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Introduction

Contact Zones of Europe from the 3rd Millennium BC to the 1st Millennium AD

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This volume publishes materials of the International Conference (*Humboldt-Kolleg*) "Contact zones of Europe from the 3rd mill. BC to the 1st mill. AD" which was held at the Institute of World History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow from the 29th of September to the 2nd of October 2017, with the financial support of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Russian Science Foundation (fig. 1). The event was aimed at establishing contacts between various scientific institutions of the Russian Federation, Germany and other countries; strengthening international professional ties between Humboldt scholars; discussing topics common to different research fields (history, archaeology, linguistics, cultural studies, ethnology); involving young scientists from the Russian Federation in the discussion of actual scientific problems; maintaining the interest of young scientists in the programs of the Russian Science Foundation and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

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FIGURE 1 Conference participants. Moscow, October 2nd 2017

The conference was attended by senior and young scholars from 15 countries, including Austria (1), Belarus (1), Canada (1), Denmark (3), Georgia (1), Germany (8), Hungary (2), Moldova (1), Poland (7), Romania (2), Russia (54), Serbia (1), Turkey (2), Ukraine (3) and the USA (1).

The conference opened on September 29th. The opening ceremony was attended, among others, by Michael Dobis (Head of the scientific Department of the German Embassy), Wilma Rethage (Head of the DFG Bureau in Moscow), Mikhail A. Lipkin (Director of the Institute of World History RAS) and Askold I. Ivantchik (Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Conference).

The first session was devoted to theoretical issues relating the definition of the concepts “Cultural contact”, “Contact zone” and “Border region”. Christopher Ulf (Innsbruck, Austria) presented an approach for analysis of the processes determining cultural transfer. The direct or indirect interaction of the “Creator” of a cultural phenomenon (object / idea) with its “Recipient” is influenced by certain factors that differentiate the actors of the process (their cultural characteristics, individual status, type of society, common and individual needs). Depending on how much power is used by any of the parties in this interaction, there are different types of contact zones proposed in which the relations between the actors vary from heterarchical to hierarchical. This also affects the extent to which the meaning of the transmitted objects /

ideas is perceived by the receiving party. It is emphasized that the meaning of the transmitted objects is not predetermined culturally or ethnically, and is formed in the “recipient” culture again. Natalia Petlyuchenko (Odessa, Ukraine) lectured on the problem of defining the concept of “contact zone” in the various scientific disciplines. Questions were raised about what types of contact zones are actually distinguished (“physical” and “social”), about the conceptual difference between the concepts of “contact zone” and “border area”. She underlines that the concepts of “contact zone” and “border area” can be considered as a cognitive opposition: border-separation-interculturality / contact-mixing-hybridity. The decisive feature by the application of one or the other term is the presence or absence of a border. A contact zone she defines as an “umbrella term” that may include a “border region” as a “sub-concept”. This semantically-conceptual subordination can help in defining boundaries between and within contact zones. A contact zone may have one or more boundary areas that can be localized and measured. Pavel Donec (Kharkiv, Ukraine) in the paper “Borderland as a zone of synergy and disergy” highlighted the relevant reasons for studying the concept of border: political (gradual disappearance of state borders in Western and Central Europe, the emergence of new borders in connection with the collapse of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, *etc.*); economic (globalization of the economy); cultural (postmodern blurring of genre boundaries in art and traditional subjects of research in science); heuristic-conceptual (relative versatility of the term, which applying it to a wide range of phenomena). The speaker proposed a typology of borders according to the parameters “form”, “essence”, “transitivity”.

The second, third and fourth sessions were devoted to the “Contacts and contact zones in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region in Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods”. Dmitri Panchenko (St. Petersburg, Russia) presented results of the study of new cultural elements of European origin in Attica during the Dark Ages. According to the speaker, these elements originated in Ionia. However, the emergence of new cultural traditions and institutions does not imply an immediate Ionian conquest of Attica, but rather a cultural cross-fertilization. Katja Sporn (Athens, Greece) studied Athens as a special contact zone on the material of Attic and Atticizing funerary monuments (primarily tombstone reliefs) of Classical Greece. The paper by Peter Funke (Muenster, Germany) was devoted to the Greek political world and its relations with its neighbors in North-Western Greece. Altay Coşkun (Waterloo, Canada) delivered a paper “On the background of the dissemination of Cybele-cult in the West Mediterranean – New research on Phrygian-Hellenistic Pessinus”. He examined a number of sources on the fact of transporting the Great Mother (in the form of a meteorite) from Pessinus to Rome in 205 BC.

