

КОНСТИТУЦІЙНА СПАДЩИНА ПИЛИПА ОРЛИКА
(за матеріалами однойменного
міжнародного наукового семінару,
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ADDRESS TO SEMINAR
“CONSTITUTIONAL LEGACY OF PYLYP ORLYK”
(KRISTIANSTAD KOMMUN, 20 JUNE 2019)

It is an honor and pleasure for me to visit the City of Kristianstad today, when we mark 300 years from the period of stay of Ukrainian Hetman Pylyp Orlyk in Sweden. It is also quite symbolic that just one week later we in Ukraine will mark the Constitution Day of my country. So, at the outset I would like to express my sincere gratitude to You, dear Mr. Silverbern, to Dr. Bertil Häggman for this initiative, and to Administration and the staff of Kristianstad municipality for organizing this seminar today, for your warm welcome and hospitality.

By restoring historic events and honoring our past, we pay tribute not only to the events of our history, but also to heroes, who led our nations and fought for freedom in our lands. And the seminar today is yet another event, which will give us the possibility to exchange views on the period of XVIII century, when Sweden and Ukrainian Cossack State were allies and stood together.

Throughout Ukraine's continuous fight for its independence and statehood, Sweden was and continues to be a reliable partner and a true friend of Ukraine. Back in 1657, in the Korsun Treaty, Sweden recognized Ukraine as “a free people, subject to no one”, in 1709 – sealed military and political union and included Sweden's agreement not to accept peace with Moscow until Ukraine was freed from the Russian rule. One cannot agree more with Hetman Ivan Vyhovsky's saying that relations between Ukraine and Sweden are “a question

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of binding the hearts of our two peoples”. And today Sweden is amongst the strongest supporters of Ukraine in our fight against the Russian aggression.

We have gathered today to reflect upon Pylyp Orlyk’s legacy, his role in political relations of early XVIII century, and ambitious actions during his exile government in Sweden. Hetman Pylyp Orlyk was a patriotic leader and commander, a talented diplomat and a skilled negotiator. He understood the importance of national struggle and strength of the nation as crucial steps in uniting Ukrainian territories into one independent state.

Next year Ukraine will commemorate the 310th anniversary of the first Ukrainian Constitution. “The Collection of rights and freedoms of the Zaporozhian Sich” or “1710 Constitution of Ukraine”, or “The Benderian Consitution”. All these refers to one document known as Pylyp Orlyk’s Constitution. It proves that Hetman Pylyp Orlyk was much ahead of his time. Sufficient to quote here the opening lines of his Constitution: “Ukraine in both sides of the Dnipro River must remain free from foreign domination for all time to come”.

This historical document is a cornerstone not only for Ukrainian traditional history and political thought, but also for the European constitutional tradition in its legal sense. Ratified by the electoral assembly that chose Pylyp Orlyk for the Hetmanat government, the Constitution provided key principles of state governance. Its true democratic value is in the strong separation of legislative, executive and judiciary branches of government. Quite a revolutionary approach in 1710, isn’t it? And nowadays one can hardly think of a true democratic states without strong separation of powers.

The Latin original of the Pylyp Orlyk’s Constitution is carefully kept in the Swedish State Archives. The monument of commemorating Hetman Orlyk’s exile years in Sweden, unveiled in Kristianstad 8 years ago, is a visual reminder of the Swedish period of his life here and his efforts in uniting international support for making his political goal and personal dream true – establishing Ukraine as unitary and sovereign state. Pylyp Orlyk’s legacy is of particular importance to Ukraine.

So, once again I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Administration of Kristianstad Municipality for holding this seminar today. I am confident, that discussions, which we will have today, will be fruitful and interesting!