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THE KIEVAN MOHYLA-MAZEPA ACADEMY AND THE ZAPOROZHIAN COSSACKS

It would be difficult to think of two, more contradictory concepts — Cossacks and an Academy. As soldiers, brigands and vagabonds the Cossacks could scarcely be imagined to have any relationship to higher education. And, indeed, they didn't — everywhere, that is, except in Ukraine. The strange fact is that in 17th and 18th century Ukraine the Zaporozhian Cossacks were among the foremost patrons and defenders of the greatest institution of higher learning in Eastern Europe at the time — the Kievan Mohyla College, later the Kievan Mohyla-Mazepa Academy. This remarkable phenomenon surely deserves some examination.

The rebirth of Kiev as a cultural and educational center dates back to the foundation of the local "brotherhood" (bratstvo) in 1615 at the Epiphany Church. In addition to the clergy, enrolled in the brotherhood were Ukrainian burghers and the majority of the Ukrainian nobility. But, most significantly for us, the Kiev brotherhood was soon joined by the Cossack hetman, Petro Konashevych Sahaidachnyi with the entire Zaporozhian Army.[1] He thus became its first Cossack patron, beginning the tradition of Cossack support for the revival of culture and education in 17th century Ukraine.

The main task of the "bratstvo" was the defense of the Orthodox faith against Catholic encroachment, and cultural-educational work in the Ukrainian community of Kiev. With this aim the Brotherhood established a school at the Epiphany monastery under the rectorship of Iov Boretskyi, later Metropolitan of the renewed Orthodox hierarchy. Under his direction the school assumed a Slavonic-Greek character, continuing the tradition of other Brotherhood schools in Ukraine and Belorussia at that time.[2]

In 1627, the Kievan Pechersk Monastery received a new archimandrite — Petro Mohyla. Educated in the spiritual and cultural traditions of the Ukrainian nobility in his native Moldavia, Mohyla was deeply aware that for the defense of the recently revived Orthodox Metropolitanate of Kiev the support of the local brotherhood was insufficient. It required more — a highly-educated clergy and a cultured lay elite. He consequently attempted to set up a college of the West-European type which could become a new educational center for the entire Orthodox elite.

However, on the request of the Kievan nobility not to engender competition for the Brotherhood school, Mohyla in 1632 transferred his college to the Epiph-

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1 Hrushevsky M., *Istoria Ukrainy-Rusi,* New York/Knyhospilka 1965, vol. VII, pp. 412—413.

2 Ibid., pp. 414—415.

any monastery and united it with the existing Brotherhood school. This move met with universal approval in the Kievan community, and the Brotherhood — which had previously viewed the creation of a new educational institution with some suspicion — gave the archimandrite a free hand in the organization of this new center.[3]

In this connection, the single act of the utmost importance was the attitude of the Zaporozhian Host as expressed in its charter (hramota). "The hetman, *osauls*, colonels and all the Zaporozhian Host," considering this to be "a holy endeavor, very necessary and beneficial for the entire Orthodox Church," as members of the Brotherhood gave their approval for Mohyla to become the "life-long overseer, protector and defender" of the Brotherhood, and instructed the Kievan otaman and all the Cossacks to provide him with every aid and protection.[4] Furthermore, the Zaporozhians assured the populace of Kiev that they would support and defend Petro Mohyla's new educational establishment. They said in their letter:

"The Zaporozhian Host, which always even in ancestral times, strove to do something good and beneficial for the Holy Church, all the more now sees the sign of the Holy Spirit's will and the unanimous action of this Rus'ian people, clerical and lay, the nobility and the entire community, that learning and education in the Holy Scriptures for the support of our religion at the Brotherhood Church of the Epiphany be renewed through the endeavors, cost and supervision of the reverend Petro Mohyla; thus, seeing this truly wortwhile and beneficial endeavor for the Holy Church, we join in this, assent and pledge to support this Brotherhood Church and school, and to defend it with our heads."[5]

