

Andrii Portnov. *Dnipro: An Entangled History of a European City*.

Boston: Academic Studies Press. 374 pp. Notes Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Tables. \$40.00, paper.

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Andrii Portnov's *Dnipro: An Entangled History of a European City* is a contribution to the growing subfield of studies of cities in eastern and central Europe that seek to leverage a local focus to capture broader forces and their interaction with a specific place, its inhabitants and development over time. In *Dnipro*, these forces include, for instance, the strategies of states (representational, modernizing, and highly repressive); capitalism and the industrial revolution (or the ambition to be "Manchester"); ideas, ideologies, and identities; the catastrophes of war, civil war, and mass violence, and, last but not least, the multiple agencies of groups and individuals. To handle the ensuing complexity, Portnov relies on a combination of one key concept, entanglement, and one pervasive technique, namely, in effect, a form of collage.

Dnipro's central problem is that the concept and the technique fail to work together in a convincing manner. As a result, at its best, *Dnipro* offers deft if traditional interweaving of narratives, as, for instance, in the sections "'Ukrainization' in the City" and "'The Great Turn' at a Local Level." At its least effective, the text sometimes appears almost inchoate or takes the form of a kaleidoscopic, even fragmented urban chronicle, essentially a sequence of frequently short vignettes, sequestered rather than connected in their own subsections of longer chapters. In both cases, collage replaces a substantial account of entanglement. Yet *Dnipro's* declared, and most promising, aim would require fleshing out what precisely entanglement is—apart from a detailed description of interactions and connections (biographical, institutional, or contingent) across literal and metaphorical (social, cultural, political) dividing lines and distances—and what it does for us, that is, how deploying that concept makes a difference.

Thus, in the first chapter, short sections summarizing some literature on the Russian empire are little integrated with others focusing locally on Katerynoslav (future Dnipro). In the second and third chapters, the accounts of the city's industrialization and the 1905 and 1917 Revolutions interweave narratives of key events, actions, and individuals at different levels. Capsule biographies, excerpts from ego documents, such as travelogues, and statistics serve to enrich (and sometimes, especially in the case of statistics, encumber) the text.

Ch. 4 through 6, covering, in essence, the Soviet period, including a Nazi German occupation, are *Dnipro's* most important contribution. Portnov's description of German wartime rule and its effects is detailed and illuminating. It does not offer any surprises, but it pays attention to multiple experiences and perspectives. The same is true for his account of the first postwar Soviet years. His discussion of the links between Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet leader who has come to stand for the long Soviet seventies, and the city, is perhaps the most revealing and rewarding part of *Dnipro*. The short but important epilogue covers the post-Soviet period, including the years of open conflict with Russia. Portnov's discussion of Dnipro's special role in this period highlights urgent key issues, even if it cannot go beyond a perceptive commentary on literally current affairs.

Portnov has used a diverse though not exhaustive set of sources and historiography, including the efficiently mined work of local historians and chroniclers, as well as guidebooks and photo albums. Primary sources from local archives have also been used, even if they are surprisingly little quoted. But engaging with pertinent works in a related vein is not *Dnipro's* strength. Several important and recent studies of cities such as Wrocław, L'viv,

or Grodno do not merely go unmentioned but seem to have had little effect on *Dnipro*, which may restrict its impact on the subfield it belongs to.

Dnipro is a significant work of research and interpretation, featuring many acute observations and insights, even while it mostly fails at its explicit aim to produce, in effect, an exemplary “entangled history of a particular place” (9). Maybe *Dnipro*’s limits could be understood as reflecting those of the entangled history approach as such. Perhaps the latter cannot but result in the pronounced fragmentariness that marks much of Portnov’s text. But that seems unlikely and also not fair toward entangled history in general. In any case, *Dnipro* puts Dnipro on the map in terms of up-to-date historiography, even while it could have engaged more effectively with it. Specialists in various fields, such as the history of Ukraine, the Soviet Union, and Russia, or cities in eastern and central Europe, should not miss this book. General readers will find it accessible and highly informative.

Myroslav Shkandrij. *In the Maelstrom: The Waffen-SS “Galicia” Division and Legacy.*

Montreal: McGill-Quinn’s University Press, 2023. xxxiii, 424 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Maps. \$44.95, paper.

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This book is a definitive study of the much debated and still painful subject of the recent Ukrainian history: the youth who enrolled in the Waffen-SS “Galicia” (renamed in April 1945 the First Ukrainian Waffen-SS Division) and fought on the German side through the very bitter end. Created by German initiative in the spring of 1943 but with the blessing of collaborationist Ukrainian leaders and the connivance of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the 14,000-strong division underwent months-long military training and saw its first action at Brody at the eastern front in July 1944, where it was decimated. Having suffered casualties that amounted to more than half of its initial number, the Division was later complimented with other units manned by ethnic Ukrainians, mostly former policemen. In September–October 1944, the Division participated in the suppression of a Slovak communist-led uprising and later fought against Josip Broz Tito’s partisans in Yugoslavia. It surrendered to British and American forces following German capitulation, who interned them in POWs camps but eventually released and allowed most of them to integrate in west European and North American societies.

The Division’s creation was from the very beginning mired in controversies within the Ukrainian community, as leaders of both rival factions of the pro-independence Ukrainian Nationalist Organization, OUN-M and OUN-B, who suffered persecution at the hands of the Germans, opposed its formation. The OUN-B, which disposed of a substantial guerilla force known as UPA, considered volunteers to the Division as traitors to the cause, as they preferred German uniforms to membership in armed underground groups. The animosity between the Division and OUN-UPA veterans survived the war’s end and has continued in contemporary Ukraine, where the latter group, together with their supporters, block proposals to honor Division veterans as freedom-fighters. The Division veterans’ own narrative portrays themselves as Ukrainian patriots who joined the division with the purpose