

[Rev.]: Ivangorodsky K. Ethnic History of East Slavs in Contemporary Historiography (Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian discourses). Cherkassy : Yu. Chabanenko Published, 2018. 422 p.

Recently, the scientific monograph by Cherkasy historian Kostiantyn Ivangorodsky has been published. It's devoted to the study of three contemporary historiographic discourses in the post-Soviet space concerning the problem of the East Slavs ethnic history before the Mongol era. In the work it has been clearly demonstrated that this problem remains extremely important and scientifically relevant today, and therefore in historical science during many centuries it is often called «eternal». Despite this, until now there was no holistic historiographical research, in which the ways and methods of corresponding reconstruction offered by researchers of a diverse profile – archaeologists, anthropologists, linguists, ethnologists and historians themselves has been traced on the polydisciplinary and comparative bases. It is especially important that in the book the author attempted to cover the entire spectrum of contemporary scientific thought by various (Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian) post-Soviet historiographical traditions and to make their scientific and ethnological and historiographical analysis with precise methodological and theoretical principles.

In general, Kostiantyn Ivangorodsky's book has a logical and motivated structure, consists of the introduction, seven sections, conclusions and extremely solid bibliography (1596 positions), that proved the enormous amount of analytical work carried out by the author. In the introduction are correctly formulated goal, task, object, subject, chronological framework of the study. A positive point must be recognized rather thorough essay on the main methodological and theoretical grounds on which the Cherkasy specialist builds the logic of his own historiographical analysis. The clarification of main approaches within the framework of contemporary ethnological science to the ethno-historical reconstructions of the pre-essay and medieval epochs communities specifics seems to be appropriate. On this backdrop, the author's appeal to the works of foreign specialists, which in the newest historiography proposed quite different, from the «East Slavic» historical discourses, vision of the old days ethnic processes (in particular, it is an analysis of the corresponding studies by F. Curta, D. Dzino, W. Pohl, etc.) looks really important. We agree that one of the contemporary historiography significant problems remains unjustified politicization of ancient ethnicity especially in the context of contemporary inter-

ethnic relations. The analysis of the source database, which the author has drawn to study the identified problem, does not cause any complaints.

In the second chapter it is shown that the historiographic development of the topic at the latest stage leaves much to be desired, so in all contemporary post-Soviet historiographies, researchers still avoid to analyze colleagues scientific work as from their own national historical schools so the neighboring ones. The analysis of the source grounds for ethnological reconstruction by the researchers of the East Slavs ethno-historical past should be considered quite successful. Proposed book is perfectly illustrated, that in this segment of historical knowledge there are extremely many problems and obstacles that obstruct to construct the linear Slavic ethnogenesis and make a large number of relevant findings doubtful.

The methodological and theoretical principles, which the present experts use to reconstruct the Eastern Slavs ethnic history, remain controversial and even weak. To this problem the fourth chapter of the peer-reviewed monograph is devoted. Consequently, Kostiantyn Ivangorodsky rightly argues that contemporary specialists who offer their own East Slavic communities ethno-reconstruction do not always follow the well-defined methodological guidelines and theoretical postulates that allow such a study. In particular, the analysis of Belarusian ethnological thought has shown its rather weak level of development, that does not allow to hope for the emergence of more thorough empirical ethno-historical studies, including those which concerned problems of the East Slavs or the Belarusians ethnic community ethnogenesis. Studying the contemporary Russian historiography of given problem also convinces that most of specialists in this field of knowledge essentially ignore the theoretical and methodological components of researching. As a rule, there are not even attempts to explain what concrete meanings are invested in those ethno-historical concepts and categories that occur in the works about the Slavs ethnic history, even more - how they relate to specific types of ancient communities in an empirical plane. In Ukraine historical science are also present outdated rudiments of positivism, misunderstanding and reluctance to apply the latest Western approaches, conscious self-isolation within the national narrative. Although many leading historiographers in

contemporary Ukraine elucidate significant changes in this area in the last decades, that allows to hope for improvement of the situation in the ancient past ethnical history researching.

