Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatar Documents

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1. Introductory remarks

The religious literature of Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatars, known from Fleis cher’s¹ and Muchliński’s works (Muxlinski 1857), was the subject of many studies. In 1935, Szynkiewicz made an attempt to classify the outcome of the religious literary productions. In his classification, Szynkie wicz distinguished seven main types of Lithuanian Tatar² literary works: Korans, Sufras, Tejwids, Tefsirs, Kitabs, Hamails and Dalawars (Szynkiewicz 1935: 138-139). In the most recent classification of Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatar literature, in addition to the above types, Drozd has included hramotkas, nuskas, discussed earlier by Kryczyński (1938: 289-290; 303-305), as well as dictionaries and plates (2000a: 12).

Products of this literature have circulated in the form of manuscripts, at present frequently photocopied, written in the Arabic script that was modified to reflect the local languages.³ Since a dictionary is practical⁴ and plates are basically decorative and documentary, the term 'religion' should be avoided, as in Drozd’s classification. On the other hand, it is not plausible to divide this literature to religious and secular, for only a few works which are unrelated to Islam are known.

Of the above types, Korans, Tejwids, Tefsirs, Kitabs, Hamails and Sufras are mostly bound and function as handwritten books. It is customary to distinguish Korans, Tefsirs, Kitabs and Hamails as the most important genres.⁵ Korans contain the Qur’anic text, tefsirs the translation and commentary, whereas the contents of kitabs and hamails are very diversified and they can include all the other types as well as texts for dalawars, hramotkas, nuskas and some plates.

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² A number of terms have been applied in this field, e.g. Lithuanian, Polish, Lithuanian-Polish, Polish-Lithuanian, Belarusian, Polish-Belarusian, the Tatars of Polish Kingdom and Lithuanian Duchy etc. In the following, the term Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatar/s (PLBT) will be applied, although there are some restrictions on it in the historical, cultural and linguistic setting.
³ Recently, there have also been some printed works and pieces written in the Cyrillic and Latin writing, containing passages written in Arabic letters.
⁴ On dictionnaires see Majda 1994 and Miškiniene and Šupa.
To these, we have to add gravestone inscriptions (Drozd, Dziekan and Majda 1999), which constitute a very rich epigraphic material, as well as posters and pictures with calligraphic inscriptions (Drozd 2000b), and lastly some remnants of painted, now hardly legible letters on the prayer pulpit in the mosque of Reičiai. There are also glosses and notes written by the Tatars in books as those discovered by Drozd in Szymon Budny’s 16th century translation of the Bible into Polish (Drozd, Dziekan and Majda 2000: 63-64). Lastly, attention should be paid to loose slips of paper covered with various notes in the Arabic writing that can be found among the pages of many kitabs and hamails.6

As for the language, Korans are in Arabic, tefsirs contain the Arabic text of the Qur’an and the Polish translation, dalawars, hramotkas and nus-kas mostly contain Arabic prayers and magic or protective formulas, teji-wids are Turkish practical aids for learning the Arabic script with inter-linear Slavic translation, kitabs and hamails are written in a Polish or Belarusian ethnolect of Tatars with large portions in the Arabic and Turkic languages (mostly Turkish and Old Turkish, often with an admixture of Kipchak and Chaghatai elements).

Samples of the literature of Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatars are presented in a catalogue by Drozd, Dziekan and Majda (2000). This publication includes sixty-six beautiful illustrations of the most representative and oldest manuscripts hitherto identified, with detailed descriptions. The afore-mentioned article by Drozd, being the most recent and thorough overview of Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatar literature, deserves special attention (Drozd 2000a: 12-37).

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6 For a long time, historians and other researchers of PLB Tatars uncritically based their findings on a work known as 'A Treaty on Polish Tatars', Risāle-i Tatar-i Leh dated 1558, found, elaborated and translated into Polish by Muchliński (1857; 1858), but said to have been lost. Unfortunately, there are serious doubts as to the authenticity of this work (Jankowski, Łapicz 2000: 25-26, Drozd 2000a: 16). The doubts are both philological and factual. If the treaty had really been presented to Sultan Süleyman the Great, it should be preserved in Turkish archives, which is not the case. Muchliński provided only a few lines of this alleged manuscript printed in Arabic characters Muchliński 1857: 55). Nevertheless, even such critical scholar as Kryczyński had no doubts about the truth of Muchliński’s claims, and launched a hypothesis that the author of this treaty may be identical with an Islamic qādīn (al-qādi, Tur. kadi) of Tatars, Dervish Chelebi Haji Murzich (Kryczyński 1938: 206-207).
2. Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian documents

In contrast to the literature discussed above, documents written by Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatars written in Arabic letters have not been subject to any studies. Only one document has so far been edited and discussed (Antonović 1969: 174-177). Therefore, it is premature to make an attempt of classification. Preliminarily, they can be subdivided into:

1. Legal documents,
2. Congregational documents,
3. Private correspondence.

The language of legal documents is Polish, Belarusian, Turkish and mixed Turkish-Tatar or Tatar-Turkish; that of hitherto discovered private correspondence and congregational documents is Belarusian and Polish. No document written in full in Turkish, Turkish-Tatar or Tatar-Turkish is known.

2. 1. Legal documents

These documents should be subdivided into legal documents written entirely in a Slavic language in Arabic letters and those with the basic text in the Cyrillic or Latin writing, and Turkish or mixed Turkish-Tatar signatures and witness formulas.

