

Bohdan Khmelnitsky and Soviet Historiography

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Any objective and scholarly study of Ukrainian history during the Khmelnitsky period is linked in Soviet Ukrainian historiography with the name of M. Hrushevsky. Hrushevsky returned to the Ukraine from abroad in 1924. It was then that his monumental work *The History of Ukraine-Russ* was written. It was published in Kiev in the years 1928—1931. Two long chapters in volume 9 deal with the years when B. Khmelnitsky was the hetman of the Ukraine.¹

Despite Soviet conditions, Hrushevsky's outlook did not change, as may be seen from his research on the Khmelnitsky epoch. He pursued his work independently and irrespective of the government's wishes or public opinion. During these critical years Hrushevsky remained one of the last Narodnik adherents, but his work, placing greater stress than before upon the historical role of the working population as well as the social issues involved, emerged, so to speak, in the form of reminiscences of a former chief of state regarding his enthusiasm for the socio-revolutionary movement.²

It is not surprising that the great Ukrainian historian should view with scepticism the outstanding personalities in Ukrainian history, including Khmelnitsky, whose political role is regarded as questionable even though an entire epos has been created around him. Hrushevsky used a mass of archival and other material to depict and elucidate the man and his times. However Khmelnitsky is not Hrushevsky's hero. The author states that his work is devoted "not to Khmelnitsky the leader but to the creative sufferings of the Ukrainian masses."³

Even in Hrushevsky's popular works on Ukrainian history, which appeared in the first two decades of the XX century, the founder of the Ukrainian state was evaluated quite favorably and in his great monograph on Khmelnitsky, the author concluded that he was "a great man—great because of his own talents." But these talents he believed were inadequate to untie the historical knot of Ukrainian existence. Hrushevsky wrote that "as a leader, inspirer and subjugator of the masses he proved very effective but he was not a great politician and his political guidance of the Ukraine was not very judicious."

¹ B. Krupnitsky, *M. Grushevsky i ego Istoricheskaya Rabota* (M. Grushevsky and his Historical Work). Publications "Knigospylki," New York, 1954, pp. 11 onwards. (Introduction to the *Istoria Ukrainy-Rusi* (History of Ukraine-Russ) Vol. 1 by M. Grushevsky.

² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³ B. Krupnitsky, *B. Khmelnitsky v Osveshchenii Ukrainskoi Istorigrafii* (B. Khmelnitsky in the Elucidation of Ukrainian Historiography) Arka, Munich, 1948, No. 3—4, pp. 7 onwards.

Hrushevsky felt that Khmelnytsky was not consistent in his statesmanship, having only one great aspiration—to achieve the independence of the Cossack state; he did not have the interests of the people at heart, otherwise he would not have maintained such a stubborn alliance with the Tartars who in fact during Khmelnytsky's time brought such grief to the Ukrainian masses. Hrushevsky felt that Khmelnytsky's policy toward Moscow was rashly implemented and not particularly successful. His policy as a whole was not founded on any clearly conceived plan or significant national concepts nor was it implemented logically. Using almost the same word as his teacher Antonovych, Hrushevsky stressed the fact that Khmelnytsky's policy consisted of facets which clashed with each other and ultimately cancelled each other out.⁴

This evaluation appeared when the favorable views of the Polish historian Kubali⁵ and the Ukrainian historian Lipinsky⁶ were published. Hrushevsky himself stated that by his critical approach—essentially sceptical in nature, for his work reflected less a thorough and convincing analysis of revelant sources than of the author's general philosophical outlook—he wished to avoid “the pathological idealization of the epoch and of Khmelnytsky' personality “which, in the author's opinion, was reflected in Lipinsky' works.⁷

Hrushevsky's work was nevertheless unique, for even during the Ukrainian renaissance of the 1920's, it was risky to deal with great problems of Ukrainian history, and especially to publish monographs on its outstanding leaders, above all the hetmans.

