

*I. Vasylyuk*

*Research supervisor: O. V. Maksimov,*

*Candidate of Historical Sciences*

*Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University*

*Language tutor: S. S. Kukharyonok*

## **COSSACK MYTH IN THE SOVIET UNION**

One of the central images in the history of Ukraine was and remains the legendary, heroic and mythologized image of the Cossack, which was captured in our consciousness above all as an indestructible defender of our native land, an Orthodox faith and a rebel against social and national oppression. Such a stereotype has been formed for many centuries in the process of formation and development of the Ukrainian nation since the time when the Cossacks began their way of becoming as a social phenomenon at the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The Cossack myth is not something steady. Having formed at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it faced significant changes according to the changes in the Ukrainian society. Many efforts to form such a myth were made by Soviet ideologists. They interpreted it as the struggle of the masses (the Cossacks together with the peasants) against the landlords because the ideology of the USSR was based on the well-known theory of Marxism about the class struggle.

The largest falsification and distortion of the Soviet era was the Ukrainian-Russian agreement of 1654 – the Pereyaslav Council [1]. As a Ukrainian historian and philosopher Viacheslav Lipinsky confirmed, there were two facts in history: the Pereyaslav Treaty, known as the March Articles, and the Pereyaslav myth, which had nothing to do with the reality of the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This legend created a distorted idea of the real events in the minds of many generations in Ukraine and Russia that led to its complication after the death of Bohdan Khmelnytsky. The crown of conscious falsification and transformation of history, the silencing of one and the protrusion of other facts became “Theses of the Central Committee of the

CPSU to the 300th anniversary of the reunion of Ukraine with Russia”, and articles written on their basis in the newspaper “Pravda”, designed to serve the only correct explanation of history from the point of view of their authors. At that time the Moscow propagandists invented the term "reunion" in relation to the events in Pereyaslav. Its use was to stifle the aspiration of the Ukrainian people to independence.

The myth of the Pereyaslav Council contains a number of ideologies, each of which has been widely promoted both in the Soviet historical works and in the literature of the period of the USSR. Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Braichevsky wrote that even some works by T. Shevchenko, which criticized the “reunion”, were banned in order to protect "the original friendship of the Ukrainian and Russian people." So, for example, in 1954 "Kobzar" was published without such works as "Great Cellar", “Standing in the village of Subotiv ...”, “Chigirin, Chigirin ...” and others. The liberation from the myth was difficult and complex, and the myth still exists in the minds of several generations [3, p. 988-989].

The anti-Polish aspects of Cossack mythology were also not rejected. They were used particularly active on the eve and during the Second World War [2].

Thus, the Soviet ideology tried to mythologize the image of the Ukrainian Cossacks and the whole Cossack era in our history in order to prove that Ukraine was an integral part of the empire under the name of the USSR, whose key role was played by the “fraternal Russian people”. Analysis of the events of that time allows us not to repeat the mistakes of the past, to free our consciousness from historical myths and legends, because those who forget the past are doomed to its repetition.

### **References**

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