Olga Tomashevich (Moscow, Russia) spoke about the influence of Egypt on the culture of Southern Italy, in particular about the spread of the Isis cult, on the material of artefacts of Egyptian origin in Beneventum and Pompeii. Victor Cojocaru (Iasi, Romania) studied *proxenia* as an instrument of foreign political influence, analyzing the mention of *proxenes* from various Pontic States in the decrees of both the Black Sea and other regions of the *oecumene*. Oleg Gabelko (Moscow, Russia) addressed the problem of the existence and localization of the Celtic State (the Kingdom with its capital in Tyle) in Thrace. He suggested to refuse the very concept of “Tyle Kingdom” as inconsistent with historical and geographical realities, and to replace it with a more neutral and adequate term “Celtic State in Thrace”. Vladimir Mazhuga (St. Petersburg, Russia) delivered a paper on “Reinterpretation of the concepts of Greek philosophy and rhetoric by Roman grammarians in the Principate period”. He noted that in the 1st century BC and the two following centuries, the Greek theory of grammar underwent some improvements. Under these conditions, the Roman grammarians acted not as mere imitators of it, but as creators of their own concepts. Vladimir Kashcheev (Saratov, Russia) highlighted the issue of confrontation and interaction between the Greek East and the Roman West in the 2nd century BC in the field of education, literature and philosophy. Mikhail Vedeshkin (Moscow, Russia) presented the paper “‘A Barbarian by birth, but a Hellene in all other respects’. The image of a pious Barbarian in the works of the late Roman pagans”. In the discourse of pagan historians, “pious Barbarians” who held important military positions were seen as protectors of the ancestral faith against anti-pagan state policies. The military successes of the pagan warlords served as confirmation of the active participation of the gods in the affairs of their followers, and justified the need to preserve the traditional forms of worship. The concept of a ‘pious Barbarian’ was used by the Persian shahinshah Khosrow I in the conduct of wars in the Eastern Roman Empire, supporting the adherents of the “ancient faith”, which led to the accusation of pagans in collaboration and the resulting repression. Salvatore Ortisi (Munich, Germany) made a presentation on “Mobility and migration in the Roman border provinces. Raetia’s cultural identity in the upper Danube region”. He demonstrated the possibilities of studying migration processes using archaeological materials on the example of migration to Eastern Raetia and Western Noricum at the late 2nd century AD. John Lund (Copenhagen, Denmark) considered Cyprus in the 1st millennium AD as a special contact zone, based on the material of red-slip pottery. A review of the geographical distribution of ceramic imports on the island revealed a fairly constant picture, which was probably due to the geographical proximity of the centers of production of red-slip ware and the comparative ease of communication with them.

Three sessions were held on the 30th of September. The fifth session was devoted to “Contacts and contact zones of Eastern and Northern Europe in Bronze Age”. In the paper by Vladimir Napol'skikh (Izhevsk, Russia), some possible reconstructions of the role of palaeoeuropean and para-Indo-Germanic / para-Finno-Ugric groups in the prehistory of Central and Eastern Europe were presented. Flemming Kaul (Copenhagen, Denmark) discussed a commodity exchange during the Middle Bronze Age in Europe and beyond. In particular, he traced the ways of beads made of Egyptian and Mesopotamian glass reaching Denmark in the 14th century BC. In addition to the speech by F. Kaul, Jeanette Varberg (Moesgaard, Denmark) presented her research on the “glass path” in the Late Bronze Age, which passed through Denmark, Germany, and Romania.

