

Hrushevsky (Mykhailo), *History of Ukraine-Rus' -IX/I- The Cossack Age, 1650-1653*, trad. Bohdan Strumiński, éd. Serhii Plokyh, Frank E. Sysyn, Edmonton-Toronto, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2005, lxxx + 761 p.

Almost fifty years ago, in his book on the borderlands between the Muscovite, Polish, Habsburg, and Ottoman states, William H. McNeil noted that it was not possible to “develop a balanced understanding of what transpired there ... (until) linguistically well-prepared scholars come at their material with well-formulated questions in mind.”¹ He meant that the history of this complex region would require the use of primary sources written in the multiplicity of languages used there: Russian, Polish, Ottoman, German, Ukrainian, Tatar, Latin, and he might have added Greek and Armenian. McNeill admitted that most of those sources were beyond him, and he might have added that so too were histories written in many of them.

It was developments in the 16th and 17th centuries that McNeill characterized as most important, and also least known. In the mid-20th century, a number of historians examined these borderlands, though most often from the perspective of one of the surrounding large states: Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Russia, Ottoman Empire. The other peoples which populated these borderlands – the Ukrainians represented in this period by the Zaparozhian Cossacks and the Tatars (both Crimean and Nogay) – were seen primarily from Moscow, Istanbul, Warsaw. These historians have also typically used primary sources in only one or two of the languages McNeil listed, depending on historical studies for the rest. Fortunately, in the past several decades, a few historians have emerged who can read documents and historical studies written in most of those languages. In the midst of these important developments, the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies has resurrected a multi-volume history of one of these peoples, the Ukrainians, during an important period in the history of these borderlands. The Institute is publishing Mykhailo Hrushevsky's *History of Ukraine-Rus'* in English translation, with both Hrushevsky's own and an updated scholarly apparatus. Originally published between 1898 and 1937 in 10 volumes (in 11 books), the new English-language edition will comprise 12 books when completed.

Hrushevsky (1866-1934) belonged to a cadre of historians whose multi-volume histories of “nations” emerged as important ingredients in the rise and success of nationalist movements in Eastern and Southeastern Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. These included Sergei Mikhailovich Solov'ev (1820-1879), whose *Istoriia Rossii s drevnieishikh vremen* [History of Russia beginning with the ancient period] was published in 29 volumes between 1862-1879. Like Hrushevsky's work, Solov'ev's is being published in English translation (vol. 18, which covers the period of this volume of Hrushevsky's has not appeared yet, though vol. 17 and 19 have been completed), along with some annotations though little in the way of bibliography. In Turkey, İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı (1888-1977) and Enver Ziya Karal (1906-1982) published their 8-volume (10-book) *Osmanlı Tarihi* between 1947 and 1983. It is worth noting that Hrushevsky did not get beyond the end of the 17th century and Solov'ev's *Istoriia* ended in 1774.

The book under review is the third volume in the part of the *History* in which Hrushevsky concentrated on the Cossacks, and the one which holds the most importance for

¹ McNeill (William H.), *Europe's Steppe Frontier, 1500-1800*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1964, p. ii.

historians of the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate. It includes several topics: the efforts of the Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky to free the Right-Bank Ukraine from domination by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which included attempts to involve the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Tatars as allies; the continuing development of complex alliances with at various times all of the Hetmanate's neighbors; his defeat at Berestechko and his recovery with the peace settlement at Bila Tserkva. In the midst of these events, Hrushevsky includes a detailed discussion of the Cossack campaign in Moldavia, which was complicated by the fact that Moldavia was a tributary state of the Ottoman Empire whose support Khmelnytsky was courting.

Hrushevsky makes it clear that the Hetmanate was not the only borderland government which conducted complex diplomacy at this time. The Crimean Khanate, from its chancellery in Bahçesaray, sent envoys to the Hetmanate capital Chyhyryn, Warsaw, Moscow, Istanbul, Moldavia, even to Sweden. Istanbul too sent envoys to all of these capitals. Hrushevsky's account provides tantalizing details about these envoys, their travels, and often what they discussed. This latter is important as envoys and diplomats of the time often brought little in the way of paper documentation but rather were well prepared to negotiate issues in person. The main problem for us, however, is that the reports of these envoys' activities come to us primarily through Polish, Muscovite and Cossack eyes and ears. Hrushevsky just did not have access to the Ottoman and Tatar archives. Since the latter apparently were destroyed during the Russian conquest of Bahçesaray in the 1730s, and only a relatively few Tatar documents have surfaced elsewhere, even in Istanbul.

