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Andriy Zayarnyuk

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Andriy ZAYARNYUK

PARADOX ILLUSIONS

Tarik Cyril Amar's book engages with an extremely challenging and painful subject. Essentially, it is about present-day Lviv's roots in the heinous mass murders of World War II and postwar displacements, as well as cruelties and hardships of the postwar Stalinist regime. While Ukrainians (Lviv's current majority) often present themselves as victims of those twentieth-century tragedies, the book emphasizes their involvement as both perpetrators of atrocities and collaborators. The subject is tremendously important and the author should be commended for raising it, but the actual execution of his study is seriously flawed.

The author sets out to explore how Lviv, an Eastern European borderland city, that was shaped by "four key forces of European and global twentieth-century history: Soviet Communism, Soviet nation-shaping (here, Ukrainization), nationalism and Nazism" (P. 1). Whereas, arguably, "Soviet nation-shaping" was not a global force on par with the other three and can hardly be disentangled from the larger "Soviet Communism," it is central to Amar's argument. The only aspect of Soviet Communism that the book engages with at any length is its nationality policies. Both local nationalists and the Nazis were molding the city according to their ideals—mostly through atrocious murders, including the murder of the city's Jewish population. Finishing the ethnic cleansing, however, fell to the Soviets, who removed the Poles and turned the city into a Ukrainian one. This seems to be the paradox mentioned in the book's title – that the Soviets realized the dreams of the Ukrainian nationalists. As the main thesis of Amar's book, it is also the most problematic one.

Ultimately this book is about nations and nationalism, but somehow it manages to steer clear of the theories of nationalism and national identity. The only theoretical debates mentioned in the book's introduction are about Soviet modernity. A juxtaposition of Soviet claims to modernity and perceived local backwardness could have been fruitful if only it were pursued and elaborated in the book's main body. Unfortunately, Amar tells us nothing new about this modernity. According to him, Soviet modernity's self-perception was based on the illusion of superiority, it was violent and authoritarian, but so were other versions of modernity. While it used ethnicity to select the targets for its violence, Soviet modernity was not racist. What this modernity was remains unclear from the book. From Amar's narrative it seems that its most important legacy was the reconfiguration of the city's national composition. Although the book shies away from theoretical debates about nations and nationalisms, they remain, just as in the nationalist narratives, the book's most lasting constants.

Can "nations" and "nationalisms" survive transitions from one juridical, political, economic, and social framework to another with merely some outward adaptations? To speak of nations without paying attention to the forces that structure them in a particular way, generate and impose certain nationalist imagery, and define the terms of belonging is a step back from the levels of sophistication reached by academic debates about nationalism back in the 1990s.¹ It is similarly problematic to imagine the nation as relatively homogeneous and to ignore the fact that nations are normally fragmented along multiple political, social, or gender division lines.² Even when Amar questions a single Ukrainian identity, his "easterners" and "locals" function as "surrogate ethnic categories" not only in the discourses he describes but also in his book. The book ignores fractures and tensions within those groups, as well as the fact that the "party state," contrary to the book's claims, did not use the category of "easterners." The latter was invented by the locals, who applied it mostly to ethnic Ukrainians, and not to every pre-1939 Soviet citizen.

This use of nations and nationalisms as key protagonists in the narrative comes at a price. The narrative both imposes itself violently on the historical material and takes multiple shortcuts through it. The collisions and omissions of such an approach have left plentiful traces throughout the

¹ A still useful sample of possible approaches can be found in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (Eds.), *Becoming National: A Reader*. New York and Oxford, 1996.

² Partha Chatterjee. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton, 1993.

book. Nowhere in the book are these problems more apparent than in its attempt to separate Ukrainian and Russian, showing that in Lviv the former was triumphant and supported by the Soviet state. The author believes that “it is the absence of Russification in Soviet Lviv that stands out” (P. 12). Although Amar acknowledges that “by 1959 more than a quarter of the population was Russian, and Soviet Russian culture and language loomed large,” he hastens to qualify it with, “Yet, it is important to note that this peak of Lviv’s demographic Russianness was historically brief” (P. 12). First, the demographic peak was rather in 1950–1951, when Russians accounted for 30.8 percent of the population whereas Ukrainians accounted for 42.8 percent. Even in 1959 the Russian presence in Lviv was larger than in any major city of Central Ukraine, including Kyiv, Chernihiv, Poltava, and Sumy.³ Lviv’s ethnic composition at the time was nearly identical to that of Dnipropetrovsk in Southeastern Ukraine. Taking into account the fact that the majority of Lviv’s Ukrainians back then were Russian-speaking recent arrivals from the cities of Southeastern and Central Ukraine, who had lived under Soviet rule since the Revolution, Russian was the dominant language in the Lviv streets. Second, while the ethnic composition and the linguistic situation changed in the 1960s, and especially in the 1970s and 1980s, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv* explores the 1940s and 1950s. (Although there are some occasional references to the 1970s and 1980s, the book in fact ends with 1962.) Despite this chronological focus, the book has nothing to say about Russian culture, Russian-speaking Soviet culture, the Russian language in Lviv, and related cultural policies.

