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REVIEWS

HISTORY OF UKRAINE-RUS´. By Mykhailo Hrushevsky. Vol. 9, bk. 2, pt. 1, THE COSSACK AGE, 1654–1657. Ed. Serhii Plokhy, consulting editor, and Frank E. Sysyn, editor in chief, with the assistance of Myroslav Yurkevich. Trans. Marta Daria Olynyk. Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2008. lxvi, 566 pp., photograph, map, tables, glossary, appendixes, supplements, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN (cloth) 978-1-894865-10-4.

HISTORY OF UKRAINE-RUS´. By Mykhailo Hrushevsky. Vol. 9, bk. 2, pt. 2, THE COSSACK AGE, 1654–1657. Ed. Yaroslav Fedoruk, consulting editor, and Frank E. Sysyn, editor in chief, with the assistance of Myroslav Yurkevich. Trans. Marta Daria Olynyk. Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2010. xc, 480 pp., photograph, maps, tables, glossary, appendixes, supplements, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN (cloth) 978-1-894865-17-3.

Volume 9, book 2 of Mykhailo Hrushevs´kyi's monumental history of Ukraine-Rus´ begins with the negotiations between the Ukrainian Cossacks and Muscovy in the autumn of 1653 that ultimately produced the 1654 Pereiaslav Agreement, and ends with the death of Bohdan Khmel´nyts´kyi on 27 July/6 August 1657. This was a critical period for the development of the Cossack revolution that had exploded in Ukraine in the summer of 1648, and Hrushevs´kyi devoted a considerable amount of attention to it. Volume 9 was originally published in two books, but the second book is so long that the editors of the English translation prudently decided to issue it in two parts.

It covers a period in which the Ukrainian Revolution changed fundamentally in nature. The great victories over the Polish Crown army of 1648 had opened the way to the mass uprisings that swept away the old order in the years that followed. History suggests, however, that consolidating a revolution is far harder than launching one, and by 1653 the Cossack Hetmanate under Khmel´nyts´kyi's charismatic and

astute leadership had not succeeded in establishing any firm political framework for the future of the Ukrainian lands. The alliance with the Crimean Tatar Horde, which had been of crucial importance in 1648, had foundered, as Khan Islam III Giray showed that he had no interest in establishing a strong, independent Cossack polity on his northern border. His failure to support the Cossacks at vital moments had led to the setbacks at Zboriv (1649), Berestechko (1651), and Zhvanets (1653). The death of Khmel´nyts´kyi's son Tymish in September 1653, which closes book 1 of volume 9, ended hopes for a Cossack-Moldavian alliance and raised questions about the succession to Khmel´nyts´kyi, whose health was beginning to fail.[1]

The decisions taken by Khmel´nyts´kyi and the Cossack leadership in the period covered by the volumes under review had momentous consequences, as did the emerging divisions within the Cossack officer class (*starshyna*) and between the *starshyna* and rank-and-file Cossacks and peasants. The acceptance of the tsar's protection in the Pereiaslav Agreement (April 1654) not only opened the way to the extension of Muscovite power over Ukraine, but also, by encouraging the Muscovites to adopt a more aggressive stance toward the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, led to the devastating war that followed the Muscovite invasion of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the summer of 1654. The unexpected collapse of Lithuanian resistance by August 1655, when Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich entered Vilnius in triumph, had already brought Sweden into what came to be known as the Second Northern War (1655–60) and was to precipitate the apparent collapse of Jan Kazimierz's royal government. The Crown army surrendered to the Swedes, the king took refuge in Silesia, and Janusz Radziwiłł signed the Treaty of Kėdainiai in October 1655, by which he sought to establish a Lithuanian-Swedish union. These events created opportunities for the Hetmanate, but they fundamentally altered the context in which it operated by further complicating an already complex international situation.

Hrushevs´kyi was painfully aware of the importance of these years. He closed volume 9, book 2 with a remarkable chapter that is the key

1. See review by Robert Frost, "Unmaking the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: Mykhailo Hrushevs´kyi and the Making of the Cossacks," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 27 (2004–2005): 315–33.

to understanding his whole approach to the Cossack volumes of his great *History*. In it, as Frank Sysyn notes in an excellent introductory piece devoted entirely to this chapter, Hrushevs´kyi abandons the neutral tone of his *History* chapters written in the Soviet Union, in which he had cast aside the close analytical approach of the volumes completed before his return to Kyiv in early 1924 in favor of extended descriptive passages linking substantial quotations from the sources. The text of the Soviet chapters is, nevertheless, far from "deficient in authorial interpretation" as Plokhy has suggested.[2] The descriptive passages are written in such a way, and the documents so artfully chosen, that the reader usually gains a reasonably good idea of what Hrushevs´kyi thinks. In this final chapter, however, he leaves the reader in no doubt whatsoever.

