adopted "empirical Zionism," the "ingathering of the exiles" in Palestine. Cramsey places this change within the context of a much broader "ethnic revolution." This was the diplomatic and political stance emerging from Czechoslovak and Polish exiled leaderships, that a stable postwar order in east central Europe required an "ethnic unmixing of populations." Minority rights had been shelved and ascribed ethnicity would determine where individuals could legitimately live after the war. Cramsey shows just how quick and consequential the consensus on "population transfer" as a legitimate state building tool was. It was mainly driven by Czechoslovak statesman Edvard Beneš's desire to remove ethnic Germans entirely from the postwar Czechoslovak state. This consensus had deep ramifications. It resulted in the planned "uprooting" of millions of ethnic Germans as well as what remained of the region's Jewish population.

While the first three chapters trace "the intellectual and diplomatic foundation for the unmixing of populations," those developments, "do not foretell what happened" (151). The last two chapters trace what happened as knowledge and comprehension about the Jewish catastrophe emerged among the book's protagonists and how it shaped their work to change the policies of refugee and displaced persons organizations. By 1946, instead of repatriation of Jews, these organizations facilitated the uprooting and transfer of Jewish survivors away from their former homelands. If it is hard for the reader to at times follow the minutiae of meetings, wording of memos, and the painstaking plotting of conversations, Cramsey's work convincingly reveals the depth and breadth of the intellectual revolution that was necessary to create the map of ethnically homogenous nation states that revolutionized postwar east central Europe.

Oleksandr Melnyk. *World War II as an Identity Project: Historicism, Legitimacy Contests, and the (Re-)Construction of Political Communities in Ukraine, 1939–1946.*

Ukrainian Voices. Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2023. 432 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Photographs. €49.90, paper.

Jared McBride

University of California-Los Angeles
Email: mcbridejg@g.ucla.edu

doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.465

Oleksandr Melnyk's monograph, *World War II as an Identity Project*, broadly explores the "relationship between history, legitimacy, and violence" in the destruction and creation of political communities in Ukraine during and after the Second World War (25). Published as part of ibidem-Verlag's "Ukrainian Voices" series, books like this one have never been more timely given Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine. Indeed, as the preface notes, Melnyk was living in a Russian-occupied village in southern Ukraine at the time of the book's completion, showing there is presently little safety from the horrors he surveys in the book.

By title alone, the monograph's goals are ambitious. Melnyk is interested in how various actors, in light of the brutal Nazi occupation of Ukraine and its accompanying layers of violence, sought to delimit the parameters of knowledge and discourse about the war, define new civic and political identities in a post-war Soviet Ukraine, and shape

conceptions of a newly formulated Soviet Ukrainian state. Among these actors, the focus remains the Soviet state and its historicist endeavors, but the discussion is neither top-down nor one-dimensional, as Melnyk shows how various atypical actors (archivists, nationalists, partisans) interacted with the state, and he demonstrates how the state's policies could be "manipulated, reconfigured, and occasionally even thwarted" by these actors (26).

World War II as an Identity Project comprises six "thematic chapters and case studies," each guided by an investigation into how these distinct topics "played out in different social domains over several decades" (68). The first two chapters provide an occupation overview and an examination of the Ukrainian nationalist movement's challenge to Soviet legitimacy in Ukraine. The remainder consider the aftermath of occupation, discussing Soviet efforts for control and legitimization during reconquest, archival practices and information politics, post-occupation trials, and partisan memory and identity. Finally, Melnyk provides a lengthy epilogue that summarizes the book's contributions and brings the discussion to 1991. This patchwork approach is successful, though the chapters on archives and partisans feel underserved.

The book's strengths are a close reading and integration of new archival sources, a mastery of the historiographical landscape, and nuanced analytical interventions, all of which are highlighted in two case studies. The Ch. 2 case study, for example, unpacks Ukrainian nationalist (OUN-B) activities outside of Kyiv in the early months of the war in a region mostly overlooked in existing scholarship. Melnyk's dissection of participants' biographies shows how participation in the nationalist uprising was motivated less by "ideological proclivities" than political opportunism, social networks, and situational dynamics (132, 158–59). In the process, he captures how many "nationalists" were in fact willing to craft new identities when the tide of the war turned. This chapter therefore reveals the peculiar conjecture of nationalist and Soviet historicist claims. While nationalists sought to re-code the region's recent past (the civil war and famine) on their own terms to build legitimacy, the Soviets accepted these frames during their subsequent efforts to reestablish power post-war.