How can we ascertain the absence of “Russification” without looking at the language of the factory shop floor, industrial management, Party committees, or city administration? In his desire to present Soviet Lviv as a case of wholesale “Ukrainization,” the author misreads sources and misrepresents facts. He states that “by 1989, nearly 97 percent of Lviv’s population declared Ukrainian to be their native language” (P. 13), which is manifestly untrue. His source actually says that 97 percent of Lviv’s Ukrainians declared Ukrainian as their native tongue. Ukrainians, however, accounted for only 79 percent of Lviv’s population. For the absolute majority of Lviv’s Russians, Jews, Belaruians, and many others, Russian was a native tongue. As we know from Ukraine’s postindependence polls, native language and the language of everyday use are not the same, and for the latter, ratios usually

³ Roman Lozyns’kyi. *Etnichniy sklad naselennia L’vova u konteksti suspil’noho rozvytku Halychyny*. L’viv, 2005. Pp. 197, 212.

shift in favor of Russian. It is safe to assume that more than a quarter of Lviv's population used Russian as their language of choice in 1989.

The book neglects a significant Polish presence in Lviv after the "evacuation" of 1945–1946. Estimates vary, but the share of Poles in Lviv's population between 1947 and 1953 was comparable to that of Ukrainians during the interwar period. Many of them left Lviv for Poland only after Stalin's death, in the 1950s. After Amar states that "its Poles were expelled," in the next sentence he provides a breakdown of the city's population: "out of the city's about 380,000 inhabitants in 1950, about 145,000 were counted as Ukrainian, 90,000 as Russian, and 19,000 as Jewish" (P. 148). Somehow he fails to notice that these numbers do not add up, with the alleged 126,000, nearly a third of Lviv's population, unaccounted for. In fact, the city's population was closer to 300,000, with at least 30,000 identified as Poles. When the book mentions the remaining Poles, it does so to stress alleged social discrimination: "the expulsion of Western Ukraine's Poles between 1944 and 1946 not only removed Poles but also socially degraded those who remained" (Pp. 147–148). To support this thesis he emphasises that in 1959 "only 1.4 percent of Poles in Ukraine were listed as having a higher education" (P. 147). In fact, this ratio of people with a higher education to the total Polish population in Ukraine was exactly the same as for the whole Soviet population, and 0.1 percent higher than the average for the population of the Ukrainian SSR. Amar misses an obvious fact that the intelligentsia, whose livelihood depended on a Polish-speaking environment and Polish educational and cultural institutions, was more likely to leave for Poland than the Polish lower classes. Characteristically, he does not cite a single fact of this alleged social "downgrading."

Interpreting demographic trends, the book presents the 1940s and 1950s as the most important period for city growth: "the population more than doubled between the end of the war and the end of the 1950s" (P. 200). Of course, in 1945, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, and with the deportation of Poles on the way, the city was depopulated – part of a larger deurbanization experienced by large Polish and Soviet cities under Nazi occupation. Lviv had more than 300,000 people before the war, and swelling with refugees from the Nazi occupied part of Poland, it could accommodate 500,000 in 1939. The prewar population level was reached only at the end of the 1950s. Actual growth beyond prewar levels was a phenomenon of the 1960s–1980s.

Factual problems in this book often go hand in hand with conceptual issues. "Ukrainization" is one of the book's most important concepts, but Amar never properly explains its meaning. At the beginning he seems to

indicate that this Ukrainization was some converging of “nationalism” and “Communism” (P. 11), and in his conclusions it becomes a policy the Soviets pursued. There is hardly any doubt that the Soviet Ukrainian republic was not only allowed but actually expected to maintain some distinctiveness as a socialist homeland of the Ukrainian nation. There is also little doubt that after the glorious 1920s, the Soviet Ukrainian culture was often diminished to folk kitsch, ethnic cuisine, and socialist realist literature in Ukrainian. Starting with the 1930s, Soviet culture was hierarchical in its geographic and linguistic dimensions. Moscow and Leningrad as well as Russian language enjoyed a privileged position, while cultural production in the “republics,” and in languages other than Russian, was provincialized. To speak of Ukrainization after World War II without discussing this subordinate and provincial role assigned to the Ukrainian cultural product, without references to this cultural hierarchy, is misleading.

