

BOOK REVIEWS

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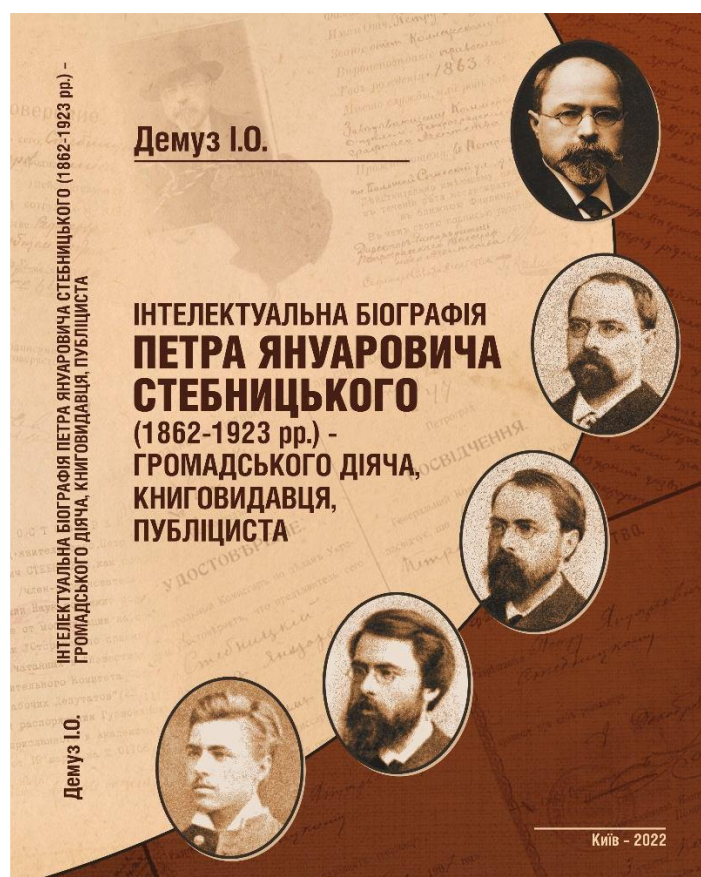
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Review of the monograph: I. O. Demuz. Intellectual biography of Petro Yanuarovych Stebnytskyi (1862–1923) – public figure, book publisher, publicist: monograph. Pereyaslav (Kyiv region): Dombrovska Ya. M., 2022. 356 pp. ISBN 978-617-7747-62-7



In the context of the search for new "anthropological projects", a "biographical turn" in humanitarianism, there is an urgent need to rethink the figure and multifaceted activity of Petro Yanuarovych Stebnytskyi (1862–1923), a builder of the Ukrainian nation, a state builder, and an active participant in the Ukrainian national movement of the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, book publisher, philanthropist and publicist, a new reading of the public figure's personal, professional, and scientific biography. The lack of research on his figure is explained by the fact that during the soviet era, the national intelligentsia was included in the black list of figures of the "Ukrainian bourgeoisie", the very

mentions of which were either removed or were exclusively negative. Despite the appearance of separate studies on P. Stebnytskyi, a number of issues have remained unstudied until now, in particular: the St. Petersburg period of the publicist's activity, his official work in state institutions, a number of committees and unions, as well as public and political life in revolutionary and post-revolutionary Kyiv (1917 – the beginning of



the 1920s); organizational principles of the functioning of publishing houses, in the work of which P. Stebnytskyi was involved, the publicist's contribution to the development of biography, literature, etc.

This topic is relevant not only in the context of biography and portraiture, but also in the direction of the study of historical nation- and state-building processes, the origins of the national self-identification of Ukrainians, a new interpretation of nationally oriented narratives.

It was these research tasks that were realized by Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor Inna Demuz in a thorough monograph, in which an innovative biographical model was proposed, with the help of which it was possible to represent not only the eventful (classical) biography of P. Stebnytskyi, but also to build his intellectual biography, in particular a mental map of the personality was presented through the method of mental mapping. All this made it possible to depict both the psychological world of P. Stebnytskyi and the Ukrainian-Russian society at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in general.

The source base of the research was, first of all, the representative personal fund of P. Stebnytskyi from the Manuscript Institute of the National Library of Ukraine named after V. I. Vernadskyi, an important place in which is occupied by the correspondence and publicist heritage of the public figure.

The scientific novelty of the monograph is indisputable, the structure of the book is logical, such a content structure makes it possible to comprehensively outline the multifaceted activity of P. Stebnytskyi in the field of Ukrainian national affairs.

In Chapter 1 "Theoretical and methodological basis of the reconstruction of the intellectual biography of P. Stebnytskyi", which consists of four subsections, the historiography of the issue, the source base of the research, the methodological principles of building a biographical model are characterized, and a mental map of the actor's biography is constructed, on which places and artifacts are presented, events, people who were significant and played a key role in the life and formation of P. Stebnytskyi's worldview. It was established that the activist belonged to the cohort of those intellectuals of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, whose cultural efforts were focused on the defense of the historical existence of the Ukrainian people, its national and political identity through the development of a communication system in the form of a Ukrainian-language press, education, "Prosvita", libraries, reading rooms, clubs, etc. The author has proven that P. Stebnytskyi was a very versatile, encyclopedically educated person (mathematician by education, held a number of official positions in the Ministry of Finance, was a member of a large number of periodical and magazine editors as a publicist, was interested in the development of trade, agriculture, linguistics, lexicography, wrote poems and literary stories, carried out diplomatic missions, was a member of numerous public and political organizations, worked in scientific academic institutions, engaged in book publishing and library work, was the Minister of Public Education and Arts of the Ukrainian State). The researcher characterized in sufficient detail the intellectual environment with which P. Stebnytskyi communicated: numerous networks of

countrymen, friendships, business, corporate, social and political ties, etc. Thus, his cooperation and personal relationships with public figures D. L. Mordovets, O. G. Lototskyi, E. Kh. Chikalenko, A. V. Nikovskyi, V. M. Domanytskyi, S. O. Yefremov, I. L. Shrag, the Grinchenko, Zhitecki, Rusov families and many others.