At the sixth session “Asian vector of the European contact zone”, three papers were delivered. Andrei Epimakhov (Yekaterinburg, Russia) discussed the earliest archaeological complexes with chariots from South-West Asia and steppe Eurasia, which are dated according to radiocarbon analysis almost identically – to the turn of the 3rd and the 2nd millennium BC. The speaker preferred the version of the steppe origin of this type of transport taking into account the long practice of using horses and wheeled transport in this region. The termination of the practice of using chariots Epimakhov associated with the gradual transition to nomadism, when the steppe population refused chariots as being too complicated in production and exploitation. At the same time, zones of early civilizations demonstrate the long evolution and mass production of chariot transport conditioned by the need to maintain a professional army. Nikita Saveliev (Ufa, Russia) presented his study of the Southern Ural region in the 1st millennium BC as a special contact zone in the far east of Europe. The internal development of nomadic societies during the first half of the millennium led, according to the speaker, to their integration in the 5th and 4th centuries BC into a single system that united the steppe and forest-steppe zones of the region, traces of which are recorded in art, weapons, social organization and, possibly, spiritual culture until the early Middle Ages. Svetlana Sharapova reviewed the archaeological materials of the forest-steppe Sargat culture reconstructing the way of life, contacts and social environment of the population of the Trans-Ural and Western Siberia in the Early Iron Age. In particular, the speaker noted the existence of a supra-ethnic system of social attributes based on kinship and political ties in the Sargat society.

The seventh session was held on the topic “Nomads on the borders of Europe”. Mikhail Treister (Berlin, Germany) presented the results of a study of Parthian imports from the graves of nomads dating to the 2nd and

1st centuries BC, found on the territory of Asian Sarmatia. They are represented by silver gilded *phalerae*, silver vessels and glazed ceramics. *Phalerae* and one of the silver vessels bear traces of deliberate damage, which probably indicate that they fell to the nomads as war booty. Ester Istvánovits (Nyíregyháza, Hungary) and Valéria Kulcsár (Szeged, Hungary) spoke on “Sarmatians on the borders of the Roman Empire. Steppe traditions and imported cultural phenomena”. They summarized the results of Sarmatian studies in Hungary. The Jazygi, the westernmost tribe of the Sarmatian steppe coalition, migrated to the Great Hungarian plain in the 1st century AD. After this, several later waves of nomads appeared here. The material culture of the Sarmatian tribes changed in this contact zone over several generations, as they found themselves in a completely new political and geographical environment, separated from their steppe relatives. Lavinia Grumeza (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) reported on “Trade, gifts and long-distance contacts in ‘Sarmatian’ *Barbaricum*, west of Roman Dacia”. She described a kind of “buffer zone” in Western Romania, located between the three important Roman provinces of Pannonia, Upper Moesia and Dacia and according to written sources inhabited by Dacians and Sarmatians. The earliest Sarmatian settlements appeared here at the end of the 2nd century AD. Topographical, climatic, and political barriers imposed by Roman borders prompted the Sarmatians to adopt new survival strategies that led to the adoption of a sedentary lifestyle.

On the 1st of October there were two morning sessions. The eighth session regarded “Contacts and contact zones in the Northern and Eastern Black Sea region in the pre-Achaic, Achaic and Classical periods”. Vakhtang Licheli (Tbilisi, Georgia) spoke on the research of the multi-layer settlement of Grakliani. Two new inscriptions were found here during the excavations of the temple. One of them (inscription A) is Northern Semitic, the other (inscription B) is probably a local version of the Aramaic script, executed on a ceramic altar. Both inscriptions are unique not only for Georgia, but also for the entire Caucasus, dating back to the 11th-9th centuries BC. Alla Buyskikh (Kiev, Ukraine) discussed “Usual and rare imports at Borysthene during the Greek colonization of northwestern Pontus”. She considered the main directions of trade contacts of the first *apoikia miletians* on the Northern coast of the Black Sea with the Eastern Mediterranean. Nikolay Sudarev (Moscow, Russia) gave the paper “Greeks and ‘Barbarians’ according to the materials of the Bosporean necropoleis”, in which he outlined the results of the Eastern Bosporean expedition on the Taman Peninsula. Denis Zhuravlev (Moscow, Russia) presented new results of the Russian-German interdisciplinary project on the Greek colonization of the Taman Peninsula. Within the framework of the ninth session “Crimean Scythia as a special contact zone of the Northern Black Sea region”,