2. 1. 1. Legal documents written in Arabic letters

Only one document of this kind has been published so far. This is a recognition of the receipt of financial support from Yusuf, Ismail and Yahya Tupalskis by Ismail Nowosielski, issued by the beneficent in Polish and dated 22 Ramazan 1172/18 May 1759, edited, transliterated and annotated by Antonović in his fundamental work (Antonović 1968: 174-177). This document, preserved in the Central State Archives of Lithuania (in 1968, of Lithuanian SSR), catalogue number f. 1177, op. 1, d. 5652, l. 1, called by Antonović kvitancia, consists of seven lines, under which there is Ismail

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7 The documents issued in the Latin and Cyrillic writings fall outside the scope of this study.
8 Although he included this document in a book called 'Belarusian Texts Written in the Arabic Script', Antonović admitted that it was written in Polish (p. 174), and pointed to Belarusian features in it (p. 176). Note that the territory inhabited by PLB Tatars was an area of intensive Polish-Belarusian language contacts, and mixed language codes were very frequent. The AD date provided by Antonović is 19 May 1759.
9 Although the writing in the document clearly exhibits the form kvitacija 'acknowledgment'.
Nowosielskiy's signature and signatures of two witnesses, one in Arabic, another in Latin letters, in two additional lines. From the fact that Antonović has found only one document written entirely in Arabic letters, Zakrzewski (1992: 121) concludes that they must have been infrequent.

Another document, the last will of Bohdan Szahanowicz (Muchla), allocating part of his property in Sorok Tatary to an inheritor, dated 1770, was presented by Dumin and Kanapacki as an illustration to their book (Dumin and Kanapacki 1993: 113). Unfortunately, the writing on the reproduction is unreadable.10

2. 1. 2. Legal documents with signatures and witness formulas written in Arabic letters

The number of documents with glosses of this type is great. We know forty-one such documents. None has been edited so far. It was Kryczyński who first drew attention to these documents (Kryczyński 1938: 231). He discussed nine Tatar signatures on legal documents, as evidenced in the 1906 publication of Lithuanian documents relating to Tatars (AVAK 31). Unfortunately, the publication does not provide the original signatures, but only indicates them. The documents published in AVAK were recorded in courts and the signatures in Arabic letters were signalled by record keepers, who apparently did not understand and could not read them.

These are the following:

1. 1617 a treći podpis arabskim pismom podpisany 'and the third signature signed in the Arabic writing' (AVAK 31, 308); written in Troki, a document of donation;

2. 1666 a drugix pećatarov podpis ruk pismom Hebrejskim 'signatures of the hands of the other witnesses in the Hebrew [!] writing' (AVAK 31, 385); written in Gudziany; a document of donation;

3. 1679 podpis ruk tatarskimi literami 'signature signed by hand in Tatar letters' (AVAK 31, 453); resignation of a mortgaged land; written in Usiejmany;

4. 1680 Tomasz Soroka popisalisie po tatarsku 'Tomasz Soroka signed in Tatar' (AVAK 31, 455); document of sale; written in Troki;

10 Andrzej Drozd has informed me that he has a legible copy of this document and has already prepared it for publication.
5. 1680 a dwa podpisy tatarskim pismom podpisano 'and two signatures signed in the Tatar writing' (AVAK 31, 459); document of sale; written in Troki;

6. 1686 podpis pismom tatarskim 'signature in the Tatar writing' (AVAK 31, 485); document of sale; taken on record in Troki;

7. 1689 (1694) Muysia ibni Dziahniu giedu elim iazdum '[I] Musia, <Yahia>'s son, have signed [it with] my own hand' and Melach ibni Mustafa giendiu elim iazdum '[I] Melach, Mustafa's son, have signed [it with] my own hand' (AVAK 31, 496); document of sale; written in Wilno;

8. 1695 pieczeżar w od kniazie Sielimowicza, który ręką swą po tatarsku podpisał 'witness who has signed [it] with his own hand on behalf of prince Sielimowicz' (AVAK 31, 503); document of sale; written in Dejnowo;

9. 1700 podpis ręki samego aktora pismem tatarskim podpisany 'signature signed in the Tatar writing by the donator himself' (AVAK 31, 514); document of donation; taken on record in Troki.

As can be seen from the quotations above, only document 7 provides a transcription of the original signatures. The remaining documents only indicate them, which is why they are of no use to linguistic research. The documents are written in either Chancellery Ruthenian or Polish. In most instances, the record-keepers identified the Arabic writing as Tatar, in one case as Arabic, and in one case even as the Hebrew writing. At this place we shall note that even nowadays many Tatars call the oriental fragments of their books written in Arabic letters which they can read but cannot understand 'Tatar', irrespective of the actual Arabic or Turkish language they were written in.11

The above list quoted from Kryczyński is not complete. In another place of his monograph, Kryczyński drew attention to a Tatar Islamic judge, PLBT kady(j), whose full name with honorifics sounds in the sources Derwisz Czelebi Chadžy Murzicz kadi, in a few variants of spelling, e.g. AVAK 31, 184; 186, (Kryczyński 1938: 204-205). As Kryczyński pointed out, Murzicz acted as the qādīn (al-qādī, Tur. kadi) of all Tatars of the Grand Lithuanian Duchy in the second half of the 16th century and signed legal documents, two of them dated 1594 are included in AVAK (184 and 186). Fur-

11 This was evidenced, for instance, during my fieldwork with Mrs Helena Selimowicz in Režiai, Lithuania.
thermore, in various sources Kryczyński discovered three 'Arabic scribes' of PLBT origins, i.e. officials who, in contrast to interpreters translating oral messages, were able to deal with the written language. These personages are Chasień Dajko, acting between 1591 and 1595, Alej Talkowski and Dawid Bachtyr, who died in 1614 (Kryczyński 1938: 163). A few further signatures in AVAK were shown by Tyszkiewicz (1989: 292).