As Sysyn observes, the chapter constitutes a robust justification of Hrushevs´kyi's populist interpretation of Ukrainian history and reveals much about his attitude toward issues of nationality and statehood. It contains his definitive interpretation of the role and significance of Khmel´nyts´kyi, reached in the course of many years of research. In it Hrushevs´kyi mounts a frontal attack on the conservative, statist interpretation advanced by V'iacheslav Lypyns´kyi (Wacław Lipiński) and other scholars. Hrushevs´kyi had enjoyed good relations with Lypyns´kyi, with whom he had collaborated on various academic projects before 1914, but he increasingly expressed doubts concerning Lypyns´kyi's interpretation of Khmel´nyts´kyi and the Khmel´nyts´kyi era. As a convinced positivist, Hrushevs´kyi was openly critical of the Great Man school of historical scholarship, in which, to quote Thomas Carlyle, "the history of the world is but a biography of great men." In this chapter he therefore attacks not just Lypyns´kyi, but the whole tradition of Ukrainian popular scholarship that saw Khmel´nyts´kyi as the great liberator of the Ukrainian people.

Despite frequently claiming that he admired Khmel´nyts´kyi and did not wish to diminish his reputation, Hrushevs´kyi comprehensively rejected Lypyns´kyi's view that Khmel´nyts´kyi was a great state builder whose legacy was betrayed by less-talented successors. Chal-

2. Serhii Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History* (Toronto, 2005), 254–55.

lenging this entrenched view among Ukrainian historians, he argued that the traumatic period of strife known as the Ruin (*Ruïna*) began while Khmel´nyts´kyi was still alive, and was not a consequence of his death. He concentrated his critique on the key question of the intentions and aims of the Cossack officer elite, including Khmel´nyts´kyi. "To what extent," he asks, "did they govern their activities according to their class interests, and to what degree did they consciously establish a Ukrainian aristocratic stratum?" (pt. 2, p. 412).

His answer is clear. He roundly condemns the *starshyna* in general and Khmel´nyts´kyi in particular for having no clear conception of what they were fighting for, particularly in the crucial early years of the rebellion. He argues that Khmel´nyts´kyi relied more on his advisors, and in particular on Ivan Vyhovs´kyi, than traditional accounts of "the man of genius" allow, and that his policies closely reflected interests and an outlook that had fundamentally been formed by the noble culture of the Commonwealth. Khmel´nyts´kyi was, in Hrushevs´kyi's view, a great man, but he was not "a titan among pygmies; the embodiment of wise statecraft and state-building to whose level his successors could never rise" (pt. 2, p. 425). There was "no trace of a consistent realization of Ukrainian statehood" (pt. 2, p. 427) in the policies pursued by Khmel´nyts´kyi and his advisors, but rather "the lack of a clear political plan, an idea of sovereignty" (pt. 2, p. 429). This failure of political imagination occurred, according to Hrushevs´kyi, because Khmel´nyts´kyi, despite being brought up in the political culture of the Commonwealth, "had within him too much of Asia, of the great Asiatic conquerors and nomads, founders of the Horde states. With the important difference that it was not foreign, conquered tribes that served him as material and cannon fodder, but his own people" (pt. 1, p. 425).

The consequence of Khmel´nyts´kyi's failings, therefore, was the suffering of the common people of Ukraine. As ever, Hrushevs´kyi's main concern is with those ordinary Ukrainians, the mass of the people who alone (for him) could form the basis of a stable Ukrainian state. For if, as Sysyn rightly argues, Hrushevs´kyi was a populist who mounted a powerful attack on Lypyns´kyi and other historians of the statist school, then statehood mattered a great deal to him. This is clear from the account he crafts in volume 9, book 2. The first chapter concentrates on the battle of Zhvanets and the negotiations

for, and conclusion of, what Hrushevs´kyi is very careful to term the Pereiaslav Agreement (*Pereiaslavs´ka umova*). The relationship this agreement established between Muscovy and the Hetmanate was not, therefore, a union between two equal sovereign states, as Lypyns´kyi and others had argued, but a relationship more akin to vassalage—a suggestion that underlies Hrushevs´kyi's view that Khmel´nyts´kyi's politics drew more on the Asiatic than the Western European tradition. At Pereiaslav, ignoring the wider interests of the Ukrainian people, Khmel´nyts´kyi and the *starshyna* negotiated a deal in their own narrow interests, which took no account of such vital matters as the integrity of Ukrainian territory or the obligations of the tsar to the Ukrainian people.

