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EUROPEAN TRADITION OF THE PERCEPTION OF THE NORTHERN BLACK SEA COAST AND ITS INHABITANTS IN ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES

The topic of the publication is devoted to the process of forming the image of the Northern Black Sea region in European society in the times of antiquity and the Middle Ages. The Northern Black Sea region had its own peculiarities of mental, verbal and artistic perception.

It is revealed that many works are devoted to the perception of the region by representatives of other cultures, among which L. Wolff work dedicated to the study of transformations of mentally-geographical landmarks of Western Europeans should be noted. Wolff tried to prove that numerous traveler-diplomats, writers, adventurers, merchants, and scholars have laid the foundations for the image of the region and as a «civilized» West looked at the «backward» Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region. The Age of Enlightenment was merely a statement of the millennial genesis of this figurative perception. The roots of this process date back to ancient times. The research is based on an analysis of the works of antique, medieval and early modern authors, which have a clear positioning in relation to the Northern Black Sea region. The study of the genesis of perception of the Northern Black Sea region by representatives of «civilized» cultures is the main goal of this publication. It was defined that both «antique» and «medieval» European threat and trouble came from the east, while the closest «eastern» region to the Europe was the Northern Black Sea region. Like the Scythians and Sarmatians in ancient times, and the Huns during the Great Migration of Peoples, and the destruction of the Roman Empire, the Mongol invasion, the Tatar-Nogai raids firmly established in the minds of Europeans the image of this land as a «hellish» place.

It is noted that the ancient «sivilis» clearly contrasted itself with the Black Sea «barbarus» and considered it dangerous. Subsequently, after the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire, along with the civilization criterion religious was added. Now, the «sivilis», which was associated with «christianitas» (Christianity), contrasted itself with the «barbarus», which consolidated «religia pagana» (paganism).

Key words: *antiquity, image, Northern Black Sea region, Middle Ages, perception, Christianity.*

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ТРАДИЦІЯ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СПРИЙНЯТТЯ ПІВНІЧНОГО ПРИЧОРНОМОР'Я ТА ЙОГО МЕШКАНЦІВ В АНТИЧНІ ТА СЕРЕДНЬОВІЧНІ ЧАСИ

Північне Причорномор'я протягом свого історичного існування мало свої особливості ментального, вербального, а також художньо-графічного сприйняття.

Дослідженню сприйняття регіону представниками інших культур присвячено безліч робіт, серед яких слід відзначити роботу Л. Вульфа, де прослідковано трансформації ментально-ге-

ографічних орієнтирів західних європейців. Вульф намагається довести, що численні мандрівники – дипломати, письменники, авантюристи, купці, науковці – заклали основу того образу сприйняття регіону, з яким «цивілізований» Захід дивився на «відсталу» Східну Європу та Причорномор'я. Епоха Просвітництва була лише констатацією тисячолітньої ґенези цього образного сприйняття. Коріння цього процесу сягають, ще у античні часи.

Дослідження базується на аналізі творів античних, середньовічних та раньомодерних авторів в яких чітко зафіксована позиція по відношенню до північно-причорноморському регіону. Розв'язанню проблеми ґенези сприйняття північно-причорноморського регіону представниками «цивілізованих» культур і є головною метою даної публікації.

Зазначається, що античний «civilis» чітко протиставляв себе причорноморському «barbarus» та вважав його небезпечним. Згодом, після утвердження християнства в Римській імперії, поряд з цивілізаційним критерієм додався і релігійний. Тепер «civilis», який асоціювався з «christianitas» (християнство), протиставляв себе «barbarus», за яким закріпилося «religia pagana» (язичництво).

Встановлено, що для «античного», так і «середньовічного» християнина «європейця» загроза та біда приходили саме зі сходу, а найближчим «східним» регіоном до тогочасної Європи було саме Північне Причорномор'я. Як скіфи і сармати в античні часи, так і гуни під час «Великого переселення народів» та знищення Римської імперії, монгольська навала, татарсько-ногайські набіги міцно закріпили у свідомості європейців образ цього краю, як «пекельного» місця.

Ключові слова: *античність, образ, Північне Причорномор'я, середньовіччя, сприйняття, християнство.*

The statement of the problem. Visual thinking as a kind of human activity is directed to the creation of new images and visual forms, which bear certain semantic loading. This thinking is possible thanks to the fact that images and forms get certain independence on concern the object of perception and can be objects of transformations and manipulations, as well as to reflect separate moments in the activity and behaviour of man. Visual activity can take place in two forms: internal (mental) and external (visible) (Rozyn, 2009: 10). The internal form of visual thinking includes mental (reflected in recollections, ideas, fantasies, stamps, etc.) and verbal (reflected in metaphors and descriptions) perception. The external form consists of art-graphic perception reflected in pictures, drawings, engravings, sculptures, and abstract-graphic images that found its embodiment in maps, schemes, plans, and drawings. The northern Black Sea coast throughout the historical existence had its mental, verbal, and art-graphic perception peculiarities.

