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LEGENDS OF COSSACKS. THE COSSACKS-SORCERERS

Among Zaporizhian Cossacks there was mysterious, surrounded by legends phenomenon – sorcery. The story of the sorcerer was usually exciting and dynamic fantasy, based on the Ukrainian history and mythology, which should take its special place among the legends of the world. It is known that in the folk mind sorcerers were granted with unique abilities, they could walk on water, air, pass through walls and they could not be destroyed with the conventional weapons.

The first mention of the sorcerers dates back to the 19th century. They are mentioned in the works of such writers as Yevgen Hrebinka, Nikolai Gogol, Panteleimon Kulish, Andrii Tchaikovsky and Adrian Kashchenko. The Polish historian Bartosz Paprocki left memories of Cossacks, who not only enchanted the bullets, but took them from their bodies by hand and threw them back to the enemy. Those, who the bullets were hit, were killed on impact. We find out about sorcerers from the historical works of Apollon Skalkovsky, Mykola Kostomarov, Volodymyr Golobutsky and Dmytro Yavornytsky [2].

The most famous Cossack-sorcerer is Cossack Mamay. It is idealized image of Cossack-traveler, warrior, sage, storyteller and sorcerer in one. But this Cossack had never been to Zaporizhia, but there were hundreds of his kind. That's why Mamay is mentioned at folk songs, legends and tales more often than any hetmans, koshovyis or colonels [3, 86].

The glory of the greatest sorcerer was taken by ataman Ivan Sirko, who participated in more than 100 battles and had no defeat from 1659 to 1680.

Historians believe that the Cossacks-sorcerers originated from the ancient Ukrainian pagan magicians. There is also a version that the roots of sorcery came to us from the time of the great migration of Aryan tribes from Ukraine to India. We can trace the etymological link of the word “sorcerer” or “kharacternyk” with name “Hara” – the ancient Aryan god of war. It is interesting to mention, that the attribute of this God is a trident – an ancient sign, which is a symbol of Ukraine [1, 176].

The ancient Ukrainian legends about the famous Cossacks-sorcerers, such as Ivan Sirko, Semen Paliy, Maxim Zalizniak, Severin Nalyvaiko, Petro Sahaidachny, Ivan Bohun, Maxim Kryvonis, Ivan Zolotarenko, Ostap Dashkevych, Dmytro Baida-Vyshnevetsky, Andrii Pohytun, Ivan Pidkova, Samiylo Kishka, Danylo Nechai or Gaidamak and the outlaw leaders, who also owned sorcery abilities such as Ustym Karmaliuk, Oleksa Dovbush, Pyntya or Golovach, confirm with amazing

consistency that these characters had to fight and kill the devil and received supernatural military capabilities of God [1, 179].

Sorcerers were usually people with extrasensory abilities, with susceptibility to suggestion, hypnosis, clairvoyance, telekinesis or telepathy. According to the legend, sorcerers "had never been buried by priests but they were buried by Cossacks" [2]. This is the proof, that many of these people were not Christians.

So sorcery institute was one of the secret societies in Zaporizhia, which played an important role in the history of the Ukrainian Cossacks. Sorcerers formed the development strategy of the Cossacks and Ukrainians in general. With extraordinary abilities, they could anticipate events for several future centuries. Sorcerers' mission was to save the soul of the Ukrainian people.

LITERATURE

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