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RUTHENIANS/RUSYNS IN THE ARAB WORLD: TEACHING HISTORY OF UKRAINE IN THE CIVILIZATIONAL CONTEXT

***The purpose of the study** is to demonstrate a new direction of integrating educational material from the History of Ukraine into the context of world history. Namely to outline the ethnic and civilizational contacts in the Middle Ages and define the place of Ruthenians in the processes.*

***Methodology.** The main research method was the historical-cultural method, which consists in close studying relevant historical sources.*

***Scientific novelty.** The article traces the history of the Slavic ethnic groups as it was reflected in the Muslim sources. It is proved that in many cases the Slavs, mentioned in these sources were in fact, Ruthenians/Rusyns.*

***Conclusions.** Contacts between the Slavic and Arab world's existed from the earliest times of the new era, as indicated by the texts of Muslim historians, travel writers, geographers, traders, and other scholars of that time. Even though Rusyns are not explicitly mentioned in Arab documents, it is obvious that they were slaves from Rus, especially when described as white slaves (saqaliba) in Andalusia although they may not be exclusively from Rus. Geographical position of Andalusia, Varangians, and Kyivan Rus makes this assumption quite plausible. Therefore, the prospects of further research should include not only the clarification and clarification of specific scientific facts, but also further popularization and explanatory work on the civilizational contacts (both positive and negative) in different historical periods. All of the above is directly related to teaching the subject of History of Ukraine in both secondary and higher education. This concerns, firstly, the introduction of new sources and new material (although some points remain hypothetical, which should be emphasized during teaching), and, secondly, the formation of a broader horizon and ability among students to consider the history of Ukrainian lands and the Ukrainian people in a broader European and civilizational (on the scale of the Greater Mediterranean) context. This task is relevant, since many pages of Ukrainian history remain little known to the general public and insufficiently covered in modern scientific publications. This especially applies to contacts between the peoples of Ukraine and the cultures of the Orient.*

***Keywords:** history of Ukraine, Ukrainian Studies, Rus, Ukraine, Rusyn, Arab world, civilizational contacts.*

Statement of the problem in a general form and its connection with important scientific or practical tasks. In the context of the multi-vectored and ambivalent contemporary civilizational contacts, it is important to trace the history of ethnic and civilizational interactions. In addition, the Arab historical sources can give us some information about the lesser-known facts of the history of Ruthenians. The clarification of historical facts also has educational potential for studying humanities in the high school.

Analysis of the main researches and publications on the raised problem. The main researchers, relevant for the study are those about the medieval Muslim world (P. Byers, P. Lunde, C. Stone, M.R. Menocal), Vikings (A. Christys, Th. Hraundal) and Byzantium (W.T. Treadgold). The works about the international trade contacts (M. Jankowjak, R. Kovalev, A. Kaelin Th.S. Nooan, O. Pritsak) were especially helpful.

Formulation of the purpose of the article. The purpose of the article is to demonstrate a new direction of integrating educational material from the History of Ukraine into the context of world history. Namely to outline the ethnic and civilizational contacts in the Middle Ages and define the place of Ruthenians in the processes.

Research methods and methodology. The main research method was the historical-cultural method, which consists in close studying relevant historical sources.

Scientific novelty. The article traces the history of the Slavic ethnic groups as it was reflected in the Muslim sources. It is proved that in many cases the Slavs, mentioned in these sources were in fact, Ruthenians/Rusyns. Presented information can be used in teaching History of Ukraine, History of Ukrainian culture, Ukrainian studies and related subjects in schools and higher educational institutions.

Presentation of the main material of the study with justification of the obtained scientific results.

The Slavs

The Slavs were actively present in the Arab world from ancient times, as confirmed by the writings of the Byzantine chronicler, Saint Theophanes (758/760 – 817/818), who mentioned that in 660 the Umayyad Caliph Muawiyah I settled in Syria about 5,000 Slavic mercenaries who later served as translators for future soldiers and traders from Rus' [12].

In the eighth century, around 711, a Berber tribe, led by the Syrian army, crossed from Africa over Gibraltar into Spain and conquered the region of Andalusia with its main city of Cordoba, which even earlier the Visigoths [9] had conquered from the Romans. The Syrian army also included many Slavs who were valued as good and loyal fighters.

During the next seven centuries, Cordoba in Andalusia, where the Umayyad dynasty ruled, remained the central area of Muslim culture, and once influenced European history from there. Before the great territory, the Abbasid dynasty, earlier defeated by the Umayyads, again regained power in the east, and the cultural and religious center from Cordoba was shifted to Damascus. For two centuries, the Islamic culture relied in all aspects including religious freedom, science and philosophy. The luxurious life style of Damascus and other cities required a great number of slaves and servants, and the later claims and struggles for leadership between Shia Muslims who claimed to be descendants of Mukhamed's son-in-law Aliy, and another faction of Fatimids who claimed to be descendants of Fatima, Mukhamed's daughter, brought the need of the great number of warriors. Slaves, servants and warriors were captured, bought, or recruited from the neighboring lands, including Slavic.