With the help of Professor Jan Tyszkiewicz, I was able to identify five documents of this type among the holdings of the Polish National Library in Warsaw. One of them, catalogue number IV. 8783, k.7, is very difficult to decipher, the others are well readable:

① Catalogue number IV. 8783, k. 34. This is a recognition of debt issued by Aleksander Krankowski and his wife to <> Jankiewicz and his wife. The date 1650, given in the catalogue description, specifies in fact the term of the repayment of the debt, and the date of emission is not provided. The Tur.-Tat. texts reads:

بن احمد طراص اوغلي | كند [و] اليم باذديم مهرم | باصطم
حرمش اوغلي | علي نيك و هم مرتضى | قدي عيشه و كله

Ben Ahmed Tarâş oğlu kend[ü] elim ya<z>dım mührüm[ü]
bastım Ḥurremşâ oğlu 'Alinin ve hem Mortaža kızı 'Ayşanî
vekal[et]line15

'I, Ahmed Taras's son have signed it with my own hand and sealed, as a representative of Ali, Hurremsha's son, and Aisha, Murtaza's daughter'.

Comments:

1. Alexander Krankowski is to be identified with Alej Krankowski, mentioned in Kierdej’s register in 1631 (Dziadulewicz 1929: 162).

2. Ajsza Murawska, in Tat. Mortaza qizâ, was a daughter of Mortuza Murawski, both mentioned in two documents, c. 1600 and 1645, respectively (Dziadulewicz 1929: 227). The consonant z was in the PLBT writing often rendered by a š dâł.

12 His signatures are indicated in AVAK in the following pages: 86, 88, 94-95, 99-100, 134, 136, 181 and 250-251.
13 My best thanks go to Prof. Jan Tyszkiewicz for his assistance.
14 I am also indebted to the direction of the Polish National Library for their kind permission for publication.
15 wknh; correctly vekâletine.
Recognition of debt by Aleksander Krankowski and his wife
3. Ahmed, Taras’s son, is a personality well-known from the PLBT studies. He is mentioned in two documents issued in Polish, one dated 1663 and the other 1667, as Achmięć Tarasowicz mołła Trocki\(^\text{16}\) (AVAK 31, 354) ‘Achmięć Tarasowicz, mullah of Troki’\(^\text{17}\). There is evidence of another, unpublished document that contains a similar signature and formula by the same Ahmed Taras’s son. We shall return to this later.

4. What is very important for the PLBT studies, we have additional historical evidence for a double use of names among the Tatars, i.e. \textit{Alexander} – ‘\textit{Ali}. Furthermore, it is very likely that \textit{Mortaza} has adopted the Pol. surname \textit{Murawski} because of its phonetic similarity with his first name.

The verso side of this document with signatures was published by Tyszkiewicz as an illustration to his book (Tyszkiewicz 1989: photograph 27). However, Tyszkiewicz has not provided any details nor a transcription of the text.

\(^2\) Catalogue number IV. 8783, k. 35. This is a bequest of Jusuf Murtozycz Alabordzian [!] and Aysza Murtazowna Alaberdziowa Samuelowiczowa to a group of Tatars, settled on the river Waka, dated 1650. There is an interesting signature at the bottom of the document, which combines the name Yusuf Allähberdi with the name of his wife Ayşa together, i.e. يسف الله بردي ايشا Yusef Allähberdi Ayşa.

Comments:

1. The document was signed by Yusuf Allähberdi and his wife Ayşa. Although Ayşa’s signature is not independent, being combined with her husband’s signature, it is the first and so far the only document signed by a woman. Along with many other women mentioned as wives, who were treated as legal persons equal before the law, it shows a high position of woman among the Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatars.

2. The diacritic mark between the \textit{sīn} and the \textit{fāʾ} in the first word looks like a small dot, and is rendered as a \textit{kasra} only tentatively; it certainly should not be read Yusif. For technical reasons, the vocalisation signs are in this article left out.

\(^{16}\) Both in the dative form \textit{Achmięciu Tarasowiczu molle Troktelskiemu}.

\(^{17}\) The list of mullahs in Troki by Drozd, Dziekan and Majda (1999: 30) does not include his name.
3. On another writing of the name Ayša < Ar. ‘Ā’iša, see document I, above.

3) Catalogue number IV. 8783, k. 47. This is a document issued by Aleksander Tochtamyszewicz Jezierski to his wife Fatma Kaszedarówna Jezierska in 1689, confirming her right to debt. The confirmation was written and sealed by the person undersigned at the bottom in Polish as Proszył pieczętarz od osoby zwysz pomienionej / Mustaf<št Ismail...>, 'Sealer requested by the person mentioned above <Mustafa Ismail...>', and in Arabic letters as اسماعيل مصطفى اوغلي كنداو | اليم ياذيم مهرم باصطم Ismā’il Muṣṭafā oğlu / kend[u] elim yazdim mührüm[ü] bastım 'I, Ismail, Mustafa’s son have signed [with] my own hand and sealed [it].

Comments:
1. Alexander Jezierski, as his own signature at the bottom shows, was probably little literate, so he must have asked Ismail, Mustafa’s son, for both writing and witnessing.

2. The sealer is probably identical with Izmael Mustaficz or son of Mustafa, mentioned in 1631 in Kierdej’s register (Dziadulewicz 1929: 232).

This document was also presented by Tyszkiewicz as an illustration to his book (Tyszkiewicz 1989: photograph 28).

4) Catalogue number IV. 8783, k. 54. This is a document written in 1699 by J. Aziul Aziulewicz on behalf of Samuel Aziulewicz to Mustafa Baranowski, and undersigned by the scribe. At the right bottom, under the signature of Aziulewicz, there is the following signature in Arabic letters: ابن دانيال بکیر ذکر Ibn Daniel Biekir Ziekieria, who may have been an attestant.

