

anything either. We are wily; we hide her well so the officers won't notice. The woman has a little white dress, all narrow pleats. We take it from her; she is left in her slip with a grey-green [military] shirt over it. We give her food, take turns going in to make love. A lot of other cars have their Jewish women, too; we travel that way for two days. But then the chaplain notices it, there's trouble, the major intervenes, and we have to leave the Jewish women at the first station. (220)

The train steams on. The young Jewish doctor goes to her destiny. But, in Revelli's text as now translated, a brief memorial light does illuminate perpetration (least of the Great Powers' style).

Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera: The Life and Afterlife of a Ukrainian Nationalist. Fascism, Genocide, and Cult*, Ibidem-Verlag: Stuttgart, 2014; 652 pp.; 9783838206844, \$45.00 (pbk)

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The literature on the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and its leader Stepan Bandera is fairly clearly divided between 'apologetics' and 'exposés'. This book by Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe is the first attempt at an academic biography of Bandera, and that is its author's great achievement. However, it is very much in the 'exposé' tradition. Over several hundred pages the author argues that Bandera and his OUN were part of a national liberation movement, but also fascists, racists and organizers of mass killings of civilians.

In the first of 10 chapters, the author presents basic information about the history of Ukraine, the Galicia region and the OUN up to 1933, when Bandera became the head of the organization's Executive Board. The next six chapters are devoted to Bandera's biography and the history of the OUN under his actual and symbolic leadership; the final three chapters explore his afterlife: his image in Soviet propaganda, his cult in the Ukrainian diaspora and the debates about Bandera and the Banderites in Ukraine after 1989.

Although Rossolinski-Liebe has studied Bandera's life thoroughly, his actual biography takes up a relatively small part of the text. Much more attention is given to related issues such as the ideology and the activity of Bandera's branch of the OUN (OUN-B), the formation and transformations of the cult of the leader, the collective memory of him in contemporary Ukraine, etc. The author stresses the theoretical aspects of his study, and it is these aspects rather than the empirical ones that raise most reservations.

Rossolinski-Liebe uses the concept of 'generic fascism' to contextualize Bandera and the OUN. Indeed, the ideology and activity of the OUN in the 1930s and early 1940s fully conformed to Ernst Nolte's 'fascist minimum' as well as some later definitions of fascism. Thus the concept of 'Ukrainian fascism' is one possible explanatory scheme, especially given that it satisfactorily explains some facts and is not internally contradictory. However, by ignoring the fundamental differences between ultra-nationalist movements of nations with and without a state, it

generates as many theoretical and practical problems as it helps solve. According to this logic, using the framework of fascism, one would have to devise a subcategory of 'national liberatory fascism', which seems to be a contradiction in terms.

The author senses this contradiction as he uses the phrases 'liberation movement', 'liberation struggle', etc. regarding the OUN and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army only in inverted commas. He explains: 'The "liberation struggle" or "liberation war" practiced by the OUN and UPA could not have been liberation because it was not necessary to kill several thousand civilians to liberate Ukraine' (541). However, killing civilians, as well as the idea of 'cleansing' the national territory of ethnic and political opponents, does not mean that OUN should not be regarded as a national liberation movement. Such practices were more of a rule than an exception in the history of twentieth-century national liberation movements, and the OUN in this respect was fairly typical.

Rossolinski-Liebe also rejects the term 'integral nationalism', which, starting with the pioneering monograph by John A. Armstrong (1955), has been widely used to define the ideology of the OUN. The author argues:

First, neither did the OUN use the term 'integral nationalism,' nor did it identify itself with the ideology of integral nationalism. Second, the OUN and its leaders did not claim the 'traditional hereditary monarchy' and a number of other features typical of integral nationalism, as did Maurras, the father of this ideology. (25)

Even if the first statement were true, it would be difficult to consider it a compelling argument: the OUN did not identify itself with fascism either; it even officially objected to this identification, but this does not prevent the author from identifying the OUN and Bandera with fascism. However, in fact the historian is mistaken: OUN ideologists, albeit infrequently, used the term 'integral nationalism' to define their ideology (for example, Iulian Vassyian in 1928, Iaroslav Stets'ko in 1933). The term was also used (with negative connotations) by opponents of the OUN from the Ukrainian Catholic camp.