In the research phase of this volume, Hrushevsky employed a number of graduate students, assistants, clerks, and other colleagues in the collection and copying of materials. His "archaeographic expedition" worked in the Moscow archives, which incorporated the Moscow Depository of Old Documents including the archives of the former ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice. Other Moscow archives consulted included those of the Military Office, the Ambassadorial Office (which had archival sections devoted to Commonwealth, Moldavian, Ottoman, and Crimean Affairs), and the Office of Secret Affairs. Many manuscripts and documents were found, examined and copied in public and private archives and libraries in Lviv, Cracow, and Warsaw. Many of the documents had already been published in late 19th century journals in Poland and Russia, though many had not. It is fortunate that Hrushevsky included in this volume many of the latter, as so much library and archival material in Eastern Europe has disappeared as the result of war and intentional neglect.

Hrushevsky notes in the preface to this volume that regrettably he had not been able to consult Tatar or Ottoman documentary materials, except for those that were housed in various Slavic libraries and archives. The presumably vast stores of such materials housed in Istanbul would most likely require considerable revision of the account that he had written. The editors of this volume report that in late 1928 and early 1929 negotiations were begun between the Ukrainian and Turkish ministries of education to organize an exchange of document and manuscript/*deft*er copies relating to the history of this borderland region, particularly in the 16th and 17th centuries. Mehmed Fuad Köprülü led the Turkish delegation. In the end nothing came from this – neither side could (or perhaps wanted) to share documents with the other, and this sort of collaboration had to wait until quite recently.

Fortunately a new generation of scholars who are literate not only in the requisite Slavic languages, but also in Crimean *Tatarca* and *Osmanlica*, has continued Hrushevsky's pursuit of mid-17th century borderland history. Indeed, given what they have found, and published, the question that R. Frost asked in 2005 whether or not Hrushevsky's *History*

is still of historical value must bring an ambiguous answer to Ottomanists.² While Frost answers in the affirmative, it is as an historical document itself as well as being a history that makes the full *History* important, particularly for Ukrainian history.

Perhaps the primary weakness of Hrushevsky's account of Cossack-Tatar-Ottoman relations was his lack of understanding of the internal workings of the Ottoman bureaucracy, of familiarity with Ottoman decision making, of Ottoman financial administration. This is not meant as a criticism of his methods. Rather it is recognition that so much has been learned (not only in the past 100 years but especially in the past 40 years) about the Ottoman 17th century as to make obsolete most studies involving Ottoman policy written in the first half of the 20th century.

The editors have provided an excellent scholarly apparatus for this volume. In contrast to what the editors of the Solov'ev's volumes decided – to include only brief editorial notes to the English translation and to remove all of Solov'ev's own notes – Hrushevsky's editors include all of the author's voluminous notes along with their own. These include corrections to the Hrushevsky text when necessary, and updates taking into account new discoveries and interpretations (particularly on Polish, Russian and Ukrainian sources – and not so much on Ottoman and Tatar materials). We are lucky that the editors did consult both Victor Ostapchuk and Marina Kravets about Ottoman, Tatar, and Nogay terminology, place names, and historical context so that some of the ambiguities of Hrushevsky's text have been cleared up.

Because Hrushevsky and his research team consulted so many different Slavic archives and libraries, and his citations refer to those as they existed and were organized at the time of their researching, it would have been helpful had the editors and consultants included a list of their present locations and numbering, if they are known, or indications that they have disappeared or have been destroyed.

The recent works of V. Ostapchuk, D. Kołodziejczyk, K. Jobst, I. Zajcev, and D. Klein would be much more useful sources to consult for Crimean and Ottoman participation in the history of 16th- and 17th-century “Europe's steppe frontier.”³ It is encouraging that these difficult subjects have attracted scholars with their linguistic and interpretive talents.

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