

Mykhailo Hrushevsky. *History of Ukraine-Rus'* Vol. 4: *Political Relations in the 14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. Translated by Andrij Kudla Wynnyckyj. Robert Frost and Yaroslav Fedoruk, Consulting Editors, and Frank E Sysyn, Series Editor, with the assistance of Myroslav Yukevich. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press: 2017. \$119.95 Review by CAROL B. STEVENS, COLGATE UNIVERSITY.

The publication by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies of Mykhailo Hrushevsky's monumental *History of Ukraine-Rus'* in English translation (each volume with introductory essays, up-to-date bibliographic apparatus, glossaries, and addenda) is a long-term project nearing completion. The three volumes on the fourteenth-sixteenth century will have seen the light of day by October 2019. With the publication of the final volume—vol. 2, on the Kyivan period—anticipated in 2020, the modern, scholarly translation of Hrushevsky's

entire 10 volume work will be complete.

Volume 4, reviewed here, begins the historian's study of the period between the fall of the principality of Galicia-Volhynia in the fourteenth century and the rise of Ukrainian cossackdom. Innovatively for the time, Hrushevsky examined this period as the "Polish-Lithuanian period of Ukrainian history." That is, in the absence of a Ukrainian state, he used the land and peoples of Ukraine as his primary lens rather than recounting the political histories of the dominant powers. As a result, his discussion of events in Poland, Lithuania and Crimea touches only on matters with an impact on Ukraine. This translation, which appeared in 2017, is based on the second edition of the original, published in 1907; as usual, the translation itself is supported by two helpful and important contextualizing essays (by Svitlana Pankova and Robert Frost), detailed supporting notes, an addendum specifically on chapter 1 of the volume, and up-to-date bibliography, map, glossary, genealogical tables and index.

Unusually for Hrushevsky, this volume deals almost exclusively with political history. The central state actors in Ukraine during this period were the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The first chapter deals with the occupation of Ukrainian lands by Lithuania and Poland; the second and third cover the way in which Ukrainian lands were treated as Poland endeavored to change its relationship with Lithuania from a joint monarchy to union; in the fourth chapter, Hrushevsky discusses the rise of Crimea and the relative disregard by the two powers dominating Ukrainian territory for its devastating impact upon Ukrainian lands. Finally, in chapter 6, Poland's annexation of Ukrainian lands from Lithuania was a prelude to the Union of Lublin, which produced the Commonwealth.

The central narrative is the expansion of Polish influence in its newly acquired Ukrainian lands, as in those lands held by Lithuania. Several important elements emerge. In the background is the persistent effort by Polish magnates to incorporate Lithuania into a unified state. That effort placed Ruthenians, and in particular Ruthenian magnates in a complex and changing position. For example, the Hlynsky rebellion in the early sixteenth century relied heavily on support from Muscovy. The conclusion of a Polish-Lithuanian peace with Muscovy in 1508 marked the last gasp of Ruthenian magnate rebellion against

Lithuanian leadership. Meanwhile, a stable Crimean Khanate emerged from under the wing of the Golden Horde; under Mengli Giray, it became a Turkish vassal. Over subsequent years, especially as Crimea turned to an alliance with Moscow, neither Poland nor Lithuania adequately supported the defense of their steppe frontiers. As a result, Hrushevsky writes, the Ukrainian Cossack movement developed and that “Ukrainian popular self-defense movement received neither assistance nor sympathy” (232) from the ruling powers. Meanwhile, Lithuanian magnates’ efforts to defend their autonomy against Poland were less successful from the middle of the sixteenth century; many were impelled in the direction of Poland, not only because of the threats of Muscovite and Crimean power, but also by the newly powerful voice of the Lithuanian nobility. The result was first the absorption of the Grand Duchy’s Ukrainian lands into the Kingdom of Poland, and then its nearly inevitable sequel, the Union of Lublin. All of Ukraine thus fell into the immediate sphere of Polish influence in its government, its law and its life. The results for the Ukrainian people would be described in the next two volumes of Hrushevsky’s history.

This is a detailed study of a period whose politics even now remain little studied. As Robert Frost points out in his introductory essay, the categories of Hrushevsky’s study are clearly of his time—in particular as to the role of the ‘nation’ in history. His lack of enthusiasm for the role of the state and focus on ordinary people was less typical. Furthermore, he did not subscribe to the then-accepted idea that Poland introduced a superior westernized culture to Ukrainian territory; he rather describes this period as a deformation of Ukrainian culture, politics and society. He was somewhat (but only somewhat) more lenient in his attitude towards the Grand Duchy. Firstly, at the beginning of the period, when the Grand Duchy exercised the most control, Lithuania was a relatively diffuse and composite state, which allowed the local leaders such as Dedko considerable control over their own affairs. And he was sympathetic to Lithuania’s lost statehood. Meanwhile, the interests of both powerful and the ordinary Ruthenians receive careful attention. This is complicated by the very great difficulties caused by little documentation in the latter case and the conflicting political interests of the former, which often led them to stray from what Hrushevsky saw as Ukrainian interests.

Volume 4 of the *History* was written while its author was “Chair of World History with Particular Focus on Eastern Europe” at the University of Lviv and unencumbered by the constraints of censorship that would impact his later volumes, written in Soviet Kyiv. But university reforms had recently undercut the number of Ukrainian students attending Lviv and vastly reduced German participation; as a result, the University was dominated by Poles during the period of Hrushevsky’s professorship. Furthermore, the political situation in Galicia was manipulated to minimize Ukrainian representation. In this context, Hrushevsky’s full-throated challenge to the Polish interpretation of Ukrainian history could hardly fail to arouse contemporary challenge and disagreement. Although its interpretations can and have been challenged on very different grounds more recently, vol 4 of the *History of Ukraine-Rus’* nonetheless remains a remarkably detailed, well-documented and important account of a little studied period.