

Kerstin Jobst. *Zwischen Nationalismus und Internationalismus: die polnische und ukrainische Sozialdemokratie in Galizien von 1890 bis 1914.* Hamburg: Doelling und Galitz Verlag, 1996. 304 pp. DM 48,-, paper, ISBN 978-3-930802-23-4.



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The revival of Ukrainian national politics during *perestroika* and the subsequent establishment of an independent Ukrainian state has led to a radical increase in general scholarly interest in Ukrainian society of the past and present. A cursory review of OCLC and RLIN suggests that, of the books on Ukrainian social and political topics written in major West European languages during the last fifty years, over half were published in the last ten years. More significantly, while much of that recent scholarship continues to be done by people with ethnic ties to Ukraine, authors without such ties are becoming more common.

Within the field of history this trend appears particularly noticeable among Germans. Not only have established historians like Andreas Kappeler contributed to the field, but a number of younger German scholars have taken interest in Ukrainian history, and several of these have already finished and published their dissertations. Much of this work has focused on Galicia, which is not surprising for a variety of reasons. Many relevant sources, particularly those related to Austrian rule of the province, are in German, and much

non-German language material can be found in Vienna. Moreover, now that they are more readily accessible to Western scholars, the archives in L'viv (Lemberg) are close enough for Germans to visit for a couple of weeks at a time between semesters.[1] Such practical matters have made Galicia, with its mix of Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, and other smaller groups, a particularly accessible place for German scholars to explore the problem of a multi-cultural society which has become so intriguing to scholars around the world.

Seen in this light, Kerstin Jobst's book on the interaction of the Polish and Ukrainian social democratic parties in Galicia prior to World War I stands as a work marking the new interest in Ukrainian history and the new perspectives only made possible during the last decade. At the time when she apparently conceived this topic, sometime before 1991, the focus on the socialist parties in the province was ideologically rather safe, even if the emphasis on national tensions was moderately risky even during *perestroika*. Certainly her heavy reliance on material gathered in the archives in Vienna suggests that, at the time she did

her research, she could not count on access to the archives in L'viv, although she did ultimately get to use them.[2]

This book offers new insight into the interactions between the Polish and Ukrainian social democratic parties after 1890, a topic that has not previously been examined in any thorough manner. Unfortunately, informative as Jobst's work is, it probably would have been much more so had she begun her work just one or two years later, when topics regarding Ukrainian nationalism in Galicia suddenly met with complete state approval. Still, Jobst's work has allowed her to demonstrate that the Polish and Ukrainian left in Galicia was just as inclined to discard international brotherhood based on class interests in favor of national brotherhood in the years prior to World War I as its counterparts in Western Europe ultimately proved to be.

While the increasing importance of nationality within the socialist movement is well known, until this study the factors that resulted in the growth of such influence in both Western and Eastern Europe have tended to be seen as distinct. In Western Europe it has been convincingly explained by socialist parties' increasing integration into the political systems of their respective states. In contrast, the proliferation of nationally-specific social democratic parties in Eastern Europe has been primarily understood as a response to the diversity of the region's population. Jobst's analysis of the divergence of the Polish and Ukrainian social democratic movements in Galicia suggests, however, that, just like the Western parties, these parties were responding to a broader political climate.

Jobst focuses almost exclusively on politics within the socialist movements, dealing with the politics of the Second International and the Austrian social democratic movement, as well as relations between the Polish and Ukrainian socialist parties in Galicia. The result is a welcome change from the more usual approach to the deteriora-

tion of Polish-Ukrainian relations in Galicia, which treats it as an essentially bilateral problem, and that is by far the most convincing aspect of Jobst's argument. Placed in this broader context, the tensions that developed among Polish and Ukrainian social democrats take on a new meaning. Thus, while the litany of grievances against the Polish social democratic leadership that their Ukrainian brethren accumulated remains a central factor in their divergence, it becomes clear that the Second International's formal Marxist orthodoxy fostered an environment where those grievances could fester rather than be resolved.

According to Jobst, the two Marxist principles that most hindered the socialist movement in Galicia were its refusal to adopt a substantive agrarian program and the willingness to see the re-establishment of a Polish state while ignoring the interests of "non-historical" nations. Given that Galicia remained a primarily agrarian society, the first can be seen a problem for both Polish and Ukrainian parties, but in reality it hurt the Ukrainians more than it did the Poles.

Since the vast majority of Ukrainians were peasants, it was difficult to adopt the principles of the Second International and remain relevant. This had even led the socialist-leaning Ukrainian Radical Party, the first true political party in Galicia (founded in 1890), to choose not to join the Second International (p. 62). Moreover, once a group of social democratically-minded members of the Radicals broke with the Radicals and founded the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (USDP) in 1899 their ability to expand their support-base among the peasantry was ostensibly limited to farm workers. While that limitation also affected the Galician Social Democratic Party, also founded in 1890, they were able to draw on the artisans and increasing number of factory workers living in the cities and towns, where Poles and Jews predominated in Eastern as well as Western Galicia. Nonetheless, as Jobst points out, even after the introduction of universal male suffrage in 1907, the

Social Democrats were never able to win more than seven seats in the Austrian *Reichsrat*—five for the PPSD and two for the USPD (pp. 174-75).