There is plenty of evidence that “Russifying” trends existed in the city. Communist writer Iaroslav Halan complained in 1949 that in Lviv “the Ukrainian language has disappeared completely from cinema bills, and now is disappearing from tram cars.”⁴ During Soviet secret police chief Lavrentiy Beria’s brief flirtation with nationalisms in 1953, just after Joseph Stalin’s death, another local Communist, Bohdan Dudykevych, claimed that the Ukrainian language was “neglected,” and he called for remedying this policy.⁵

The book tells us only about the Ukrainian and Soviet identity constructed for the city, but it fails to mention that, just as in the rest of Soviet Ukraine, Russian figures with no connection to the region or the Soviet state were memorialized in the city space. There were streets named after Lomonosov, Pushkin, Lermontov, Bestuzhev, Turgenev, Nekrasov, Chekhov, Pavlov, Suvorov, and Alexander Nevsky, not to mention Moscow, Leningrad, Smolensk, and also—for some reason—Novorossiisk and Armavir.

No one would question that the city of Lviv was “reclaimed” from Polish and Jewish history and presented as a Ukrainian city. The narrative of Lviv, however, did not differ much from those of other Ukrainian cities. They all were allowed some regional specificity. The story about Odessa was different from that of Donetsk, and Dnipropetrovsk had yet another one. Nevertheless, there were some central shared elements. Those narra-

⁴ Oleksandr Luts’kyi, Tamara Halaichak, Iurii Slyvka (Eds.). *Kul’turne zhyttia v Ukraini: Zakhidni zemli*. Vol. 1 (1939–1953). Kyiv, 1995. P. 623.

⁵ Oleksandr Luts’kyi, Tamara Halaichak, Iurii Slyvka (Eds.). *Kul’turne zhyttia v Ukraini: Zakhidni zemli*. Vol. 2 (1953–1966). Kyiv, 1996. P. 33.

tives had a class character that is completely neglected by Amar. It was never “Ukrainians” and “Poles” alone; it was always “Ukrainian peasant masses” and “Polish gentry landlords.” The presence, centrality, and normativity of Russian history were another shared feature. In this version of history, Lviv’s founder, Danylo of Halych, was a southern counterpart of Alexander Nevsky, with both of them defending Rus from the Western onslaught. Peter the Great’s visit to the city turned into one of the most prominent events in the city’s history, and “progressive” nineteenth-century local intellectuals all allegedly developed under salutary influences from the Russian revolutionary-democrats.

Amar downplays the features of the historical narrative about Lviv common to all of Soviet Ukraine and presents it as a Ukrainian nationalist narrative in a superficial Soviet garb. He says that “Khmel’nyts’kyi’s rising was one of the few pre-twentieth century events that received a monument in soviet Lviv” (P. 231). People unfamiliar with the city would not know that the “monument” refers to a stone stump with a plaque, located in a city park. The plaque’s text commemorates a victory by Colonel Kryvonis, whose



Fig. 1. Kryvonis Memorial (Alex Zelenko. High Castle. Lviv. Ukraine, 29 July 2006 // https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/1/Ukraine-Lviv-High_Castle-7.jpg).

troops took a castle that used to be on the park’s site (Figure 1). This “monument” was erected in 1954, when the Soviet Union celebrated the 300th anniversary of the Reunification of Ukraine with Russia during Khmel’nyts’kyi’s uprising, and numerous monuments commemorating the uprising and Khmel’nyts’kyi himself were raised throughout Ukraine. Moreover, in 1954 this was the only memorial in Lviv to a pre-Soviet Ukrainian. At the same time, Soviet Lviv tolerated not only Adam Mickiewicz on its central avenue, but also monuments with larger-than-life sculptures of Jan Kiliński and Bartosz Głowacki. These figures were part of Polish national history, but they were perfectly acceptable to the Soviets, as “revolutionary-democratic” and plebeian.

The most prominent Lviv Soviet monument dedicated to pre-twentieth-century history was a towering statue of Ivan Fedorov in one of the city's most historical and architecturally prominent blocks (Figure 2). Ivan Fedorov was Eastern Europe's Gutenberg, and an émigré from Moscow, who was the first to print a book in Cyrillic in Lviv. In Soviet narratives of the city's history, he was the embodiment of Ukrainian–Russian friendship and symbolized the benevolent influence of Moscow over the region as far back as the sixteenth century.