the results of the project “Crimean Scythia in the system of cultural relations between East and West (3rd century BC-7th century AD)” (supported by the Russian Science Foundation No. 15-18-30047) were presented. Askold Ivantchik and Valentina Mordvintseva (Moscow, Russia) provided general information about the project, as well as the results of the study of written and archaeological sources. In the course of the project, on a new level an analysis was made of written sources that mention Scythia and the Scythians in the period from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. It was concluded that the Scythian Kingdom with its capital in Neapolis Scythica was more like a Hellenistic state with a Barbarian dynasty at its head than the nomadic Kingdom of the Scythians of the 4th century BC. In addition to the Scythian elements, the settled Taurians played a significant role in its composition, as well as probably the Greeks and the long-Hellenized population of the Greek *chora* in North-Western Crimea. At the same time, the Scythian Kingdom maintained close and friendly relations with Olbia and the Bosporan Kingdom. Based on the material of archaeological sources, qualitative changes in the spatial location of elite burial sites, their structure, and the composition of burial goods, primarily prestige items, have been traced over a long chronological range (from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD). Tatyana Smekalova (St. Petersburg, Russia) reported on “New results of natural-scientific research of the Late Scythian settlements in the Crimean foothills”, which concerned the settlement system, spatial structure, and hierarchy of the Crimean settlements and economic types of their population. Aleksander Podossinov (Moscow, Russia) spoke about the influence of Greek civilization on the customs of the “barbarian” Scythians from the point of view of Greek authors, especially Strabo. Igor Makarov (Moscow, Russia) presented his study of the Chersonesos Taurica and its relations with the cities of the Southern Black Sea region according to epigraphy. Tadeusz Sarnowski (Warsaw, Poland) delivered a paper on the Crimea as a special contact zone in Roman time.

In the afternoon, there was a presentation of the programs of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Steffen Mehlich), followed by a session of poster presentations made mainly by young scientists. During the session, the following topics were presented: Aleksandra Abramova (Krasnodar, Russia), “Osteological characteristics of the Maiotians who inhabited the Kuban region in the period from the 4th century BC to the 3rd century AD”; Anastasiya Agjoyan (Moscow, Russia), “The Legacy of ancient Greek colonization and Turkic-speaking nomads in the gene pool of the Crimea”; Anzhela Batasova (St. Petersburg, Russia), “A Polis on the Asian Bosporos in the 6th-early 5th centuries BC: territorial aspect”; Ekaterina Bulakova (Yekaterinburg, Russia), “‘Textile’ ceramics as a marker of cultural contacts of the Eurasian population

in the Bronze Age”; Tatyana Egorova (Moscow, Russia), “Imported black-glazed ceramics on the territory of the European Bosporos in the 6th-2nd centuries BC”; Marie-Hélène Grunwald (Munich, Germany), “Roman fortress Echzell in Wetterau on the upper German limes”; Tatyana Il’ina (Moscow, Russia), “Hermonassa in Late Antiquity: between Romans and ‘Barbarians’”; Aleksey Ivanov (Krasnodar, Russia), “Formation of the elite among the settled barbarians of the Kuban region in ancient times”; Aleksey Kazarnitskiy (Moscow / St. Petersburg, Russia), “Scythian Neapolis population according to data of physical anthropology”; Natalia Kulikova (Krakow, Poland), “Natural terminologies in Aulus Cornelius Celsus’s treatise *De Medicina*: linguistic interpretation”; Valeria Kuvatova (Moscow, Russia), “Alexandrian Origin of the Roman Iconography of the Happy Afterlife”; Christoph Lindner (Munich, Germany), “A German in the Roman Legion. The Helmet of L. Sollonius Super”; Piotr Mączyński, Jerzy Libera (Rzeszów, Poland), “Symbols of prestige-flint daggers in the light of functional analysis”; Piotr Mączyński, Beata Polit (Rzeszów, Poland), “Methods of using flint raw materials in the Crimea during the period of Roman influence”; Aleksey Nechvaloda, Elena Nechvaloda (Ufa, Russia), “South Ural as a contact area. Skulls and Artifacts: South Ural nomads in the Early Iron Age according to anthropological reconstruction”; Beata Polit (Rzeszów, Poland), “Metal bracelets in children’s burials of the late Scythian culture of the Crimea”; Joanna Porucznik (Wrocław, Poland), “Olbia Pontike and its *chora* – a question of self-definition of urban and rural societies”; Vladimir Shelestin (Moscow, Russia), “Hittite and Hurrian traditions in Europe?”; Vitaliy Sinika (Tiraspol, Moldova), “Economic relations and cultural contacts of the Scythians settling on the left bank of the Lower Dniester from the 3rd to the 2nd centuries BC”; Cristina Tica (Las Vegas, USA), “Osteobiographies at the edge of Empire: ‘Roman’ provincials in Scythia Minor and their ‘barbarian’ neighbors across the Danubian frontier”; Irina Tolochko (Rostov-on-Don, Russia), Ilya Akhmedov (St. Petersburg, Russia), “From the Sea to the Forest and back again: ‘The Don Route’ in the Migration Period and the Early Middle Ages (studying the issue about interactions between populations of the Forest and the Steppe Zones from the 4th to the 7th centuries AD)”; Evgeny Vdovchenkov (Rostov-on-Don, Russia), “The Lower Don as a contact zone of interaction between nomads and sedentary population in the early centuries AD”; Sergey Voronyatov (St. Petersburg, Russia), “Traces of contacts between sedentary and nomadic peoples in Eastern Europe during the Roman period (Sarmatian tamga-signs and ‘enameled-style’ items)”.

