

In Ukrainian culture, a special place is occupied by the legends and tales of the Kharakternyk Cossacks – the most mysterious warriors of the Zaporozhian Sich, who were mystically known as knights who were brought up in the spirit of ancient folk traditions, values, and rituals. According to legends, these warriors were endowed with supernatural powers and could enchant weapons, turn into animals, become invulnerable to enemy bullets, pass through walls, and travel in time. These beliefs not only frightened enemies, but also strengthened the Cossacks' faith in their own superhuman powers.

People credited almost all prominent Cossack leaders – hetmans, Kish atamans (chief officers of the Kish – the central body of government of the Zaporozhian Host) and famous colonels – with the magical powers of the Kharakternyk Cossacks. Among the well-known Kharakternyk Cossacks were Ataman Severyn Nalyvaiko, Colonel Semen Palii, Boyar Ostafii Dashkevych, Military Leader Ivan Bohun, Kish Ataman Hryhorii Sahaidachnyi, and the legendary Ivan Sirko, whom the enemy feared and called Urus Shaitan.

Equally important is the mystery-shrouded image of the Cossack Mamai, who has become a symbol of Ukrainian culture and national identity. His portraits, which depict him as a bandura player and warrior sitting under an oak tree with a weapon and a pipe, often adorned Ukrainian homes, embodying the fortitude and indomitable will of the Ukrainian people.

Commemorative coin

Neither Bullet Nor Saber!



Although most of the stories about the Kharakternyk Cossacks were written down in the nineteenth century, the first mentions of Cossacks casting spells on their weapons date back to the sixteenth century. Famous Ukrainian writers and historians, such as Dmytro Yavornytskyi, Yevhen Hrebinka, Panteleimon Kulish, and Taras Shevchenko, made a significant contribution to the recreation of the image of the Kharakternyk Cossack. The historian Dmytro Yavornytskyi wrote:

"Among Cossacks there have always been the so-called 'Kharakternyks' whom neither fire nor water, nor saber, nor an ordinary bullet, save a silver one, could fell. Such 'Kharakternyks' could open locks without keys, ... pick up hot cannon balls with their bare hands, see what was going on several miles away..., stay at the bottom of a river, and get in and out of tightly tied and even sewn bags...".

Today, when Ukraine is once again fighting for its freedom, the image of the Kharakternyk Cossack has taken on a new meaning. Ukrainian defenders, like their ancestors, are demonstrating exceptional bravery, resilience and loyalty to their homeland. Their courage and selflessness serve as a worthy continuation of the glorious traditions of the Cossacks.

Designers – Volodymyr Taran, Oleksandr Kharuk, Serhii Kharuk.

Engravers – Volodymyr Atamanchuk, Anatolii Demianenko.

NEITHER BULLET NOR SABER!

NATIONAL BANK OF UKRAINE

mint mark of the NBU's Banknote Printing and Minting Works

stylized image of a soldier



legend "Ukraine"

issue year

Issue date

4 December 2024

Metal, face value

nickel silver
5 hryvnias

silver
10 hryvnias

Diameter

35.0 mm

38.6 mm

Quality

special uncirculated

special uncirculated

Edge

grooved

smooth with incised inscriptions

Mintage

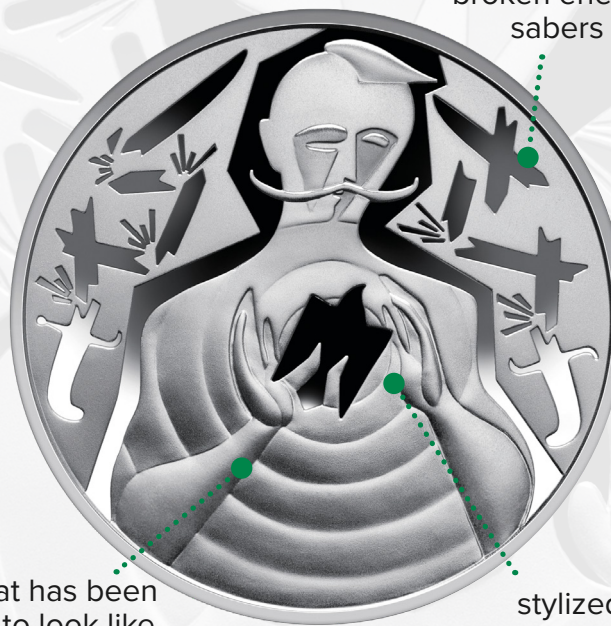
up to 125,000

up to 10,000

enemy bullets bouncing off the soldier

Ukraine's small coat of arms

broken enemy sabers



bird that has been made to look like a trident

stylized image of a Kharakternyk Cossack



face value and graphic symbol of the hryvnia