The author is absolutely right that the city's Jewish heritage was most thoroughly erased, and the Polish heritage only slightly less so. It is a shameful page in the history of the city still mostly ignored by local intellectuals, historians included. Were local Ukrainian intellectuals willing to accept this version of the city's history? They definitely were. But there were also organs of ideological control, signals, and directives coming from Kyiv and Moscow. Amar, however, is too eager to blame locals. Even when



Fig. 2. Elke Vetzig. Monument of Ivan Fedorov in Lviv, founder of book printing in Russia and Ukraine, June 2, 2006 // https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/uk/5/5a/Ivan_fedorov_monument_lviv_20060602.jpg.

the Jewish victims of the Nazis are presented as Jewish in a local publication, despite the Soviet veil of silence about the Holocaust, Amar suspects some ill intent: “Significantly, Jews had no voice in their own narrative. While non-Jewish victims of forced labor deportation featured in direct quotations, crimes against Jews were presented through the testimonies of German perpetrators” (P. 295). Perhaps the problem was that Jewish victims were less likely to survive, and the majority of those who survived left the country. Discussing the same publication, Amar also takes issue with its treatment of Moisei Naumovych Isaev, who was described as “not ‘Jewish’ but had ‘been born into a Jewish family’”. His national identity, unlike all others, was reduced to a childhood biographical accident, possibly overcome by the mature personality engaging in anti-German struggle” (P. 295). Why Amar assumes that Moisei Isaev had to have a Jewish national identity is unclear. He might have seen himself as Russian, or Ukrainian, or Soviet, and, unlike his parents, have had no distinct Jewish identity. The rules of public references to Jews and Jewish ethnicity were essentially the same all over the Soviet Union. There were dozens if not hundreds of streets and squares named after Solomon Moiseevich Uritskii, many with commemorative plaques. I would be surprised if a single one identified him as a Jewish revolutionary. The case is very much like that of Moisei Isaev. First—there is the question of whether Uritskii himself would have wanted to be defined as Jewish. Second, there was the question of anti-Semitism among Party leaders, who did not want Bolshevik heroes to be identified as Jewish. Third, there was a problem with popular anti-Semitism, which the Party tried not to provoke with a direct reference to Jews.

The Jewish heritage was erased in Lviv most thoroughly, but even in this case a place would be found for those who fit the profile of ardent revolutionary. As a Young Pioneer in a Ukrainian Lviv school, I had never heard a single story about Ukrainian leaders of the interwar Communist Party of Western Ukraine. We all, however, were told the story of Naftali Botwin, a “real hero” by Soviet standards, who on Party orders killed an alleged agent provocateur and was tried and executed in 1925. One of the central streets of Lviv’s prewar Jewish neighborhood was named after him. While his Jewishness was often glossed over, Naftali could hardly be taken for a Ukrainian or Polish name.

There is no doubt that virulent anti-Semitism was widespread among the region’s Ukrainian population, and that there were Ukrainian collaborators in the Holocaust, while Ukrainian fascist and semifascist organizations were all too ready to engage in anti-Jewish violence on their own. Amar rightfully

makes this a central point of his book. Here, however, just as in almost all his arguments, he overstretches his interpretation. According to him, after the war most surviving Jews “left Lviv for Poland before the end of 1946, frightened by blood libel rumors and a near-pogrom in Lviv in June 1945” (P. 264). I doubt that Polish anti-Semitism at the time was more benign than Ukrainian or Russian. Moreover, in June 1945 Lviv was still mostly Polish in its ethnic composition. Some decided to stay in Lviv because they found out about anti-Jewish pogroms in Polish cities.⁶ I have seen several testimonies of those who left. They left because Polish was their language and Polish culture was their culture, whereas Ukrainian, not to mention Russian, remained foreign. Moreover, many hoped that the Polish version of communism would not be as harsh as the Soviet one – after all, there was no Siberia in Poland.

Similarly, Amar says that the “post-1946 Jewish population lived preponderantly in the city of Lviv, not its rural surroundings, partly out of fear of Ukrainian nationalist attack” (P. 264). Although the “partly” part is true, he fails to mention the most important reason: post-1946 Soviet Jews came to the region as industrial workers and managers, officials and clerks, for whom the city was the only logical place of employment. For exactly the same reason, the post-1946 Russian population in Western Ukraine was also mostly urban and concentrated first of all in Lviv, the region’s largest city.

Just as with “Ukrainization,” Amar fails to define the “Ukrainian nationalism” so ubiquitous in his book. Ukrainian nationalism becomes a blanket term applied to everyone with some form of non-Soviet Ukrainian identification. Ukrainians in this book are either Communist or Nationalist, and nationalist conspiracies abound even in the most unlikely places. We are told that attempts to separate Eastern Galicia from Western Galicia “to some degree” “were usually promoted by Ukrainian nationalism” (P. 28n36). In fact, the division predated Ukrainian nationalism. Very distinct ethnic composition and economic peculiarities were obvious to nineteenth-century Polish scholars, who often treated the province’s two parts separately.⁷ In Amar’s telling slip of the tongue, even the Shevchenko Scientific Society,

⁶ Izabela Kazejak, Agnieszka Kościelska, Daria Kwiecień, Anna Schwenck. Neubeginn nach der Shoah. Jüdisches Leben in Lemberg nach 1945 // Eine neue Gesellschaft in einer alten Stadt – Erinnerung und Geschichtspolitik in Lemberg anhand der Oral History (2008). <https://homepage.univie.ac.at/philipp.ther/lemberg/neubeginn.html>.

