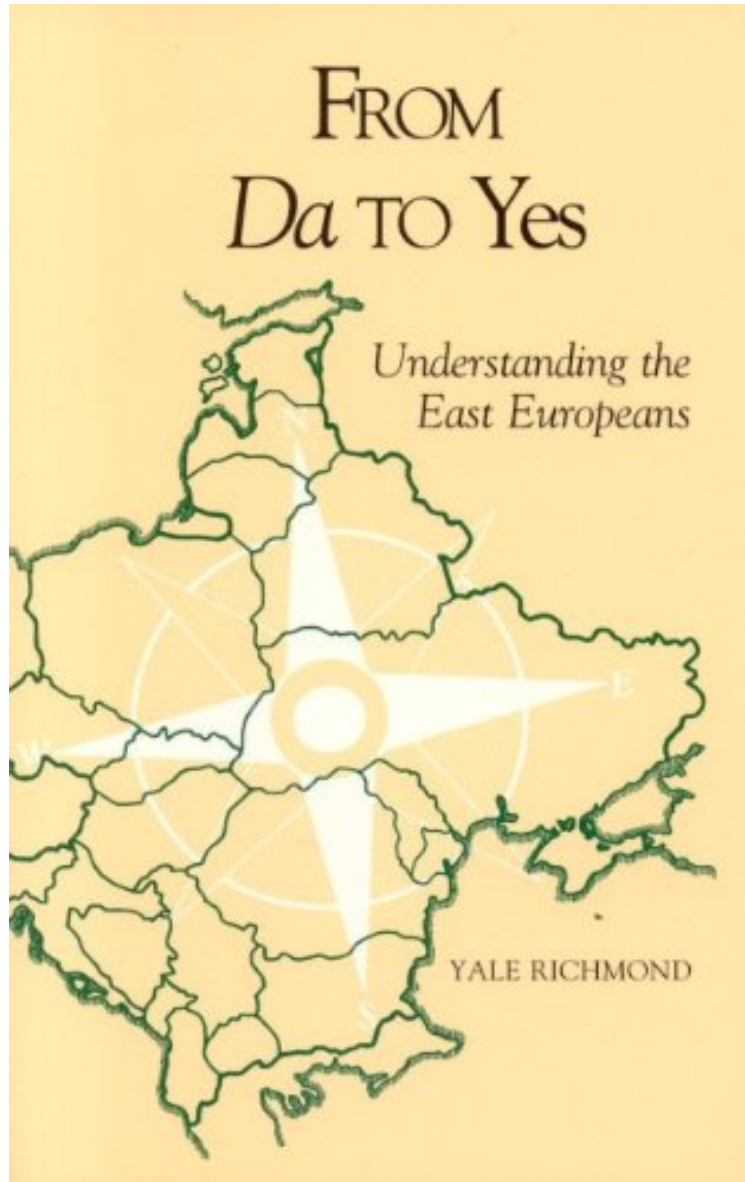


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From Da to Yes: Understanding the East Europeans (Interact)

Yale Richmond

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Yale Richmond : From Da to Yes: Understanding the East Europeans (Interact) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised From Da to Yes: Understanding the East Europeans (Interact):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bird's eye viewBy Jeffrey HuntingtonThis is an anthropology book aimed more at business travelers than tourists or lovers. It is based substantially on his personal experience, which is at

least authentic, but limited, for such a large area. Note that Russia is not included in this volume--it rates its own book. The generalizations are necessarily broad, but they are more insightful than the traditional ethnic stereotypes. There is hardly any science here, and you will be disappointed if you are an anthropologist. On the other hand, if you are a businessperson who had assumed that everyone is pretty much like your fellow Americans, it will be an eye-opener. Of course, quite a bit has changed since 1995. The effects of the 2008 crash and the 2009 Russian anti-American propaganda campaign are not anticipated here. The author was right about the instability of Crimea.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, if lacking in bite