In addition to the above-mentioned study by M. Petrovsky of individual figures during the Khmelnytsky period, research was done into the activities of Petryka (by Oglobin) and of Polubotka (by Vassylenko). Certainly Petrovsky opened up wide vistas for analytical research. In his detailed monograph on the *Chronicles of Samovydyets*, he contributed greatly to increasing our knowlegde of the Khmelnytsky period.⁸

In 1929, however, great changes took place in the development of the Soviet Ukraine. The renaissance ended suddenly and unexpectedly. Stalin's new “general” line with its main slogans of collectivization and industrialization implied a crusade not only against the Ukrainian peasantry but against the Ukrainian intelligentsia. This new policy cost the Ukraine millions of victims: Neither Ukrainian scholarship in general nor Ukrainian historical research in particular were spared. Ukrainian “bourgeois” historians were persecuted as well as Communist historians. In fact the first accusations were levelled against the Marxist M. Yavorsky for the national-Ukrainian deviations which appeared in his courses on the history of the Ukraine.

This blow, however, was only the prelude to the implementing of reforms. In 1930, the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences was reorganized and the historical-

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Well-known Polish historian and author of numerous monographs on the Khmelnytsky period. Cf. D. Doroshenko, *Ocherk Ukrainskoi Istoriografii* (Essay on Ukrainian Historiography), Prague, 1923, p. 152.

⁶ Particular attention should be paid to the monograph *Ukraina na Perelome 1657—1659* (The Ukraine during the Crisis of 1657—1659), Vienna, 1920.

⁷ See note 3.

⁸ M. Petrovsky, *Ocherki s Istorii Ukrainy* (Essays on Ukrainian History) I. Research on the Chronicles of Samovidets, Kharkov, 1930.

philological section removed: Only two departments remained, that of physics and mathematics, now renamed the natural-technical section, and that of sociology and economics, to which were added certain committees of the former historical-philological section.

Then began the transitional period of Stalin's "reevaluation of values." Even the Russian school under the authoritative M. Pokrovsky fell into disgrace, as it considered its most important task to be the application of Communist doctrine to the historical panorama of Russia or the Soviet Union. The new approach consisted of giving the "great" Russian people first place. This people was, henceforth to play the leading role as the main herald of revolution and Communism as well as the guiding cultural factor in eastern Europe.

Once again famous leaders of the past, including the tsars, were re-appraised. Services to the "homeland," especially for having consolidated and propagated its greatness, were most favorably interpreted by the Soviet leaders. Now neither Stenka Razin nor Pugachev were such "pure" representatives of revolt but rather such figures as Alexander Nevsky, Ivan the Terrible, Minin and Pozharsky, Peter the Great, Suvorov, Kutuzov and the heroes of the defense of Sebastopol.

This patriotic, Kremlin note which signified the complete victory of Russian nationalism over that of other nations was linked in Stalin's directive with increased demands to utilize the orthodox Marxist method. Under Stalin's editorship the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* appeared, containing basic instructions for every worker and scholar, particularly for historians.

In general this was a period of dictated and controlled research work. The situation has in fact not changed to this day. There is no research accomplished as a result of the free cooperation of scholars and only tasks set by the Kremlin to further its interests may be implemented.⁹

With the new reforms of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in 1934, based on the newly created research institutes and autonomous centers directly under the control of the presidium of the Academy, the Institute for the History of the Ukraine (initially under the name of the Historical-Archeological Institute), attached to the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, also began its research. With the disappearance of historical research the Institute was called upon to carry out very important work. After the removal of *Yavorshchina* together with history text books written by this first Ukrainian Marxist historian, literally nothing remained either for students or teachers. Instead of textbooks, collaborators at the Institute prepared a series of monographs, approaching Ukrainian history from a new point of view. These monographs included a contribution by M. Petrovsky, at that time the most outstanding Ukrainian historian. His work was called *The Ukrainian People's War of Liberation against the Oppression of the Polish Ruling Class and the Annexation of the Ukraine to Russia, 1648—1654* (Kiev, 1940, No. 4).

The Institute's work marked a new period in Ukrainian Soviet historiography. Whereas in the twenties, Khmel'nitsky could at least be referred to, and Hrushevsky could express his own opinion of the great hetman, all this was now at an end. Practically every historical personality was allotted his interpretation

⁹ B. Krupnitsky, *Die Ukrainische Geschichtswissenschaft in der Sowjetunion, 1921—1941* (Ukrainian Historiography in the Soviet-Union), 1941, Vols. 2/4, p. 150.

under the watchful eye of the Kremlin. Thus for example, I. Mazeppa, P. Doroshenko and I. Vyhovsky were described as Ukrainian traitors, because the Kremlin considered them to have betrayed the idea of a union between the Ukraine and Moscow, traitors who were ready to seek other than the Moscow type of orientation.