⁷ Józef Buzek. Stosunki zawodowe i socyalne ludności w Galicyi według wyznania i narodowości na podstawie spisu ludności z dnia 31 grudnia 1900 r. // Wiadomości statystyczne o stosunkach krajowych. Lwów, 1905. Vol. 20. No. 2.

a Ukrainian academic institution, is transformed into the “Shevchenko National Society” (P. 71).

The book is virtually helpless when it comes to interpreting more complex texts created by intellectuals. Instead of analysis, we encounter labels, invectives, and insinuations. To Amar, Osyp Nazaruk was “an ordinary European racist of his time, believing in Aryans and other tribes” (P. 76). “An ordinary European racist” seems to be an awfully imprecise category for the time under discussion. Did Winston Churchill qualify as one or rather Adolf Hitler, or were perhaps both equally ordinary racists? Osyp Nazaruk was definitely influenced by racist theories, anti-Jewish prejudice, and imperialism, which were rampant in Europe between the world wars. However, in the cited work – *Galicia and Greater Ukraine* – he states explicitly that he does not believe in pure races, or in the hierarchy of races, or that some races lack the ability to distinguish between good and evil – the latter point directed against Alfred Rosenberg’s *Myth of the Twentieth Century*. For some reason Amar brings up this 1936 publication, informed by Nazaruk’s experience of the Civil War in the former Russian Ukraine, to illustrate the 1939 encounter between Western and Eastern Ukrainians. Amar believes that Nazaruk’s “fear of pollution and longing for purity defined the most important Other of Galician Ukrainians as not Russians or Poles or Jews but other Ukrainians” (P. 77). I am not sure that there is a theory of identity in which the constitutive Other appears only to merge eventually with the Self. After all, this was exactly the message of Nazaruk’s book: despite the differences, Ukrainians are a single nation and would unite. Ideally, in this unification Galicia would play the role Prussia played in the German states, an active agent cementing the Ukrainian nation. Needless to say, Nazaruk never loses sight of Ukrainians’ real Others: Poles and Russians.

Nazaruk was definitely more than an “ordinary racist.” He started as a leftist intellectual before World War I, and he converted to monarchism after the Revolution (allegedly in front of the statue of Queen Victoria while in Canada). Although he worked for clerical newspapers during the interwar period and found some features of authoritarianism appealing, he never accepted Dmytro Dontsov’s teachings. Recalling his escape from Soviet Lviv to Nazi-occupied Poland in 1939, he shows genuine compassion for the plight of Jewish refugees, and he feels for their sufferings.⁸ Back in 1910, Nazaruk defined anti-Semitism as “the morphinism of little people,” a neurosis of hatred with which modern human substitutes exhausted natural

⁸ Osyp Nazaruk. Ucieczka ze Lwowa do Warszawy. Wspomnienia ukraińskiego konserwatysty z pierwszej połowy października 1939 roku. Przemyśl, 1999. Pp. 59-61.

passions.⁹ He himself was not completely immune to it. Nonetheless, when as an army journalist he visited Proskuriv in 1919 right after a heinous massacre perpetrated by troops of the Ukrainian People's Republic, he saw it as a crime. Rebuffing attempts to justify massacres and pogroms by the political stance of Jews, Nazaruk says: "among the Bolshevik insurgents everywhere I saw ten times more Ukrainians than Jews; after all Bolshevism is not being organized by Jewish children and old women, who are also slaughtered."¹⁰ I am not sure if the average European racist shared these views.