There can be no doubt that this posture of the Cossacks was of great significance for the establishment and maintenance of the Kievan College which thus developed with the unequivocal support and protection of the Zaporozhians. Their support proved beneficial not only for the Church, but also for the Cossacks themselves, since the College provided education not just for the sons of nobility and burghers, but to a great extent for Cossack sons — and especially the *starshyna*. At its inception the College had some 200 students; by the death in 1647 of Petro Mohyla (since 1632, Metropolitan), the enrollment increased to over 800. A significant proportion of these were sons of Cossacks. In the eighteenth century we have some detailed statistics on the composition of the student body. Thus, in the rhetoric and grammar classes in 1736 there were:

sons of Cossacks: 16
sons of burghers: 15
sons of priests (Diaks): 15
sons of peasants: 5[6]

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[3] *Pamiatniki Izdannye Kievskoi Komissiei dla Razbora Drevnykh Aktov,* Kiev 1898 (ed. II), vol. I, pp. 415—417.

[4] Ibid., pp. 418—421.

[5] Ibid., pp. 421—422.

[6] Khyzhniak Z. I., *Kievo-Mohylanska Akademia,* Kyiv/Vyd. Kyiv. Universytetu, 1970, pp. 111; Vyshnevskyi D., *Kievskaia Akademia v pervoi polovine XVIII st.,* Kiev/Tip. Gorbunova, 1903, pp. 356—362.

Unfortunately, similar statistics are lacking for the 17th century, but the number of Cossack students was undoubtedly high, as evidenced by the visibility and influence of the Academy's alumni in the turbulent years of Khmelnytsky's uprising, continuing ever more strongly to the high-water mark in the hetmanate of Mazepa.

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The uprising under Bohdan Khmelnytsky, which erupted in 1648, radically altered the socio-political situation in Ukrainian lands, culminating in the creation of a new Cossack state — the Hetmanate. The old ruling elite of nobles and magnates was eliminated — partly in battle, partly through flight, and those who remained lost their former influence. Their dominant role was now assumed by the Cossack estate which took over the state administration. The new military state order needed an educated elite — and the only source for such an elite could be the Kiev-Mohyla College. Thus the institution assumed importance for the newly-emerging state, from which it began to receive aid. In 1651 Khmelnytsky granted to the war-damaged college the estates of the abandoned Dominican Church in Kiev with the village of Mostyshche,[7] and in 1656 added to these the properties of some banished Polish Jesuits.[8] It is of great significance to note that at this time Khmelnytsky's closest collaborators numbered several alumni of the Mohyla College, including the later hetmans Ivan Vyhovs'ky and Pavlo Teteria, and Khmelnytsky's own son, Yuri.

The growing importance of higher education as represented by the Kiev-Mohyla College in the eyes of the new Hetmanate order is best typified in the Hadiach Treaty negotiated between Khmelnytsky's successor Vyhovs'kyi and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1658. In accordance with this treaty, which envisioned the reorganization of the Commonwealth as a triple confederation with the Ukrainian lands forming a Grand Duchy of Rus', the Kiev College ceased to be a private establishment and became part of the state structure. The aim was to provide the cultural and educational support for the Hetman State. The relevant points were expressed in the very first article of the treaty, and deserve to be quoted in full:

"His Majesty the King and the Estates of the Crown allow to found in Kiev an Academy, which is to enjoy all such prerogatives and freedoms as the Cracow Academy, with the sole condition that at this Academy there be no professors, masters or students belonging to any sect — Arian, Calvinist or Lutheran. And — so that there be no occasion for fights among students and pupils — His Majesty the King shall order all other schools, which existed in Kiev previously, to be transferred elsewhere.

His Majesty the King, the Estates of the Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, allow the foundation of a second such Academy [in a city] where a suitable place will be found. It will enjoy the same rights and freedoms as the Kievan [Academy], but will be founded on the same condition as the Kievan —

7 Krypiakevych I. — Butych I., *Dokumenty Bohdana Khmelnyckoho*, Kyiv/Akad. Nauk, 1961, pp. 209—210.

8 Ibid., pp. 467—468.

that it not allow professors, masters or students of the Arian, Calvinist or Lutheran sects. And where this Academy shall be founded, other schools are not to be created there for all time."[9]

The fact that the Kiev Academy was to be on the same level as the Cracow Academy, then one of the best in Europe, testifies to the importance attached to higher education in the eyes of the Cossack ruling circles.

