

Kuchabsky, Vasyl. *Western Ukraine in Conflict with Poland and Bolshevism, 1918–1923*. Translated from the German by Gus Fagan. The Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research Monograph Series, 4. CIUS, Edmonton and Toronto, 2009. xxix + 361 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Maps. Index. \$34.95 (paperback).

THE East Galician Vasyl Kuchabsky fought in the Austro-Hungarian army during the First World War, was captured and interned in Russia. When revolution broke out, he became an officer in the Sich Riflemen, a unit made up of Habsburg Ukrainian prisoners of war that supported the nascent Ukrainian state. He helped defend Kiev against the Bolsheviks and supported the rising against Hetman Skoropadskyi. In 1920, Kuchabsky returned to L'viv where he became involved in the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), a paramilitary group that sought to continue the military resistance against the Polish annexation of Eastern Galicia. For this, he spent ten months in a Polish prison. At the end of 1922, Kuchabsky moved to Germany where he started an academic career. He maintained his contacts with the UVO until he broke with them to join the exile Skoropadskyi camp. (I thank Frank Golczewski for information on Kuchabsky's political connections in Germany.) His account of the war in which he had recently fought was published in German in 1934. It has now been translated and reprinted by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.

In the light of these facts, it is hardly surprising that Kuchabsky's work betrays many of the concerns and commonplaces of the interwar Ukrainian emigration, which in these years experienced a rise in integral nationalism. This new trend ended the Ukrainian intelligentsia's past emphasis on achieving social alongside national goals using gradualist methods in favour of a violent struggle for Ukrainian unity, independence and statehood. Above all, Kuchabsky acknowledges an intellectual debt to Vyacheslav Lypynskyi, a prominent figure in the statist school of Ukrainian historiography, in his treatment of the national elite. Kuchabsky argues that a nation striving for independence must be led by a stratum uniting the young, radical elements who can put themselves at the head of the revolutionary movement with those members of the old order who can mould this impetus into a stable system with strong ties to the past. He asserts that the Ukrainian leaders' commitment to social-revolutionary goals undermined their national aims, for example by alienating the land-owning classes who could have provided the necessary leadership. In particular, Kuchabsky expresses admiration for military virtues and sees their presence in a nation and its leaders as essential to the achievement of national objectives.

Kuchabsky's interest in statesmanship leads him to devote considerable attention to the geopolitical context of the attempts to create a Ukrainian state. He analyses the positions of the various powers and concludes that the Ukrainian leaders were naive to put their trust in Wilson's abstract principle of the self-determination of nations; nations have no rights but what they can claim for themselves through their own efforts. This advocacy of the politics of realism over those of principle is further reflected in Kuchabsky's criticism of the West Ukrainian leaders for refusing to give up territory in return for

the establishment of an independent Ukrainian rump state, which could have formed the basis for a future united Ukraine. At the same time, Kuchabsky repeatedly seeks to dispel the interwar prejudice that the Ukrainian national idea was an invention of the Central Powers.

Kuchabsky's account, therefore, appears to be an attempt to explain not only why Ukrainians had recently failed to create their own state but also how they could achieve it in the future. It was written for the German-speaking public of the 1930s, who represented a potential ally in this cause. Consequently, its arguments are often both tendentious and highly speculative. Nevertheless, in reprinting it, the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies has for the first time made available to an English-speaking audience this useful document of the changes in political thought within the interwar Ukrainian emigration. Moreover, it is a contribution to the early twentieth-century debate between statist and populist historians — a discussion that continues to influence current Ukrainian interpretations of the events in the country between 1917 and 1921. Thus, the book may be of greater interest for those interested in the intellectual developments of the interwar period and the historiography of the Ukrainian revolution than for those seeking a narrative of that revolution itself.

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