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INFLUENCE OF THE ZAPORIZHIA SICH ON MODERN UKRAINE

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The relevance of the topic is due to the fact that Zaporizhia Sich played a key role in shaping the political, military and cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people. It became an example of the early form of national statehood, which developed in the conditions of constant confrontation with external threats. The study of its history provides a better understanding of the patterns of formation of the Ukrainian political tradition, the main characteristics of the development of national self-awareness and the struggle for independence. Besides, the issue of the Cossack heritage remains important today, as it influences the formation of the national identity, state building and the revival of military traditions, in the context of current war.

The **aim** of the study is to analyze the reasons for the formation of Zaporizhia Sich, its main political, military, and social functions, as well as to determine its impact on the process of the state formation of the Ukrainian people.

To achieve this **aim**, it is necessary to consider the historical preconditions for the emergence of Sich, to investigate its internal organization and activities, to assess its role in the political struggle and to trace the consequences of its liquidation for the further development of Ukraine.

The **object** of the study is Zaporizhia Sich as a historical phenomenon that played an important role in the formation of the Ukrainian statehood.

The **subject** of the study comprises specific factors that contributed to emergence of Zaporizhia Sich, the characteristics of its political and military organization, as well as its impact on the further development of the Ukrainian political culture.

The study is based on a historical method that allows us to trace the chronology of the development of Zaporizhia Sich and establish the relationship between its activities and general trends in state formation. The comparative-historical method is used to analyze similar phenomena in other countries and determine the characteristics of the Ukrainian model of the Cossack republic. The method of analysis of historical sources enables us to study documents, testimonies of contemporaries and scientific works that cover the activities of Zaporizhia Sich. A structurally functional method has also been used to assess political and military institutions of Zaporizhia Sich in the context of the overall state-building process.

Zaporizhia Sich played a decisive role in the formation of the Ukrainian statehood, the formation of national self-awareness and the struggle for independence. Its creation was a response to the difficult political situation of the XVI century, when the Ukrainian lands were under the rule of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and constant raids by the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate posed a threat to public safety. Socio-economic factors, such as increased serfdom, restrictions on the rights of the Orthodox population, and general dissatisfaction with the Polish authorities, led to the consolidation of the Cossacks into a separate military-and-political force that took over the function of protecting the Ukrainian lands [2].

Zaporizhia Sich became a unique phenomenon, combining the features of a military organization, democratic self-government and independent economic entity. The Cossack's political system was based on the election of leadership, the All-Cossacks Council, and the equality of members of the community, which distinguished it from other state entities at the time [1].

The conditions of the constant war contributed to the creation of an effective military structure that allowed the Cossacks to conduct both defensive and attacking operations against the enemies, including the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The military campaigns of the Cossacks became an important factor in international politics, forcing the great powers to reckon with Ukraine [1].

Summing up, one of the most important functions of Zaporizhia Sich was the struggle for independence of Ukraine. During the XVI–XVII-th centuries, the Cossacks took an active part in the national liberation wars, the most significant of which was Khmelnychyna in 1648–1657. The Cossacks were the main military force of the uprising, which gave impetus to the creation of the Ukrainian Cossack State. However, the struggle for autonomy was complicated by foreign policy circumstances and the constant intervention of neighboring states, which led to the loss of independence and gradual integration of Ukraine into the Moscow kingdom [2].

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