dnieper Rus’, the Tatars had no choice. The Tatars, however, were not “antiprincely” if they supported the Bolokhiv princes (42, 115–16), let alone found northeast Rus’ princes to their liking. Aleksandrovych is therefore off the mark in taking Hrushevsky to task for exaggerating the Mongol role in the Dnieper River valley by insisting that the Mongols everywhere destroyed local power structures, when they obviously did not do so in Galicia-Volhynia or in the northeast.

There are no statistics on the size of the Tatar tribute paid in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Ukraine, so judging how “heavy” it was remains impossible. Hrushevsky disregarded the evidence from northeast Rus’ when he wrote that “if a regular annual tribute had existed [in Galicia-Volhynia and the Dnieper valley], we would expect to have more precise references to its levy by the Tatars” (75). No statistics on the size the tribute are available for northeast Rus’ until the end of the fourteenth century. According to Hrushevsky, the Bolokhiv people might have preferred the lighter burden of Tatars to the heavy princely burden (117–18), yet he also described the Tatar
tribute as heavy (139, 142). Hrushevsky labeled tax-farming one of “the most oppressive aspects of Tatar (and generally Oriental) taxation” (137) without noting its ubiquity in “civilized” Europe.

Hrushevsky appreciated that, as Tatar vassals, the Rus princes were entitled to Tatar assistance in defending their territories from the designs of western neighbors like Hungary and Poland. Prince Lev Danylovych took advantage of this entitlement (75). Rus princes could also call upon Tatar military assistance in internal disputes, as Prince Vasilii of Briansk, from the Smolensk dynasty did (133–34). This is no way differs from Tatar aid to northeastern Rus princes against Lithuanians or each other.

By Hrushevsky’s own admission Boroldai (Burundai) terrorized the Romanovych princes into dismantling anti-Tatar urban fortifications and compelled them to join Tatar attacks against Galicia-Volhynia’s western neighbors. The Tatars could not have been afraid of Grand Prince Danylo’s resistance for long, if ever (pace Hrushevsky’s assertion, 119). Hrushevsky later referred to the Tatar threat as a sword of Damocles hanging over Grand Prince Danylo’s head that paralyzed his forces and drained his energy. The Tatars prevented him from trying to reunite the Kyivan region with Galicia-Volhynia (61). Tatar forces crossing Galician-Volhynian territory to fight in Poland or Hungary devastated his land (176–77). The Tatar onslaught was a catastrophe, a calamity, a “terrible shock” to Kyivan society (226), and a fatal blow to Kyivan culture (141). Such an impact hardly qualifies the “Tatar terror” (111, 130) as “relatively benign.” Aleksandrovych objects, stating that both the Orthodox Church metropolitanate and the Kyivan Monastery of the Caves continued to function in Kyiv throughout the remainder of the thirteenth century, therefore Hrushevsky exaggerates the negative cultural impact of the Tatars on the Dnieper valley. Ivan Lynnychenko, who disagreed with Hrushevsky on far broader questions of Ukrainian identity than on this more specific factual issue, criticized Hrushevsky’s evaluation of Galician dependence on the Tatars as inconsequential in the first edition of volume 3. Hrushevsky did not alter his view in the second edition, the one translated into English. He insisted that even if the legal position of the different regions was identical, the implementation of subordination was not, and that the military situation of the southwest was different from that of the north (76n273). This is special pleading; the realities of Tatar
rule varied everywhere based upon the political conjuncture of the time. The military situation of all regions of Rus’ vis-à-vis the Tatars was identical: if the Tatars chose to impose their will by military force, no Rus’ region could stop them.24

Despite his best efforts to the contrary, Hrushevs’kyi’s narrative demonstrates continuing Tatar involvement in Ukraine throughout the fourteenth century, until Poland and Lithuania firmly established control over the region because of civil wars and regional splintering in the Horde. Indeed, as mentioned above, Tatar pretensions to sovereignty over the area survived the disappearance of the Great Horde. The last remnant of the Volga Horde, the Crimean Khanate, retained that historical memory into the sixteenth century.