The figure of Khmelnytsky was unable to escape this type of rigid interpretation. M. Petrovsky was by no means a Communist adherent, nor did he support as a historian the idea of a *rapprochement* with Moscow, and yet he was compelled in his monograph to depict Khmelnytsky although positively, as nevertheless failing to stress the fundamental issue, from the Ukrainian historical viewpoint, of the alienation of the Ukraine from Poland and the creation of the Ukrainian Cossack state. Instead Khmelnytsky's efforts to unite the Ukraine with Moscow were given prominence.¹⁰

If the 300 years of union between the Ukraine and Russia (1654—1954) had not been celebrated, the works devoted to Khmelnytsky would have been far more modest in scope. One can hardly take seriously the popularly written essay on Khmelnytsky by the Russian K. Opisov which appeared in 1948.¹¹ The most characteristic feature of this author, who was not especially well-versed in the epoch and lacked adequate knowledge of Khmelnytsky's personality, was a return to old legends about the great Ukrainian hetman—to those legends which Hrushevsky tended to dismiss and which no longer figure in Ukrainian historiography. But Opisov defamed Khmelnytsky in accordance with the new Soviet policy, that is, in connection with Khmelnytsky's unification of the Ukraine and Moscow.

Even before the anniversary many individual works appeared, which were however devoted only to localized problems and were written in an official vein on orders from above. As an example we may point to Petrovsky's report entitled *The Initial Relations between Bogdan Khmelnytsky and the Russian Government on the Annexation of the Ukraine to Russia*, which was read at a session of the Shevchenko Kiev State University.¹² Attacking the representatives of the "bourgeois-nationalist" school of historiography—M. Hrushevsky and M. Korduba,¹³ the author attempted to prove that negotiations with Moscow were already in existence in 1648 and that the discussions in 1649 were only a continuation. He pointed out the important role as mediator in these relations played by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Paisie who on Khmelnytsky's instructions held discussions with influential people in Moscow, including the tsar. Petrovsky wrote that he had discovered new archival documents concerning Paisie's speech and that he was preparing them for publication.¹⁴ However such Ukrainian historians as Hrushevsky and Korduba had already known a good deal about Paisie before Petrovsky.

Further research has since been concerned with elucidating the epoch from the above described point of view. The climax was reached in 1954 when the anniversary of the 300 years of union between the Ukraine and Moscow was

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Molodaya gvardia* (The Young Guard), Moscow, p. 480.

¹² *Voprosy istorii* (Questions of History), Moscow, 1949, No. 4, pp. 156—158.

¹³ D. Doroshenko, *Ocherk Ukrainskoi Istorii*, p. 197.

¹⁴ Very valuable information published for the first time on Patriarch Paisie's conversations is to be found in volume 11 of "*Vossoedinenia*" (Unification), Moscow, 1954, No. 46.

celebrated. Preparations for these celebrations began early and final instructions were issued by Moscow as far back as 1953. The presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR decreed that the following be published in connection with the celebrations: a work entitled *The Ukraine and Russia in the Joint Work of the Institute for Historical Research of the USSR and the Historical Institute of the Ukrainian SSR*; a symposium of reports delivered at the anniversary session of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR; a collection of articles on the "union," published by the Historical Institute and the Slavic Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in conjunction with the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR; popularly written pamphlets on the union to be prepared by the Ukrainian Professors Huslisty and Holubotsky.¹⁵

The celebrations themselves acquired more and more splendor in the course of time. They took place mainly in the spring of 1954 in conjunction with a long series of official anniversary measures and sessions of the All-Union and Kiev Academies of Sciences, etc. Military parades were organized in Moscow and Kiev as well as exhibitions of archive and museum documents and illustrations. Dankevich's opera *Bohdan Khmelnytsky* was produced in Moscow; the May Day slogans of the Ukrainian journals *Vychyzna* and *Dnipro* were mainly devoted to the 300 years of union; anniversary celebrations were held, of course, in the various republics.¹⁶ The satellite countries also responded; Khrushchev spoke, apparently in Poland, on this occasion.¹⁷

The press was particularly diligent in responding to the events with a stream of articles in every newspaper and magazine. In Kiev the press spoke in elevated tones of "the two great Slavic peoples."¹⁸ In the Moscow *Izvestia* on March 15, 1954, Ivan Tsyupa wrote that "the long history of humanity has never known an example of such genuine, unselfish and ardent friendship as exists together with brotherly unity between the two great Slavic peoples—the Russian and the Ukrainian."¹⁹

