

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/1644-857X.17.03.14>



Władysława Sokyrka, *Widnosciny miż RSFRR i USRR (1919–1929 rr): administratiwno-teritorialnyj ta politiko-ekonomicznyj dyskurs*, Wydawnictwo Soczynskij M.M., Umań 2017, pp. 578 + unnumbered pages 2.

The reviewed book is a habilitation thesis of Władysława Sokyrka, a well-known researcher in Ukraine and Poland where she participated in scientific conferences and published a number of important works. Her PhD thesis about Grigorij Hraban, a historian and researcher interested in the haidamaks and Koliyivshchyna, revealed many unknown facts from Hraban's life and work to the Polish historians. In 2017, our article about the Polish-Ukrainian discourse in the context of the haidamaks and Koliyivshchyna in which each of us presented their own view of the Polish-Ukrainian relations in the 18th century was published in 'Przegląd Nauk Historycznych' [The Review of Historical Sciences]¹.

Władysława Sokyrka has recently changed her scientific interests. The result of that interest shift is the reviewed book which consists of the following elements: table of contents, list of abbreviations, preface, five chapters (I. State of research, sources and methodology of the research; II. Political and administrative unification of mutual Russian-Ukrainian relations; III. Diplomatic, administrative and institutional relations between the two republics; IV. Inter-Republican conflict of interests in commercial, economic and budgetary relations; V. Formation of a common national-economic complex: theory and practice), afterword, list of sources and literature, index of names, index of geographical names and attachments.

Władysława Sokyrka described a very important and difficult problem of the Russian-Ukrainian relations in the first decade

¹ W.W. Sokyrka, T. Srogosz, *Hajdamacy i koliszczyzna w historiografii polskiej i ukraińskiej*, 'Przegląd Nauk Historycznych' 2017, vol. XVI, No. 2, pp. 7–41 [= *The haidamaks and Koliyivshchyna in the Polish and Ukrainian historiography. The Polish-Ukrainian duet*, 'Przegląd Nauk Historycznych' 2017, XVI, No. 3, pp. 7–40].

of the Bolshevik rule. The Authoress presented the problem in question widely and comprehensively, she analysed factors that influenced formation and activity of authorities, nature of mutual relations, concepts of Russian policy and process of shaping the borders between the Soviet Russia and the Soviet Ukraine.

The chronology of the book is unambiguous. After the February revolution in Russia, foundations of the Ukrainian statehood were created on the initiative of political parties and national elites. On March 17, 1917 the Ukrainian Central Council was established in Kiev and the most outstanding Ukrainian historian, Mykhailo Hrushevskiy, was elected its chairman. The Ukrainian People's Republic was established which functioned until 1921 (excluding times of the Ukrainian State, unofficially called the Hetmanate). In 1919, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, a marionette state dependent on the Russian Federal Soviet Socialist Republic, was established with the capital in Kharkov. In 1922, it became a federal republic. In 1929, in turn, the formation of that republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was finalised.

Władysława Sokyrska's work is based on solid research sources, mainly archival ones, from: the Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine in Kiev, the Central State Archives of Public Organisations of Ukraine in Kiev, the State Archive of the Russian Federation in Moscow and the Russian State Archives of Socio-Political History in Moscow. The Authoress used an impressive number of archive fonds and printed sources (minutes of meetings, various magazines, *etc.*) as well as the press and other materials. The list of literature includes 359 items the vast majority of which are in Ukrainian and Russian. Yet, English references, including those written by representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora that have always been very active in the US, were also quoted in the reviewed book. According to Władysława Sokyrska, though, in spite of such a numerous subject literature, mutual relations between the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Russian Soviet Socialist Federal Republic in the context of administrative, territorial, economic and financial interests of both republics have not been widely discussed by other researchers so far (p. 30).