Hrushevs’kyi did not relate Ukrainian antimonarchism to the differential effects of the Tatar conquest. He noted that monarchical power had more time to evolve in Vladimir-Suzdal than in Galicia-Volhynia, where the native dynasty died out (153), but did not realize that this asynchronicity vitiated his contrast. It is impossible to establish how princely power would have changed in the southwest, had it been given as much time to evolve as in the northeast. The murder of Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii by his boyars in the twelfth-century Suzdal would not have justified predictions that princely authority in the northeast would later be exalted. Some recent scholarship even on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Muscovy emphasizes the consultative elements of Muscovy’s political culture. The Galician-Volhynian chronicler called the Tatar khan, despite religious insults, “tsar,” the equivalent of a legitimate Byzantine basileus, just as the Vladimir-Suzdalian chroniclers did. Ukrainians in Galicia-Volhynia, subject to the metropolitan in Kyiv in the thirteenth century, were obliged to pray for the health of the khan as stipulated in Tatar patents to the Rus’ Orthodox Church as did the inhabitants of the northeast (226–27). Hrushevs’kyi did not draw any inferences about the attitude of Ukraine-Rus’ toward the image of the khan as a legitimate ruler embodied in such religious deference.25

Despite Hrushevs’kyi’s previously cited allusion to the “savagery” of the Tatars (77), in his view the Tatars imposed terror for political purposes and would not have senselessly massacred entire populations (here, in Dnieper Rus’) of future taxpayers (109–10). He knew full well that the Tatar method of warfare was no more savage than that of the
Rus’ or their neighbors, but he did not always mention that fact when decrying Tatar oppression. One would not expect “elemental forces” to exercise rational political decision making. Hrushevs’kyi’s vocabulary resonates with his prejudice. The Mongols sent a highly disciplined army to invade Hungary, organized into divisions and structured around decimal units of ten, a hundred, a thousand, and ten thousand, but Hrushevs’kyi called it a “horde” (in Ukrainian, *orda*)\textsuperscript{26} (41). A “horde” meant not an army but a nomadic camp, including tents, flocks, and people, which was highly structured in its layout in terms of political hierarchy and ecological necessity, but Hrushevs’kyi uses it to mean an amorphous and undisciplined amalgamation of warriors. He similarly reduced the Khazar Khanate to a “Khazar Horde” (118). Only on rare occasions did he acknowledge that the Horde was a state (137n114), governed by a “government” (120) with accompanying “governmental spheres” (circles of political administrators and councilors) (137), a political structure whose existence no reader could be expected to infer from Hrushevs’kyi’s exposition. Hrushevs’kyi took the implicit rationality of such a political institution into account only when convenient, such as to argue that Batu intended to turn Ukraine-Rus’ into Tatar provinces, not a wasteland, so he would not have ordered the massacre of the entire urban population to the last man (110). Actually, the Mongols did sometimes massacre almost entire urban populations, sparing only clergy and artisans, useful to them in different ways. They tended to do so only when cities refused to surrender to Mongol might, as an example of the futility of resistance and a deterrent to future disobedience.

Hrushevs’kyi never discussed the question of Galician-Volhynian institutional borrowing from the Tatars. Despite Hrushevs’kyi’s heavy reliance upon the Galician-Volhynian Chronicle, he never cited the passage recounting how Prince Danylo Romanovych dressed his warriors and their horses in Tatar leather mail armor to frighten his enemies, although he did remark positively that the Germans and Hungarians were amazed at the “never-before-seen apparel and armaments” of the Galician troops (55).\textsuperscript{27} Aleksandrovych dates Danylo’s military reforms to after the Tatar conquest, but mentions the introduction of catapults and changes in army organization and operations, not the changes in appearance.\textsuperscript{28} Danylo’s ability to have his warriors imitate Tatars reveals Ukrainian acquisition of vast expertise
in Tatar armament: weaponry, armor, and horse accouterments. From the patents to the metropolitans of the Rus’ Orthodox Church (137) Hrushevsky knew that church properties were exempted from paying customs dues and postal service taxes, but he did not ask whether such payments would have been extracted from non-church properties in Galicia-Volhynia, a part of the metropolitan’s see, which would entail that Tatar customs’ officials and relay stations be installed there. Nor did Hrushevsky call attention to the eastern derivation of many fiscal and military terms that entered the Ukrainian language. Hrushevsky omitted acknowledging that the positive effect of the church on the later development of Rus’ culture was enabled by the earlier tax immunities granted by the Tatars.