The analysis of recent researches. It is difficult to trace the peculiarities of art-graphic perception in antiquity and the Middle Ages for reason of the lack of sufficient amount of sources. However, the mental and the verbal can be traced very distinctly. A great variety of works deal with the question of the perception of the region by representatives of other cultures, among which L. Wulf's work, who researched the transformations of mental and geographical orientations of the western Europeans, should be mentioned. The northern Black Sea coast in this work is considered in the context of E. Said's ideas about the orientalism as a sub-region of Eastern Europe. By L. Wulf's definition, the spaces of this region, in particular, the Crimea, in the last third of the XVIII century became «l'Europe Orientale», the safest area for the Europeans (Wulf, 2003: 46). Wulf tries to prove that numerous travelers – diplomats, writers, adventurers, merchants, and scientists – laid the foundation for that image of the region, namely, as the «civilized West» looked at the «backward» Eastern Europe and Black Sea Coast. The Enlightenment epoch brought about only an ascertaining of a thousand year old genesis of this

figurative perception. The root of this process dates back to the antiquity. The study of the origin of the perception of the North Black-Sea Region by the representatives of «civilized» cultures in the antique and medieval times makes up the main **purpose** of the given publication.

The statement of the basic material. The tradition of mental and verbal perception of the population of the region in view as the «barbarians» and «savages» is fixed as early as in the in ancient Greek scientific treatises. So, a severe «barbarous» temper of the Scythians, their custom to suck blood of enemies and to make objects of use of human skin was mentioned yet by the antique historian Herodotus (Herodot, 2004: 187). Hence, the famous ancient Greek doctor Hippocrates in his work «On air, waters, and localities», speaking about Scythians, points to their essential physiological and reproductive drawbacks, caused by the severe climate and a barbarous way of life (Hippocrates, 1936: 298–299). Characterizing the Sarmatians, whom he took for the people belonging to the Scythians, Hippocrates also recalled their «barbarous» customs, namely, that «their women... conduct wars with the enemies... and not earlier give up their virginity than as they kill three enemies». The right breast they burn out still in childhood so, «that all force and completeness pass to the right shoulder and hand» (Hippocrates, 1936: 297).

The ancient Greek literary tradition speaks about tragic destinies of foreigners in the Crimean lands. In Euripides' tragedy «Iphigenia in Tauris» the custom of the Taurians to sacrifice foreigners to goddess Artemis is one of the key ideas of its plot which adds dramatic character to it (Euripides, 1969: 492–493). A similar passage can be found in Lucian's «Conversations with Gods» wherein Artemis' brother Apollo, in his conversation with Dionysos, speaks about Artemis's boredom of accepting sacrifice of foreigners in Taurianss and her wish to return to Greece (Lukian, 2001a: 118). In Lucian's other work, namely, «On offering», the author asserts that for the Scythians (but not for the Taurians) to sacrifice foreigners is the highest respect for gods (Lukian, 2001b: 437).

Similar estimations of the inhabitants of the northern Black Sea coast were given by Roman authors. So, in 43 A. D., following the Greek tradition, Roman geographer Pomponiùs Mela notices so: «The Taurians... have an awful custom, and about it an awful glory spreads that they, instead of sacrificial animals, easily kill the newcomers» (Pomponius Mela, 2011: 55). The other tribes of the area, in antique mental representations, looked far from being better: the Arimasps, who had but one eye; the Agaphirses who wear unnatural indelible signs (tattoos) on their bodies, and Neurii are even able to turn into wolves (Pomponiy Mela, 2011: 51). Eagerness to fight and unfriendliness of the tribes of the northern Black Sea coast to their neighbours Pomponius explains by the circumstance, that their main god is Mars (that is, his local correspondence), and their basic way of communication was but murder of others (Pomponiy Mela, 2011: 55).

In late Roman times the Huns' invasion of Europe in the IV century added new negative features to the image of the northern Black Sea region. So, the Roman military leader Ammianus Marcellinus in his «History» characterised the Huns, who had come to Europe through the northern Black Sea coast, as such who «surpass all measures of wildness» and «... are awful and with terrible appearance, so that they can be taken for biped animals» (Ammian Marcellin, 2005: 538).

In due course, on the break of the IV and V centuries, human sacrifices in the northern Black Sea lands were referred to by Porphyrius, Neoplatonist philosopher, born in Tyros (Porfiriy, 1900: 656) and one of «church fathers», archbishop of Constantinople Grego-

rius (Georgiy Bogoslov, 1900: 715). A century later church historian Zacharias, partially retelling Herodotus and Hippocrates, noticed that in the northern Black Sea coast dog men lived and, also, the amazons who had one breast and killed male children (Zakhariy Rytor, 1941: 165–166). To the late antique Christian authors, the tribes inhabiting the northern Black Sea coast already appeared as pagan barbarians who were in constant conflicts with the antique world.