Comments:
1. The normal PLBT pronunciation of the Ar. word ḫbn is ʾihni or ʾibniu, cf. the transcription provided in item 7 in Kryczyński’s examples above. The former coincides with the Tur. tradition of writing and pronouncing the Ar. names in so-called izafet, e.g. ḫbn-Mühennā ~ ḫbn-i Mühennā, the latter renders the Ar. status constructus as written and pronounced in Tur., e.g. ḫbn-i’l-Esir.

2. The Ar. male name Bakr, pronounced in Tur. Bekir, was written with the letter pā’. Substitution of weak plosives for strong ones and
A confirmation of debt by Aleksander Tochtamyszewicz
vice versa was in PLBT texts quite common (Jankowski and Łapicz 2000: 105).

3. The writing of the Ar. name Zakariyyā, in PLBT mostly Ziekieryia, is unusual; in the document, there are two dots beneath the final letter ra’, which may stand for -yā.

5 Catalogue number IV. 8783, k. 9b. A document written in 1626 by the scribe A. Texanovskij for Abraham Kulzmanovic. At the bottom, there is an illegible signature imitating the divāni writing of Ottoman diplomatic letters. The beginning probably reads (أسطورة) ben T. If this is the case, it must be a usual formula like in document I above. The next word may be Muḥammad, and the fourth one Muṣṭafā. Another clearly seen word  الله is Allāh, which may be part of a composite name such as ‘Abd Allāh and Allāhberdi. Unfortunately, the remaining part is illegible. The document is a unique example of a calligraphic writing of a signature.

One document dated 1595 was discovered in Main Archives of Ancient Acts (Archiwum Główne Lat Dawnych) in Warsaw, thanks to information kindly given to me by Prof. Andrzej Zakrzewski.18

6 Catalogue number AR dz. XXIII, t. 81, p. 6, k. 6b. This is an endorsement of the right to sale a part of the estate given to Achmieć Zdanowicz and his wife. The document, as said above, is dated 1595. At the bottom of leave 6b, there are three signatures, one in the Latin, one in the Cyrillic and one in the Arabic script. The latter writes: بن عبد الرحمن | مراد اوغلی اوز | مهربی باصتی(م) | و الیم بازدم Ben ‘Abdurrahmān | Murād oğlı öz | mühr-rim[i] bast[m] | ve elim yazdım 'I, Abdurrahman, Murad’s son, has sealed [it] and signed [with] my own hand'.

Comments:

1. It is the Qur’anic tradition of a defective writing of the word rahmān 'merciful' with a small, vertical alif or fatḥa, here with no diacritics, that deserves attention. Every literate Tatar knows the writing of basmala.

2. The Tat. word öz instead of Tur. kendü ~ kendi, which appears in later documents, is worth noting. At the same time, there is a usual Tur. ben instead of the Tat. men 'T.'

18 I owe a debt of gratitude to Prof. Andrzej Zakrzewski for this.
A document written by the scribe A. Texanovskij
An endorsement of the right to sale part of estate given to Achmiec Zdanowicz
Andrzej Zakrzewski has also identified many documents with Tatar glosses during his quest in the Lithuanian archives. Among his notes he kindly offered to me, there are twenty-four documents with both formulas and seals in the Arabic writing. Firstly, there is a recognition of debt of 1664 – kept in the Library of Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (henceforth BLAN), catalogue number VBF-1620, by Furs Dzianajewicz from Mereszlan for Asanowicz – signed by the afore-mentioned Ahmed Taras’s son as a representative of Furs Dzianajewicz (Canay oğlı). The formula is a bit different: [...] ben Ahmed Tarâş oğlı kend[ü] elim<...> yazdim ve hem Canay oğlu dileğine vekâleten 'I, Ahmed Taras’s son have signed [this] <...> [with] my own hand, by request of Canay oğlı as his representative’.

The analysis of these documents shows how important they are for the study of PLB Tatars’ culture and language. Firstly, as said above, the documents demonstrate that many of the undersigned used double names, one Slavic in contacts with the local population, and the other Turkic, when written in the Arabic script. Naturally, not all of them did so. Furthermore, it seems that the Slavic forms of names and Slavic names themselves have over time replaced Turkic names. In the documents of the 18th century the Slavic forms prevail, e.g. Roman Eljasiewicz (BLAN F.138-1362, 4. 21-22, 1706), although they are also present in earlier documents, e.g. Sulejman Aziulewicz (BUVil F. 7, k. 830, 1667). Secondly, many Tatars were illiterate and they requested imams to sign documents on their behalf. The imams, who were educated in the Oriental languages, were able to use more correct Turkish and Arabic language forms. Thirdly, the signatures demonstrate some command of Turkish and Arabic of their authors, although this knowledge could be limited to the active use of prayers, common idioms, isolated words and formulas. The language competence decreased through the 17th century, and by the end of the 18th century it became a rare ability among Tatars. Fourthly, the formulas shed some light on the character of the Turkic languages that Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatars used. At this point, it must be noted that Turkish, as a high prestige language, has

19 Naturally, the figures are much higher. In one of his articles, Zakrzewski presents the results of his examination of signatures put on the documents dated 1560-1792. Although he does not provide the number of those containing Arabic-written signatures, he says that 45% of signatures on the documents dated 1560-1599 were in the Arabic writing (Zakrzewski 1991: 109).