Amar's treatment of Milena Rudnytska is even more baffling. He charges her with the "fantasies not only of polygamy but also of extermination" (P. 77). She is portrayed as "welcoming Soviet measures that expropriated Jewish trade" (P. 76). Moreover, she allegedly "stereotypically assumed that only Jews were loyal to Soviet rule and others not" (P. 76n215). The alleged "fantasy of polygamy" refers to Rudnytska's reply to Nazaruk, in which she says that even ten Galician women will not be able to change a Soviet Ukrainian. It is obvious that we are dealing with a figure of speech, and with a subtle mocking of Nazaruk, who did have fantasies about strong women. (His most famous historical novel was *Roksoliana*, about the strong-willed Ukrainian wife who, through manipulating her husband, Suleiman the Magnificent, ruled the powerful Ottoman Empire.) Accusing the head of the Central Board of the Union of Ukrainian Women of polygamous fantasies is simply bad taste. The situation with alleged "extermination" is exactly the same. Amar chooses not to see that in the next letter Rudnytska speaks of creating "educational institutions," in which those young Soviet Ukrainian officials could be reformed, and she treats them as future leaders of an independent Ukrainian state: "with these people we shall have to build the state, to staff the state apparatus with them!"¹¹ Polygamy, extermination, and anti-Semitism are Amar's fantasies, not Rudnytska's.

Both of Amar's references to Rudnytska's alleged anti-Semitism come from the same source, Nazaruk's recording of Rudnytska's testimony about life under the Soviets. Her testimony refutes allegations by Stepan Baran, another fugitive from Lviv, about Jewish support for the Bolsheviks:

⁹ Cited in: Nazar Vas'kiv. Ukrains'ko-ievreis'ki vzaiemyny u prohramakh ta diial'nosti UNDP (1899–1914) // Naukovi zoshyty istorychnoho fakul'tetu L'vivs'koho universytetu. 2014. No. 15. P. 76.

¹⁰ Osyp Nazaruk. Rik na velykii Ukraini. Konspekt spomyniv z ukrains'koi revoliutsii. Vienna, 1920. P. 144.

¹¹ Marta Bohachevs'ka-Khomiak and Myroslava Diadiuk (Eds.). Milena Rudnyts'ka. Statti, lysty, dokumenty. L'viv, 1998. Pp. 594, 596.

Baran told of things about the Bolsheviks that we knew even before they came, as if he himself had not seen the Bolsheviks. He is also wrong about the wider Jewish public: the majority of them are just as dissatisfied as ourselves. Their middle class is destroyed, the trade too. From the national point of view for us this is more important than the elimination of great landownership. [The Soviets] were not glad to take Jews into the government, but they had no one else to rely on, only on them ... Baran's stories about the placing of Jews in peasant homes are simply an invention.¹²

The spirit of this passage is the opposite of what Amar ascribes to it. Rudnytska does think that the destruction of the Jewish middle class is of great sociological importance for Ukrainians, who were moving into those urban occupations, leaving their rural ghetto, but there is no joy in her description of it. She foresaw sociological changes, which indeed would take place after the war, and which Amar fails to explore in his book. Christopher Mick, in his otherwise excellent book, described Rudnytska's assessment of the destruction of the Jewish middle class as "positive,"¹³ while under Amar's pen it becomes "welcoming." By the way, in another assertion of hers, Rudnytska also refutes Baran's claim that the Soviet political police was staffed with Jews and says that "no one else saw Jews there."¹⁴

Amar never mentions in his book that Milena Rudnytska's mother was born and raised in a Jewish family, and that by the end of her life she had never fully mastered Ukrainian. We never learn that Rudnytska and her family maintained good relations with her mother's relatives, or that her private teachers were Jewish. She and her mother survived the war living together, with the help of a forged birth certificate issued to her mother by a Greek Catholic priest. Instead, she is labeled as "an activist ... for moderate Ukrainian nationalism" (P. 76). The only purpose of such a definition is to show that even moderate Ukrainian nationalism was permeated with racism, anti-Semitism, and genocidal ideas. Milena Rudnytska, in fact, was quite radical. She left the Ukrainian National-Democratic Alliance in 1935 because she disagreed with its policy of "normalizing" relations with the Polish government. As Oleksandr Zaitsev has shown, the Polish police suspected her of supporting the Front of National Unity, an organization

¹² Ibid. P. 705.

¹³ Christoph Mick. *Kriegserfahrungen in einer multiethnischen Stadt: Lemberg 1914–1947*. Wiesbaden, 2010. P. 466.

¹⁴ Marta Bohachevs'ka-Khomiak and Myroslava Diadiuk (Eds.). *Milena Rudnyts'ka. Statti, lysty, dokumenty*. P. 704.

with definite fascist tendencies.¹⁵ In fact, she did not belong to the Front, and while Rudnytska was quite radical on the issue of Ukrainian independence, she was also anti-authoritarian and anti-imperialist, condemning “all total, exclusive movements, which do not want to tolerate any other thought but their own”¹⁶