The second objection is equally unconvincing – the concept of 'integral nationalism', which was introduced into academic usage by Carlton J. H. Hayes, has long ceased to be associated with monarchism in the style of Charles Maurras. Its meaning as used by Hays and Armstrong differs little from the concept of 'ultra-nationalism' as used by Roger Griffin and Stanley G. Payne, on whose theories the author relies.

Although there is a case for the concept of 'Ukrainian fascism', it might be more appropriate to consider the OUN and Bandera in the context of the revolutionary ultranationalist (integral-nationalist) movements of stateless nations, such as the Croatian Ustaša (until 1941), the radical wing of Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (until 1939) or the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization. Movements of this type (I call it *ustasism*) had certain features in common with fascism, but sought, not the reorganization of the existing state according to totalitarian

principles, but to create a new state, using all available means, including terror, to this end. The history of the Ustaše movement shows that if the conditions are 'favourable', ustašism can evolve into real fascism. Having dispersed Stets'ko's government and imprisoned Bandera and other leaders of the OUN in 1941, the Nazis prevented a repeat of the Croatian scenario in Ukraine. The unsuccessful 'Ukrainian National Revolution' is well described in the fourth chapter of the book (which is one of the best), although the author is convinced that these events did not change the fascistic nature of the OUN.

The radical ethnic nationalism of the OUN, although it differed from fascism, was not more humane or less prone to violence. This is evidenced time and again by Rossolinski-Liebe's findings, which describe in detail the mass violence the OUN and the UPA perpetrated against Poles, Jews and Ukrainians during the war, although Bandera, who at this time was imprisoned in a German concentration camp, bore no direct responsibility for these actions.

A conscientious historian must take into account not only the facts that support his working hypothesis, but also the ones that do not fit it. Unfortunately, Rossolinski-Liebe does not always observe this rule and sometimes consciously or unconsciously adjusts the facts to an *a priori* scheme of 'fascism', 'racism' and 'genocidal nationalism'. He rightly points to the elements of racism in certain pamphlets by OUN members, yet he ignores criticism of Nazi racism in other texts, in particular in the semi-official OUN publication, *Rozbudova Natsii*. He sees fascism everywhere, even in the greeting 'Glory to Ukraine!', groundlessly attributing its invention to a small and little-known Ukrainian Union of Fascists (34), when in reality it had been widespread back in the time of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1920, several years before the formation of the Union of Ukrainian Fascists. Citing documentary sources, he uses the translation 'totalitarian power' (181), although the word 'totalitarian' does not exist in the original, which refers to 'a sovereign, indivisible, total [*povna*] power of the Ukrainian people'. The author regards the OUN as an ideological monolith, which it was not. Fascism, Nazism, antisemitism, totalitarianism, terror had both their supporters and critics in the ranks of the organization, yet the author carefully cites only the supporters.

The greatest originality of Rossolinski-Liebe's monograph lies in the study of the formation and development of the cult of Bandera, from its inception in the mid-1930s to the present day. The author is right in arguing that the cult of Bandera, common in western Ukraine, is one of the factors that has prevented Ukrainians from critically reassessing their history. Unfortunately, while debunking this cult, the author falls for the other extreme, stressing the exceptionally 'fascist', 'racist' and 'genocidal' nature of the Banderite movement, and denying the presence of liberatory and democratic elements in it. The subject of Bandera and the OUN is still waiting for researchers who will be able to combine Rossolinski-Liebe's scale and thoroughness in processing sources with greater impartiality and more original theoretical reflection.