20 It is my pleasant task to thank Prof. Andrzej Zakrzewski for leaving at my disposal the notes he made during his archival work. He copied all the Arabic glosses by hand in a way that it makes them readable. However, it must be stressed that the examination done on the basis of a handwritten copy must only be preliminary.
often been a written language of literate people, notwithstanding their spoken language. However, a few documents reveal some non-Turkish (or at least old Turkish) features, such as the use of the word öz instead of kendi '(one)self; own'. Very interesting is document BLAN F. 21-1895, 4. 15, with the following signature, Ben Yahyā öz qolum yazdim 'I, Yahya, have signed [it with] my own hand', in which there is not only öz instead of kendi, but also the Kipchak qolum instead of the Turkish elim 'my hand'. This signature must be, therefore, regarded as Tatar-Turkish.21

The style of the Turkish and formerly the Tatar-Turkish language as evidenced in the documents examined is fixed and typical of formulas. In the phrases kendi–kendü elim yazdim and mühür bastım ~ mührüm bastım ~ mührim bastım the word order is correct, but the necessary noun case suffixes are lacking, notably instrumental case suffix -LA or postposition ile 'with' as in Turkish, or bile(n) in Old Tatar, or -nen as in the present-day Tatar in the former, and accusative case suffix -ü in the latter. These are 'bekannte Fehler', but they demonstrate some inaccuracy in the Turkish or Tatar language competence of PLB Tatars. Another frequent inaccuracy in the above formula is the defective spelling of the word kendü ~ kendi as kend, with the final vowel skipped. The formula kendi ~ kendü elim yazdim/öz qolum yazdim is an equivalent form of the Polish ręka swą, Chancellery Ruthenian vlasnoju rukoju, Latin manu propria '...with [my/his/ her/their] own hand'. The lack of the case suffix or postposition can probably be attributed to a direct syntactic copy from the Chancellery Ruthenian form ruka vlasna, ruka moja vlasnaja etc. (AVAK 31, 120-121). The formula in question occurs in three basic forms: kendi elim yazdim, öz elim yazdim, and öz qolum yazdim (only one occurrence so far evidenced).

2.3 Congregational documents

The majority of congregational documents issued by Islamic mullahs (PLBT molta ~ molna) as birth, marriage, death and divorce certificates, attestations of nobility etc., for the sake of a holder have been written in the state language, either Chancellery Ruthenian or Polish. However, signatures in the Arabic script could be employed as well (cf. Kryczyński 1938: 195). Another group of documents are those which pertain to a religious community and are not designed for outsiders. These can be found written exclusively in the Arabic script.

Some documents of the second type hang in frames on the walls of

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21 Tatar must have men instead of ben.
mosques. In this form, they resemble plates and can be classified as plates. One of these documents will be published below.

7 This is a very interesting document dated 1922, to be seen in the mosque of Iwie. It is written in Belarusian. The title of it is Žertva am'eri-
kansk'ix mus'ul'man. Padpis'noj list na remont muratščiznans'koj magome-
tans'koj priyodstoj m'oč'et'i ü 1922 godu aprl'ja 5 dnja 'Charity of Ameri-
can Muslims. A list of donors for the reconstruction of the Mohamedan pa-
rochial mosque in Muraushchizna, 5th April 1922'.

The list includes 114 names and surnames, in most cases with pat-
ronyms, of PLB Tatars who emigrated to America and contributed to the
reconstruction of the mosque in the American currency. In the line at the
bottom, there is the following sentence, üseho sto četynadac' žertvovat'e-
lej na summu p'atsot dolarov 'One hundred and fourteen donors in total
with the sum five hundred dollars'.

The plate was stuck together from two sheets of brownish paper. The
first column of the left-hand sheet contains the names of 28 persons (1-27
and 109), while the second column contains 29 persons (28-54 plus 110 and
113). The sequence of two columns on the right-hand sheet is opposite, it
runs from the left to the right. Thus the right column at the edge includes
persons numbered 55-81 plus 112, the left-hand column contains numbers
82-108 plus 111 and 114. Donors 109-114 have been put at the end of the
list, beyond the original sequence.

The writing of both Arabic letters and Indo-Arabic numbers is very
professional, pretty and well readable, with some calligraphic curves and
bends, especially at the end of the names, although the ink, now looking
brownish, has faded. Since the list is framed and under glass, a closer
palaeographic examination of the paper and the backside was not possible.
Therefore, the author of the list is unknown. It is also unclear if the list was
written by a representative of the donors in the USA or in Iwie, after the
transfer the money. However, the forms of Indo-Arabic numbers are typi-
cally local.

Here are the surnames, names and patronyms, when applicable, of all
donors enlisted:

1. Aleksandr22 Muxa
2. B'ekir Mustafov Rafalovič
3. Jakub Mustafov Safarevič
4. S'ulejman Assanovič
5. Miša Aleksandrov Muxa

22 In this transcription no difference is made between dental [l] and palatalized [l'].
6. Ruz'a Matvejevna Šabanovič
7. Amin'a Jakoůlevna Safarevič
8. Jivan23 Jakoůlev Safarevič
9. S'ulejman Jivanov Šabanovič
10. S'ulejman Mustafov Rafalovič
11. Mustafa Jakoůlev Bogdanovič
12. Abraham Mustafov Šabanovič
13. B'ekir Osifov Šabanovič
14. Aleksandr Salixov Ryzvanovič
15. Davyd Jakoůlev Radlin'ski
16. S'ulejman Jakoůlev Genbicki
17. Jakub Šabanovič Jakuboůski
18. B'ekir Samujlov Ščucki
19. Amin'a Jakoůleůna Gembickaja
20. Jakub Mustafov Šabanovič
21. B'ekir Stefanov Ratk'evič
22. Aleksandr S'ulejmanov Gembicki
23. Mustafa Mis'kevič
24. S'ulejman Rafalovič Graf24
25. Davyd Abrahamov Ratk'evič
26. S'ulejman Osifov Rafalovič
27. K'emil Jakoůlev Rafalovič
28. Jakub S'ulejmanov Genbicki
29. Fela Mustafoûna Leb'ed'
30. Abraham25 Jakoůlev Rafalovič
31. Abraham26 Varanovič
32. Osif Mustafov Šabanovič
33. Mustafa S'ulejmanov Safarevič
34. Mustafa S'elimov Safarevič
35. S'ulejman Jivanov Šabanovič
36. Mustafa Aleksandrov Bihuševič27
37. Matv'ej Asanov Al[i]jevič

