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**Віталій КОРОЛЬ**

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**HETMANATE OF 1918 THROUGH THE PRISM OF UKRAINIAN  
BUREAUCRACY HISTORY**

**Monograph review: Degtyarev S. State Institutions and Officials of the Period of P. Skoropadsky's Hetmanate (Treatise on the History of the Authorities and Governance Bodies of the Ukrainian State in 1918): Monograph. Sumy: SSU, 2018. 168 p.**

**ГЕТЬМАНАТ 1918 Р. ЧЕРЕЗ ПРИЗМУ  
ІСТОРІЇ УКРАЇНСЬКОГО ЧИНОВНИЦТВА**

**Рецензія на монографію: Дегтярьов С. Державні інституції та чиновники періоду гетьманату П. Скоропадського (нарис з історії органів влади й управління Української Держави 1918 р.): монографія. Суми: СумДУ, 2018. 168 с.**

Alternative ways of further development of the state and society always appear at critical moments of history. In 1918, the attempt to move away from the revolutionary-socialist path in favour of an independent Ukraine building on a conservative basis was made under conditions of chaos, anarchy and a foreign military presence. A strong leader, able to take decisive action to give peace to the people, law, order, and opportunity for productive work was necessary.

A century has passed since the existence of P. Skoropadsky's Hetmanate, but a number of aspects of the functioning of the Ukrainian State (*Ukrayinska Derzhava*) remain poorly studied. Professor Serhiy Degtyarev's monograph is dedicated to covering little-known pages on this topic. The scientist made an attempt to reveal the mechanism and principles of a state power functioning and local self-government in 1918 from the perspective of the Ukrainian bureaucracy at that time.

The monograph consists of an introduction, four sections, conclusions, a list of sources and literature, annexes and a name index. The author outlined the main problems and tasks of the research, characterized the theoretical and methodological apparatus in the introduction. The historiography of the issue was analysed. In particular, several groups of scholarly works on this problem were distinguished, namely: the works of the Soviet historians, the contemporary Ukrainian historiography, the researches of representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora, and the works of foreign scholars.

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Section I “Higher and Central Government Authorities” focuses on the description of the structure and character of the Hetmanate as a specific form of government. P. Skoropadsky’s reorganization efforts to save the state were analysed. According to the author, the system of management of the Hetmanate became more viable in comparison with the inefficient state apparatus of the Central Council (*Tsentralna Rada*). During the regime of P. Skoropadsky, the government was formed with a network of subordinate ministries and other institutions with clearly defined and regulated powers. Many important regulatory acts were adopted. During the development of this system, the positive experience of the Russian Empire was taken into account. But this experience was rethought and adapted to the Ukrainian traditions and realities of that time. It seemed that such a path could give the Ukrainian State a chance to survive in the current military, political and socio-economic situation.

Section II “Local Administration and Local Authorities” is devoted to the interaction of the local state apparatus and territorial self-government. In particular, the causes, characteristics, and consequences of a permanent conflict between government and self-government were investigated.

The Hetman government was immediately confronted with the problem of the complete absence of the implementation mechanisms of the local authorities. The network of peripheral government agencies was set up in an extremely tight time frame. The greatest power was concentrated in the hands of the governorate and county heads (*huberniya* and *povit starostas*). At the same time, local self-government institutions (*zemstvos* and *city dumas*) had to deal with an extremely large number of issues of daily living for the people. This self-government was based on an electoral nature. Because of this, political opponents of the government, who tried to use *zemstvos* to struggle against P. Skoropadsky’s Hetmanate often became its representatives. The author illustrates how the authorities struggled with this by means of revisions, dismissals and the dissolution of self-government bodies. This confrontation was very detrimental for the effective resolution of local economic, social and humanitarian issues.

Section III “Judicial and Law Enforcement Bodies” focuses on the organization of the judicial and law enforcement system in the Ukrainian State. The author described in general the state of justice in Ukraine in 1918. The problem of the functioning of foreign (German and Austrian) military courts is discussed in details. The very fact of their presence was a sign of incompleteness of the Ukrainian sovereignty and created some tension between the population and the allied troops. The author paid a special attention to the issue of the State Guard functioning (*Derzhavna Varta*), which was the body with police and gendarmerie functions and absorbed both the experience of the imperial era and the Ukrainian national specifics (in particular, its name). The researcher reasonably points at the extraordinary efficiency and effectiveness of the State Guard. The particular value of this section is the widespread use of information about the activities of ordinary provincial courts and law enforcement agencies.

Section IV “Officials of the Ukrainian State” illustrates the staff specifics of the central and peripheral state bodies of the Hetmanate. Thus, it presents a social portrait of the Ukrainian bureaucracy of that time. This section is extremely rich in factual material collected from various sources. It is argued that the biggest problems in the functioning of the state bodies were the shortage of a qualified personnel and inadequate material support of the officials. The formation of the public servants contingent took place primarily on a professional basis without assessing the political preferences of the candidates. However, political opponents

of the Hetman government tried to do harm in various ways, in particular, by infiltrating administrative or local self-government bodies to sabotage or discredit the work of these institutions. The representatives of leftist political forces initiated the acts of terrorism, inciting the population to show discontent for political destabilization in Ukraine.

S. Degtyaryov's research is based on the following groups of sources:

- collections of published documents of the period of the Ukrainian State;
- archival materials from the Central State Archives of Higher Authorities and Administration of Ukraine and regional state archives;
- information from the central and local newspapers published in 1918, namely: *Derzhavnyi Visnyk*, *Visnyk Ministerstva zemel'nykh sprav*, *Vidrozhennia*, *Zemske Dilo*, *Selianska Sprava*, *Luch*, *Sumskyi visnyk* etc.
- memoirs of direct participants in the events of 1918 in Ukraine, both the Ukrainian leaders and leaders of the “White” movement.

However, it should be noted that most of involved archival sources and materials of the local press concern the Left Bank Ukraine. The researcher focused his attention precisely on this part of the country. At the same time, we can assume that this work would become even more relevant and informative by wide using of documents from the regional archives of the Right Bank and the South of Ukraine. However, the foregoing does not detract from the scientific achievements of this comprehensive study. Undoubtedly, it will be useful not only for academic experts, but will be useful for teachers and students in the study of the history of the state and law of Ukraine, as well as a wide range of readers.

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