

РЕЦЕНЗІЇ / REVIEWS

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THE UKRAINIAN ELITE IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY HISTORY: A NEW STUDY IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL HISTORY

(peer-review of the collective monograph: The Ukrainian Elite in the Second Half of the 19th – the Beginning of the 21st Centuries: Formation Features, Transformation of Ideas, Intellectual Potential. Western Lands. Selected Issues / ed. Ihor Soliar, compiled by Oleh Muravsky, Mykhailo Romaniuk; NAS of Ukraine, I. Krypiakievych Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Book 1. Lviv, 2023. 536 p.

УКРАЇНСЬКА ЕЛІТА У НОВІЙ І НОВІТНІЙ ІСТОРІЇ: НОВЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ У РІЧИЩІ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ІСТОРІЇ

(рецензія на колективну монографію: Українська еліта у другій половині XIX – на початку XXI століття: особливості формування, трансформація уявлень, інтелектуальний потенціал. Західні землі. Вибрані проблеми / від. ред. Ігор Соляр, упоряд. Олег Муравський, Михайло Романюк; НАН України, Інститут українознавства ім. І. Крип'якевича. Кн. 1. Львів, 2023. 536 с.)

In 2023, in the Ukrainian humanities a landmark event was the appearance of the collective monograph “The Ukrainian Elite in the Second Half of the 19th – the Beginning of the 21st

Centuries: Formation Features, Ideas Transformation, Intellectual Potential. Western Lands. Selected Issues”, which was prepared at the I. Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the NAS of Ukraine (a responsible editor – director of the Institute, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor Ihor Soliar). The monograph covers various historical periods, from the end of the 19th century and the Ukrainian Revolution to the present day, emphasizing the complexity of the national elite formation taking into account external and internal factors, including Russification, pseudo-elite and a low public trust in government structures.

The appearance of the collective monograph at the time of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation is not accidental. Russia's invasion in Ukraine became a catalyst for a possible rethinking of the elite's role and the problem of its consolidation on the issues of preserving statehood. In the collective monograph, in particular, there are characterized the contradictory processes of the formation and evolution of the Ukrainian elite in Western Ukrainian lands in the second half of the 19th – the beginning of the 21st centuries; retrospectively there are analysed the essence, socio-historical genesis, stages and models of elite formation at the end of the 19th – the beginning of the 20th centuries, the period of the Liberation Struggles, the interwar period of the 20th century and modern Ukraine; the peculiarities of the political elite rotation processes in Ukraine are researched, its ethnic and social characteristics and generational potential are shown; a significant focus is on the issue of interaction between central and regional political administrative elites of modern Ukraine, the influence of regionalization on state-building processes is shown, and the role of party structures in the process of elite formation is defined.

Methodologically the collective monograph is based on the Western tradition of elite research (Vilfredo Pareto (1848 – 1923), who introduced the concept of “circulation of elites”; Gaetano Mosca (1858 – 1941), who developed the concept of “political class”; Robert Michels (1876 – 1936), the author of the law of oligarchization; Charles Wright Mills (1916 – 1962), who studied the power structures of the United States, etc., the Ukrainian socio-political thought (Dmytro Dontsov (1883 – 1973), who emphasized the importance of creating a strong national elite; Viacheslav Lypynsky (1882 – 1931), the author of the concept of the elite as the driving force of state formation; Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytskyi (1919 – 1984), who emphasized the role of the intellectual elite in the national identity formation, etc.), as well as scientific achievements of the contemporaries (Borys Kukhta, Natalia Teploukhova, etc.), achievements of leading scholars of the I. F. Kuras Institute of Political and Ethno-National Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the I. Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, etc.

