

Богдан Хмельницький: історична постать у контексті процесів українського державотворення

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THE MEMORIALIZATION OF B. KHMELNYTSKY BY MEANS OF FINE ARTS IN XIX CENTURY

The theme of the liberation war in Ukraine in the middle of the seventeenth century and the figure of its charismatic leader Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky – in ambiguous interpretations of his activities and heritage – is one of the central themes of fine arts. In the 19th century during the intensification of the processes of nation-building grew interest to the person of the creator of the Ukrainian state B. Khmelnytsky.

Bohdan Khmelnytsky is the most famous Ukrainian politician of the XVII century, his activity had a huge impact on the European history of the time. So it is not surprising that personality of hetman had attracted the attention of artists both in Ukraine and abroad for many years.

Mikhail Mikeshin is a well-known designer of monuments to the Millennium of Russia in Novgorod and Catherine II in St. Petersburg. In 1863 he proposed a project of a statue of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, which was installed near the Kyiv Cathedral of St. Sophia. It was the year of the Polish uprising.

Mikeshin's intention was to combine Russian imperialism with Ukrainian militant nationalism - Khmelnytsky held a sword directed to the east in defense of Russia. Khmelnytsky's horse tears the chains and tramples the defeated enemies: a Polish lord, a Catholic priest and a Jewish mercenary. The representatives of Khmelnytsky's allies are in front of the rider: Russian, Belarussian, Galician and Ukrainian laymen next to a sitting Ukrainian kobzar.

The design was controversial on many respects. Due to the lack of funding and concerns about the escalation of ethnic tension, the administration of Tsar Alexander II forced Mikeshin to remove images of allies and antagonists from the final version of monument. The sculptor also deleted the inscription «United, Indivisible Russia - Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky» and the names of Ukrainian Cossack heroes.

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The monument, which was installed in 1888, had only a rider with a short inscription. However, Mikeshin's early blueprint offered a portrait of Khmelnytsky as a deeply controversial figure. Prominent Ukrainophiles, and not only ethnic minorities, had the reason to oppose the worship of the hetman.

As Frank Sisyn pointed out, «the controversy over the monument reflected both disagreement about man and his goals, as well as a desire to confer an image, which has been graced from 1648 to the present day». Although Mikeshin intended to present a vision of united Russia, the inclusion of multiple national and religious symbols in the original project testifies to Khmelnytsky's involvement in competing political narratives. From the point of view of Poles, Jews, Russians and Ukrainians, who were the competing parties of the Cossack uprising of 1648, Hetman could be presented either as a hero or as a villain [2].

T. Shevchenko turned to the artistic interpretation of Khmelnytsky's image. In 1844-1845 T. Shevchenko created an etching series «The Picturesque Ukraine». The first etching of the series is «The Gifts in Chigirin». It is very typical situation with the name, which in the original version soundsheaded as Gifts to Bogdan and the Ukrainian people». The name had to be changed from review of censorship.

The picture shows the visit of three ambassadors: from Constantinople, Warsaw and Moscow to the pond Bohdan Khmelnytsky. In the center of the composition themselves gifts that seem to divide the figures of Moscow and Turkish envoys. Both elderly and experienced people, who try not to show their emotions, so the first - sits, and the second – stands. Polish, younger, sitting on a bench behind, and sideways, in the shade, squeezes the pipe in his mouth [1].

T. Shevchenko created two full-scale watercolors of « The Bogdan's ruins» and «The Bogdan's church» during the visit to Subotiv. These works are dominated by the spirit of light elegiac sadness, which can be traced in the compositional decisions of landscapes. In the close-up of the Bogdan's Church, which presents the specificity of architectural structure, the artist confers a feeling of loneliness and pity. Thus in the fine arts of XIX century the person of Ukrainian Hetman and his charisma came to being as an object of memorialization.

References:

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2. Stories of Khmelnytsky: competing literary legacies of the 1648 Ukrainian Cossack uprising / edited by Amelia M. Glaser. Stanford University Press Stanford. 2015. 293 p.