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23 Pronunciation without the protethic [j], Ivan, ist also possible.
24 Cf. the Rus. rpač 'earl'; a nickname?
25 Spelled by a ģaym, possibly under the influence of the Belarusian Cyrillic spelling, but in the intervocalic position pronunciation was certainly [h]; in contrast, pronunciation of ģaym in the initial, as in Genbicki ~ Gembicki and in some instances before another consonant, e.g. Bogdanovič, is [g] or [g'].
26 As in the name above.
27 As in Abraham, no 30.
38. S'ulejman Ščensnovič
39. Osif Adamov Šabanovič
40. Abraham Mustafov Bogdanovič
41. Anifa Aleksandroûna Genbickaja
42. Abraham Genbicki
43. Adam Az'ulev Šahi'dević²⁸
44. Jakub Osifov Murzič
45. Jivan Jakoulev Varanovič
46. Aleksandr Mustafov Varanovič
47. Adam Aleksandrov Muxa
48. Mixal Amuratov Abramovič
49. B'ekir Xas'en'ević
50. Jivan Smolski
51. Smuil Mustafov Lebed'
52. <Sami>²⁹ Muraûski
53. Stefan Leb'ed'
54. Ruz'a B'ekirovna Šabanovič
55. Jakub Bronislaûov Muxa
56. Jakub Jakoulev Ščensnovič
57. Aleksandr S'ulejmanov Š'unkevîč
58. Mustafa Abrahamovič Š'unkevîč
59. Osif Kurmanovič
60. Adam Korycki Davytkav z'at³⁰
61. Mixail Juzufovič
62. Mustafa Dz'alaçycki³¹
63. Davyd Xas'en'ević
64. Sem³² Jakoulev Ščensnovič
65. Stefan Radkevîč
66. Gamb'er Muxarski
67. Mat'ej Ratkevîč
68. Jakub Aleksandrov Muxa
69. S'ulejman Mustafov Aleksandrovič
70. S'ulejman Az'ulev Jakuboûski
71. Jakub Mustafov Bajrašeûski

²⁸ As in Abraham no 30.
²⁹ The first letter hardly legible, perhaps 'L.
³⁰ I.e. 'Davyd's son-in-law'.
³¹ The surname derived from the village name Dzjaljaçicy, Pol. Delatyce.
³² This is the English name Sam, derived from Samuel.
72. Samuil Lvov Xaz'bijevič
73. Z'uhra Bogdanovič
74. Osif Ščensnovič
75. Amurat Az'ulev Jakuboŭski
76. Aleksandr Osifov Leb'ed'
77. Aleksandr Osifov Muraŭski
78. Konstanty Matvjejv Makav'ecki
79. Osif Leb'ed'
80. Mixail Radecki33
81. Kuba Aleksandrovič
82. Jivan Mustafov Bazareŭski
83. Abraham Mustafov Aleksandrovič
84. Alej Vilson34
85. Aleksan[d]r Stefanov Jakuboŭski
86. Rafal35 Ščucki
87. Frink36 Jakuboŭski
88. Alek Aleksandrovič
89. Adam Pultarźycki
90. Adam Jasins'ki
91. Stefan Asanovič
92. S'ulejman B'ekirow Pulturźycki
93. Jakub Pulturźycki
94. Eva Abrahamovna Radlin'skaja
95. Adam B'ekirov Konopacki
96. Aleksandr Smolski
97. Aleksandr Abramovič
98. Abraham Ratk'evič
99. Samuil Assanovič
100. S'ulejman Az'ulev Šahidevič37
101. Jakub Aleksandrov Bogdanovič
102. Mustafa Jakoŭlev Rafalovič
103. Jakub Mustafov Ryzvanovič
104. Jivan Abrahamov Jakuboŭski
105. Roman B'ekirov Radlin'ski

33 Spelled Redecki.
34 This is a well-known English surname Wilson.
35 Spelled Refal.
36 I.e. English Frank.
37 As in Abraham, no 30.
106. Stefan Osifov Vilčyn'ski
107. Jivan Makulovič
108. Stepan Aleksandrov Makulovič
109. Adam Jakubošíki
110. S'elim Tavs'un'ski
111. Adam Osifov Ryzvanovič
112. S'ulejman Jakoulev <Gen>bicki
114. B'ekir Samuilov Šćucki.

Comments:

1. Most surnames are popular among PLB Tatars, and quite a few were used by more than one family. Some surnames are Slavic, shared with the local non-Tatar population, e.g. Radlin'ski, Šćucki, Vilčyn'ski. Two surnames are oikooanthroponyms, i.e. derived from the names of Tatar habitation places: Dz'alačycki and Tavs'un'ski. Some are derived from the PLBT personal male names and are of Oriental origin, e.g. Al[i]jevič, Asanovič ~ Assanovič, Bajraševski, Bazarevski, Xas'en'evič, Xaz'bičevič, Kurmanovič, Murzič, Ryzvanovič, Šabanovič, Safarevič and Šahid'evič. Some of them may be products of a common Tatar-Slavic coexistence and reflect both Oriental and Slavic roots, e.g. Muxa, Muxarski and Smolski. Lastly, one name, Vilson, is English (Wilson), either adopted in the USA or inherited from an American father.