The term Saqaliba came into being as an Arabized name for the Slavs based on the Greek name Sklaven (Σκλαβένοι). Procopius from Caesarea (Προκόπιος ὁ Καισαρεύς), a Greek historian, mentioned them in his books «History of Wars» as early as 545, as did Jordanes, Pseudo-Cesarius, Menander Protector, Byzantine Emperor Maurice in his book Strategikon, Justinian I, Constantine II, etc.

Constantine II conquered Sclavinia (land of the Slavs) in 657-658 and settled enslaved Slavs to Asia Minor [2], where they were fighting the Umayyad civil war. According to legend, in the year 665, about 5,000 Slavic warriors joined Abdulreman ibn Khalid, a Syrian-Umayyad military leader who had returned from war in Asia Minor. After the war, they settled on the outskirts of Apamea, today's Afamia – a small town in northern Syria.

Justinian II, the Byzantine emperor, settled by force about 30,000 Slavs from Thrace to the military-civilian province of Opsician Theme (θέμα Ὀπικίου) in northwestern Asia Minor (modern Turkey), and strengthened his army militarily. According to estimates, the Bulgarians and Serbs were the most numerous [12]. In 692, in the Battle of Sebastopolis, near today's Sulasaray, about 20,000 Slavic warriors under the command of the Slavic commander Nebulos crossed over to the side of Umayyad-Arabs and Byzantium lost the battle.

The mention of the Slavs can be found throughout the territory of the ancient Arab world. In the city of Palermo in Sicily, there is a quarter not far from the harbor, called the Slavic Quarter (Harat as-Saqaliba), which is believed to have been a garrison of Slavic soldiers founded there in 535 by the Byzantine general Belisarius, or it may have been established in the 10th century as a garrison of Slavic soldiers during the rule of the Fatimids. The Arab writer, geographer and chronicler Ibn Hauqal mentioned in his book «The Face of the Earth» that in Palermo in the 10th century there was another quarter called the «Slavic Mosque» [11]. He also mentions the Slavs as pirates in the Mediterranean. Another Arab historian, the geographer, and observer Al-Masudi, recalled that the inhabitants of Andalusia often fought against these invaders, the Franks, Lombards and Slavs (Saqaliba) [3, p. 23].

How deeply the name Saqaliba was incorporated into the Arabic dictionary, can be seen from the agricultural book Kitab al-Filaha written by Ibn al-Awwam al-Ishbili (Ibn al-Awwam of Seville) in the 12th century while living in Andalusia. He mentions the pale yellowish-white color of the beans, which he called saqalibiya, apparently reminiscent of the color of the skin and hair of the Slavs.

Apart from the sea and in service or alliance with the Arabs, the Slavs attacked independently by land too. The book «History of the Lombards» mentions that after the murder of the duke Lupus in the year 666 by the Avars, his son (Arnefrit) became duke in Friuli (modern Italy), but the Lombard king Grimoald deposed him and Arnefrit fled to the Slavs who lived in caves in the territory of modern Slovenia and Austria [4]. He returned with them, but was defeated by Grimoald. In the 8th century, the Slavs attacked the northernmost part of Italy several more times and, established their settlements in the occupied territories, from where they advanced in their expansion.

Ruthenians/Rusyns as Saqaliba

According to the writings of Ibn Hauqal, Slavic slaves were brought to Muslim Spain from Galicia, the Frankish lands, Lombardy and Calabria in southern Italy. Many came independently as paid troops from the Balkans, the Baltic Sea and Rus.

Female slaves were valued as concubines in the harems of wealthy Arabs for their white skin and golden hair, while male slaves, who were mostly brought as young boys, became servants in the wealthy palaces and chambers, or eunuchs in harems, while the physically strong became members of an elite army called the «Slavic Guard» founded by Abd al-Rahman III (889/91 - 961), Emir of Cordoba [1].

There were two main sources from which the Arab world supplied the slaves it needed. The first source was Prague, where caravans from Andalusia came to trade, and the second was the Volga Bulgars (Al-Bulghar),

where caravans from Khorezm in Uzbekistan came and bought them for golden dinars and silver dirhams or exchanged them for goods from the Far East such as silk and precious ornaments [8].