The political and administrative unification of mutual Russian-Ukrainian relations, including formation of the borders, was

carried out in harmony with the Russian-Bolshevik strategy of Unitarianism. According to that strategy, the Ukrainian-Russian border was formed, the Donetsk region and the south-eastern region of Ukraine included. The peculiarities of inter-regional relations between the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic became visible, too.

In the twenties of the 20th century, when relations between the Soviet Ukraine and the Soviet Russia were just beginning to develop, the diplomacy as well as administrative and institutional relations were functioning to a limited extent. In 1920, the Ukrainian Representation was established at the People's Commissariat of Nationalities of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Władylena Sokyrka analysed the status of that institution. Its functioning was finally limited in 1931 by a special decision of the Council of People's Commissars for the economic and cultural building of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Moreover, in 1920, the delegation of the Ukrainian People's Republic was holding talks in Moscow. The Bolshevik dominance in most institutions of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was the main scope of the then politics of Russian authorities.

The chapter on organisational, legal and socio-economic principles of the functioning of the 'federal budget system' as well as the top-down deepening of trade and economic ties, is particularly interesting. Firstly, Władylena Sokyrka explained the evolution of the term 'general budget of the Federation' and then analysed the budgetary laws of individual republics as well as their institutional and nomenclature status that was contrary to that of the general budget of the Federation. The Authoress also discussed the percentage share of Ukraine and Russia in a general budget of the Federation which was unlikely to secure the needs of the republic's development. In the twenties of the 20th century, the role of the Authorised Ministry of Foreign Trade of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic as well as of other Russian institutions was still growing.

In the last chapter, Władylena Sokyrka noticed a number of significant discrepancies between the Soviet Ukraine and the Soviet Russia/Soviet Union. She specifically underlined such issues as: pursuit of unification; creation of a common 'national-economic complex'; subordination of the central government; creation of the acts levelled against Ukrainian interests. The then scholars and activists argued that Ukraine was not Russia's province, they considered

advantages and disadvantages of decentralisation and unification (mainly the economic unification). Yet, the idea of territorial division of the industry into the Republican and Federal had won.

In an afterword, Władysława Sokyrska presented conclusions that may be drawn from the analysis of mutual relations of the Soviet Ukraine and the Soviet Russia. The Bolshevik policy was consistently aiming at the creation of a national-economic complex through nationalization of resources and transformation of economics. The Authoress pointed out the following factors that were unfavorable (or perhaps even tragic) to Ukraine: 'Constitutional formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; establishment of a one-party political system and its elite with state apparatus; transformation of authorities of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic into central organs of the Union; subordination of strategic branches of Ukrainian industry and demonstrative ignorance of Ukraine's interests' (p. 502).

In my opinion, the book by Władysława Sokyrska fills the gap not only in the Ukrainian and Russian historiography, but also in the European history. It may be of interest to the Sovietologists who tend to construct general but usually unfounded concepts.

TADEUSZ SROGOSZ

JAN DŁUGOSZ UNIVERSITY IN CZĘSTOCHOWA*

Bibliography

STUDIES

Sokyrska W., *Widnosciny miż RSFRR i USRR (1919–1929 rr): administratiwno-teritorialnyj ta politiko-ekonomicznyj dyskurs*, Uman 2017.

Sokyrska W.W., Srogosz T., *Hajdamacy i koliszczyzna w historiografii polskiej i ukraińskiej*, 'Przegląd Nauk Historycznych' 2017, vol. XVI, No. 2, pp. 7–41 [= *The haidamaks and Koliyivshchyna in the Polish and Ukrainian historiography. The Polish-Ukrainian duet*, 'Przegląd Nauk Historycznych' 2017, XVI, No. 3, pp. 7–40].

* Faculty of Philosophy and History, Institute of History, Department of Methodology of History and History of Historiography / Wydział Filologiczno-Historyczny, Instytut Historii, Zakład Metodologii Historii i Historii Historiografii, e-mail: tadeusz.srogosz@ajd.czest.pl.