

Regarding first contacts between North Europe and Black Sea Region

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Abstract. The article is devoted to sophisticated issue of first contacts between Black Sea Region and Northern Europe in I A.D. This phenomenon must be considered in the context of events related to establishment of union relations of the Empire with barbarian King Farzoi and inclusion of his "kingdom" into system of buffer states of Black Sea. Possibly Roman administration imposed an obligation on some northern tribes to provide continuous delivery of amber from Baltic Sea coast to Roman Empire, including transit through North Black Sea Region. Guarantor of this amber trade was barbarian kingdom of Farzoi.

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Introduction

It is known that under reign of Nero Farzoi's Kingdom turned into one of the key links in the system of buffer states located between Barbaricum and Roman Empire [1]. Side by side with close relationship of Farzoi clan with Sarmatian-Iranian aristocratic party of Bosphorus these nomads established links with Northern barbarians. The last fact is unlikely to be pure coincidence. For the first time connection between Farzoi kingdom and Northern barbarians was suspected after finding of the whole set of curious artifacts. In rich burial mounds Sadovy and Vysochino on Nizhny Don together with things of turquoise-golden style iron umbos of shields were found (German, type Zielsing I-1), typical for cultures of Central Europe of the 1st half of I AD. In one case the shield was very dear for owner - it was concealed in a hideaway together with silver cups [2, 3].

More importantly, on some German spears the whole encyclopedia of Sarmatian signs incusted with silver was found [4] including tamga of Farzoi. Since most of them do not have analogues among Sarmatian signs it is evident that Germans took only the idea of tamga which was developed by them [3, 5]. It is correlated well with the fact that most of mentioned spears date back to the second half of II AD – 3 first decades of III AD [6] when the kingdom of Farzoi and Inismeus already did not exist. Scientists interpret these artifacts in a different way. Usually these tamgas are considered magic symbols [7-10] or even letters of the ancient Runic alphabet [7]. M. Shchukin, on the contrary, writes that glory of Farzoi was well-known in military aristocratic circles and friendly contacts on the level of warriors resulted in borrowing tamga of this fortunate king and the mercenaries from the North could even be his bodyguards [3]. G. Dobzhanskaya points out to the oncoming Goths' intrusion which made nomads

dwelling in pools of Prut and Dniester unite with bearers of Pshevor culture which resulted in placing of Sarmatian signs on German spears [5]. S. Voronyatov and D. Machinsky [believe that tamgas on spears were trophy signs and could be handed over to the winners as symbols of force and fortune 11].

Any of given above interpretations can be true because the circumstances and the character of identified relations between Northern Europe and Black Sea Region are unknown for us. We need complex analysis of all available categories and sources. Using method of historical analysis and comparative-analytical method we shall try to find the reasons of origination of these relations, to find out particularities of Roman strategy in Black Sea Region in those times.

First of all, we should pay our attention to existence of other evidences of relationship between Black Sea Region and Northern Europe in that period. So, numerous jewelry appear in I AD and disappear in the beginning of III AD which was made by antique granulation-filigree method but in accordance with tastes of barbarian customer. Strangely, all these findings, very close to each other by the method of their production are concentrated in Northern Europe – even reaching territory of modern Czech Republic and in North Black Sea Region where they were popular in Scythian times [3, 12-14]. Celts and Romans knew granulation-filigree method long time ago, that is why it is not clear why it is spread in first centuries AD and exactly in mentioned regions. It seems that these things were used by representatives of Zubov-Vozdvizhensk group of archeological monuments we can agree at argument of M. Shchukin that these things were produced locally. For example they can be produced in Eastern Mediterranean Region or Black Sea Region, may be in Bosphorus [3]. In M. Treister's

opinion, many of expensive things decorated with granulation-filigree were made in Olvia under order of one of Sarmatian kings [15].

Special group from these things is massive golden grivnas which could not be used in trade. Such things being obligatory attribute of high rank and prestige were very expensive and were only made on by-order basis. The 6 known grivnas of Khavor type (with retort-like end) decorated with granulation-filigree were enigmatically distributed again among Northern Europe and Black Sea Region.

Grivnas from Northern Europe include items from the moor in Dronninglund in Denmark, accidental finding in Western Sweden near river Gota-Alf - west border of Westergötheland and grivna from treasures of bronze cups of B2 stage (70-170 AD) in the Gotland island. It is interesting that all items were found in the places related directly to ethno-genesis of Goths in I AD (here reduction of population was observed, prohibition for placing of the weapons into the grave and erection of stone construction on the burial mounds was imposed) [3].

The other similar items originate already from North Black Sea Region. Two grivnas were found in 1876 near Zalevsky village (Cherkassk region) in broken by peasants burial mound (presumably 20-80 AD) where beside items including those which were made by granulation-filigree method and turquoise-golden style there was golden funeral mask. M. Shchukin believes that these masks are analogous to those which were found in Parfia. Third grivna was found near Olvia, accidentally and also together with golden mask. The last finding was accompanied by golden earrings, possibly of Hellenistic times. However M. Shchukin pointed out that this burial mound was located at the territory of Olvia which could happen only after 50 BC [3]. With all debates around date of these items [3, 12] we should pay attention to their stylistic similarity and concentration in 2 (only!), rather distant from each other, sources [3].