Lubomyr Wynar succinctly summarizes Hrushevsky’s schema of medieval and early modern Ukrainian history as consisting of three periods: the Kyivan state, the Galician-Volhynian state, and Polish-Lithuanian rule. Wynar does not call attention to the absence of a “Tatar period” in Ukrainian history, which is itself a judgment as to the significance, or rather, insignificance of Tatar rule in Ukrainian history. Wynar did not comment that this finessing of the Tatar role in Ukrainian history parallels the same feature of much of Great Russian historiography, which utilized the “appanage period” instead of a “Tatar period.” Kliuchevskii even began the appanage period in the twelfth century, so that it did not coincide with the years of Tatar sovereignty.

Serhii Plokhy correlates Hrushevsky’s minimization of the Tatar impact with his rejection of Mikhail Pogodin’s thesis that, as a result of the severe Tatar incursion, the entire surviving population of the core Kyivan territory eventually migrated to the northeast after the Tatar conquest to become Russians. At the same time, according to the theory, newer immigrants from the Carpathians replaced them to become Ukrainians. Pogodin thus asserted the continuity of Kyivan Rus’ and the Muscovite state, not, as Hrushevsky would have it, the continuity of Kyivan Rus’ with the Galician-Volhynian state of the thirteenth century. However, if Pogodin was wrong that as a result of the Tatar conquest all survivors in Kyivan Rus’ migrated to the northeast, it is entirely plausible that some did. Hrushevsky’s denial of any demographic shift between Kyivan Rus’ and the northeast caused
by the Tatars is as overstated as Pogodin’s exaggerated insistence on a total relocation of the surviving population.

In evaluating the Tatar influence on Kyivan Rus’, Hrushevsky followed his Eurocentric impulses, yet he simultaneously attempted to demonize the Tatars and to minimize their impact, which created a great dissonance in his presentation. Hrushevsky’s scholarly integrity impaired his prejudiced exposition. By and large he did not omit sources, events, and processes that reflected a greater Tatar impact and substantiated a more sophisticated understanding of Tatar policy than his aversion to the Tatars dictated. This resulted in contradictions, ambiguities, and grey areas. Thus the Mongols were destructive, but not that destructive; they did not massacre everyone to the last man, woman, and child, but did murder an appallingly large number of people; the tribute was onerous, but relatively light; the Tatar requirement of princely personal submission and military service was not systematic but nonetheless obligated all the princes. Hrushevsky did not justify his partitioning Rus’ into northeastern, later Muscovite, Rus’, Dnieper Rus’, and Galicia-Volhynia on the basis of differentiated consequences of the Tatar conquest. Galicia-Volhynia and northeastern Rus’ retained their princes, but supposedly Tatar influence was greater on northeastern Rus’ and the Dnieper region than on Galicia-Volhynia. If Hrushevsky’s contrast between Ukrainian and Russian reactions to the Tatars is understandable in terms of his Ukrainian nationalism, his exaggerated discrimination between the effects of the Tatar conquest on Galicia-Volhynia and Dnieper Rus’ reflected his populism. However, it did so in an almost perverse form. The Tatars, in his telling, had more authority over populist Rus’ than over princely Rus’. Hrushevsky’s populist ambivalence about the state and preference for community autonomy and self-government underlay this analysis. The Tatars were oppressors, but not as bad as Ukrainian princes. The Tatars were primitive Asiatic nomadic savages, but the Ukrainian “people” preferred them to their own exploitative Ukrainian princes.