2. As is well-known and mentioned above, PLB Tatars started to use non-Islamic names as early as the 16th century, therefore the use of such names as Jivan and Matvej, some in a diminutive form, e.g. Alek, Kuba, Miša, is not surprising. It is also known that many Slavic names have alternative counterparts used as autonyms. It means that their holders used Slavic forms officially and in relations with non-Muslims, whereas at home and with other Tatars both Slavic and Muslim forms were applied. For example, Aleksandr was normally substituted for PLBT Alej (Ar. 'Ali), Stefan for PLBT Mustafa (Ar. Muršafà), Matvej for PLBT Maxm'et' (Ar. Muḥam-mad), Roman for PLBT Ramazan (Ar. Ramađàn) etc.; cf. also section 2.1.2.

It is worth noting that in many cases the names of both biblical and

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38 This surname is derived from the name of the village Tawsjuny in Lithuania, close to Eišiškes, at the Lithuanian-Belarus border.
Islamic origins were spelled in the local Christian, and not Muslim forms, e.g. Osif and not Jusuf (Ar. Yūsuf, note, however, the surname Juzufović), Abraham and not Ibrahim (Ar. Ibrāhim).

Two English male names were also put on the list, Sem (Sam) and Frink (Frank).

There are only a few female names, all typical of PLBT name-giving practice, both Slavic e.g. Ruz'a, Fela, Eva, and Islamic e.g. Amin'a (Ar. Amina), Anifa (Ar. Ḥanifa), Z'uhra (Ar. Zuhra).

3. Patronymics, as a characteristic Eastern Slavic property, were in some instances listed in the Belarusian form, whereas the corresponding first names were given in the Polish form, e.g. Jakub Jakůlev, i.e. Pol. Jakub, but Br. Jakůlev, Ar. Ya'qūb. By far not all names and surnames were combined with patronyms. The preference for a patronym may incidentally be regarded as a Belarusian option as opposed to a Polish one.

It must be noted that a detailed study of all names included in this list falls beyond the scope of this paper.

Another document dated June 13, 1913, can also be seen on the wall of the same mosque in Iwie. This is a document of the pious foundation, the well-know waqf, of Bekir Jakovlev Shabanovich. The document, titled Vypiska iz domašn'aho zav'eščaniya um'eršaho dvarjanina B'ekira Jakouleva Šabanoviča 'Testament and the last will of Bekir Yakovlev Shabanovich, deceased nobleman, written at his home' is written in the Cyrillic and the Arabic writings. In a sense, this document can be classified as legal, but it is strongly linked with the congregation.

2. 4. Private correspondence

As for private correspondence, we have two pieces of epistolary literature. One is a letter written by an unnamed Tatar woman to her children on both sides of a sheet of paper that Andrzej Drozd has discovered among the pages of Bekir Szabanowicz's hamail from the turn of 19th - 20th centuries. There is no signature on this letter, and the date, written in the edge with letters, provides only the day and the month. It is unknown when and to whom this letter was sent, if ever. The other is Abraham

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39 This letter will be published by Andrzej Drozd.
Rafalovich's letter to Abe Jacobusky. As is seen from the envelope, the letter was posted on December 13, 1940, at Woodridge, N. Y. It was addressed to Mr Abe Jacobusky, 181 Ellery St., Brooklyn N.Y. The return address printed on the envelope is Royal House, H. Schlosberg, Prop. Mountaindale, N. Y., with the name of the sender written in ink as A. Rafulowitz.

Although the letter was sent to Abe Jacobusky, Mr Rafalovich's discourse is addressed to Hadia, called 'sister', and not the recipient. The reason for it, as Mr Edward Potereiko has kindly informed me, is that Abe Jacobusky 'did not understand Arabic'. It is not quite certain who the actual addressee Hadia was, but she could be Abe Jacobusky's mother, since his mother was called Chaja, as put in English. The nominal addressee is mentioned in the letter directly as Eibi ~ Aibi [1, 4; 2, 4].

The letter was written on a sheet of paper with the name and address of the Royal Hotel and Country Club on the letterhead and an add in the footing. Abraham Rafalovich worked for this resort as a seasonal worker. The sheet of paper was folded in two, and the text was written on three pages formed in this way. There are eight lines of the text filling the whole first page, and five lines on the next page. A half of this page has been cut off and the text is lacking. Two lines have been written on the third page, which is the backside of the first page. The first line on page 3 is a continuation of the final lines from the previous page, while the second and the last line, arranged in centre, is an English form of leaving, 'goodbye'. The first line on the third page, because of the damage, is unclear.

In contrast to the remaining part of the letter, the English 'goodbye' is not vocalised. It is to note that this was a usual practice; the texts in Slavic languages were always vocalised, whereas Oriental passages, unless Qur'anic, were either provided with vowels or not. Naturally, the pages are unnumbered.

The style of writing is known from PLBT manuscripts copied by copyists inheriting the tradition of the school of writing in the region of Kleck and Orda, Belarus, Poland before 1939. A similar style can be seen on the pages of a prayer-book copied by Alej Bajraszewski from Orda, a few pages of which were demonstrated by Drozd (1993: 49; 50; 51). The writing can be specified as rather horizontal, with a characteristic double-bent ra'.
and a *sin* composed of two small, discontinuous, slanting strokes and a binding stroke.

In the following, a copy of this letter, a transcription and an English translation of it will be presented. I have to note that I did not have any opportunity to see the letter in original. I only examined a copy of it sent to me scanned in a picture by email, then a copy sent by airmail. The quality of both the scan and the copy on paper is very good. The graphic and philological analysis excludes any forgery.