In the north and north-west of Europe, large hoards of Islamic silver dirhams and gold dinars were found, which merchants hid as their trade earnings. The variety of money found in them indicates the expansion of trade between central, northern and north-western Europe with the Middle and Far East. Its diversity shows the change of dynasties in the Arab caliphates, from which not everyone minted their own silver dirhams with the year and place of minting. Silver dirhams were most valuable in Rus due to the rarity of silver in those regions. With dirhams, traders bought slaves, fur coats, honey, amber, fish and other things from the Rus. The first appearance of dirhams in the Rus territories occurred around 820, according to T. Nooan [10], although there is older money in the treasuries, which means that trade ties between the Rus' from Kyiv already existed then, i.e. probably even before the founding of Kyivan Rus' around 862.

The main suppliers of slaves were the Varangians, who enslaved them, or bought them in Rus territories and from the Bulgars, for which they received dirhams from Arab traders. Large hoards of dirhams were found and excavated on the territory of Rus, along with which were also Varangian artifacts (a ring with Thor's hammer, ornaments with runic inscriptions, etc.) [5]. The Varangians who traded with the Arabs, stayed in place for a long period of time, hid the money they received, buried it in the ground, and later dug it up before returning back to Scandinavia. Many of them suffered in battles on the territory of Rus and beyond, as evidenced by the Swedish inscriptions on stone monuments in Sweden and Norway, and their money was left buried. Found hoards confirm the fact that the Varangians were not permanently settled in Russia, but came there as seasonal traders and marauders.

The trade and dealing with slaves is known in the history of the oldest civilizations, however, the keeping and use of slaves in the Arab world is still different from others. Because of such an attitude in Islam, slaves were freed at certain times, which increased the need for new ones. They were obtained through trade, war, or the plundering carried out by the Varangians, and then the Tatars, Mongols, and Turks.

The treasuries of Abbasid and Samanid dirhams in Scandinavian and Rus lands indicate an intensive slave trade in the ninth century, which was carried by the Volga Bulgars and the Khazars [7]. The trade has spread as far as Iraq.

Riots and uprisings in Samara and Baghdad, as well as the reduced quantity of silver used for minting dirhams, gradually led to a decrease and cessation of the Rus' slave trade.

The trade of slaves in Prague was at its greatest in the tenth and eleventh centuries, when slaves were sold to Andalusia, where they were significantly present in the army of the Umayyad Caliphate. In the eleventh century, the fall of central authority in Andalusia came, and that meant the end of trade between Spain and Central Europe [6].

Moreover, in the Christian world, from the nineteenth century onwards, the ban on selling Christian slaves to non-Christians progressively expanded until 840, when an agreement was concluded between Venice and the Carolingian Kingdom with the so-called Pactum Lotharii (a pact of the Carolingian Emperor Lothar I) [13]. Before this agreement, Christians actively participated in the trade with slaves taken from non-Christian and Christian countries, and after the agreement they ceased only to sell them to non-Christians.

Since the Christianization of Rus came in 988, it meant that until then there were no religious or other obstacles to handing over Rus people as slaves to Arab rulers, and since the adoption of Christianity, the Varangians often handed over Rus people to Christians, which was not prohibited by the Pactum Lotharii. Many high priests and the popes kept slaves, and Muslim slaves were sold on the galleys of the Papal States (especially in Italy). Pope Nicholas V, in his *Dum Diversas* of 1452, allowed the Portuguese king Alfonso V to keep for «eternal service» enslaved Saracens (Arab Muslims) and pagans from Africa. Similarly, the purchased Christians were not slaves, but eternal servants.

According to Th. Hraundal, Rus can be divided into two historical entities [5]. The first is Kyivan Rus, and the second is Volga-Caspian Rus, of which the Kyivan Rus was predominantly Slavic with Scandinavian elements which gradually became Slavic, and the Volga-Caspian Rus that was predominantly Scandinavian, or a Varangian group of marauders and looters, absorbed by the local population and were no longer present in eleventh century. Probably, that group of marauders was selling Rusyns into slavery.

Some of the Ruthenian slaves, after liberation, took up important functions in the environment where they had remained. Some were paid servants, some were artisans, soldiers, and some were promoted to prominent positions.

For example, Mujāhid al-ʿĀmirī, who held a high position in the Cordoba Caliphate, after its collapse, founded the Principality of Denia with freed slaves, which lasted in relative peace and prosperity from 1010 to 1076. Mujāhid al-ʿĀmirī was probably of Slavic origin. Since slaves were brought to Spain from Rus, he was probably of Rusyn origin. He was educated as a slave at the court of the Andalusian ruler Al-Mansur Ibn Abi Aamir, and he was a patron to intellectuals in Cordoba, specially to writers, ulemas (teacher of Islam), to loyal Christians and a Jewish merchants. He died in 1045. He was married to a Christian woman with whom he had a successor, Ali Iqbal al-Dawla.

