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## **Historical Reconstruction in Ukraine**

My paper concentrates on the stream of historical reconstruction in Ukraine. This movement appeared in Ukraine comparatively recently about 15 years ago. It can be described as a re-creation of material culture of some historic times. Certainly, it is not limited only to a re-creation; otherwise it didn't differ from ordinary collection.

There are a lot of clubs all over Ukraine that are fond of historical reconstruction. They are interested in the world and Ukrainian history, sewing kits, they organize festivals and other actions, train fights with historical weapon and ammunition. Also amateurs learn ancient dancing and play historical folk music. For example, in Lviv reconstruction clubs are Black Galich, Akvilon, Silver Wolf, Gold Lion and others.

People from different cities, regions and even countries – Russia, Poland, Byelorussia, Hungary came to the varied festivals and historical role-playing games.

Historical reconstruction is presently in two most popular directions:

- “living history”;
- tournaments

Living history is an attempt to re-create a day (or anymore) from the life in the studied times. And here all is important absolute, beginning from cutting out of worn clothes concluding by the authen-

tic recipes of kitchen. Similar measures are interesting not only for participants but also audience which can personally look at alive history of the country, on the way of living of their ancestors. This stream is very popular and developed in the West, there are a lot of “museums under the opened sky” where people live and work as long days ago. Unfortunately, creation of similar centers of studying history is impossible without the financial help from the state, and that is why in Ukraine the possible historical living can be represented only by the field camp.

Tournaments (and also bugurts – the joking battle field). Essence of this direction is a study and application in practice of soldiery of a certain epoch. Tournaments can be divided into performances (for an audience or for aesthetics) and sports on which people want objectively estimate their forces and abilities.

Most popular times of historical reconstruction are:

- Early Middle Ages
- Late Middle Ages;
- Napoleonika;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> world war.

Into every epoch there are the divisions on regions and certain historic periods.

Now I'd like to tell about some actions organized in Ukraine in previous years.

### **Tournaments in Lutsk**

There is a small district in the center of the glorious hail Luchesk (historic name – Lutsk), named “old town”, flushed by various monuments of architecture, murals and monasteries. One of such

sights of old town is the Lyubart's Castle – Upper Castle, remains of large complex of buildings, which surrounded Luchesk in the past; it was built by the Lithuanian prince Lyubart in the 14th century – more precisely, Lyubart finished the building, because the first serfs on the territory of modern Upper Castle date to the 12th century.

Powerful walls, spacious yard, massive towers – a unique combination of history and administrative status for Ukraine. This is why Lutsk Castle became the center of present Ukrainian knighthood. The first tournament was held there in 1997, it was one of the first large-scale action of a similar type in our country.

There is a great number of legends related to the Lyubart's Castle. One of them is imprinted on the coat of arms of Lutsk. It says that when the army of enemy walked up to the town, a duchess went out from a lock. A commander thought that she intended to hand the keys to a town, and for it forfeited by the life. A duchess put to death it by the blow of dagger, and a hostile army in fear hurried.

Traditionally, every year in Lutsk Castle the festivals devoted to the medieval culture are held. During a festival events of archers, knights' tournaments and mass battles called bugurts are organized. A weapon is done out of wood, duralumin and steel. Despite that, warriors who fought downright assure, that this it is not quite dangerous. In intervals between fights the public is cheered by jesters. During a festival the musicians are necessarily present – folk-groups from Lviv, Byelorussia. Wonderful ladies in medieval dresses and their escorts demonstrate the accomplishment, and all interested persons can take part in it, too. In general, the public doesn't feel miserable. For those who are dissatisfied, an executioner wait in the

corner under a tower, with the merry attractions – gallows, block and shoe tree.

In 2005 there was a fiery show organized – fights with burning weapon, gymnasts with fire and other. And after it, when direct participants of festival could rest, musicians gave a small concert in one of Lutsk bars, remarkably designed in style of Middle Ages.

### **The 5<sup>TH</sup> Birthday of “Silver Wolf“ in Lviv**

On 1-2 April, 2006 near the architectural monument Porohova Vega there was a medieval festival dedicated to the 5th birthday of Lviv club “Silver Wolf“ organized.

Guests from other Ukrainian cities arrived to Lviv, many of them from Kiev.

Participants faced strict rules of admittance regarding clothes – they must expressly correspond to the certain epoch and country.

At the beginning bugurts were organized – they could be watched by all persons interested. Then the participants of festival rested at the ball in the tower – feasted and danced medieval pавanas, branles, stellas, almans...

In Lviv it was the first large event of a similar kind and it went down in memory of the audience and participants for a long time. All were satisfied and spoke highly of the conducted holiday.

### **The Third Cross March**

Another event devoted to the Middle Ages – the third Cross March – took places in Acres. It was one of the largest events of that year. About six hundred persons from Ukraine, Russia, Byelorussia came to the fields next to a city of Hmel'nitsk. In two days there were

conducted mass fights, small battles, and assaults of the fortresses built by players from logs.

Historical reconstruction is a very interesting issue. This fascination may be a tool for establishing and strengthening communication between inhabitants of different cities and countries, it may also integrate people of different hierarchical levels of a company. They communicate, share the experience, and they are deeply interested in history, they learn to dance, to fight with swords. They also learn how to make panoplies. There is always a demand for good masters-gunsmiths! People can specially arrive in a city to acquire a weapon or accoutrement or to order small necessary things (for example, details of arbalest or gloves) by mail.

Attending the events means also another pleasant thing – meeting old acquaintances, battle comrades or rivals.

In general, a historical reconstruction is a tool for a comprehensive development of company and man – physical, spiritual, moral. And now this stream finds great popularity. We hope that soon it will be supported by the state.