Within the political framework of the Second International, the Poles also had a relative, if rather subtle, advantage due to the acceptance that, come the revolution, a Polish state would be revived. While, like other socialist parties representing nations without states, the Polish socialist parties including the GSPD/PPSD were not allowed to appear as a distinct delegation at party congresses, the legitimacy accorded the re-establishment of a Polish state by the Second International gave the Polish parties a subtle advantage. For example, the German-dominated Austrian Social Democratic Party cultivated its Polish affiliate's common interest in curbing "separatism" within the Cisleithanian socialist movement to the disadvantage of both the Czech and Ukrainian socialist parties. At the same time, the legitimacy of pushing for a revived Polish state tempted most Polish Socialists into accepting the revisionist position of cooperating with bourgeois parties, even if, like the western socialist parties that were doing similar things for somewhat different reasons, they formally denounced such revisionism (p. 138).

This favorable treatment of Polish aspirations unavoidably raised the question of how Ukrainian socialists would be treated in the process of reviving the Polish state. Consequently, while the creation of a separate Ukrainian state never became a high priority, Ukrainian socialists became quite concerned about how they might be treated by their Polish brethren under such circumstances. Unfortunately, according to Jobst, the GSDP/PPSD never grasped the importance of this issue. She describes a series of slights to the Ukrainian party that, combined with other Galician political events, drove even the most pro-Polish Ukrainian socialists closer to Ukrainian nationalist parties. Thus, on the eve of the Great War the Polish and Ukrainian Socialist parties in Galicia were more

closely aligned with their bourgeois co-nationals than with their socialist brethren, just as was true of most West European socialists, albeit for slightly different reasons.

Valuable as this insight is, its meaning and its relationship to the emergence of modern Polish and Ukrainian national identities is not well argued. Throughout the book, I continually felt that Jobst accepted Ukrainian socialists' claims to Ukrainian national distinctiveness without really analyzing its basis within a socialist context or its rhetorical significance. This becomes clear in the introduction, where she uncritically accepts the appellation of Ukrainians as a *nation* (my emphasis) of priests and peasants, as evidence that the distinctiveness of their political identity was firmly established well before 1890.

To be fair, given Jobst's focus on developments after 1890, she was not well-positioned to test that view. Yet such questions are no less relevant for the period she did study. If, as is evident from her narrative, Ukrainian Socialists perceived their interests as different enough from those of the GSPD/PPSD, then we need to know why they felt that way. This goes beyond the fact that the USPD broke away from the Ukrainian Radical Party. Proper consideration of this problem requires analyzing how various concerned people understood Polish and Ukrainian identities. Unfortunately, even when such evidence was readily available, it is not well used.

When Jobst mentions that in 1899 the USPD called for the creation of a separate Ukrainian state, she does not probe why it felt such a move was necessary. She notes that this was phrased in terms of international proletarian solidarity, and appears to assume that for that reason alone it cannot be treated as a "serious call for a Ukrainian nation state." By the same token, rather than simply criticizing the GSPD/PPSD's insensitivities towards their Polish comrades it would have been helpful to explore how Polish socialists understood Ukrainian national identity.

Related to these problems is the absence of a thorough discussion of the Polish and Ukrainian national political contexts to parallel the discussion of the politics of the Second International and the socialist movement in Cisleithenia. Important as the climate created within socialist circles may have been, the increasing competition for votes may have also influenced Polish and Ukrainian socialist parties to move more closely to the bourgeois parties of their respective nations. Thus, in the discussion of the machinations that led the GSPD/PPSD not to let Mykola Hankevych, a member of both the PPSD and USPD, stand for election in a Lemberg constituency in the first parliamentary election based on universal-male suffrage in 1907 (pp. 165-68), we are told nothing about the broader context. For example, while using a quotation to the effect that the Polish Socialist leadership was concerned about the timing of running a Ukrainian in Lemberg, even one as pro-Polish as Hankevych, Jobst does explore the extent to which they were being influenced by forces beyond their own party doctrine. She does not mention that the Polish National Democrats were becoming a prominent force in Lemberg politics, nor that the predominantly Polish population in Lemberg had been shocked by a recent riot of Ukrainian students calling for the establishment of a Ukrainian university in the city.

While the lack of a satisfying account of this or that is a common enough flaw in a monograph, the failure to relate the specific events treated here to the more general discussion of national identity and national politics is frustrating. It is even more so because, judging from her footnotes and bibliography, Jobst is familiar with the ground-breaking theoretical work by Benedict Anderson, the late Ernest Gellner, and Miroslav Hroch.[3] That she fails to use their insights more effectively brings me back to the transitional nature of this work. Her research demonstrating that the integration into national political frameworks was no less a problem for socialists in Eastern Europe than it was in Western Europe is sig-

nificant. Unfortunately, Jobst's failure to explore the way Polish and Ukrainian Socialists understood national identity as well as the lack of a broader discussion of contemporary Polish and Ukrainian national politics makes her contribution far less satisfying than it might have been.

Notes:

[1]. Jobst rightly elaborates on her choice of Lemberg over other names early in her narrative, and I shall follow her example in this review, save where I am referring to the last ten years.

[2]. According to a note in the bibliography, Jobst made her research trip to L'viv in the summer of 1992. (p. 261, note)

[3]. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Editions/NLB, 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1983); Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: a Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

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