The idea of the need to rethink the role of the Ukrainian elite in the processes of state formation runs through the collective monograph. At the same time, the focus is on the influence of elites on national identity and democratic processes. In this context, it is worth noting that the monograph is distinguished by a clear and thoughtful structure. In Part I “The Phenomenon of the Ukrainian Elite,” there are analysed the issues of the “Identity Wars” as a challenge for the Ukrainian elites (Yaroslav Kalakura, Oleh Kalakura), “The Intellectual Elite and Book Culture of Galicia (Roman Holyk). The focus is on the fact that the absence or uncertainty of the leadership role of elites, their excessive politicization leads to a mutual struggle and becomes the cause of identity crises, conflicts and “wars”. Overcoming these and other shortcomings, increasing the role of the state and civil society in the identification process will contribute to the formation of a new quality of elites and identities, their understanding between themselves for the sake of consolidating the Ukrainian society, achieving Victory over the internal and external enemy.

Among the chapters of Part II (“Ukrainian Elite during the Period of Nation- and State-building Processes of the Second Half of the 19th – the Beginning of the 20th Centuries”),

the studies by Oleksandr Muzychko “Interactions of the South Ukrainian and West Ukrainian Intellectual Elite in the Second Half of the 19th – the Beginning of the 20th Centuries”, Myroslava Novakovych “The Role of the Musical Elite in the Cultural and Political Life of Galicia in the Second Half of the 19th – the Beginning of the 20th Centuries”, Valentyna Hoshovska “The Leading Role of the Ukrainian Elite in the Formation of National Social Democratic Thought (the end of the 19th – the beginning of the 20th centuries)”, Ruslan Piroh “The Ruling Elite of the Ukrainian State in 1918: Issues of National Identification”, Ivan Pater “The Ukrainian Political Elite during the Great War: between National Consolidation and Political Confrontation”, etc. are of a particular relevance. The latter, in particular, noted that by the end of 1918, i.e. after the end of the Great War, political figures in Galicia and the Dnieper region believed that their main and highest goal had been achieved, since independent Ukrainian state had been formed, national and social oppression had been eliminated, conditions had been created for the revival and powerful development of the nation, and then a new stage in the struggle for the Ukrainian statehood in other forms and conditions was coming. After the end of the liberation struggles of 1917 – 1921, the majority of the Ukrainian political elite, without betraying their convictions, made many efforts to restore the Ukrainian state.

Of great interest is the third part of the collective monograph “The Elite of the National Liberation Movement of the 1920s – 1950s”, co-authored by Vasyl Futala (“The Political and Military Elite of the Ukrainian National Liberation Movement of the 1920s – 1950s: Modern Ukrainian Historiography”), Oksana Ruda (“The Ukrainian Political Elite in Defense of National Interests in Parliament of Interwar Poland (1922 – 1939)”), Iryna Skalska (“Models of Formation and Work of the Ukrainian Elite of Western Volhynia (1921 – 1939)”), Oleksandra Stasiuk (“The OUN Policy Regarding Involvement of Intelligentsia in Underground”), Oleksandr Lutsky (“The Intelligentsia of Western Ukraine in 1939 – 1941: between Adaptation and Resistance”), Vasyl Ilnytskyi (“The Leading Members of the Carpathian Regional Leadership of the OUN (1945 – 1954): Structure, Organizational Responsibilities, Social Portrait”), etc.

It is worth mentioning the opinion of Vasyl Futala, who argued that in a new socio-political, spiritual atmosphere after the restoration of Ukrainian statehood, the names of those who fought for Ukraine’s independence were brought back from oblivion, and our history was enriched with its human dimensions. According to the scholar, despite significant success in studying the role of the political and military elite in the Ukrainian national liberation movement of the 1920s – 1950s, there is a need to continue doing the research. The scholar argues that historians have focused on key figures mostly – Ye. Konovalets, S. Bandera and R. Shukhevych, but academic biographies of these figures will have to wait. There are no book-format studies on four of the nine UPA generals – I. Klymiv, V. Mayivsky, L. Stupnytsky and I. Treik. We have little information about the UPA commanders and staff chiefs of the operational groups – Vasyl Ivakhiv, Petro Oliinyk, Ivan Lytvynchuk, Oleksandr Lutsky, Vasyl Sydor, Mykola Svystun, Vasyl Protsiuk, etc. The situation is similar regarding the commanders and chiefs of staff of military districts and tactical units – Mykola Yakymchuk, Yuriy Stelmashchuk, Ivan Butkovsky, Mykola Tverdokhlib, Bohdan Vilshynsky, Mykola Levytsky, Volodymyr Yakubovsky, etc. On the agenda there is the coverage of the life and combat path of dozens of commanders of kurens, hundreds and other grassroots units of the UPA. The scholar notes that knowledge about famous OUN figures, such as Roman Kravchuk, is far from complete.