From Amar’s book we never learn that Mykhailo Rudnytsky, whom he discusses in the context of “local minds” collaborating with the Soviets, was Milena’s brother, or that Germans’ doubts about his “Aryan descent” were justified. Instead, Amar just leaves hanging a Soviet description of his mother as a “Ukrainian (allegedly of Jewish descent)” (P. 232). Mykhailo Rudnytskyi, according to Amar, “had a history of expressing no sympathy for Socialism” (P. 232). In fact, there is a lot of sympathy for socialism and social reform in Rudnytsky’s magisterial *From Myrnyi to Khvyliovyi*.¹⁷ More important, there is no sympathy in Rudnytsky for “integral nationalism.” Rudnytsky, with his journal *Nazustrich*, was seen as the main opponent of Dmytro Dontsov’s *Literaturno-Naukovyi Visnyk* and *Visnyk*’s milieu. The irony is that Dmytro Dontsov lists Mykhailo Rudnytsky among the interwar Bolshevik and “Muscophile” agents (together with Nazarus, allegedly a Jewish puppet),¹⁸ while present-day nationalist critics accuse Rudnytsky of dealing “a central blow against the power and endurance of national culture.”¹⁹ In *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv*, just as in the accusations of nationalist critics, Mykhailo Rudnytsky appears as a docile prop in Soviet scenarios of the “intelligentsia reconstruction,” all too eager to denounce his colleagues and ingratiate himself with the new regime (Pp. 232–235).

Local intellectuals in Amar’s book appear as one-dimensional men from the reports of Soviet agents and officials. The book picks up the condescending tone of those reports, which bask in their own sense of superiority. Except for an occasional line from the meeting minutes, we do not hear those intellectuals’ own voices, and there is no engagement with their texts and ideas. Ivan Kryp’iakevych becomes just another co-opted local fulfill-

¹⁵ Oleksandr Zaitsev. *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm (1920–1930-ti roky)*. Narysy intelektual’noi istorii. Kyiv, 2013. Pp. 336-37.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* P. 413.

¹⁷ Mykhailo Rudnyts’kyi. *Vid Myrnoho do Khvyliovoho*. Lviv, 1936.

¹⁸ Dmytro Dontsov. *Moskovs’ka otruta*. Toronto and Montreal, 1955. P. 149; Dmytro Dontsov. *Natsionalizm*. London, 1966. P. 7.

¹⁹ Oleh Bahan. *Koryfei liberal’noi literaturnoi krytyky // Mykhailo Rudnyts’kyi. Vid Myrnoho do Khvyliovoho. Mizh ideiu i formoiu*. Drohobych, 2009. P. 26.

ing the role assigned to him by the state. Kryp'iakevych's work on Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi becomes a commission from Soviet authorities and part of the narrative they are creating for Western Ukraine: "the leading Soviet historian from western Ukraine ... writing the life of a key eastern figure of the Soviet Ukrainian pantheon" (P. 231). Of course, the figure was as much western as eastern, and it belonged to the all-Ukrainian pantheon. If Amar opened a book of poems by Markiian Shashkevych, a pioneer of the Ukrainian "national revival" in nineteenth-century Galicia, he would have seen that one of his earliest poems, dated 1834, is called "The Siege of Lviv by Khmel'nyts'kyi."²⁰ In the middle of the period between Shashkevych's poem and Kryp'iakevych's book, in the 1890s, Stepan Tomashivs'kyi produced in Lviv his important study of Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi's uprising. The list of strained, and often completely false, interpretations of sources in Amar's book can be continued. For the sake of space I will stop here and move to its other problems.

The lives of ordinary people in the book remain completely opaque. What did these people think, how did they speak or behave after 1944? Two chapters on the reestablishment of Soviet power in 1944–1947 and postwar industrialization are chaotic, with naive arbitrary glimpses into the city's social history. There are two pages and one paragraph on "Life in Lviv" (Pp. 215–217) discussing water supply, trade, transportation, nursery, and kindergartens, and ending with a picture of a small hut with seven "half-naked" children. There are many insights, and keen observations throughout Amar's book, but they are never elaborated, and they are scattered across fragmented, stunted subsections. The headings of those subsections – "Emerging from War: A Cluttered Void" (two paragraphs), "Leaving Lwów, Slowly" (three paragraphs), "Irrelevant yet Crucial, Naïve yet Evil, Ours yet Treasonous: Dmytro Manuilskyi's Local Intelligentsia" (four paragraphs) – instead of intriguing, antagonize the reader, since their subjects are never properly developed, and there are simply too many of them.

Moreover, Amar's evidence and the way he interprets sources neglect the actual lives of Lvivians. He pays no attention to interactions among the population after 1945, to what these people thought and how they behaved. How did the interactions between Western Ukrainians, Eastern Ukrainians, Russians, and Jews look on the streets and in the neighborhoods? From a chapter on the last Lviv synagogue we learn nothing about the postwar Jewish community, its social composition, attitudes to the city and its rich

²⁰ Mykhailo Vozniak (Ed.). *Pysannia Markiiana Shashkevycha* (Zbirnyk Filiologichnoi sektsyi Naukovoho Tovarystva imeny Shevchenka, Vol. 14). Lviv, 1912. P. 1.