The comparative analysis allowed the author to demonstrate the specific aspects of the historiographical process in various cognitive spheres of contemporary disciplines and to reflect the peculiarities the East Slavs before the Mongol era ethnic history researching reconstruction, which are presented by various scientific disciplines representatives. Particularly important is to admit the analysis of synchronously interpreting the relevant development trends in Belarusian, Russian and Ukrainian contemporary historiographies. In this way, the author succeeded to elucidate a number of similar problems and difficulties existing till now, and at the same time to exclude the purely «national» aspects of such reconstructions.

Thus, in the fifth section the author presents a panoramic review of the Belarusian scholars works devoted to East Slavic ethnic history. It deals first of all with the fact that in Belarusian historiography the problem of the Eastern Slavic communities' ethnic history is discovered by archaeologists, but, as a rule, fragmentarily. The only contemporary Belarusian archaeologist E. Zagarulsky who proposed his own concept, although his scheme is characterized by guessing, sometimes by inventing some aspects of the «Slavic» ethnogenesis, that does not allow to specify the subject. None of contemporary Belarusian historians has devoted particular attention to the problem of the Slavs ethnic history or even Belarusians ethnogenesis. All these issues are discovered by them in a random manner or in the context of other research problems, usually in the form of a peculiar background, which is depicted in dashed form and does not become a separate object of analysis. In the Belarusian historiography is quite popular the version of the «baltic substrate» definition in Belarusians ethnogenesis. However, this definition has not yet acquired any scientific conceptualization. It must to be noted that Belarusian humanitarianism is attendant by extremely low theoretical and methodological level of scientific studies, in which complex ethno-historical problems are solved mainly without source base verification, analysis of the problem historiography and categorical apparatus.

In the sixth section of his work Kostyantyn Ivanorodsky civilly, objectively and professionally approaches the verification of the latest projects about «the Slavs Origin» proposed by Russian humanities in the last decades. It becomes clear that the concept of the Slavic ethnogenesis by V. Sedov's authorship is

the most developed and popular but extremely controversial, schematized and engaging, in contemporary Russian historiography. The main disadvantage of the Sedov's concept structures is complete isolation from any ethno-theoretical principles, which makes its extremely vulnerable and scientifically unconvincing, since it is built exclusively on intuition, guess and ideologized dogmas. It also noticeable in «moscowian» and «petersburgian» archaeological schools studios. Similar flaws are inherent for historical and ethnological reconstructions offered by the latest Russian humanities.

In the last chapter, the author has thoroughly explored the «Ukrainian discourse ethno-historical optics» in relation to the Eastern Slavs before the Mongol era ethnic history in particular the archaeological conjecture and versions of the historical and ethnological direction. The author finally concludes that in contemporary Ukrainian historiography of the problem are much more visible concepts and hypotheses variation compared to similar discourses in Belarus and Russia. Although the «nationalized» approach to the East Slavic history, represented by the versions of three contemporary ethnic East Slavs groups separately formation, is also dominant in Ukrainian.

Some historians of the older generation continue to follow the so-called «old-Rus' nationality» hypothesis that was dominant in the Soviet historical science. From this hypothesis Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians have appeared after Mongolian era. Nevertheless, the both camps have the same theoretical and methodological flaws, primarily due to neglecting the ethnological theory, free manipulating and constructing the corresponding terminology and completely uncritical perception of the exclusively primordial vision of ethnogenesis and ethnic processes. But we have to mention attempts to analyze the problems on the basis of new methodological principles. It inspires significant historiographical optimism and allows us to hope for a qualitatively different level of ethno-historical reconstructions concerning the East Slavs communities in the future. The same is proved in the final conclusions of the monograph, which also discovered their author's originality of thinking and scientific maturity.

In general, Kostyantyn Ivanorodsky's work must be positively evaluated. But we have to express some wishes that may be needed by the author in future work. Perhaps in the work it would be advisable to use the content analysis and critical discourse analysis in conjunction with the behavioral method of scientific study, which would allow to characterize the level of this problem politicization in historical

investigations in the post-Soviet countries. At the same time, the wishes and remarks made do not affect the overall positive assessment of the peer-reviewed monograph, which is the significant achievement for contemporary Ukrainian historiography and allows us to hope for essentially scientific rethinking

of the Eastern Slavic initial period history.

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