

**Rhonda L. Hinthner, *Perogies and Politics: Canada's Ukrainian Left, 1891–1991* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018). 312 pp. Cloth \$65.00.**

The twentieth-century history of the Ukrainian left in Canada, as Rhonda Hinthner's *Perogies and Politics* makes abundantly clear, was shaped by developments both internal and external to the movement itself. While never isolated from transnational political currents, especially those emanating from the Soviet Union, the trajectory of Ukrainian leftism was tied in at least equal measure to endogenous social dynamics among the women, men, and children for whom the movement was, at various times, a source of solidarity and success, as well as disappointment and failure. Impressively combining aspects of political, cultural, generational, class, and gender history in order to show how these dynamics changed over time, Hinthner's study should be of great interest to a diverse audience.

Within the period from 1891–1991, Hinthner focuses mainly on the years from the end of the First World War through the 1960s. The first three chapters of the book deal in turn with Ukrainian men, women, and children as “ethnic hall socialism” carved out a distinct place on the left during the interwar period (21). Structured institutionally by the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association and the Communist Party of Canada (CPC), these years are well-trodden historical ground, but Hinthner is particularly effective in addressing the experiences of rank-and-file Ukrainian leftists who have typically received less scholarly attention than movement leaders. Many of these rank-and-file leftists had complicated relationships with the institutions around them, especially the CPC, and by focusing on their experiences Hinthner strikes a notable dent in a certain top-heavy narrative that largely treats the Ukrainian left as uncomplicatedly pro-communist. Chapter four deals with the tumultuous history of the Second World War and its ramifications—repression, incarceration, and adaptation—for these leftists. Here, Hinthner's treatment of the myriad consequences of the internment crisis, where hundreds of men with ties of some kind to the communist movement were arrested and imprisoned, is especially noteworthy. The final two chapters discuss adults and young people, respectively, as the cultural, ideological, and generational character of the movement changed dramatically during the decades after 1945. The narrative of these chapters is declensionist in terms of the movement's influence and coherence, as Hinthner draws out how growing feminist and peace movements, along with an emergent New Left, contributed to an increasingly wide dispersion pattern for activist energy.

Throughout these chapters, the operant analytical logic is intersectional. Hinthner is concerned with understanding the interactions of gender, class, age, and ethnicity as a means of highlighting the spatial and temporal contingencies that influenced the standing of Ukrainian leftists vis-à-vis one another. In showing this,

Hinther refuses to segregate the component aspects of individual subjectivities, instead treating these as mutually constitutive, interrelated, and always informative of social relations. This intersectional approach is then coupled with an adaptation of Gramscian hegemony analysis, which is especially important for Hinther's examination of gender dynamics. Identifying three distinct modes of masculinity available to leftist Ukrainian men—hegemonic, complicit, and subordinate—along with two modes of femininity available to women—hegemonic and oppositional—she traces a “gendered discourse and masculinist ideology that privileged and valued the older men's work and activist priorities while marginalizing women's contributions and perspectives” (134). This patriarchal order of things, while always subject to challenge, opposition, and change, especially in times of chaos like that which emerged during the Second World War, remained mostly intact throughout the century that the book covers.

Hinther's particular use of the hegemony concept is the foremost strength of her analysis, especially in terms of what the book contributes most generally to historical scholarship about left politics. For good reason, left history is often written, whether these terms are used or not, in such a way as to emphasize developments that proceed from a struggle between a hegemonic apparatus and a counter-hegemonic movement that levels some form of challenge to that apparatus. In the process of highlighting this oppositional challenge, it is possible for dynamics internal to left movements to be ignored or underplayed. What Hinther shows so effectively about the Ukrainian left in Canada is that, while it was attempting to build a viable counter-hegemonic alternative to liberal capitalist common-sense, the movement was hampered along the way by assumptions and ideals that were more limiting than liberating. As Hinther writes in the book's conclusion, “even in the face of seeming unity, internal tensions and conflicting membership priorities (not to mention inequality) challenged—and ultimately contributed to the decline of—the movement” (206). Hegemonic masculinity, in this way, was partially responsible for the shortcomings of Ukrainian left formations in the twentieth century. This insight stands out among others in the book.

The most distinct limit of Hinther's analysis could perhaps be seen as following, understandably, from its main strength. In her discussions of hegemonic social norms within the Ukrainian left, the nature of the movement's counter-hegemonic perspective can feel underdeveloped. Hinther is clear about the presence of Marxism-Leninism, the official ideological perspective of the CPC, but does not define or explain this perspective beyond broad strokes. And in the post-war years, as the influence of the CPC waned considerably, the ideological alternatives that emerged are noted but not extensively described. The relationship between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic thinking within the movement is thus not made precisely apparent.

*Perogies and Politics* represents a substantial contribution to the historical literature on Canadian left movements, but also to historiographies of gender, youth,

class, and immigration. Indeed, Hinthner shows just how deeply these histories are intertwined, and it is to be hoped that her book finds a wide readership.

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