

work on Lviv's twentieth-century history is well worth reading. It steps aside from classical historicized fact-driven narration, proposing a closer examination of particularly meaningful cases instead. Well-argued, based on profound archival research and a fundamental analysis of secondary literature produced across multiple scholarly milieux, Amar's book is yet another step towards the comprehensive understanding of the complex recent history of Eastern Galicia in general, and Lviv in particular. In spite of a seemingly large existing corpus of research dedicated to Lviv, the city's recent history still lacks detailed study, and new research questions continue to emerge. This book will hopefully open the floor for further discussions and in-depth investigation of how a particular ideology may work in a single peripheral location, coupled with its own peculiarities.

Yulia Oreshina

PhD candidate

University of Regensburg

Victoria Khiterer, *Jewish Pogroms in Kiev During the Russian Civil War, 1918-1920*. Lewiston, New York: The Edward Mellon Press, 2015. 108 pp.

Victoria Khiterer's short monograph seeks to provide the first comprehensive account of the pogroms inflicted upon Jews in Kyiv during the Russian civil wars by Ukrainian, Russian, and Polish forces. She aims to counter the apologist historiography among latter-day supporters of both the Ukrainian nationalist and Russian White movements that downplay the leaders' responsibility by blaming the anti-Semitic violence on spontaneous acts by insubordinate rank-and-file soldiers.

More than half of the book's almost 90 pages deal with the pogroms committed by troops of the Ukrainian People's Republic (*Ukrainska narodna respublika*, hereafter UNR). This is entirely appropriate: they were responsible for about 40% of the recorded pogroms in Ukraine and more than half of the deaths. While there were

a few outbreaks in Kyiv in 1917, Khiterer identifies January 1918 as a turning point: the Russian, Polish, and Jewish parties in the Ukrainian revolutionary parliament either voted against or abstained on the issue of Ukrainian independence, and, when the Bolsheviks took Kyiv that month, they stayed in the city. But only the Jews were held to collective account by the UNR troops. These now saw the whole Jewish population as inherently pro-Bolshevik and anti-Ukrainian. UNR troops perpetrated pogroms throughout the country, the worst in spring 1919. In Kyiv itself, UNR soldiers attacked Jews when they took the city alongside the Germans in March 1918, during their retreat in February 1919 and on the one day they spent in Kyiv in August 1919 (although not in December 1918 on their entry after the Germans' expulsion).

Khiterer firmly lays responsibility at the feet of Symon Petliura, commander in chief of the UNR army and, from February 1919, the Ukrainian head of state. Petliura did nothing to stop the violence or punish pogromists in his army. Moreover, argues Khiterer, he made a number of anti-Semitic statements in public and private.

Khiterer's desire to counter the exculpatory narrative that dominates Ukrainian writing on Petliura and the pogroms is entirely praiseworthy. However she does not employ the necessary sources to make a convincing argument. Khiterer asserts that the lack of surviving primary documents from the time of the pogroms means one can gain a better understanding of the violence in Kyiv using memoirs. She quotes autobiographical novels by the Soviet writers Nikolai Ostrovskii and Konstantin Paustovskii, who were in Ukraine during the civil wars. But it is unclear what here is fact and what fiction or a product of the ideological constraints placed upon those writing in the Soviet Union.

Similarly Khiterer cites Volodymyr Vynnychenko to prove that Petliura made anti-Semitic remarks in private. Certainly Vynnychenko served in government with Petliura and had numerous opportunities to hear Petliura's personal views. However, after reluctantly resigning his position, Vynnychenko devoted himself to castigating Petliura in print. Moreover, as the head of the Ukrainian government during the first major wave of pogroms, Vynnychenko

had sufficient reason to find someone else to blame. He is no more a reliable witness than the Soviet authors.

Khiterer does refer to one text by Petliura—*Moskovska vosh*a (Muscovite Louse), written in exile in 1925, but not published until the 1960s. This she describes as a work of “antisemitic raving” (p. 51) that reached “the same conclusion regarding national minorities in Ukraine as Nazi [sic] did in Germany” (p. 44). She even writes that “it is difficult to say if Petliura wrote his books under the influence of” (p. 44) Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*. However it is unclear why she thinks it likely or even possible that Petliura could have read a book in German by a then obscure recently released prisoner that appeared in the same year as he wrote his own composition.

*Moskovska vosh*a is an interesting text, and Khiterer deserves credit for rescuing it from obscurity. A couple of passages recall the canard of Judeo-Bolshevism. One points to Ukrainian Jews as the third group in Ukraine after the Russian intelligentsia and workers that supported the Muscovite invaders;¹ another claims that Jews made up 28% of the Communist Party in Ukraine (after the 65% Muscovites and Russians), concluding that “not Ukrainians but Muscovites and Jews rule” the country.² Jews thus appear as Ukraine’s secondary enemy, helping Ukraine’s main Muscovite foe, something quite typical of Ukrainian anti-Semitic thinking.

Nevertheless, for a supposedly rapidly anti-Semitic screed, Jews are remarkably absent: in over 100 pages, they only appear in three passages. The most virulent invective is reserved for Ukraine’s external enemy, the Muscovites (i.e., Russians from outside Ukraine):³ after all, the “lice” in the title are Muscovites, not Jews. The book also contained criticism of Ukrainians who did not support Petliura.⁴ Shortly before his death, Petliura was probably moving toward a more anti-Semitic position, employing more explicitly than ever before the canard of Judeo-Bolshevism. But this seems to

¹ Symon Petliura, *Moskovska vosh*a. *Opovidannia diadka Semena pro te, iak Moskov’ki voshi idiat Ukrainu ta shcho z nymy treba robyty* (Paris: Biblioteka im. S. Petliury i natsionalistychno vydavntstvo Evropi, 1966), 24-26.

² *Ibid.*, 48.

³ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 34-35, 41.

be part of a more general bitterness in response to his failure and exile. Consequently, it does not necessarily reflect his thinking in 1919, as Khiterer suggests. Lastly Khiterer makes the text sound more anti-Semitic by translating the Ukrainian word *zhyd* as “Yid,” but it was not clear whether its use at that time indicated anti-Semitic intentions.

These source problems mean that Khiterer fails to make the case against Petliura. His latter-day admirers will dismiss her work. This is a pity, because there is a case to be made. Khiterer mentions that Petliura arrived in Zhytomyr during a pogrom. Because she does not use the published collections of archival documents, however, she misses the fact that while he was there he issued a proclamation claiming that the Ukrainian people were rising up against the “new pillager Muscovites and Jews”.⁵ In meetings with Jewish representatives, Petliura tied the question of Jewish safety to Jewish loyalty.⁶ Yet there is other archival evidence complicating this picture. Khiterer is wrong to claim that Petliura did not condemn pogroms until August 1919. For example, he wrote several telegrams before this to local commanders calling on them to punish pogromists.⁷ Thus Petliura was not a supporter of pogroms as such, but he shared some of the same prejudices as the pogromists. This explains his failure to punish the perpetrators. Countering exculpatory nationalist narratives is important, but it needs to be on the sound basis of archival sources.

Christopher Gilley

Durham University Library

⁵ L. B. Miliakova *et al.* (eds.), *Kniga pogromov. Pogromy na Ukraine, v Belorussii i evropeiskoi chasti Rossii v period Grazhdanskoi voiny. 1918–1922 gg.: Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), 85.

⁶ Volodymyr Serhiichuk (ed.), *Pohromy v Ukraini: 1914–1920. Shtuchnykh stereotypiv do hirkoi pravdy, prykhovuvanoi v radianskykh arkhivakh* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 1999), 316–317.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 198, 310–311.