with the onset of the creation of the USSR, the centralists finally had their day. Russia simply could not exist without her borderlands. These points the author makes convincingly. One wonders, however, just how authentic the actual claim of Ukrainian independence was and whether, if conservatives, liberals or some other branch of socialism won the revolution, was there ever really any chance for an independent or even federal Ukraine? That is, how well does the author prove that the Ukraine was a separate nation-state? It may have been, but the author assumes it was without giving us very much data one way or the other. And without his developing this theme, we end up with the story of a modern country that never was—however valid the author’s points on Lenin and his associates are. And after a reading of this magnificently researched book, there can be no doubt about Lenin’s aims.

On the level of how well the book was executed, there are a number of problems. First, there is the problem of straight history, that is, the author should have given the reader a narrative of events in their chronological sequence. I do not fault the author on the topical organization of his book, but I would rather have had the summary chapter placed first and in an expanded form in order to serve as an introductory narrative. Then, let the conclusion be just that—the consequences to be drawn from this exhaustive study; but no such consequences are drawn, and that is a shame because the Ukrainian case is a tragic lesson in Great Russian and Marxist imperialism. Without a good lead-in chapter, the book often tends to be disjointed and lacking in overall cohesion. Furthermore, the author needed to develop further the roles of the Central Rada, the Skoro-pada’kyj regime and the Directory. They all get short shrift while Piatakov and Rakovskij get fuller coverage. Yet the RCP had to deal with them all in its policy of integration and assimilation. Also, the role of the Ukraine as the major battlefield during the civil war is only lightly touched on. Finally, in his introduction to this edition John Armstrong contends that this book is a pioneering effort cast in the mold of the Annales School—a somewhat sweeping claim for the author’s modest efforts in the socio-economic field. On the other hand, Armstrong is correct in maintaining that the stories of the vanquished and the borderlands deserve greater scholarly attention in the Western world.

All in all, this is a fine study and is must reading for those interested in this subject.

Donald E. Davis


The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was formed in 1929. As John Armstrong demonstrated in his pioneer study, it became the most dynamic and controversial Ukrainian political movement of the 1930s and 1940s. Motyl’s slim volume attempts to identify and analyze the origins of the OUN. He argues that post-war nationalism was an indigenous Ukrainian phenomenon arising out of the Ukrainian conservative and right-wing traditions rather than non-Ukrainian fascist movements to which the OUN has been frequently linked. A brief encyclopedic account of the Ukrainian political spectrum serves to highlight the chief ideological and organizational characteristics of the right-wing groupings which were later incorporated into the OUN.

Ukrainian nationalism was born in exile—in the aftermath of the defeat of the Ukraine’s national liberation struggle at the hands of Soviet Russia and Poland—among those embittered emigrés who refused to accept the defeat as final. The democratic and socialist forces, which had led the unsuccessful struggle for independence, were discredited and
blamed for the failure. The Nationalists saw them as romantics par excellence who were blind and insensitive to the complexities faced by tough minded realists. New attitudes and methods were deemed necessary for the attainment of the goal of an independent and united (soborna) Ukraine. Thus in their enclaves in Vienna, Prague, and Berlin, the Ukrainian emigrés, mainly students and war veterans, generated a stream of nationalist ideologies which negated the pre-1917 democratic and humanistic traditions in favor of militant totalitarianism.

The year 1923 was a turning point in the fortunes of Ukrainian nationalism. Until then, many Ukrainians still had believed in the possibility of at least a Ukrainian Galician state. However, the fateful decision of the League of Nations (the Council of Ambassadors) to legitimize the Polish occupation of Galicia ended that hope. It also destroyed the credibility of the Galician government-in-exile, thus opening the way for the nationalist factions to launch their drive for total control of Ukrainian political life among the emigrés and in Galicia. The nationalists' uncompromising outlook and militancy (including terrorism) strained their relations with the legal Ukrainian parties in Galicia. The latter, without abandoning the goal of Ukrainian independence, nonetheless chose a conciliatory path in their relations with Poland. Motyl then retraces the arduous steps of the nationalist consolidation process which ultimately culminated in the creation of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. The book concludes with a brief discussion of the OUN ideology, drawn extensively from the writings of Dmytro Dontsov and stressing the notion of peasant preeminence in the future socio-political structure of the Ukraine.

Motyl's study, brief as it is, does make several interesting observations. He tries to unravel the confusing beginnings of the key component of Ukrainian nationalism, the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO). Formed in Prague from the remnants of the Ukrainian army (Sichovi Stiltsi) and led by Colonel Evhen Koňovalets, the UVO acted in the 1920s as a catalyst for the fragmented nationalists. The UVO's political and guerrilla activities enjoyed a degree of Lithuanian and German support, including financial aid and intelligence and military training. Hence the future Nazi connection. Perhaps more significantly, Motyl touches on the attitude of the nationalists toward the controversial problem of Ukrainian-Jewish relations. Using the Ukrainian press as a mirror of political opinion, he emphasizes the general absence of anti-Jewish sentiment until the assassination of Symon Petliura, the head of the Ukrainian National Republic (in exile). Petliura was killed by a Soviet agent of Jewish nationality for alleged anti-semitism. Motyl sees the interwar manifestation of the Ukrainian anti-Jewish feeling as a direct reaction to the wave of Jewish Ukrainophobia which surrounded the trial. The assassin's acquittal not only made Petliura into a criminal in the eyes of the world, but discredited the entire Ukrainian cause. The acquittal transformed the Ukrainian Revolution from a struggle for national liberation into an infamous chapter in the history of pogroms. These events motivated the nationalists to place the Jews in the camp of their traditional enemies, the Poles and the Russians.

While it is legitimate to trace the history of an idea, one wonders whether the study of such a complex phenomenon as the origins of Ukrainian nationalism can be complete without reference to economic developments in the Polish Ukraine and their impact upon Ukrainian social and political thought. It would seem that the questionable Polish policies of colonization and economic descrimination resulting in the impoverishment of the Ukrainians not only radicalized the population but made the nationalist ideas of self-reliance and militancy popular. Furthermore, Motyl's efforts to keep Ukrainian nationalism as free as possible from Western fascist connections tend to blind him to the existence of important similarities between Ukrainian nationalism and its East European counterparts. A comparative chapter on such nationalist organizations as the Croatian Ustashi, the Slovak Hlinkavites, the Romanian Iron Guard, and the Polish National Radical Camp would have placed the Ukrainian movement in a broader and more relevant historical context.