In Chapter 2 "Public and political platform of the national idea of P. Stebnytskyi", which consists of three subsections, little-known aspects of the life and activities of the public figure are analyzed: his participation in intellectual, cultural, educational and political centers (in particular, the All-Ukrainian Non-Party Democratic Organization, the Society of Ukrainian Progressives, the Ukrainian Party of Socialist-Federalists, the Ukrainian Democratic Party, the St. Petersburg Ukrainian Club "Hromada", the Ukrainian Parliamentary Community, etc.). For the first time, the researcher has thoroughly analyzed the contribution of P. Stebnytskyi as the head of the Ukrainian National Council in Petrograd in helping refugees and displaced persons during the World War I, as well as his participation in the Ukrainian revolution and liberation struggles of 1917–1921, where he served the representative of Ukraine under the Provisional Government in St. Petersburg, a member of the Financial and Economic Council of the Ukrainian People's Republic, a senator of the Administrative General Court of the State Senate, the Supreme Judge of the Ukrainian People's Republic, the Minister of National Education and Arts of the Ukrainian State, was the deputy head of the Ukrainian peace delegation during the Ukrainian-Russian negotiations of the process between the National Union and P. Skoropadskyi.

In Chapter 3 "Cultural and educational vector of activity of P. Stebnytskyi", which consists of three subsections, the most important direction of activity in the life of P. Stebnytskyi – promotion of the development of national book publishing and distribution of Ukrainian-language printed products is characterized. The public figure during the entire period of existence of the "Charitable Society for Publishing General Useful and Cheap Books" (1898–1918) performed the duties of treasurer, secretary and head of the cell, which enabled this truly innovative and progressive cell to operate in difficult imperial censorship conditions for 20 years of existence, to print a large number of Ukrainian-language books and brochures on economics, law, history, political and public life, agriculture, natural history, medicine, hygiene, veterinary medicine, etc. In the monograph, the author reproduces for the first time a complete list of books published by the society. It was established that P. Stebnytskyi belonged to other publishing houses - "Ukrainian Agronomist", "Drukar". The editorial, lexicographical, educational and librarian activities of the publicist are also highlighted. For example, P. Stebnytskyi was the editor of the Kyiv publishing house "Chas", worked on the editorial board of the collection "Native School" and the bibliographic magazine "Knygar", at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, he was the editor of the Permanent Commission for Compiling the Biographical Dictionary of Ukrainian Figures, he headed the Commission for the Creation of the Ukrainian encyclopedic dictionary and dictionary of the living Ukrainian language, participated in compiling the "Russian-Ukrainian dictionary". It was established that the public figure stood near the origins of modern Ukrainian spelling. The publicist

consistently defended the rights of the Ukrainian language in tsarist Russia, was the initiator of the development of a draft law on education. Among the names of the founders of the first National Library in the history of Ukraine (currently the National Library of Ukraine named after V. I. Vernadskyi) is the surname of P. Stebnytskyi. He was a member of the committee since its establishment, developed the first Instruction on the activity of the committee, was the head of the "Ukrainika" department.

The significant contribution of P. Stebnytskyi to the development of Shevchenkiana was studied. The project of publishing the first complete "Kobzar" in the Russian Empire by T. Shevchenko during 1906-1911 was a grandiose creative idea of the nationally minded Ukrainian intelligentsia. The most significant role in the preparation, printing and distribution of the book was played by V. Domanytskyi as scientific editor of "Kobzar" and P. Stebnytskyi as co-editor of the publications.

Chapter 4 "Representation of the "Ukrainian nation-building project" in the legacy of P. Stebnytskyi", consisting of five subsections, analyzes the journalistic and scientific output of the figure, which includes 168 items, includes articles and materials of general economic content; reviews and reviews in the Russian press; articles "about Ukrainian life"; articles, reviews and feuilletons in the Ukrainian press; materials in collections and collective works; materials in separate publications; fiction, poetry, translations. His legacy is generally devoted to issues of national movements and state building in Ukraine, there are literary and journalistic biographies, biographical fiction. The researcher proved that the creative heritage of P. Stebnytskyi affirmed the idea of the individuality of the Ukrainian nation, its right to self-determination and a separate path of development of national culture, had a nation-building, state-building and anti-colonial character. In the creative work of the publicist, issues of socio-economic development of Ukraine were also revealed.

The monograph contains a large number of illustrations (photos of P. Stebnytskyi, prints of his manuscripts, major works, letters, important personal documents, etc.).

The significant search and analytical and critical work carried out by Professor Inna Demuz deserves a favorable assessment. In general, the monograph makes a positive impression both in terms of content, stylistic design, and research methodology. The work will be useful not only for a narrow circle of historians, but also for everyone who is interested in the history of national and public movements in Ukraine, biography and biographical studies.

Conflicts of interest.

The author declare no conflict of interest.

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