As the 1954 spring session of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, devoted to the 300 years of union, scholars expressed themselves far more cautiously than before in the presence of representatives from Moscow and from the other Soviet satellites. The leading role of the "great Russian people" was stressed, and it was for this reason that reports dealt with such themes as "the historical significance of the Ukraine's union with Russia;" "economic cooperation between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples;" "the leading role of progressive Russian scholarship and of the creative, friendly cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian scholars;" "the beneficial influence of Russian literature on the development of Ukrainian literature."²⁰

It is impossible to say definitely whether the promised symposiums and pamphlets by Huslisty and Holubetsky ever appeared. It was certainly easy enough to write the stereotyped newspaper articles on these celebrations, whose content was pre-determined by the central government.

The publication in 1954 of a three-volume collection of documents was completely unexpected.²¹ These volumes concerning the union between the Ukraine

¹⁵ *Voprosy istorii*, 1953, No. 10, p. 143.

¹⁶ *Ukrainsky visti*, Ulm, 1954, Nos. 33, 34, 36, 39.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1954, No. 27.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 33—34.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

and Russia deal with the periods 1620—1647 (vol. 1); 1648—1651 (vol. 2); and 1651—1654 (vol. 3).

All these publications have a common feature: they focus attention on Khmelnytsky as the great state leader. It is, however, astonishing that Soviet scholarship has not paid serious attention either to Khmelnytsky or to the Pereyaslav-Moscow negotiations. The whole issue revolves not around personalities, even outstanding ones, but around theses. In examining the fundamental processes of research into the Khmelnytsky epoch, after Hrushevsky's contribution, primary attention must be paid to M. Petrovsky's work entitled *The Ukrainian People's War of Liberation against the Oppression of the Polish Ruling Class and the Annexation of the Ukraine to Russia, 1648—1654*²² and to the contents of vol. 1 of the *History of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic*²³—a work which apparently has not yet been completed.²⁴ The first volume is supposed to contain a separate chapter on the Ukrainian War of Liberation from 1648—1654 under Khmelnytsky's leadership and on the unification of the Ukraine with Moscow.

Why is there no mention of the years 1654—1657? The answer is clear. The Kremlin needed a suitable version of Khmelnytsky's life for wide propagandistic distribution. However, Khmelnytsky as a "unifier" of the Ukraine with Moscow would lose considerable prestige if his independent policy during the later years of his life were factually depicted, which would not be to the Kremlin's advantage, for after extolling Khmelnytsky it would ultimately have to declare him a betrayer of broad interests as interpreted by the Communist center. In fact, after the Pereyaslav-Moscow treaty the paths of Moscow and the Ukraine, following a short period of unity became sharply divergent; by 1656 Moscow had made peace with Poland and had sent its armies against Sweden, whereas the Ukraine was collaborating with the Swedes and continuing the fight against Poland.

The History of the USSR (in Ukrainian)²⁵ published under the editorship of Prof. G. M. Pankratova also mentions the struggle of the Ukrainian people against Poland. Not only are the uprising of 1648 and the Pereyaslav treaty of 1654 mentioned, but also the years 1654—1657. While Khmelnytsky appears in this "History" as an active leader during the years 1648—1654, the contributors make no comment on his later activities but describe in the most general terms the Moscow-Polish armistice (1656) and the Russo-Swedish war.²⁶

It may now be understood why the celebration of this 300 years of union was so important to the Kremlin: it was a most favorable stimulant to Russian propaganda regarding the Kremlin's beneficent influence. Khmelnytsky and the

²¹ *Vossoedinenie Ukrainy s Rossiei* (The unification of the Ukraine with Russia). Published in 3 vol. by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Moscow, 1954. The basic work of this symposium was accomplished mainly by Ukrainian scholars, Russian collaboration was mainly concerned with guidance and supervision. The so-called editorial board of this technically imposing work consisted half of Russians and half of Ukrainians: Therefore the most important role in the compilation of these 3 vols. was played by the Historical Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences on which depended ultimately the selection of documents.

²² Kiev, 1940, Vol. IV.

²³ *Voprosy istorii*, Moscow, 1953, No. 5, pp. 130—131.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1951, No. 2, pp. 156—158. Cf. also *Ukrainsky Visti*, 1954, No. 47.

