

New Imaginaries: Youthful Reinvention of Ukraine's Cultural Paradigm. Ed. Marian J. Rubchak. New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. 330 pp. Bibliography. Index. \$125.00, hard bound.

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Marian J. Rubchak's extensive scholarship has been a significant contribution to discussions and challenges that face gender scholars working in the context of postsocialism. Her two recent edited volumes both combine scholarly conversations about women's issues and women's roles in politics and activism in Ukraine with more practice-oriented considerations of precisely *how* to implement the changes that many of the authors hope to see. The current volume, *New Imaginaries*, attempts to provide a "new paradigm" through which to think about feminist and gender studies in Ukraine and beyond. The editor's introduction begins with a vignette from 1990 about the Revolution on Granite, a students' and workers' protest against Soviet structures. She describes these protesters as creating a "new imaginary," which was neither Soviet nor Western, but which relied on both Soviet and Western ideas and ideals in order to gain meaning and mobility; as Rubchak puts it, the new imaginary "reconciled selected elements of Soviet modernity with an articulation of [protesters'] own quest for freedom and democracy" (2). The essays in the volume seek to add a gender component to this imaginary by similarly drawing from Soviet experiences and developments and combining them with feminist scholarship and activism drawn from European and North American contexts. Most of them integrate examples from the Soviet period and the 2000s, including recent data from the late 2010s.

Do the essays in the volume successfully complete this task? The volume is divided into four thematic sections with three or four essays each: Gender Politics in Post-Soviet Ukraine, Power of the Media, Changing Demographics, and Paradigm Shifts. A cursory search of bibliographies shows that most authors combine English-language sources with those from Ukrainian and Russian milieu; sources also come from a long span of time to reflect an extensive engagement with feminist thought. What is striking, however, is that no authors cite Soviet-era feminist thinkers, such as socialist feminists Clara Zetkin, Alexandra Kollontai, or even Friedrich Engels. Rather, their feminist theoretical framework comes almost exclusively from European and North American feminism. To this end, it seems more that the young gender scholars and feminist researchers included in this volume are attempting to engage with already-existing feminist discourses rather than creating a new paradigm of Ukrainian or even post-Soviet feminism. In this review, I focus in detail on three essays that achieve the goals set forth by Rubchak and reflect the strength of this title and the contributions of Ukrainian scholars to global academia.

Tetiana Bulakh's excellent discussion of glamour and consumption economy successfully engages with the "new imaginaries" paradigm by considering the development of glamour and fashion in the United States and analyzing Ukrainian appropriation of these styles as access to the consumer economy expanded from the 1990s and to the contemporary moment. She finds an interesting way to relate class politics and the development of new elites to certain forms of consumption, concluding that the spread of glamour-based lifestyles and imitations was itself a form of anti-Soviet protest. While this essay is not exclusively a consideration of women, Bulakh argues that glamour is gendered in the way that it impacted women's self-perceptions and their actions in specific ways that diverged significantly from Soviet-era images of women and style. In

the Soviet period, glamour was accessible only to the Soviet elite; when ordinary Ukrainians appropriated glamour in the 1990s, they combined kitsch aesthetics with Western looks and goods to create a specifically post- and anti-Soviet image.

Hanna Chernenko's essay also successfully spans the two time periods by analyzing discussions about family structures found in the women's magazine *Zhinka* in late socialism and the 2000s. Her findings show that women increasingly desired to live within a patriarchal, rather than an egalitarian, family structure in the post-independence period. Importantly, Chernenko's conclusions are that this type of structure negatively impacts *both* women and men, and these results are concurrent with a dismantling of the social welfare state that ensured families' well-being during socialism. As Chernenko describes the effects, "In opting for the dominance of the patriarchal ideology, the woman shifts responsibility away from the state and transfers her demands to the man" (284). When men's economic positions cannot fulfill these demands, men are further degraded, along with women. Chernenko concludes that the only people who benefit from these transferred demands are those who are already in high positions of authority within the government, because it encourages a patriarchal familial structure that leaves women out of the labor market, reducing competition and women's independence from men and decreasing the possibility of social and political activism against the regime.

Tamara Zlobina's first essay also considers Soviet and post-Soviet gender paradigms, tracing state monitoring and control of private lives and spaces over time; however, Zlobina finds a clear divide between these two eras. She concludes that new moralizing about sexuality in the postsocialist era—which places women as protectors of national tradition, therefore confined to home and family—has further limited women's roles for social and political participation. Here, the author could have more clearly traced some similarities, links, or holdovers from the Soviet periods and into contemporary Ukraine. While Soviet gender policies proclaimed gender equality, for instance, more evidence shows that women were involved in politics but usually at lower levels, prevented from gaining membership in the proverbial "boys' clubs." Now, as several authors in the volume document, politicians are more explicit about excluding women from politics. There are clear connections between these two attitudes (and the people who promote them); their tactics diverge, but the effects do not.

It seems that the contributors are more strongly engaging with a different transition than that of socialism to postsocialism. Instead, they are engaged with the transition from the post-independence period to the political era of Viktor Yanukovich, Ukraine's president until the EuroMaidan mobilizations of 2013-2014. This is partly a consequence of their subject matter. For instance, Zlobina's second essay that provides analysis of contemporary women's art is based on images and performances that are products *not* of socialism but of an explicitly postsocialist moment. Additionally, the essays that discuss migration from Ukraine to Europe are also grounded in the post-independence period: Viktoriya V. Volodko, discussing the reconfiguration of family practices caused by migration, cites 1991 as the year in which Ukrainian migration abroad increased, and Galyna Gorodetska begins her analysis of women's migration to Spain during the "first Ukrainian migration" which "dates to the beginning of the 1990s" (212).

Other essays in the volume cover a range of topics. Tamara Martsenyuk and Oksana Yarosh both examine women's roles in political positions, legislation targeting women, and the potential effects of the implementation of a gender quota in Ukraine's political system. These essays cover

similar material without being placed in conversation with one another. Within the subsection focused on media, Oksana Kis and Tetyana Bureychak investigate the relationship between gender and advertising through visual phenomena of eroticization and commodification of women and presentation of machismo for men in advertising. Finally, Mariya Tytarenko provides a sketch of women's contributions to literary journalism in Ukraine today. In the subsection on demographics, Volodko's and Gorodetska's essays are complemented by Halyna Labinska's research on changes—including national and linguistic composition, education levels, and women's health—in women's lives in the L'viv Oblast. Lyudmyla Males's essay considers young people's changing marriage practices and their impact on family structures. In the final subsection, "Paradigm Shifts," Marfa M. Skoryk's short essay describes a gender approach to psychology in Ukraine. The final essay by Tetyana Bureychak explores the notion of men in crisis in Ukraine, particularly focusing on media representation and interpretation.

While this volume does create a new paradigm for Ukrainian women contributing to a global conversation about feminism and gender studies, it is one that is fairly far removed from Ukraine's Soviet experience. This is not to say that these essays neglect to recognize the effects of decades of communist rule, but rather that the authors' own paradigms are more radically influenced by Western feminist thought than Soviet-era feminism. Many of them have engaged with European and North American scholars for significant portions of their careers. Ultimately, this bodes well for what this volume can contribute, because it is evidence of the global engagement and relevance that Ukrainian feminism offers. Together, these essays bring together a variety of disciplinary perspectives. They are of interest to all scholars of Ukraine and of gender in postsocialism, as they present significant trends for contemporary women; additionally, the volume provides a welcome lens onto the work of Ukrainian women scholars that should encourage readers reposition themselves in relation to academic contributions from Ukraine.