There is much still to be said for Hrushevs´kyi's interpretation. Pereiaslav was indeed no formal treaty of union, agreed and sworn to by both sides. While the Cossacks petitioned for recognition of their rights and privileges, Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich never swore an oath to uphold them, though the Cossacks swore oaths of obedience to him. The consequences of accepting the tsar's protection—"the tsar's high hand," as it was termed—are traced throughout the rest of volume 9. While the military alliance with Muscovy helped produce the Commonwealth's dramatic military collapse in 1655, strains in the relationship rapidly became apparent. As Hrushevs´kyi observes, even if the Muscovites were willing to respect a certain amount of Cossack autonomy, they regarded the Pereiaslav Agreement as a means to uphold the age-old claim of the tsars to rule "All Rus´." What this entailed rapidly became clear. In many respects the Muscovite view of the relationship was similar to that of the Commonwealth's government as outlined in the treaties of Zboriv (1649) and Bila Tserkva (1651); indeed, it was actually modeled on the former. The Muscovites were prepared to allow a larger Cossack register than the Commonwealth—sixty thousand men, but no more, and the officers and men were to be paid by taxes raised in the Ukrainian lands. The rest of the Ukrainian people were to be governed in the standard Muscovite manner: there was to be a Muscovite garrison in Kyiv, while Muscovite *voevoda*s would take control of towns and cities. Cossack autonomy was strictly limited. Cossacks were not to undertake any separate foreign policy, and were not to be consulted over Muscovite foreign relations, as became patently obvious in 1656, when the tsar's

diplomats negotiated the Vilnius Truce (3 November 1656) with the Commonwealth. In the Vilnius Truce the Poles promised to summon a diet (*sejm*) to elect Aleksei Mikhailovich as successor to King Jan Kazimierz; the Cossacks were not consulted.

There were those at the time who recognized the dangers of the Pereiaslav Agreement. Atanasii, archpriest of Chornobyl, wrote to the local deputy *starosta* in February 1654 that "Khmelnytsky has delivered us all into servitude to the Muscovite tsar all the way to Volodymyr, Turiv, and even farther" (pt. 1, p. 172). Yet Moscow's ability to project its power was by no means as developed as it subsequently became, while Aleksei's decision to direct his major assault against the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1654 and 1655 meant that he was unable to force compliance with his demands concerning the future government of the Ukrainian territories. A Cossack army under the expert command of Ivan Zolotarenko (d. 15 November 1655) played a key role in the Lithuanian campaign, while—much to the annoyance of the Muscovites—encouraging the development of Cossackdom in the lands of the post-1569 Grand Duchy. The truce with the Commonwealth, however, brought increased Muscovite pressure for the acceptance of closer control by Moscow, just as Khmel´nyts´kyi's failing health focused minds on the problem of succession. It was already becoming clear that Cossack assumptions concerning the right freely to elect their hetman might shatter against the adamantine Muscovite conviction that the tsar, ultimately, should decide.

Hrushevs´kyi expertly considers the resultant divisions within the ranks of Cossackdom. These divisions ran right through the *starshyna*, where various factions, kept in sometimes truculent unity while Khmel´nyts´kyi lived, burst into quarrelsome life after he died. Hrushevs´kyi is right, however, to suggest that the Ruin had already begun. The Zaporozhian Host was refusing to accept direction from the general Host over a number of issues, and the rivalries that were to pit Cossack against Cossack in a bitter series of civil wars during the Ruin were already apparent. Some, resenting the increasing harshness of the "tsar's high hand" looked once more to the Commonwealth, whose ideological attachment to the idea of self-government, in which they had grown up, seemed to offer more than tsarist autocracy; others remained loyal to Muscovy. The shortage of sources means that little can be gleaned from the historical record concerning the attitudes of

the ordinary Ukrainian people, but Hrushevs´kyi uses the considerable evidence of peasant flight across the Muscovite border to condemn those among the *starshyna* who pursued their narrow class interests, seeking merely to replace the rule of the "Polish" lords, who had been driven from their estates after 1648, with their own version of peasant bondage. Much of this exodus was prompted simply by the constant ravages of war, but that war included the Tatar raids on Ukrainian territory that Khmel´nyts´kyi, in desperate attempts to keep the Tatar alliance alive, was willing to condone, much to Hrushevs´kyi's consternation. The charge remains a valid one, and Hrushevs´kyi's recognition of the great hetman's shortcomings in this and other areas demonstrates that he was not prepared to accept the sentimental idealization of Khmel´nyts´kyi that characterized, and still characterizes, most popular accounts of the great events of the seventeenth century. In spite of the concern for ordinary Ukrainian people that marked Hrushevs´kyi's populist approach to history, he was not prepared to pander to easy populist notions in his scholarship.