On the 2nd of October, the tenth session dedicated to “Contacts and contact zones in the Middle Ages” took place. Heinrich Härke demonstrated in

the paper “Conquest, conflict, and co-existence: Multiple monocultures and dual contact zones in the British Isles, 5th-8th centuries AD” that the borders associated with early medieval migrations in Europe did not always turn into contact zones, as might be expected. The example of the British Isles of early medieval times shows that contacts between continental immigrants and island natives took two completely different forms: in Anglo-Saxon settlements, native acculturation took place, while cultural exchange between Anglo-Saxon and local polities was practically absent. Piotr Stefanovich (Moscow, Russia) spoke on the formation of military squads in early medieval European polities, including the Kievan Rus. The ‘Grand retinue’ was an association of royal soldiers, and differed from the ‘ordinary retinue’ in its number (up to 2-3 thousand people). These squads played a major role in establishing of centralized power during the 10th and 11th centuries, and in the 12th century they degenerated or transformed. Vladimir Kulakov (Moscow, Russia) discussed Prussian antiquities, which have been recorded in the archaeological material of the South-Eastern Baltic from the first half of the 5th century AD. The speaker noted that the Baltic influence on the steppe antiquities of the first millennium AD is practically unstudied and requires closer attention by archaeologists. Dmitriy Afinogenov (Moscow, Russia) delivered the paper on “Cimmerians in Asia Minor: Once more?” He analyzed two texts describing the exploits of Saint Hieron, where the Scythians and Cimmerians are mentioned. The speaker suggested that the Cimmerians, who were previously considered as an archaic designation for the Slavs, should be interpreted as Seljuks. The session ended with the paper by Irina Arzhantseva “‘Oguz Desert’: Ustyurt plateau – a contact zone of Eurasia”. During the late prehistory and early history, Eurasia was divided into two broad zones: sedentary civilizations in the South, and nomadic cultures in the North. Between them, from the Northern Pontus through the Caucasus to the Aral Sea region and southern Siberia, there was a zone of contact in which the two worlds interacted, exchanging ideas, peoples, and goods. The Ustyurt plateau, between the Caspian and Aral Seas, was a kind of microcosm of relations and communication in this contact zone. The best evidence of trade and exchange here in the middle ages are the caravan routes crossing the Ustyurt plateau. They are illustrated by the text descriptions and remains of caravanserais, watchtowers and a small number of fortresses of the 10th-14th centuries. Taken together, this data demonstrates a busy network of communication across the desert landscape, which was destroyed only in the 14th century as a result of the Mongol invasions.

After this session, the conference was closed. All participants noted a friendly warm atmosphere and the high scientific level of the conference.

According to Christopher Ulf (Innsbruck, Austria), the conference participants encountered many scientific positions from different scientific fields, which is extremely rare, and it was a great opportunity to learn from representatives of various scientific schools.

This issue of the journal contains articles based on some of the papers presented at the conference.