Unfortunately, the terms of the Hadiach Treaty were never brought into life. In the turbulent decades that followed, the period called "Ruina" during which Ukraine was divided between Poland and Muscovy the Kiev College shared in the unhappy fate of the country. In 1660 it was devastated and for a period of five years was closed entirely. Moscow was reluctant to see the renewal of the Ukrainian cultural center. In 1666 Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich wrote that "it would be better not to establish schools in Kiev," and it took much effort to prevail on the Tsar to allow the resumption of studies in Kiev, but only to his subjects, and not to students from Right-Bank Ukraine who remained under Poland.[10]

In 1668 Petro Doroshenko, hetman of the Right Bank, briefly reunited both sides of the Dnieper. His envoys to the Polish sejm again demanded the elevation of the College to the status of an Academy,[11] but it proved too late. Poland lost for always its hegemony over Kiev. The gate of the College henceforth was tied to the hetmanate on the Left-Bank and shared its fate.

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In one of his last articles Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi expressed the view that "the academic circles [in Hetman Ukraine] did not demonstrate an adequate sensitivity to the moods of the Cossack intelligentsia and were incapable or unwilling to serve its needs, particularly in providing the historical foundations for its social and political aspirations."[12] The apathy of Kievan scholarly circles toward the Cossack *starshyna*, he believes, is reflected in the famous *Sinopsis* and the statement of Theofan Prokopovych *(Ars Rhetorica)* that "so many glorious events of our fatherland are completely forgotten, and that, which it has accomplished, has hardly been passed on to the memory of posterity."[13]

This, however, is only one side of the coin. For in fact it is in the last quarter of the 17th century and up to 1709 that we see the highest point in the interaction between the Kiev College and the Cossack-Hetmanate. This is exemplifid, for instance, in the composition of numerous verses and panegyrics in honor of notable national heroes. In 1687 we see the first known panegyric to a hetman — Ivan Samoilovych (an. 1672), himself an alumnus of the College

9 Hrushevsky M., op. cit., vol. X, p. 336.

10 Akty, Otnosiashchiesia k istorii Yuzhnoi i Zapadnoi Rossii (Sobrannye i izdannye Arkheograficheskoi Komissiei), S. Peterburg 1869, vol. VI, p. 93.

11 Ibid., vol. IX, pp. 302—303.

12 Hrusevs'kyj M., Some Reflections on Ukrainian Historiography of the XVIII Century (Translated by Zenon Kohut), in: *The Eyewitness Chronicle*, Part I, Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies, München 1972, p. 11.

13 Ibid.

and its patron? *Trybut i. w. i. m. Panowi Janowi Samuytowiczowi... Panu Protektorowi, Patronowi, etc.*[14] And, further, among the alumni of the College were such men as Samiilo Velychko and Hryhorii Hrabianka (and perhaps the anonymous Samovydets) whose "Cossack chronicles" became the main historical and literary monuments of the Cossack era. Their recounting of the Cossack exploits and vicissitudes created the image of Cossack Ukraine which left an indelible mark on subsequent generations.

But the culmination of this process was reached under the hetmanate of Ivan Mazepa (1687—1709). Combining in his person Cossack traditions with a high education on the Western model (probably at the Kiev College), Mazepa became the most conspicuous patron of culture and education in Ukrainian history. In his attempt to elevate the Kiev College to the status of Academy, Mazepa was instrumental in expanding the curriculum to include full courses in philosophy and theology. For this he procured in 1694 a charter from Tsars Ivan and Peter, which also gave academic immunity to the institution. This was followed up by the decree of 7 October 1701 by Tsar Peter I which officially recognized the school as an academy, with all its privileges and prerogatives.

The institution had more reason to be grateful to its patron. In 1695 Mazepa erected a new church, and in 1704 a new school building for the Academy, and bestowed on it a large library and rare manuscripts. To expand its material basis Mazepa several times endowed the Academy with large estates — in 1692, 1694, 1702, 1703, and 1707. And from the Cossack military treasury Mazepa granted 200 rubles annually for the upkeep of the Academy.