²⁵ *Radyanska shkola* (The Soviet School), Kiev, 1941, No. 1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

Pereyaslav-Moscow treaty were only a means of providing the thesis—very important for the Soviets—of the happy existence of peoples under Moscow's administration. In the journal *Questions of History*²⁷ there appeared as early as 1953 a leading article entitled "On the 300 Years' Union of the Ukraine with Russia—The Inviolable Friendship of Fraternal Peoples." This article stated that the Ukrainian people had striven for centuries to unite with Moscow and that Pereyaslav was only a point of return to the homeland.

A common motherland signifies a common origin. On the basis of this official doctrine, the Soviets speak also of a "single old-Russian character."²⁸ This precept of national character became the basis of Kievan Russ with its high level of culture and brilliant development in agriculture, handicrafts and military techniques. Within this Kievan realm, apparently, all East Slavic tribes developed, the three outstanding East Slavic tribes of Belorussians, Ukrainians and Great Russians acquiring kindred qualities in the process of maturation. The influence of this Kievan epoch was, the thesis continues, so profound that it has left to this day in the consciousness of these three tribes the ideal of unity and common origin as well as of a linguistic and cultural kinship. This awareness was, it seems, most alive in the Ukrainian people, and it is for this reason that the historical development of the Ukraine was determined at an early period, especially when Moscow supposedly was utilizing every opportunity to give the Ukrainians aid in the form of munitions or grain or support for the colonization movement of the Ukrainian peoples.

Consequently the unification with Moscow in 1654 may, it appears, be called progressive in nature. For the Ukraine it was a guarantee that it could develop under the protection of Moscow without fear of the Poles or Turks or of any other form of oppression. The Ukrainians, it would appear, have always found in the Russian people²⁹ their protector and ally.

The initial step in this new account of Ukrainian historical development was to persuade the Ukrainians that their country as a whole had never been able to exist independently. As early as 1941, the textbook *The History of the USSR* (edited by G. M. Pantratova) stated that "The War of 1648—1651 graphically showed that the Ukraine could not free itself from Polish slavery by its own efforts alone. Surrounded on all sides by more powerful states it was unable to become independent at that time."³⁰ The complex historical and political conditions in eastern Europe in the XVII century were not apparently conducive to the creation of independent national states. For the Ukraine, lying under foreign oppression and in a constant state of political and economic conflict, the only other solution was to support an alliance with its fraternal Russian neighbor and to struggle, with the aid of the latter, for its own existence.³¹

This very action by Moscow is purported by Soviet historians to make its policy a progressive one, even though its foreign relations at that time also reflected the interests of the feudal ruling class. It is asserted that the Ukraine by entering the Russian "centralized" state saved itself from destruction by the Poles or Turks.³² For the Ukraine, union with Moscow should have been

²⁷ Moscow, 1953.

²⁸ Cf. also the introduction to *Vossoedinenie*, Vol. 1, p. V.

²⁹ *Voprosy istorii*, 1953, No. 12, pp. 3—6.

³⁰ Kiev, 1941, p. 189.

³¹ Cf. Introduction to *Vossoedinenie*, Vol. 1, p. VII.

³² *Ibid.*

advantageous as the Muscovites are said to have been more advanced economically, politically and culturally than the Polish nobility.³³

At this time the brilliant Polish culture of the nobility was at a particularly high level. It is well-known that in the middle of the XVII century the Ukrainians were the chief founders of Muscovite culture, particularly in the fields of education and handicrafts, the Ukrainians coming from a country which had long been under Polish domination.

Pereyaslav represents a sharp break, in the eyes of Soviet historians, from another point of view. They state that whereas prior to Pereyaslav, the Ukrainian people had striven for union with Moscow, afterwards they became a loyal nation and remained so throughout the vicissitudes of history. Pereyaslav extends its influence into the past and into the future; uprisings such as those of Kossinsky, Fedorovich, Pavlyuk or the Sahaydachny epoch were all at periods when the people's desire to join with Moscow was finding apparent expression. The Soviets stress particularly the loyal activity of Sahaydachny,³⁴ although no mention is made of the true fact, namely, that he together with the Polish king Wladislaw commanded the Cossack army in the struggle against Moscow (1618).

