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Cossacks as a cultural and historical phenomenon

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The national idea is the leading, unifying in the historical existence of each people, nation (ethnic group). The Ukrainian national idea runs through the entire pedagogical heritage of past epochs. It inspired whole generations of educators and teachers to faithfully serve the native people. Research of the origins, formation and development of the national system of education, domestic pedagogy is a primary problem, the solution of which depends on the emergence of an independent Ukrainian state to the current level of world standards in the field of education and upbringing.

The creative approach to the historical and pedagogical heritage of our people allows us to say that a prominent place in it belongs to the powerful educational potential, which is most appropriate to call the Ukrainian Cossack pedagogy. To reveal its main features, it is first necessary to find out what the Ukrainian Cossacks are as a cultural and historical phenomenon.

The Cossack movement of Ukraine was one of the brightest pages of the chronicle of the people's struggle for political and state independence. In the fact that we, Ukrainians, today are a people, a nation, the leading role belonged to the Cossacks, who from century to century were the only and powerful outpost, vigilantly guarding the freedom, dignity and honor of Ukraine as an independent state. No wonder foreigners often called Ukraine a "Cossack republic", a "Cossack country", and Ukrainians – a "Cossack nation".

The freedom-loving Ukrainian Cossacks arose on the glorious Zaporozhian Sich, on the legendary island of Khortytsia, on the banks of the Dnieper – Slavuta. In the national consciousness of Ukrainians, the concept of the Zaporozhian Sich merges into a single spiritual complex, the asceticism of past generations. The Zaporozhian Cossacks are the pride of the Ukrainian nation, its highest rise in its age-old development. Its ideological and moral potential is the core of Cossack spirituality, which is an inexhaustible treasure trove of civic hardening of the younger generations.

A significant part of modern youth has a superficial and simplified idea of the Ukrainian Cossacks. In fact, it was not only a military, but also a social, political, state, pedagogical, cultural and historical phenomenon. The activities of the Cossacks as victorious warriors, defenders of the plundered rights of the people, freedom-loving citizens, politicians and statesmen, as caring landowners, experienced farmers, creators of high art, caring family members,

wise educators of children were multifaceted. Many Cossack figures became leading political and state figures in the history of the native people.

The strength, greatness and power of the Cossacks were so influential that fighting in those days against feudal enslavement, oppression of the individual, which brought with them various invaders, every Ukrainian sought to become a Cossack. The whole nation showed Cossacks, which testified to a new, higher level of their spirituality. And only the aggressive machinations of foreigners from time to time slowed down, interrupted, destroyed this progressive historical process, which testified to the unity of the Ukrainian people, its unity in the fight against enemies.

The Cossack era created a multifaceted, deep spirituality that became the pride and adornment of the Ukrainian national culture. Its educational, emotional and aesthetic potential formed the basis not only of the Cossacks, but also of the entire Ukrainian national education system. The Cossacks were, in the best sense of these terms, the aristocracy of the national spirit, the high moral elite of their nation. The ardent Ukrainian patriotism of the Cossacks was a powerful stimulus to a state-building, free and independent life.