After such material and moral support the Kievan Metropolitan Varlaam Iasyns'kyi had every reason to style Mazepa "a special renovator, provider and benefactor of the Brotherhood Monastery and the Kievan Academy. In 1704 the Academy, in gratitude to its patron, assumed the name: Kiev Mohyla-Mazepa Academy. Every occasion and event in Mazepa's hetmanate found praise in specially composed panegyrics or pamphletes — in Latin, Polish or Ukrainian. The following two examples serve to illustrate:

1) "Echo głosu wołającego na puszczy... przy solennym powienszowaniu doroczney festu patronskiego rewolucyey... P. P. Janowi Mazepie... brzmjące głośną życzliwego affectu resonancyą, Najniższego sługi Symeona Jaworskiego Artium Liberalium et Philosophiae Magistri consummati Theologi, Roku... 1689."[15]

2) "Capitolium perennis gloriae praenobili, crucis gentilitiae trophaeo insigne, accensis, avitorum syderum pyris, illustre, nativâ generis, virtutu(m), meritorum honoru(m)-q(ue) magnitudine sublime:

Ad auspicatissimum ac desideratissimum ingressum,
In celeberrimum Vrbium Metropolim Kiioviam,
Illustrissimo ac Magnificentissimo Domino
P: Ioanni Mazepa
Duci Exercituum Zaporoviensium Strenuissimo, de caesis hostium, de suppedaneis Civium Capitibus,

14 Quoted after Pritsak O. "Mazepynska Bibliografia" (unpublished).
15 Ibid.

Erectum
Atque solenni salutationis plausu, ab alumno suo
Collegio Kiiovo Mihileano Reseratum
Anno quo Caelestis ille, de terno hoste Triumphator, Empireum ingressus Capitolium 1690."[16]

Perhaps the best summary of the contemporary attitude, and its link to historical continuity, is given in Theofan Prokopovych's title to his historical play, *Vladimir* (translation from Ukrainian):

"Vladimir, prince and ruler of all Slavonic-Rus'ian lands, [who was] brought by the Holy Spirit from the darkness of unbelief into the great light of the Gospel in the year 988 from the birth of Christ; shown today in the famed Kievan Mohyla-Mazepa Academy — which salutes the noble Hetman of His Tsarist Glorious Majesty's Zaporozhian Host and of the two sides of the Dnieper, and Cavalier of the grand Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Ivan Mazepa, its great benefactor — for the view of the Rus'ian people by honorable Rus'ian sons here well-educated, in a play, which poets call a tragicomedy, on the 3rd day of July in the year of Our Lord 1705."[17]

After the Battle of Poltava (1709) the situation changed. The Academy came under increasing pressure from the Russian center. But to the end of the Hetmanate, the close links between the Academy and the Cossack estate remained. For the Cossacks saw — in the words of Hetman Danylo Apostol (1729) that the Kievan school "is indispensable for our Fatherland, where sons of Ukraine and others learn the liberal sciences and subsequently give proper support to the Orthodox Church and the Fatherland."[18]

In conclusion, it may be worthwhile to conduct a simple intellectual experiment which will underscore the purport of this paper. If we were to imagine a hypothetical situation in which another Cossack group — the Don Cossacks or Ural Cossacks — were to have an organic link to an institution similar to the Mohyla-Mazepa Academy, we would find such an attempt ludicrous. If we tried to imagine a Stenka Razin or a Kinrat Bulavin undertaking the cultural activities of a Mazepa, our endeavor would appear utterly absurd. It is this fundamental incompatibility — even on a hypothetical plane — of groups such as the Don or Ural Cossacks with an institution of higher learning on the one hand, and the organic ties of the Zaporozhian Cossacks with the Mohyla-Mazepa Academy on the other hand, which most strikingly emphasizes the uniqueness of the Zaporozhian Host.

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16 Sichynskyi V., Graviury Mazepy, *Mazepa-Zbirnyk* (Pratsi Ukrains'koho Naukovoho Instytutu), Warszawa 1938, p. 150.

17 Feofan Prokopovich, *Sochinenia*, pod redaktsiei I. P. Eremina, AN SSSR, Institut Russkoi literatury, M.-L. 1961, p. 149.

18 Khyzhniak Z. I., op. cit., pp. 52—53.