

Europe, respectively, Stańczyk's chapter on the appropriation of reggae in Poland and Mazierska's chapter on the use of Balkan sounds and imagery to penetrate the Polish music market adapt the classic framework of orientalism to the complex, multidirectional dynamics of eastern Europe. Looking from eastern Europe to the west, however, the answer is more pessimistic and one-sided. At best, eastern Europe is a frontier—as in Aimar Ventsel's chapter examining the region as the “punk frontier” (a fruitful concept meriting additional exploration). Seen from the west, it is eastern Europe that is orientalized—or even postcolonial (for instance, in Mariusz Gradowski's postcolonial reading of Polish singer Czesław Niemen's later career).

Asymmetry between eastern and western Europe merits analysis, particularly given the resurgence of populist nationalism in the region. Zsolt Győri's chapter offers a compelling case study, showing how the collision of west European capital, tourism, and mass marketing with local bands and audiences at the Sziget festival has increased tension between European liberalism and Hungarian nationalism. Slobodan Karamanić's and Manuela Unverdorben's analysis of “high” and “low” Balkan folk genres (also invoking orientalism) is more provocative, arguing that critiques of excessive nationalism in Balkan pop-folk stem from the class privilege of west European liberal elites. Examining eastern Europe's peripherality with respect to western Europe is a productive but risky undertaking. If lenses like orientalism, postcolonial studies, or cultural imperialism are applied unidirectionally, they can feed into familiar narratives of east European victimization, with western Europe replacing the Soviet Union as the perpetrator.

For the most part, however, Mazierska and Győri keep the politics of resurging nationalism from dominating the book's subtler musicological contributions. Paradoxically for a book on transnational connections, perhaps its greatest strength is its authors' ties to the scholarly conversations of their respective regions, bringing new debates, information, and approaches to the English language reader. As such, it is a useful resource for scholars of eastern European and of transnational popular music and culture.

RAYMOND PATTON

*John Jay College of Criminal Justice
City University of New York*

Ukrainian Women Writers and the National Imaginary: From the Collapse of the USSR to the Euromaidan. By Oleksandra Wallo. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020. xv, 201 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$52.50, hard bound.
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Oleksandra Wallo's monograph on contemporary Ukrainian women writers adds a new dimension to a growing list of scholarly works investigating post-Soviet Ukrainian literature. Her exclusive focus on women's writing is justified not only because these women's voices have grown in importance in post-independence Ukraine, but also because, as she argues, they have uniquely engaged national issues (past and present) in order to come up with compelling national narratives. Relying on Benedict Anderson's conceptualization of nations as “imagined communities,” Wallo introduces the concept of national imaginary as a fitting prism through which she examines representative prose works by Oksana Zabuzhko, Ievheniia Kononenko, and Mariia Matios. The author understands the national imaginary “as a web of collectively shared, continually contested, and evolving imaginings of and about a national community,” (7) imaginings, she further explains, that facilitate “togetherness” and “uniqueness” of the national community. By concentrating almost exclusively

on the generation of women writers who had their literary debuts in the mid to late 1980s, however, Wallo, perhaps unintentionally, intimates that the paradigm of the national imaginary applies first and foremost to that specific generation, also known in Ukrainian as *visimdesiatnyky* (eighties writers), which is not necessarily the case, as some critics might argue.

In her introduction, Wallo states that “the chapters in this book trace the re-emergence, evolution, and reception of post-Soviet Ukrainian women’s prose writing, using as examples representative works by Zabuzhko, Kononenko, and Matios, and analyzing their interventions in the national imaginary” (23). To provide the contrast in opportunities and attitudes toward female authors in Soviet and post-Soviet realities, Wallo first introduces the Soviet writer Nina Bichuia from the 1960s generation. Chapter 1, dealing with her literary career and works, serves as a distinctive context and demonstrates how difficult it was for a woman to become an accomplished writer under Soviet rule. Out of the remaining five chapters, two (Chapters 3 and 5) are almost entirely devoted to novels by Zabuzhko, her bestseller *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* (1996) and *The Museum of Abandoned Secrets* (2009), respectively. Chapter 2 provides insights into early prose works by Kononenko and Zabuzhko, whereas Chapter 4 analyzes the national narratives by Matios and Kononenko. Chapter 6 focuses specifically on the activities of these three writers during the mass protests of the Euromaidan, also known as the Revolution of Dignity (2013–14), and shows how these activities were later turned into post-Maidan narratives.

Arguably, the most rewarding part of *Ukrainian Women Writers* is the author’s interpretation of Zabuzhko’s works. Wallo’s reading of *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* is exceptionally discerning, especially when defending the novel’s ambivalent stand vis-à-vis feminism and nationalism. Zabuzhko’s other novel, *The Museum of Abandoned Secrets*, presents yet another example of the foundational national narrative, which Wallo finds of particular interest mainly because of its “construction of Ukraine’s past and post-Soviet present as one continuous gendered history” (117). Wallo appreciates the novel’s “mythical” qualities and its close adherence to what Anderson perceives as “a national biography.” She discusses the other two authors not as extensively as she does Zabuzhko, however her analyses of their national narratives, *Imitation* (2001) by Kononenko and *The Nation* (2001) and *Sweet Dariusia* (2004) by Matios, are as insightful and well-argued, and positioned in such a way in order to underscore the centrality and complexity of female characters in the process of re-imagining the national community, while influencing the dynamics of gendering at the same time. It seems that “unmuting” female voices also becomes a thread that ties all the works under scrutiny.

Ukrainian Women Writers offers a valuable contribution to the study of post-Soviet Ukrainian literature. However limited in scope (focusing only on the *visimdesiatnyky*), it presents exceptionally engaging readings of some of the most significant works produced at the turn of the twenty-first century. What could enhance the volume though, at least according to this reader, is if the author provided an epilogue (or even an extra chapter) in which she would outline these three authors’ impact on the younger generation of female writers, namely to indicate (however peripherally) whether or not the younger women authors, especially in the post-Maidan period, embrace or reject the enticement of a national narrative. As much as it was justified to present Bichuia’s voice as the women *visimdesiatnyky*’s literary predecessor, so would also be an example of their literary successor.

MARIA G. REWAKOWICZ
University of Washington