Twenty-five years after the publication of Orest Martynowych’s *Ukrainians in Canada: The Formative Years, 1891–1924* (Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1991), this long-awaited sequel volume is finally out. And even though the study took longer to produce than most would have expected, the wait was well worth it. With the arrival of the first of Martynowych’s two volumes covering the interwar history of Canada’s Ukrainians, immigration historians and general readers finally have what one may call an “encyclopaedia” of Ukrainian-Canadian social and political history from 1925 to 1939.

The book picks up where its 1991 predecessor left off: with the signing of the 1925 Railway Agreement between the Canadian government and the country’s largest railway companies, spawning the second wave of Ukrainian immigration. Unlike their pre-1914 forerunners (mostly peasants from Galicia and Bukovyna), these new immigrants were more educated, nationally conscious, and socially mobile. Many of their leaders were veterans of the recent battles for Ukraine’s independence, triggered by the fall of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires. The impact of these war veterans on the intellectual and political life of the community is one of the central themes running through the book. These ambitious men, imbued with the sense of duty to the Ukrainian nation, quickly made their way into the old – more socially conservative and less politically active – Ukrainian-Canadian elite, creating an array of new organizations and profoundly transforming existing community institutions.

Transnationalism is another thread that is woven through the book. Martynowych convincingly demonstrates that most Ukrainian-Canadian community activists never severed the ties that connected them to the homeland, remaining part of a worldwide Ukrainian diaspora and staying in close touch with Old World intellectual currents and Ukrainian émigrés in Europe and elsewhere. Indeed, the ideological divisions within Canada’s Ukrainian community were more an extension of Old World political battles than a result of any domestic developments.

Factionalism remained a constant presence in the interwar Ukrainian-Canadian community, just like it had before 1925. If anything, it increased even further. Between the two world wars, Canada’s Ukrainians exhibited virtually every shade of the political spectrum, from the Communist leftists to the far-right integral nationalists. Yet the author rightly
cautions the reader against the habitual tendency to see the history of the community through the rigid dichotomy of “progressivism vs. nationalism.” This simplified view, he argues, “fudges the essential nature” of the “progressives” and the “nationalists,” exaggerates the relative strength of the “progressive” camp and ignores the diversity that existed within its “nationalist” counterpart (xxi).

In Chapters 3 and 4, Martynowych takes us through a detailed and well-researched history of two main Ukrainian-Canadian religious denominations (Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox). Like other community groups, Ukrainian-Canadian churches had more than their fair share of internal conflict and fractiousness during the interwar period, yet they still remained institutions that commanded the most authority and largest membership within Canada’s Ukrainian community. In Chapter 5, the author turns to the exploration of the Ukrainian-Canadian left, as represented by the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA). Despite its unapologetically pro-Soviet attitudes, the ULFTA managed to become the largest Ukrainian secular mass organization in Canada and boasted the most extensive and “best organized network of Ukrainian-Canadian cultural/educational, benevolent, and homeland aid associations” (243). This chapter is grounded in less archival material than some of the other chapters, but this is largely compensated by the meticulous research of Ukrainian-Canadian periodicals.

The last four chapters of the book are dedicated to the various associations representing the non-Communist camp: from the traditionalist and conservative United Hetman Organization to the liberal-nationalist Ukrainian Self-Reliance League and the far right Ukrainian National Federation, which proclaimed the Ukrainian nation “above all else.” These organizations offered the community their own visions of its place in Canada and, more importantly, of Ukraine’s future as a nation as the attainment of independence for the homeland remained their ultimate goal and primary raison d’être.

The volume is rendered in a neutral tone and in an accessible style, which have become hallmarks of Martynowych’s writing. The author gives credit to Ukrainian-Canadians’ achievements, yet he does not glorify the community or its leaders. Nor does he shy away from uncomfortable topics, such as the failure of some Ukrainian Catholic clerics to observe celibacy, the pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic views of some Ukrainian-Canadian nationalist leaders, and the ULFTA’s Stalinist sycophancy. The author manages to find the right balance between the general/national and individual/local and between analysis and narration. The inclusion of curious facts and interesting vignettes keeps the
Martynowych’s study will no doubt become a standard reference source for anyone interested in the history of Canada’s Ukrainians. Together with its companion volume (Book 2), which will deal with Ukrainian-Canadian culture and participation in Canadian politics, it will certainly claim the title of the most comprehensive scholarly analysis of an ethnic community in this time period ever published in Canada.

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An important, though understudied, aspect of labour history is the choice made by workers not to unionize. Flowing from her previous book, Manufacturing Mennonites (University of Toronto Press, 2013), historian Janis Thiessen presents in Not Talking Union a “qualitative not quantitative” examination of the experiences of North American Mennonite workers in several contexts in Canada and the United States (10). Locating these Mennonites in the larger context of North American religious and labour history, Thiessen’s objective is to have these historical actors speak for themselves about their lives, faith, and relationship to unions or lack of one. The book certainly does this very well.

Thiessen opens her study with the basic question: “How does one write a labour history of people who have not been involved in the labour movement in significant numbers and, historically, have opposed union membership?” (3). She introduces her study with a detailed and thoughtful description of oral history methodology, explaining how the interviews were set up, which denominations were studied, and which population centres were selected. Thiessen examines the experiences of the General Conference Mennonite Churches, (Old) Mennonite