In volume 10 of his *History*, Hrushevs´kyi would go on to chart the succession struggle after Khmel´nyts´kyi's death on 6 August 1657 and the negotiation of the abortive 1658 Union of Hadiach with the Commonwealth. Volume 10, however, has an unfinished feel about it; published under conditions of great difficulty by his daughter Kateryna after Hrushevs´kyi's death, it breaks off abruptly with the texts of the Treaty of Hadiach. In many respects, therefore, the polemical last chapter of volume 9, book 2 is as close to a summation of Hrushevs´kyi's final views on the Cossack period as exists. Overall, book 2 reveals Hrushevs´kyi's great strengths as a historian, as well as some of his weaknesses. The weaknesses center around his constant concern with the issue of sovereignty and statehood. The whole purpose of the *History* was to demonstrate that the Ukrainians constituted a historic nation distinct from Russians, Poles, and Belarusians that had enjoyed statehood in the past and was fully deserving of it in the future. Hrushevs´kyi's harsh verdict on Khmel´nyts´kyi in the last chapter reflects many of the observations he makes in the text and is ultimately dependent on his view that Khmel´nyts´kyi and his advisors squandered the single greatest opportunity to establish an independent Ukrainian state before 1917. Their lack of a developed notion of sovereignty and statehood meant that they failed to champion the interests

of the whole Ukrainian nation, and failed even to pursue with any consistency the aim of establishing Ukraine's borders. Hrushevs´kyi is constantly standing on the sideline criticizing Khmel´nyts´kyi for not showing sufficient concern for securing Western Ukraine for the Hetmanate.

It is in this context that Hrushevs´kyi's positivist training emerges most clearly. His belief in the historical forces that move the actions of mankind and his rejection of Great Man history render him uninterested in the question of human motivation. He tends to attribute decisions taken to a set of abstractions: self-interest, class interest, national interest. Knowing what subsequently happened—and painfully aware of the consequences of those decisions—Hrushevs´kyi does not seek to explain them in terms of the political culture of the time. Rather, he judges them largely on their failure to embody a modern concept of national sovereignty and a modern idea of statehood. He does not devote enough consideration to the political and military forces available to Khmel´nyts´kyi and his advisors at given points, or of the forces ranged against them. His assumptions concerning the weaknesses of the Commonwealth's government and his visceral contempt for its nobility lead him to underestimate its resilience, which was a significant feature of the period after 1656.

It is hardly surprising that neither Khmel´nyts´kyi nor his Cossack officers developed a strategy based on a clear concept of sovereignty and national independence. They had grown up in a republican Commonwealth whose political thought was based on Renaissance concepts of an estates-based system, in which liberties and privileges were granted to self-governing estates. The Commonwealth had failed to reconcile the demands of the Cossacks for autonomy and self-government with the competing demands of a politically dominant noble estate—many of whose members were of Ruthenian origin—whose liberties and rights of self-government inevitably cut across those of the Cossacks. Many of the Cossacks, in turn—like Khmel´nyts´kyi himself—were themselves of noble background, but felt excluded and discriminated against on account of their Orthodox faith. Politicians and political theorists in the Commonwealth rejected the idea, popularized by Jean Bodin from the 1570s, that sovereignty was indivisible, associating it with the claims of absolute monarchy that they fundamentally rejected. The concept of modern popular, national

sovereignty that animated Hrushevs´kyi's historical and political projects lay more than a century in the future. Thus Khmel´nyts´kyi's lack of a developed concept of sovereignty did not derive from the Asiatic nature of his political ideas; even in his brief time at a Polish Jesuit college he would not have learned anything approaching a modern notion of political sovereignty.

Hrushevs´kyi, however, was never a student of political ideas. He was a consummate analyst of politics, and his intuitive understanding of political possibilities shines through this mature work. We will never know quite how it would have looked had Hrushevs´kyi been free of the hideous political constraints under which he wrote it. Despite those constraints, these volumes will remain the indispensable starting point for any investigation of these crucial years, due to the fine-grained, detailed account of the complex politics they describe. The editorial team has maintained the extremely high standards set for the volumes published so far. The generous funding provided by the Peter Jacyk Foundation has provided the space and time necessary for a level of attention to detail that is extremely rare in the cash-strapped world of modern scholarly publishing. The English translation by Marta Olynyk is excellent and reads very well. While one could quibble with some editorial decisions concerning individual choices of words, the decisions are justified, and the original terms are listed in an extensive glossary. As in the other volumes, there are excellent introductions that set the books firmly in context. In part 1, Serhii Plokhy gives an exemplary analysis of the way in which Hrushevs´kyi approaches the Pereiaslav Agreement, teasing out the tangled historiography of the matter and expertly highlighting Hrushevs´kyi's achievement. In part 2, alongside Frank Sysyn's essay on the last chapter, Yaroslav Fedoruk draws on his unparalleled knowledge of the diplomatic history of East-Central Europe to set the context for the complex maneuverings during the Second Northern War that take up much of part 2. The result is another major addition to the English-language literature on East European history. The last chapter of part 2 might well be set, alongside Frank Sysyn's commentary, as required reading for any introductory course on Ukrainian History.

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