Individual fragments of the Ukrainian elite evolution issue after the restoration of Ukraine's independence (Part IV) are revealed in the studies by Ihor Pidkova “Democratic Parliamentary Elite in the Processes of Sovereignization of the Ukrainian SSR: Institutional Formation, Socio-political Structure and Ideological Configuration”, by Mykola Vehesh,

Marian Tokar “Features of Formation and Development Trends of Transcarpathia Political Elite”, by Zoriana Hbur “Ukrainian Elite during the Russo-Ukrainian War of 2014 – 2023”, by Iryna Hrabovska, Mykhailo Tsiurupa “Military Elite of Ukraine: the Path of Ukrainian Women to Leadership”, etc. It is difficult not to agree to the thesis that the Ukrainian elite plays an important role in the Russo-Ukrainian war, which began in 2014 and continues to this day. In the monograph it is stated that at the beginning of the war, many Ukrainian elite groups, including businessmen, politicians, and intellectuals, felt threatened by the Russian aggression for their property and positions in the Ukrainian society. Many of them took responsibility for the defense of Ukraine and the fight against the Russian aggression, including financing the Ukrainian army, providing assistance to military hospitals and war victims, and participating in military operations. The book proves that it is the elite that shapes national identity and supports the Ukrainian language and culture, which is an important factor in Ukraine's resistance against the Russian aggression. Actually, in this way, the Ukrainian elite plays an important role in protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

In general, having analysed the main parts of the collective monograph, we can conclude that the Ukrainian elite played a decisive role in the formation of national identity, statehood and cultural independence during the second half of the 19th – the beginning of the 21st centuries, however, its influence was often limited by external factors. The formation of the Ukrainian elite was affected negatively, in particular, by the processes of Russification, Polonization, as well as the Soviet ideology.

Without any doubt, the collective monograph creates a platform for an interdisciplinary dialogue on the Ukrainian models of elite formation, historical patterns and modern challenges, which is an important step for the development of the Ukrainian historical and political science. It is also gratifying that the publication is aimed at creating a theoretical basis for training new generations of the Ukrainian leaders who will be able to meet modern challenges and realize the state potential.

In Preface of the collective monograph, O. Muravsky notes rightly that it is impossible to characterize the contradictory processes of formation, establishment and evolution of the Ukrainian elite in Western Ukrainian lands in the second half of the 19th – the beginning of the 21st centuries in one book fully, taking into account the multifaceted nature of the term “elite”, which is used to designate a layer of society that is endowed with power and / or influence, resources, privileges, etc. For these reasons, according to the scholar, there is a need for a serial publication, which in the future would become a dialogical all-Ukrainian platform for studying a wide range of issues, among which the following thematic blocks should become dominant: the Ukrainian models of elite formation; features of the political elite rotation at the turning points of the 20th – 21st centuries; general trends in elite formation that unite the elites of the Ukrainian Revolution period, the interwar period of the 20th century and modern Ukraine; social features, a “generational code” and intellectual potential of modern elite; the influence of pseudo-elites on socio-political processes in historical and modern retrospect, etc. It is difficult to disagree to such a statement, which gives hope for the emergence of a series of publications on the analysis of the intellectual, economic and military elites functions, determining their influence on the development of democracy, social justice and social values formation.

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