After Pereyaslav, the loyalty of the Ukrainian people, according to the Soviets, followed a clear pattern. The years 1708—1709 and 1812 and the war of 1941—1945 are said to show this without any doubt. If there were any traitors, they were to be found among the leaders, not the people.³⁵

In order to give Pereyaslav its pure Muscovite orthodox interpretation one very fundamental difficulty has to be dismissed. This concerns the question of whether a unification between Moscow and the Ukraine was a lesser evil for the latter or whether Moscow's benevolence was available without reservations.

In the 1940's the theory of a "lesser evil" was the officially accepted doctrine and even the *History of the USSR* edited by Pankratova states unequivocally that "the entry of the Ukraine into the Russian state represented a lesser evil for it than slavery under Polish or Turkish rule."³⁶

The theory of a "lesser evil" was an attempt to examine the Ukrainian-Moscow issue more or less factually. Indeed the concept of Moscow as progressive, as the virtuous defender of downtrodden peoples, was unrealistic and strange even for the Russians themselves. Tsarist Moscow, maintained essentially by the cooperation and support of the great feudal landowners, (boyars) had been censured for too long by its own historians (beginning with M. Pokrovsky) for it suddenly to assume the genuine role of a progressively-minded defender.

Later, when on Stalin's initiative the old regime had to be given official support (particularly such personalities as Alexander Nevsky, Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great) Marxist dialectic was once again put at the service of the Kremlin. The beneficent influence of Moscow and its role as the defender of all oppressed peoples was hard to reconcile with the theory of a "lesser evil." Consequently, starting in 1950, Russian historians began demanding a more consistent policy. The well-known Soviet historian Nechkin wrote in 1951 a letter

³³ *Ibid.*, P. XXV.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Part 1.

³⁵ *Voprosy istorii*, 1953, No. 12, pp. 3—6.

³⁶ Kiev, 1941, p. 189.

to the journal *Questions of History*,³⁷ in which he demanded a renunciation of the "lesser evil" formula and for treatment of the Pereyaslav-Moscow treaty as one which had proved to be completely advantageous to the Ukraine.

This viewpoint is supported by A. Pankratova, who is perhaps at present the most typical representative of Soviet Marxist historians. She feels that there is no point in denying the reactionary nature of the tsarist colonial policy.³⁸ Apparently it is sufficient to point out that many people were menaced by completely reactionary states like Turkey. The only solution for such peoples was, supposedly, union with Russia, a union which can, it appears, only be described as a beneficent historical act. Pankratova thinks it is necessary to distinguish between two phenomena of the tsarist period: first, the cooperation by non-Russian feudal leaders with Russian powerful landowners and nobles and second, as a reaction to this process, military alliances of the subjugated or united peoples with the great Russian people, that is with the Russian masses.³⁹

This is in fact nothing but dialectic fiction. There was no real cooperation on the part of the leaders or of the masses. Indications of Ukrainian participation in the Razin and Pugachev rebellions as well as Russian participation in the 1768 uprising in the Ukraine⁴⁰ do not prove anything, as these were purely military episodes. Further evidence of the lack of collaboration among the leaders is the mood of opposition and even enmity of the Ukrainian nobility toward Russia during the first half of the XIX century.

Consequently, the Pereyaslav-Moscow treaty and Khmel'nitsky's activities are represented by Soviet historiography as phenomena necessary and inevitable for the Ukraine itself. It is asserted that by this agreement the Ukraine saved itself and acquired a guarantee of its development.⁴¹ Moreover, both Khmel'nitsky and the treaty are said to symbolize the general unity of the non-Russian peoples with Russia during both the tsarist and the Soviet periods. The theory of unification is at the same time a theory of a war of liberation in which Moscow is supposed to have played the role of liberator. This so-called positive and progressive nature of Russia's policy is constantly stressed by the presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR whenever it has to reproach its own Historical Institute on this matter.⁴²

In this respect Soviet historiography, both Russian and Ukrainian, was given definite instructions from which it may not digress. Historians well appreciate that the important issues do not center around Khmel'nitsky or Pereyaslav. They are only the initial positions for justifying the policies of Russia and of the Soviet Union but nevertheless positions which are important for their propagandistic potential.

This type of anniversary comment in the press marking the 300-year celebrations, learned articles, an imposing edition of the Pereyaslav treaty—all represent a definitive approach to Khmel'nitsky which has been stressed as favorable, for it would be impossible to regard him in any other way after his having accepted the task—so praiseworthy in the eyes of Moscow—of uniting the Ukraine with Russia. However the situation has not always been as described

³⁷ Moscow, 1951, part 4, pp. 44—48.