The next case study, in Ch. 5, probes a post-occupation trial against three Ukrainians in Kyiv for their participation in anti-Jewish violence. Beyond a reading for empirical claims about the Holocaust, Melnyk uses the case to make two points about the new Soviet order. Rather than a "figure of absence," he argues that the Holocaust was openly discussed after the war, and as such, the Soviet policy of downplaying Jewish victimhood was not necessarily "coterminous with everyday mnemonic practices in the formerly occupied territories" (296–97). In addition, his painstaking cross-referencing of testimonies shows how Kyvians protected some community members likely involved in the violence. Instead of pushing back with wider repressive tactics, the Soviet state seized the opportunity to limit the parameters of the investigation to just three people, minimizing its need to deal more explicitly with Jewish victimhood and consequently, the uncomfortable fact of extensive local collaboration and complicity in interethnic violence.

One of several paradoxical conclusions presented by Melnyk is that the repressive Soviet state realized that mass violence alone could not rebuild society anew, nor could it punish everyone even if it so desired, in the face of a war in which millions lived under occupation and many collaborated with the occupiers. Conversely, by means of its interpretation of the war, the Soviet state constructed novel modes of legitimacy and affiliation (placing emphasis on the "friendship of the peoples," promoting "moral-political unity of the Soviet people," denouncing Nazi atrocities, fostering national identities, and elevating wartime sacrifice and allegiance to the state) (59). Complementing emerging scholarship on post-war justice, memory of the conflict, and the experiences of previously overlooked groups, the argument is convincing.

https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2024.465 Published online by Cambridge University Press

An area of further evaluation remains the relationship between the state's broad "strategic silence" about problematic aspects like collaboration and the relitigation of the war beginning in the 1960s, replete with sprawling investigations, new show trials, and an internationally coordinated propaganda campaign (387). Melnyk mostly insulates this later development from internal politics, noting the trials were for international consumption. However, considering the sheer scale of the investigations, that trials were held publicly, and that the accompanying literature was published in multiple languages and disseminated internally, one may question how they complicated the official narrative. This small criticism notwithstanding, the book ought to be read widely and will serve as an essential resource for future research on these subjects.

Ed. Zenon E. Kohut, Volodymyr Sklokin, and Frank E. Sysyn, with Larysa Bilous. *Eighteenth–Century Ukraine: New Perspectives on Social, Cultural, and Intellectual History.*

The Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research Monograph Series. Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press; Edmonton/Toronto: CIUS Press, 2023. v, 648 pp. Notes. Index. Figures. Tables. Maps. $110.00, hard bound.

Rev. Dr. Roman I. Shiyan, (UOCC) Independent Scholar

Email: fr.roman.shiyan@gmail.com

doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.466

When I think about European history and historiography of the eighteenth-century, the image of one struggling with their identity comes to mind. This "identity struggle" manifested itself quite differently in various European polities and societies during and around the 1700s (depending on one's preferred chronology for this century), as it did in the studies of it as well. Indeed, the question of the "true identity" of this historical period, of it being a precursor to modern Europe, a "watershed," and/or a historical epoch in its own rights with its distinctive social, cultural, and intellectual dynamics, among other elements, was and remains hotly contested. This holds true regardless of whether we are searching for the survival of previous historical forms or tracing the emergence of new patterns of modernity, in this case in relation to eighteenth-century Ukraine.

The reviewed collection of studies lays a strong claim to position itself as both a new and authoritative presentation of eighteenth-century Ukrainian history, which "... has long been a marginal and even neglected period in the dominant master narratives of Ukrainian history ..." and "... it has fared hardly better in the interpretations developed after 1991, being either absorbed into the broader early modern age or confined into a pale transition period between the pivotal 'long' seventeenth and 'long' nineteenth centuries" (3). Recently, "... eighteenth-century studies have demonstrated a steady quantitative and qualitative growth ... that have turned the period into one of the most dynamic and innovative fields in Ukrainian history writing" (3). As argued by this volume's editors, eighteenth-century Ukrainian history "became a testing ground for often methodologically sophisticated studies in the new social and cultural histories, historical demography, women's history and childhood studies, religious studies, and the history of education, as well as intellectual and