By Matt W. What do you call a book that's laced with copious amounts of nonsense but is still worth reading? From Da to Yes, as its name implies, is a guide to the nations of eastern Europe excluding Russia, which is covered in Yale Richmond's companion book From Nyet to Da. Richmond himself, so far as I can tell, is one of those weedy little neoliberal twerps who went to eastern Europe in the nineties to facilitate in the regions democratic and capitalist transitions (read: help Westerners steal everything that wasn't nailed down). Indeed, the book is dedicated to the Americans who are giving so generously of their time to assist in the democratic transition in eastern Europe. Were in for some rough sledding, folks. Still, From Da to Yes is an interesting and informative cultural guidebook, provided you can read between the lines and decipher Richmond's squid-like prose. He's clearly an academic, as evidenced by his clinical, dry writing style and unwillingness to make any kind of judgment about the people he's writing about. For example, here's a section from one of the first chapters, on Poland: "Poles have two codes of behavior, one public and the other private. In public, they can be pushy, demanding, distant, abrupt, and rude. In private, they are warm, generous, hospitable, and loquacious. Conversations are lengthy, and goodbyes never seem to end. As the Poles say, 'The English leave without saying goodbye. The Poles say goodbye but do not leave.'" Read: the Poles are a bunch of blabbermouths. Still, From Da to Yes is nothing if not comprehensive. The book is short on practical information for tourists such as cost of living and sights to see, so don't buy it if you're looking for a Lonely Planet substitute (though given that the book was published in 1995, it wouldn't be useful for that purpose anymore anyway). Richmond is squarely focused on describing the cultural and historical attributes of the Poles, Hungarians, Romanians and more. Additionally, if you're of eastern European descent and interested in tracing your ancestry, the book has an interesting appendix full of resources and advice. You just need to wade through a lot of pointlessness to get there. As I mentioned already, Richmond's academic perspective prevents him from calling BS where appropriate. Many of the chapters drag on due to him repeating information that was already pretty well-stated in the introduction. For example, he keeps making a point to delineate each culture's hospitality to outsiders, oblivious to the fact that it's virtually identical from country to country. Additionally, Richmond lacks the balls to just admit that a lot of people in eastern Europe, such as the Macedonians and Moldovans, simply aren't that noteworthy. This would be somewhat forgivable if From Da to Yes applied the same level of detail to all of the cultures it discusses, but it doesn't. The section on Belarus is embarrassingly skimpy, for example, and all the nations of Yugoslavia are cramped into a single chapter. Additionally, Richmond spends an odd amount of time on information that should merit a footnote at best. For example, he spends multiple paragraphs discussing how each nationality treated Jews in World War II. What saves From Da to Yes is its historical information. Richmond gives you a bird's-eye look at the pasts of Poland, Albania, Bulgaria and more, useful if you're a history buff or looking to augment your knowledge if you're planning to make a trip to the country in question. If you keep your BS detector on, From Da to Yes is a solid resource if you're interested in and/or traveling to eastern Europe and want to know what to expect.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very helpful book!

By Linda A. Marden Very helpful book at learning about Eastern Europeans.

Now that communication barriers between Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet bloc have fallen, there are valuable opportunities for personal and business exchanges. Remaining, however, is the challenge of mutual understanding, as Eastern Europeans move from subservience to the East to cooperation with the West, in essence, moving from da to yes.

From Da To Yes: Understanding the East Europeans offers a description of life in Eastern European countries, reviewing their shared history and making note of their past and ongoing struggles with alcoholism, ethnic cleansing, organized crime and environmental degradation. Featuring individual chapters on each country and its inhabitants, Yale Richmond pays close attention to each country's individuality, the personal characteristics of its people, its attitude toward the West, its most esteemed values and its preferred style of communication. From Da To Yes is a complete guide to Eastern European nations today and their connections to the West. A refreshingly clear writer, without pretense. Our understanding of the Eastern Europeans is indispensable and I believe that Yale Richmond's book fits that need very well.

-Max M. Kampelman

Contents Preface Acknowledgments Introduction: Encountering East Europeans 1 Slavs and Other Peoples 2 Poles 3 Czechs and Slovaks 4 Hungarians 5 Romanians and Moldovans 6 Bulgarians 7 Land of the South Slavs 8 Albanians 9 Balts 10 Belarusians 11 Ukrainians Appendix A: Tracing Roots Appendix B: Recommended Readings Index

About the Author Yale Richmond, a former U.S. Foreign Service Officer, worked on U.S.-Soviet exchanges for more than twenty years, including a tour of duty as Counselor for Press and Culture in the American Embassy in Moscow.

Yale Richmond is also the author of *Into Africa, From Da to Yes: Understanding the East Europeans and Practicing Public Diplomacy: A Cold War Odyssey*.