Early medieval sources relate a continuation of the «antique format» in the perception of an image of the northern Black Sea coast. This region for the Europeans was a place of «religia pagana» (the pagan religion), that is, a different and dangerous world. The first medieval Christian authors speak about it. Often, when characterising Slavs, Veneds, Ants, Avars, and other tribes residing in the northern Black Sea region in the IV – X centuries, the authors characterize them with such epithets as «disgusting and the worst representatives of mankind» (Boniface, 1995: 417), «cruel thieves» who «eat human flash» (Adam of Bremen, 1989: 138), «...ferocious... beast-like creatures which consume crude meat and suck human blood» (Otto of Freisingen, 2010: 238–239), «the barbarous people... that plundered churches» (John of Ephesus, 1994: 279), «the worst and cruelest of all pagans inhabiting the earth» (Bruno of Querfurt, 2010: 57–58). Relating constant skirmishes among these ethnic groups, the early medieval Christian authors saw them as «aliens» and enemies to the world.

The medieval tradition «added» to such a negative image of the northern Black Sea coast and its inhabitants the Christian tales from the biblical mythology. The Christian tradition considered, that exactly in the direction of the northern Black Sea region the ferocious Gog and Magog peoples, «the lost tribes» of Israel lived. Therefore, to Mongolian invasion in the 13th century the European population reacted with Jewish pogroms, having accused the Jews in calling in their former countrymen to mortify the Christians and having identified the mentioned Old Testament tribes with the Mongols and Tatars, who came from the east (Vishlenkova, 2011: 32). Such an identification of Gog and Magog tribes with Mongols and Tatars which, according to the biblical stories, should go and attack «the Divine people», is fixed in the sources of XIII century (Epistle of a Hungarian bishop, 1979: 174). This tradition was strongly fixed in the consciousnesses of the Europeans and reflected in cartographical sources up to the second half of the 17th century. So, on the map published in Amsterdam in 1670 the mythical Magog people was identified with the real Mongols. These peoples are signed as *«Moal at Mongul et Magog»* in a big font, underlining their dominations over other peoples including the tribe named Gog, which is signed in a smaller letters. On a later map of 1684 «Le Grand Continent», drawn by «the father of the French cartography» P. Duval (1619 – 1683), the mythical people Magog and real Mongols, too, are the related peoples put together by the same inscription «Moalat-Mongulet-Magog» as on the aforementioned Amsterdam map of 1670, but they together with other tribes, including a tribe Gog, belong to the Great Tartary. On both maps the tribes Gog and Magog are localized in the Siberia.

In the European tradition of the XVI – XVII centuries no essential changes in the perception of the northern Black Sea coast is observed. This perception received only some conceptual generalisation. The Christianization of the majority of the East European tribes made these territories «friendly» to Europe. They became a buffer between the barbaric world and the civilised Europe and only the khan and Turkish possession in the northern Black Sea coast remained the avant-guard of the «barbaric» threat to Europe.

An Italian by birth and a military figure of Polish Commonwealth A. Guangini and Polish chronist Martin Bielsky called the lands of the peoples which lived in the borders from the Vistula to the Don and from the Sea of Azov to the Baltic Sea as European Sarmatia. Guangini specified, that Europe «glorious for Christian piety, virtues, customs, honourable sciences, and its way of life by the number of inhabitants, particularly, urban, considerably exceeds Asia and Africa» (Guangini, 2007: 44). In origins of many peoples of the European Sarmatia, according to A. Guangini's data, a barbarous component is traced (Guangini, 2007: 48¬50). Concerning the population of the northern Black Sea coast a notable gradation of perception by the religious principle can be noticed. He perceives the Zaporogian Cossacks positively. «It is good that there are Cossacks there» wrote A. Guangini, hinting at their role in restraining the Tatar attacks. At the same time, the Tatars arouse his mistrust: «The Tatars say that if there were no Cossacks, we would live well with the infidels. But we should not trust the pagans, because we well know them by their affairs» (Guangini, 2007: 428). A similar position is that of G. Beauplan. He speaks about Tatars as the «aliens», distinct from Christians and born as animals – with eyes closed (Beauplan, 1832: 41), to whom cruelty and savagery in relation to the Christian people are inherent (Beauplan, 1832: 52). Besides, on the contrary, Beauplan praises the Cossacks for their natural talent (Beauplan, 1832: 82). Other European authors also write about the Zaporogians in a positive tone. An Italian Gamberini in 1584 characterised the Ukrainian Cossacks as follows: «Of the Cossacks it is possible to collect a 14.000 – 15.000 strong perfect and well armed army, [they] crave more for glory than profits and are ready for any danger.... They are good at war both as the foot and the cavalry... and they also fight well in the sea» (Suchynskyi, 1991: 14).

