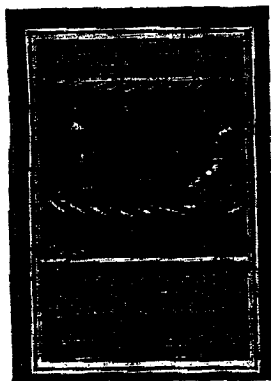


Reviews

History of Ukraine-Rus'. Volume 1. From Prehistory to the Eleventh Century. By Mykhailo Hrushevsky, translated by Marta Skorupsky (Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Edmonton-Toronto, 1997), 602 pp.



This book represents the first part of a major task undertaken by the Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Studies, established at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta in 1989. Jacyk's endowment of the Centre was accompanied by a request that the Centre should undertake the translation of the monumental *Istoriya Ukerayiny-Rusi* by Mykhailo Hrushevskiyi, the scholar who, in effect, was the founding father of modern Ukrainian historiography. The Ukrainian original, in ten volumes, was published over the period 1898-1937. A single-volume abridged version in English appeared in 1948; but this, of necessity, omitted much of the detail which makes the original so valuable a work of scholarship.

This first volume, appearing as it does a few months before the centenary of the publication of the Ukrainian original, is thus the harbinger of what will undoubtedly prove of enormous significance and value, not only to Anglophone students of Ukrainian history, but also to historians whose field of interest touches only in part or peripherally on Ukraine (for example, specialists in the Habsburg or Ottoman empires), as well as those many scholars from other academic disciplines - economics, politics, and the like, who in the last few years developed a professional interest in Ukraine, but have insufficient knowledge, as yet, of the Ukrainian language to tackle Hrushevskiyi in the original.

The current volume covers the period 'from the depths of prehistory', up to the death of the Grand Prince Volodymyr I of Kyiv in 1015, together with two Excursi, by Hrushevskiyi, on 'The Earliest Chronicle of Kyiv' and 'The Normanist Theory'. To this original content, this edition adds an Editorial Preface to Volume 1, an introduction to the *History* by Frank E. Sysyn, and an Introduction to Volume 1 by Andrzej Poppe. The purpose of the latter - as will also be the aim of similar introductions to subsequent volumes - is, in Sysyn's words, 'to place [Hrushevskiyi's] work in the content of the field'. Poppe, accordingly, not only sets Hrushevskiyi's book in the context of his time - stressing, in particular, his scholarly evaluation of sources, and his break with tradition in beginning his history, not with the earliest written records, but with the earliest archaeological evidence of human habitation - but also contrasts it with the later distortions forced upon Soviet Ukrainian historians by the demands of Marxist-Leninist theory. 'It turned out to be fortunate', Poppe concludes, 'that after 1934 it was forbidden in Soviet Ukraine to cite Hrushevsky and his works, for this prevented them from being

disfigured and made to conform to the resolutions and immediate needs of the party of Lenin and Stalin'.

Wisely, no attempt has been made to emend or update Hrushevskyi's text. Where the editors considered it necessary to expand on a particular point, correct a misprint in the original, note variant interpretations of the Ukrainian text, or draw attention to the works of later scholars, this is done either within the conventional square brackets in the body of the text, or else in footnotes, in a type-face easily distinguishable from that used for the translation of Hrushevskyi's original. They have treated the text, in short, as befits what may justly be termed the founding classic of modern Ukrainian historiography.