³⁸ Cf. *Istoria SSR*, 1941, p. 189.

³⁹ *Kommunist*, Moscow, 1953, No. 6, pp. 64—65.

⁴⁰ *Voprosy istorii*, 1953, No. 12, pp. 6, 7, 18.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, No. 10, p. 142.

⁴² *Ibid.*, No. 5, p. 126.

above, as may be seen from the biography of Khmel'nitsky in the *Large Soviet Encyclopedia* (Moscow, 1935, vol. 59, pp. 816—918). Here the social aspect was stressed. But the Soviets had not yet thought of using the memory of the Ukrainian hetman as a symbol of the 300 years of coexistence between the Russian and the Ukrainian peoples, a symbol of the "friendship of fraternal peoples." This false romanticism had arisen from the needs of Russian nationalism which was still seeking an outlet in the 1930's. The official interpretation of Khmel'nitsky in the *Large Soviet Encyclopedia* was based on the thesis that this hetman was a "betraye'r and a sworn enemy of the rebellious Ukrainian peasantry." Apparently even prior to the uprising of 1648 he represented the interests of the Ukrainian feudal leaders who were aspiring to the same rights as those held by the Polish feudal nobility.

It is stressed that Khmel'nitsky headed the peasant rebellions, but he is said to have done this in order to force concessions from the Poles because his interests and those of the peasantry diverged sharply. The Ukrainian feudal leaders wished to negotiate with their Polish counterparts and this fact is given as the reason for the "shameful" Treaty of Zborov in 1649 (as a result of which the Cossack leaders gained their feudal rights and serfdom was restored on all noble and monastic estates) as well as the humiliating Treaty of Belotserkov in 1651. It is also used to explain Khmel'nitsky's savage reprisals against the popular uprisings. He then went farther than he had planned, for he achieved essentially, at that time recognition of rights for Ukrainian feudal leaders equal to those of their Polish neighbors and only during the last few years of the struggle did he aspire to achieve Ukrainian independence. In his policy toward the rebellious peasantry, Khmel'nitsky often utilized purely provocative means which aimed at breaking the force of the peasant uprising, for example by enabling the Crimeans to occupy a provisionally "neutralist" position and thus enabling the feudal leaders to conclude the peace of Belotserkov, so advantageous to them. Even more treacherous was Khmel'nitsky's attitude to the insurgents under the leadership of Nechay, Bohun and others. In this case the Ukrainian hetman did not hide behind a neutralist façade but gave direct help to the Polish forces which had suppressed the popular rebellion.

Although Khmel'nitsky was an excellent general and diplomat who found allies sometimes in Turkey or the Crimea, sometimes in Sweden, he nevertheless sought aid persistently from Moscow and in 1651 sent his plenipotentiaries to Moscow for negotiations concerning a protectorate over the Ukraine. These negotiations lasted for three years and were terminated by the celebrated Treaty of Pereyaslav which constituted an alliance between the Ukrainian and Moscow feudal leaders and which legalized essentially the beginning of Russia's colonial domination over the Ukraine. Relying on the considerably strengthened feudal class, Khmel'nitsky wished at this period to become the autocratic ruler of the Ukraine.

Encyclopedias prior to the 1920's at least recognized that Khmel'nitsky wished to be an autocratic ruler of the Ukraine. To admit this would today be considered pernicious by Moscow. Equally untenable would be the admission that the Treaty of Pereyaslav led to Russia's colonial domination over the Ukraine and not to that brotherly love and cooperation which were stressed so frequently during the recent celebrations. Moreover, it is forbidden to express the opinion that Khmel'nitsky betrayed the Ukrainian people. All these are theses which must not be substantiated. Russian historians are in the habit of

putting them forward only if it is necessary to prove some issue or other. In the 1930's, social awareness in the USSR was still strong, and it is for this reason that it was natural to develop the theme of antagonism between the reactionary, feudal Khmel'nitsky and the ordinary Ukrainian people, who had proclaimed their right to lead a free existence.

Moscow as the elder brother of the Ukraine, the beneficent influence of the former on the latter after the Treaty of Pereyaslav, the progressive nature of their liaison—not a feudal alliance but a people's alliance implying mutual aid—all these factors are now being accentuated by the Soviets. It is for this reason that there is such a great difference between what Soviet historiography was preaching twenty years ago and what it is preaching today.