Golden grivna from the burial mound near Porogi village is also rather interesting. This artifact belongs to another type of similar items but nevertheless also has its parallels both with rather ancient Celtic grivnas and jewelry business of Late Hellenistic epoch and in first centuries AD [15,16]. Delicate lock of grivna consisting of 20 golden rings forming a circle often decorates golden pendants and pins of first centuries AD from Scandinavia. It is interesting that similar delicate rings are on edges of grivna from Khavor [15]. On the grivna from Porogi itself, on one of the horse's heads there is a tamga resembling Inismei sign [15-17]. Expensive item was obviously made on by-order basis which is proved by

the fact that tamga was made through soldering of golden wire to a item [15].

All these expensive golden grivnas, if we date them back to I AD, testify not only spontaneous barbarian contacts but union relations on the level of leaders and kings. If it is so, then, probably, such relations which usually were legalized by dynasty marriages and established legislative foundation of moving of Germans to North Black Sea Region.

No doubt, such suggestion needs additional data from other sources. In this connection we should pay attention to some enigmatic circumstances of peace treaty between Romans and king Farzoi known by us from writing on the gravestone in his mausoleum in Tibur. So, it is not quite clear why Tiberius P S who came together with Roman troops in 63 AD in North Black Sea Region for making peace with unknown and hostile to Rome kings had to bring them to Danube coast which he, as legate of Mezia, defended. Was it only for honoring Roman badges by them? [18-22]. Doesn't it mean that at negotiations on making peace with barbarians some important intermediaries had to be present, who arrived from Roman party? It is worth noticing that by mentioned time Rome had already had rather close relations with the world of German tribes behind Danube and some union leaders were even granted political shelters at the territory of the Empire. As early as in 19 AD under permission of Cesar Tiberius powerful in the past Marabod found his shelter. Soon Rome accepted Catualda - noble man (troops' leader?) who in his times eliminated union of Marabod's tribes [3, 23]. Catualda was from Gotons dynasty [24-27] who are usually associated with Gustav group of monuments in the lower Oder. Presumably these barbarians were the first Goths who appeared from Scandinavia [3]. In the Empire Catualda was sent to one of the cities of Narbonne Gallia, and the troops of both leaders stayed behind Danube [28]. Taking into consideration the fact that while providing political shelters the Romans intended to use barbarian leaders in their relations with Barbaricum [28] when uniting with Farzoi, from Roman side any intermediary could act who was closely related to barbarian world of Northern Europe.

In order to clarify supposed union of Sarmatian and Gothic noblemen we should remember the fact of sending of Roman military squad which consisted from the warriors of XV legion from Carnunt led by the horseman Quintus Attilius Prim by Nero to Baltic coast, and just on the eve of interesting for us events (until 62 AD) [29, 30]. Road from Carnunt (about 900 km) [31, 32] to lower Vistula was long, it passed through the territory of different tribes [33] and took 2 months [23]. This is

proved by findings of Roman weapons of I AD on the Amber coast [34]. The aim of the campaign was amber from which expensive luxurious items were made and even a net which protected Emperor in the amphitheatre from possible dangers [23].

The fact of such expedition itself testifies that Rome suffered difficulties with supplies of amber which was earlier traded only by the Wendians. We shall recall that exactly in that time (10-70 AD) beside Gustav group of monuments in lower Vistula slow transformation of monuments of Oksyv culture into Velbak culture was going on, related, among other reasons to the inflow of new Gothic migrants from Scandinavia [3]. All this could be the reason of interruptions in delivery of amber. If so, we understand more clearly the direction of the route of Roman squad and its purpose - to organize amber trade with the Empire together with local leaders and provide its safety [34]. The fact of successful negotiations with barbarians was testified by Plinius who mentioned 13-pound amber piece [35] which was handed over to Nero by some "rex of Germania" [31, 36]. If the intermediary in negotiations and in establishing peace with Farzoi was Roman horseman Quintus Attilius Prim, than the obligation of Sarmatian king on free and safe pass of Northern troops through his territory could be mentioned in the contract. In this case the route of these warriors must go through Vistula-Western Bug-Southern Bug. Such a bypass way to the Empire, with transit through Tira and Olvia most likely was considered as more safe and reliable than through Central Europe [37] where ancient trade ways were located [38], otherwise there wouldn't have been any problems with amber in Rome.

Archeological data testify the establishing contacts of Velbarsk culture (in lower Vistula, already in 10-70) with barbarians of Amber coast, and evidently on the base of inclusion of local tribes into trade by Amber way. O. Khomyakova believes that it was delta of Vistula which apart from important role in amber trade also became the main "filter" and source of innovation influences for the tribes who lived to the east from Paslenka river [40]. This explains why since 2nd half of I AD the simplified derivatives of grivna were popular here - bronze artifacts of Khavor type [3, 40], original golden samples of which local barbarians must know well in any case. In spite of the fact that the volumes of oncoming into the Empire amber were still moderate [41], in the next years this way became key one for Goths, by this way the connection between South Baltic Sea region and Black Sea Region was kept [42].

Conclusions

No doubt the issue of first contacts between Northern Europe and Black Sea Region in I AD must be considered in the context of events related to establishing of union relations of the Empire with barbarian king Farzoi and inclusion of his "kingdom" into the system of buffer states. Roman administration most likely imposed an obligation on some northern tribes to provide continuous delivery of amber from Baltic Sea coast to Roman Empire by transit through North Black Sea Region. Guarantor of this amber trade was barbarian "kingdom" of Farzoi. In turn, for Gothic kings the union with Romans and kings Farzoi and Inismeus opened relatively safe and, what is most important, obstacle-free road to south-east which further played its key role in history of Eastern Europe.

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