Abd al-Rahman III (889/91 - 961), Umayyad emir of Andalusia, although he was an Arab, according to legend, had blue eyes, yellow hair and fair skin, apparently because he was the son of a Slavic, possibly Rus concubine. It was almost obligatory for Islamic rulers to marry non-Muslim wives.

From the document *Pravda Ruskaya* (Synodal-Tirotse copy of *Ruskaya Pravda* from 1209 on the basis of the original, lost original from the 11th century) it is clearly visible who lived on the territory of Rus. They were

Rusyns/Ruthenians and other Slavs who were simultaneously enslaved and delivered into slavery. The mention of Rusyns and Slavs as separate nations, opens up new questions which are out of this text scope.

Conclusions. Contacts between the Slavic and Arab world's existed from the earliest times of the new era, as indicated by the texts of Muslim historians, travel writers, geographers, traders, and other scholars of that time.

The trade links between northern and northwestern Europe were the most frequent form of contact with the Arab world, about which there are numerous archaeological traces that supplement and expand the knowledge derived from known documents. Most often, hoards of Arab silver (dirham), and even more rarely, gold (dinar) money, are found in or near places where trade / exchange took place. Arab traders bought for dirhams beaver and fox skins, honey and amber, and at the highest price were slaves from Rus who then served in the courts of Arab emirs and caliphs as soldiers, eunuchs, concubines, but also as labor and servants in city properties.

Even though Rusyns are not explicitly mentioned in Arab documents, it is obvious that they were slaves from Rus, especially when described as white slaves (saqaliba) in Andalusia although they may not be exclusively from Rus'. Geographical position of Andalusia, Varangians, and Kyivan Rus makes this assumption quite plausible.

The trade with Rus slaves was mostly carried out by the Varangians, and gradually ceased with the strengthening of central power around Kyiv (Kyivan Rus), but continued to a lesser extent with the Mongol invasion of 1240, after which slaves, especially women, could once again be found in harems in the Near and Middle East.

Therefore, the prospects of further research should include not only the clarification and clarification of specific scientific facts, but also further popularization and explanatory work on the civilizational contacts (both positive and negative) in different historical periods.

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РУТЕНИ/РУСИНИ В АРАБСЬКОМУ СВІТІ: ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІСТОРІЇ УКРАЇНИ В ЦИВІЛІЗАЦІЙНОМУ КОНТЕКСТІ

Мета дослідження – продемонструвати, новий напрям інтеграції навчального матеріалу з Історії України до контексту світової історії. А саме – окреслити історію етнічних та цивілізаційних контактів періоду середньовіччя, та визначити місце русинів в цих процесах.

Методологія. Основним методом дослідження став історико-культурологічний, який полягає у детальному вивченні та співставленні даних з релевантних історичних джерел.

Наукова новизна. У статті простежується історія слов'янських етносів, відображена в ісламських історичних джерелах. Доведено, що в багатьох випадках слов'яни, згадані в цих джерелах, можуть бути рутенами/русинами.

Висновки. Контакти між слов'янським та арабським світами існували з початку нової ери, про що свідчать тексти мусульманських істориків, мандрівників, географів, торговців та вчених того часу. незважаючи на те, що русини прямо не згадуються в арабомовних документах, очевидно, що вони були рабами походженням з Русі, особливо, коли їх описують як «білих рабів» (сакаліба) в Андалусії, хоча це не означає, що всі сакаліба були родом з Русі. географічне положення Андалусії та Київської русі, поєднаних між собою маршрутами варягів, робить це припущення цілком правдоподібним. Перспективи подальших досліджень мають передбачати не лише з'ясування конкретних наукових фактів, але й подальшу популяризаційну та роз'яснювальну роботу щодо цивілізаційних контактів (як позитивних, так і негативних) в різні історичні періоди. Все вищезазначене має безпосереднє відношення до викладання предмету Історія України як в середній, так і в вищій школі. Це стосується, по-перше, введення нових джерел та нового матеріалу (при тому, що деякі моменти залишаються гіпотетичними, що повинно наголошуватися при викладанні), і, по-друге, формування у здобувачів освіти більш широкого кругозору та здатності розглядати історію українських земель та українського народу в більш широкому європейському та цивілізаційному (в масштабах Великого Середземномор'я) контексті. Це завдання є актуальним, оскільки багато сторінок історії України залишаються мало відомими широкому загалу та недостатньо висвітленими у сучасних наукових публікаціях. Особливо це стосується контактів між народами України та культурами Сходу.

Ключові слова: історія України, українознавство, Русь, Україна, рутени/русини, арабський світ, цивілізаційні контакти.

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