The relations of the northern Black Sea coast's inhabitants were not so good with the population of the southern steppes and the states of the Eastern Europe, such as the Muscovite Tsardom (later, the Russian Empire), the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and then Polish Commonwealth and the Ukrainian lands as parts of these states. Constant attacks and robberies, capture of the population and its sale into slavery assisted the formation of a negative image of this region in mental representations of their citizens. In those days the Steppe was more associated not as friendly and fertile, but as a region enemy and dangerous to the Christians (Komarnytskyi, 2011: 5–6).

Under the influence of the scientific revolution which started in England in the 17th century, Europe began to be influenced by the ideas of Enlightenment, – an intellectual movement based on rationalism and freethinking. At that time «histories», which tried «rationally» and «scientifically» to explain historical processes, began to substitute «descriptions» and «chronicles». The works of Ch. Paisonneille, E. Gibbon, and P. Leveque attempted to explain features of the process of ethno-genesis of the peoples of the northern Black Sea coast from rational and scientific viewpoint on the basis of antique ethnography. In these works the perception of the people to the east from Germany and Italy as barbaric, although Christian, was most accurately reflected. The Christianization of these peoples made them «familiar» for Europe, but of «barbaric» origins. Therefore, the aforementioned scholars (E. Gibbon, a. o.) speak about two ways of ethno-genesis. They write about Slavs as barbarians, but notice that they came to the east of Europe irrespective of the Turkic people. Two separate directions of barbaric intrusions into Europe are allocated: «eastern barbarians» (Scythians and their descendants) and «northern barbarians» (Slavs) (Paisonneille, 1765, 4–5). French historian P. Leveque considered that

medieval authors «through the antiquity of sources» were mistaken, when they includes Slavs as the descendants of Scythians. The Slavs had no relation to Scythians. They also came from the east, as well as Scythians, and settled in the region (Leveque, 1785: 5). English historian E. Gibbon laid out his variant of the theory of the ethno-genesis of the barbaric peoples of European Sarmatia. He, as well as other scholars, speaks about two separate lines of this process, namely, the Bulgarian (which include the Tatars) and Sclavonian (Gibbon, 1906: 180). He identified the Tatars with the Scythians and, also, considered them barbarians who «are near to the animal condition» (Gibbon, 1788: 341). «There is no need to repeat the simple and well-known description of the Tatar morals», – Gibbon wrote about the Bulgarians (Tatars) (Gibbon, 1906: 180). However, he pays a considerable attention to the language, history, and traditions of the Slavic (alias Sclabonian) tribes (Gibbon, 1906: 180–182). In his characterization of the Cossacks, the researcher places emphasis on their traditionalism and conservatism. About it E. Gibbon, who had never been in the northern Black Sea region therefore used A. Bell's wandering sketches, writes the following: «the contemporary appearance of the country in accuracy recreates the old one, as in the hands of the Cossacks it still remains in its natural state» (Gibbon, 1776: XXXV II). Voltaire, in his work «An Experience of a Temper», expressed a more negative perception and mistrust to the Zaporogian Cossacks. He noticed that the Zaporogians had no natural population increase and, consequently, remained a strange anti-natural tribal people with a wild primitive temper. Their way of life differs in no way from that of the ancient Scythians and Tatars at the coast of the Black sea (Voltaire, 1834: 515).

Conclusions. In the imagination of both an «antique» and a «medieval» inhabitant the threat and trouble came from the east, and the nearest to that time Europe eastern region was the northern Black Sea coast. As the Scythians and Sarmatians during the antique times, and the Huns during the time of «the Great resettlement of the peoples» and destruction of the Roman empire, the Mongolian invasion, and the Tatar-Nogai incursions fixed an image of this territory as a «hellish place» in the consciousness of the Europeans.

The Greek tradition, according to which the Scythians and Taurians (who, sometimes, were identified with the Scythians) belonged to the insidious, dangerous, and wild peoples, was firmly settled also in the Roman sources. The Greek tales about the territory in view were supplemented by negative stories about the Huns, Goths, and other tribes of the late Roman period. So, it is possible to say that the man of antiquity was «civilized» and opposed to the «barbarian» man of the northern Black Sea coast, considered as dangerous. In due course, after the establishment of Christianity, the civilizational criterion was supplemented by a religious one: thus, «civil» (Latin «civilis»), which now was associated with «christianitas» (Christianity), then opposed itself to «barbarian» (Latin «barbarus»), to which the quality «paganism» (Latin «religia pagana») was fixed.

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