



**Borotbism: A Chapter in the History of the
Ukrainian Revolution. With a new introduction by
Chris Ford (Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and
Society 61) (Volume 61)**

Ivan Maistrenko

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Ivan Maistrenko's Borotbism is more than just a historical document. The debates during and after the 'Ukrainian revolution' of 1917 still have a contemporary relevance - and Ukrainian debate was especially rich because if extended beyond the ranks of the Bolsheviks to the 'national communist' parties, the Borotbisty and Ukapisty. Ukrainian 'national communism' proved ephemeral when reborn in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but arguably because it failed to reconnect with earlier polemics, being, as Maistrenko predicted in the 1950s, little more than a cover story for the nomenklatura to pursue its self-enrichment. The debate about the relative importance of national and/or social liberation is still of great importance, however, especially as Ukrainians arguably now have the former without the latter. In Putin's Russia, market capitalism has to struggle with the state, and the left has often been prisoner to imperial nostalgia. The popular hatred of 'oligarchs' is as visceral in Ukraine as it is in Russia, but these sentiments are currently better tapped by opposition politicians like Yuliia Tymoshenko and Yuri Lutsenko. Both are often dismissed as 'populists', but building a non-communist Ukrainian left remains as important a task today as it was in 1917 or 1954. - Andrew Wilson, Senior Lecturer in Ukrainian Studies at the School of Slavonic & East European Studies, University College London Much has been written on the 1917-20 revolution in Ukrainian, on the national movement, the Makhnovists and the struggle of the Bolsheviks. Yet there were others with a mass following whose role has faded from history. One such party was the Borotbisty, an independent party of Ukrainian revolutionary socialists seeking to achieve national liberation and social emancipation. Though widely known in revolutionary Europe in their day, the Borotbisty were decimated during the Stalinist holocaust in Ukraine. Out of print for over half a century this lost text by Ivan Maistrenko, the last survivor of this party provides a unique account. Part memoir and part history this is a thought provoking study which challenges previous approaches to the revolution and shows how events in Ukraine decided the fate not only of the Russian Revolution but the upheavals in Europe at the time.

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