

**Mykhailo Hrushevsky. *History of Ukraine-Rus'*. Volume 1. *From Prehistory to the Eleventh Century*. Translated by Marta Skorupsky. Edited by Andrzej Poppe, Consulting Editor and Frank E. Sysyn, Editor-in-Chief with the assistance of Uliana M. Pasicznyk. Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1997. lxi, 602 pp. \$79.95, cloth.**

A major work of the greatest historian of the Ukrainian national school, Mykhailo Hrushevsky (1866, Chelm–1934, Kislovodsk), the ten-volume (in eleven books)

*Istoriia Ukraïny-Rusy* has been edited and translated in recent years (the first volume in 1997, the seventh in 1999, while the eighth volume has been published just lately). The Hrushevsky Translation Project is mainly supported by the Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research, located at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta and the University of Toronto. The first volume of the work reviewed here came out in 1898, but the translation is of the third edition of volume I (1913), first published in L'viv.

Let me begin by locating the author's standpoint in the famous and age-old Normanist-anti-Normanist polemics. He pointedly states that after the initial steps that were taken in the eighteenth century (Gottlieb S. Bayer was the first to provide scholarly background), A. L. Schözer canonized the Normanist theory in the beginning of the nineteenth century. As Hrushevsky asserts, the canonization hindered research into the roots of Kyivan Rus' from other points of view. Above all, the anti-Normanist opposition, which emerged only in the second half of the nineteenth century, was backed up in such an unscholarly way, especially in the works of I. D. Illovaikii in the 1870–1880s, that this side was widely discredited. This point casts light on the problem of Ukrainian historiography: the retardation, caused by political and human circumstances and the lack of institutional background, the late emergence of a "national narrative," as well as the delay in the national movement of the Ukrainian people. Thus, researchers dealt mostly with the Cossack period. When Mykhailo Hrushevsky began his masterpiece in the last years of the nineteenth century, the origin of the Ukrainian people had not been studied precisely.

The first volume consists of eleven large chapters (pp. 1–409) and twelve "Notes," which are almost substantial historiographical databases (pp. 410–49), plus two "Excurses" (pp. 450–92) on the Primary Chronicle and the Normanist theory.

The first four chapters give us a wide-range scheme about the geographical appearance of the Ukrainian lands and the prehistoric era of the territory from the Great Ice Age until the Slavic dispersion. The author also presents the influence of Greek, Thracian, Early Germanic and nomadic peoples on the inhabitants. The Kyivan state is shown to be the inheritor of age-old cultural and socio-political developments in southern Russia. Examining the older and contemporary theories, he concludes that the cradle of Indo-European ethnicity can be located in Eastern Europe (a conception that has also become predominant recently). Hrushevsky lays a special emphasis on the Black Sea Greeks amongst the wide range of surrounding peoples' influences.

The next two chapters (on material culture and social relations of the Slavs) are unquestionably the most interesting and, compared to the contemporary national-romantic viewpoint, the most innovative parts. Rejecting (in light of the available sources) the so-called "matriarchal" theory of prehistoric "society" (L. Morgan, J. F. McLennan), the author undauntedly asserts that as early as the disruption of the Indo-Europeans the patriarchal system had already existed. Regarding marriage patterns, he claims that the passages of the Primary Chronicle on the primitive sexual habits, unregulated marriage, and promiscuity of the Slavs are unreliable, highlighting only the chronicler's moralistic and antipathetic viewpoint. Characteristically, the author, having a critical eye, distrusts such romantic-Slavophile myths as that of Slavic "peacefulness" and "Slavic democracy" and casts light on the Slavs' reputation for warfare and shows how the early Slavic society was governed strictly by tribal and clan

elders.

The last three chapters comprise the political history of the Rus' state up to the death of Volodymyr the Great (1015), and the weakening of the tribal system. The author applies not only a step-by-step annual description, but also a well-constructed depiction of the system of the state in its process of change, as well as giving a vital but critical portrait of the first princes and princesses of the Rus'. As regards chronology, the data are not much different from recent analyses.

Hrushevsky does not contest the Norman presence and the role they played in state-building and commerce from the middle of the ninth century. Nonetheless, he rejects the "ultra-Normanist" viewpoint, which stated that the Norman factor shaped the otherwise unorganized and stateless Slavic society. The pre-Novgorodian/Kyivan Slavic entity emerged because of the challenge of organization, and the need to maintain and defend local trade and long-route commerce. Based on a so-called "prince-and-retinue system" and fortresses along the trading routes, the tribal and clan structure was weakening and being replaced by the prince's hegemony. Therefore, the invited Riurydae found an organized society. The Kyivan princes slowly but consistently crushed the resistance of the tribes; one of the famous events was the birth of the Derevljanians (Ihor, then Olha), to which sources and folk tradition have paid special attention, according to Hrushevsky.

The author bestows particular attention on the reign of Volodymyr the Great, whose goal was, on the one hand, to initiate Christianity and Byzantine culture amongst the Eastern Slavs, and, on the other, to establish a new governing system. The new structure was founded on close familial ties; thus, members of the princely house were given domains to hold retainers and collect tribute. Although the system seemed to be firm during the father's reign, the independence of the holders would give birth to a temporary collapse of the state in the eleventh century.

Nowadays, in the age of a "moderate" Normanism or a theory of the initial and autochthonous Southern "Rus'" entity before the Novgorodian-Kyivan state officially was founded being co-existent with Normanism, Hrushevsky's book provides exhilarating reading for the non-English reader too. Additionally, as the editorial preface states, only a very few bibliographic items had been undercovered in the eyes of the editors; only one reference is mentioned from the extensive bibliography (one article by Aleksandr Pogodin).