Jewish history and destroyed Jewish heritage, or its involvement with the legacy of the Holocaust. A book that purports to show how Lviv has become Ukrainian has nothing to say about the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church, its perseverance in the underground (far more successful than that of armed nationalist resistance), and the accommodation of both clergy and the faithful with the only officially allowed Church of the Eastern rite—Russian Orthodoxy. This is especially strange because of the importance of religious identification in the region. The book could also have paid greater attention to Union-wide trends – many local developments can be explained by oscillations in official policy, such as the replacement of “bourgeois nationalism” with “rootless cosmopolitanism” as its main target in ideological campaigns. Sometimes Amar fails to connect related dots. For example, it is not an accident that a “fantastic” letter to the Party by Ivan Vozniak, a veteran of the Communist resistance, in which he identifies “Jewish nationalists, not only Ukrainian and Polish ones,” as part of Himmler’s “black international” (P. 293), comes from February 1962, the time at which the Party attacked Lviv’s last synagogue. It was part of a Union-wide anti-Semitic campaign targeting Judaism and alleged “Jewish embezzlers.”

Amar’s narrative contains important insights, and his desire to debunk Ukrainian nationalist myths is commendable. The book’s discussion of the category “local” in the Soviet discourse and Soviet policy toward Western Ukraine is especially important. The author also draws our attention to the tensions this category entailed: tensions of inclusion and exclusion, sameness and difference. His discussion of the city’s reinvention as Ukrainian, with Jews (one-third of the city’s population before the war) completely left out of it, and Poles (the former majority) only marginally present is also largely valid. The rewriting of history was especially striking in the case of two organizations he discusses – the People’s Guard (a Communist underground organization under Nazi occupation) and the Communist Party of Western Ukraine – since many of their members were still alive and active at the time.

These insights, however, get lost in the mire of misinterpretations, inaccuracies, factual errors, and mistakes obviously stemming from the author’s carelessness. Somehow, “Kyiv Rus’ origins” become assigned “to the Grand Duchy of Moscow/Russian Empire” and not vice versa (P. 23). “Poles were a majority only in the eastern half of Galicia” (P. 29), whereas of course the opposite was true. The Order of the Red Banner of Labor is taken for the Order of the Red Banner (P. 231), whereas the former was far more common and less prestigious. Lviv’s destroyed infrastructure described by Zofia

Romaniczówna appears to be a consequence of World War I, but in fact she is writing about the damage inflicted by the Ukrainian-Polish war, which was far more destructive to the city's built environment than World War I proper (P. 31). Russian and Ukrainian book titles in the references would have benefited from editing, since at the moment they contain pearls like "Ukrainy v ohni" (P. 76n214) or "robitnykoho zhyttia" and "dokumentalni povest" (P. 217n211).

As for the author's main thesis, it remains unproven. The conclusions indicate some hesitancy about it. If the Soviet regime "conceded" (P. 322) the distinct Western Ukrainian identity, then the primary agency might have lain elsewhere – with the local population, or the processes that Soviet modernization engendered without foreseeing all their consequences, just as Amar's opponents have argued. The book definitely does not contain enough evidence for the claim that the Soviet regime "in effect, promoted" it (P. 322). Amar attempts to show the city as a playground for three ideological and political forces, the bad, the worse, and the ugly of his story. Such an approach, however, not only simplifies historical realities, but omits their essential and most interesting parts. Ultimately, the book about "Ukrainization" fails to explain the appearance of an urban Ukrainian-speaking culture in Lviv, in both its high- and low-brow forms. Let us not forget that Serhii Kuzmysky, a leader of the legendary Ukrainian rock band the Snake Brothers of the 1980s and 1990s, sang in a perfect local dialect, yet came from a Russian-speaking family of "easterners."

SUMMARY

In his extensive review, Andriy Zayarnyuk challenges the main thesis of Tarik Cyril Amar's book *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv* – that the Soviet regime purposefully promoted the Ukrainization of L'viv in the wake of World War II, at the expense of the formerly predominant Polish and Jewish national cultures. Zayarnyuk also charges Amar with poor handling of primary sources.

РЕЗЮМЕ

В своей обширной рецензии Андрий Заярнюк ставит под сомнение главный тезис книги Тарика Амара о том, что советская власть целенаправленно украинизировала Львов после окончания второй мировой

войны за счет цензурирования преобладавших прежде польской и еврейской национальных культур. Заярнюк также обвиняет Амара в неаккуратности при работе с источниками.