Notes

and Robert Romanchuk, with the assistance of Uliana M. Pasicznyk (Edmonton-Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2016). Page references will be provided in-text in parentheses. The principle of full disclosure obligates me to note that I served as a consultant to this translation.

2. See further for a discussion of Hrushevsky’s use of the word “horde.”


4. Regarding Ukrainian-language scholarship, this conclusion is based upon citations in English-language publications and the articles by Volodymyr Aleksandrovych and Svitlana Pankova, cited below, translated from Ukrainian into English for inclusion in Hrushevsky, *History of Ukraine-Rus’,* vol. 3.


7. An ulus is a Tatar polity. Jochi was the eldest son of Chinggis Khan. The Jochid ulus comprised the territories conquered by Jochi’s son, Batu, and allocated to his descendants. The term the “Kipchak Khanate” is currently popular in some English-language scholarship by specialists in Rus’ history, but it also does not appear in medieval Rus’ sources.

8. Of course, the translators rightly follow Hrushevsky’s text in employing all three terms.


12. It is impossible to avoid suspecting that the seventeenth-century Cossack experience of the Crimean Tatars as allies influenced this judgment about the Turkic pastoral nomadic allies of various Kyivan Rus’ principalities. See Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia*, 317–18, 339, 343.

13. Hrushev’s’kyi’s doubts about Carpini’s description of Kyiv as reduced to two hundred households (110–11) have been reinforced by Donald Ostrowski, “Second-Redaction Additions to Carpini’s *Ystoria Mongolorum*,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 14, no. 3–4 (December 1990): 522–50.

14. Quoted in Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia*, 143n196, from Hrushev’s’kyi’s Russian-language history of the Kyivan Land.


17. This really should be “Eastern.”

18. The Tatar execution of Mykhailo of Chernihiv (226) was probably political, not religious, like the rare Tatar executions of northeast Rus’ princes during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.
19. Plokhy failed to appreciate this point or even to alert the reader to this anomaly by referring only to the “Bolokhiv Land” or “Bolokhovians.” Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia*, 143–44.

20. On the Bolokhiv princes as descendants of Prince Inhvar Iaroslavych, see L. Voilovsky’s editor’s notes to note 21, in Hrushevsky, *History of Ukraine-Rus’,* 3:440–42.


22. Hrushevsky attributed the departure of the metropolitan from Kyiv to the metropolitan’s discomfort at not having a princely patron on site to subsidize him, not the depopulation of the region (140–41, 205). For a more recent analysis that considers Tatar violence to be the cause of his actions, see Donald Ostrowski, “Why Did the Metropolitan Move from Kiev to Vladimir in the Thirteenth Century?” *California Slavic Studies* 16 (1993): 83–101.


25. The propensity to defer to sacerdotal royal authority in Hrushevsky’s presentation cannot be correlated with modern nationalities; “Russian” Novgorodians (where the *viche* was most developed [156–57]) and Suzdalians were as resistant to princely abuse as “Ukrainian” Galicians and Kyivans. Hrushevsky’s contrast of the Kyivan sense of “honor” compared to later Muscovy (283) is quite wrong; beginning in the middle of the sixteenth century, Muscovite law treated “dishonor” as a criminal offense.


29. See the glossary in lxiii–lxv, s. vv. *basqaq, darugha, iarlyk, tamgha, ulus,* and *yam*.

30. Lubomyr R. Wynar, “Michael Hrushevsky’s Scheme of Ukrainian History in the Context of the Study of Russian Colonialism and Imperialism,”...

31. Hrushevskyi’s predecessor Mykhailo Maksymovych did refer to a “Tatar era” of Ukrainian history (Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia*, 145), but this may have been no more than a casual turn of phrase.

32. Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia*, 140–47, 165–66. Plokhy also observes that Hrushevskyi was neither the first nor the last critic of the Pogodin theory.