   Transcription

[1]

1. Abraham Rafałovič uv'edamlaju ja t'ab'e što ja s
2. lava Bohu živ i zdarov. Rabotaju na 'erm'e
3. i ščo posylaju ja teb'e Xadź'e i Džeku iz ženoji42 i Štivi
4. iz ženoji43 i Ejbi i Ajdi i B' eru i vsim radnym i z
5. nakomym niski peklon i žalaju ad Allaha jedi
6. neho dobhato zdarovyja i v'es'olaj žizn44
7. i dolhato v'eku45 na mnohija lata i ščo uv'ed'emlaju46
8. ja t'abe Xadź'a što ja vislau petnas'c'e talarov

[2]

1. dz'en'ek47. Pirašu ja c'ibe doragaja s'es[t]ra Xadź'a ni
2. zabud'ej mus'ku, nixej zaplac'iu susej
3. du. Ja dumaju što hety m'es'ec' budz'e mitink
4. i ščo prašu ja vas kedy48 Ajbi polučit'49 dz'engi
5. to nixej atpiše mn'e skoro bo ja ni znaju
[...]

42  żżanway.
43  żżanway.
44  wwaśwalay źižni.
45  wwaqwu.
46  'wwwa... .
47  d'anaq.
48  qada.
49  pwalwwučič.
Royal Hotel and Country Club

Private and Adjoining Baths

MOUNTAINDALE, N. Y.

Phone: Woodridge 275-276

Steam Heated Throughout

COME TO THE ROYAL FOR YOUR VACATION

Abraham Rafalovich's Letter
أبوتوما ساتوا ين أشموفر

Abraham Rafalovich's Letter
[3]

[1] abo <na bumahe.> To adž’in adris

Translation

[1]

[1] I, Abraham Rafalovich let you know that, thanks to God, I am alive and in good health. I am working in a farm, [3] and I am sending my best greetings to you, Hadia, to Jack and [his] wife, to Steve [4] and [his] wife, to Abe, to Ida, to <Myra>, as well as to all relatives and [5] friends. I am asking One Allah for good health, pleasures [7] and a long life to you. I also let you know that I have sent $ 15.

[2]

[1] My dear sister Hadia, please do not [2] forget the mosque. He should pay at the Society. [3] I think that the meeting will be this month, [4] and therefore, I am asking Abe to reply immediately upon the receipt of the money, for I do not know [...] [3]


Comments:

1. Rafalowicz [1, 1], Abraham/Abram Rafalovich, Mr Edward Potereiko's grandfather, b. c. 1884 – d. c. 1944, arrived in the USA on June 16, 1902 at the age of 23, his nationality being listed as Polish or Russian. Rafalovich, Pol. Rafalowicz, is a well-known Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatar name, cf. the list of 1922, published in section 2. 3 above, on which he is probably recorded as donor 30, K’emil (27) and Mustafa (102) being his brothers.

2. Xad’a [1, 3], as said above, is probably Abe Jacobusky’s mother. The term sestra ‘sister’ was probably applied as a polite form of address, very common in Belarus and old eastern Poland. In fact, Hadia was roughly the same age as Abe Rafalovich. The female name Hadia is very popular among Tatars. It is a form abbreviated from Xadydža, which

50 Reading suggested by Mr Edward Potereiko.
51 Reading suggested by Mr Edward Potereiko.
comes from the Arabic Ḥadiğa.

3. Dżeku [1, 3], dative form of Dżek, i.e. English Jack. Jack/Jacob was one of Abraham Rafałovich's brothers.

4. Štivi [1, 3], a more correct form being Stivi. This is the English, phonetically spelled form of Steve/Mustafa Rafałovich, Abraham's another brother.

5. Ejbi [1, 4], like the two preceding names, also is an English name, notably Abe, spelled phonetically, a short form of Abraham. Most probably, Abe is identical with Abe Jacobusky, to whom this letter was nominally addressed.

6. Ajdi [1, 4], dative form of the English Ida, who was Abe Jacobusky's sister.

7. Beru [1, 4]; although it resembles the dative form of the English name Barry, the lady so called can be identical with Abe Jacobusky's another sister, Myra/Minnie, also called Aminia < Ar. Amina. Dr. Andrzej Drozd has suggested the dative of Bera, which would be a diminutive form of Bekir.

8. mus'ku [2, 2], probably the English word 'mosque' spelled phonetically and put in accusative case; note that PLB Tatars normally call a mosque miechet or miechet' (Jankowski and Łapicz 2000: 118); another possible reading is Mus'ku, which could be a diminutive form of the name Mūsā, but such person is unknown.

9. susejdu [2, 2-3], probably a phonetic spelling of the English word society, here designating 'Muslim Society', a member of which was Abraham Rafałovich and to which he paid his fee in the sum of $15; the word is in locative case; note that PLB Tatars normally call Muslim community ummiet or jemie'at (Jankowski and Łapicz 2000: 59).

3. Conclusion

At this stage of the study, it is difficult to evaluate the quantity of Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatar documents. What is certain is a great number of legal documents with signatures in the Arabic writing, so great that they can be examined in a separate study. Further quest in public and private archives can hopefully bring to light new documents of other types as well. It is the recent correspondence in private possession that is most difficult to have access to, for the owners are very reluctant to share them
with scholars. However, it is unlikely that letters like the one written by Abraham Rafalovich existed on a large scale. Letters of this type were certainly written as a secret code, since Tatars knew that even specialists in Oriental studies could hardly read and understand them. We have heard of letters written in the Arabic script sent by Tatar soldiers in wartime. Hopefully, in the future we shall know more about the penmanship, literacy and therefore, about the culture of Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian Tatars.

EDITORIAL SYMBOLS

[] - enclose lacking letters
<> - enclose reconstructed or amended letters
| - shows end of line

ABBREVIATIONS

Ar. - Arabic
Br. - Belarusian
PLB(T) - Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian (Tatar)
Pol. - Polish
Rus. - Russian
Tat. - Tatar
Tur. - Türkisch
Tur.-Tat - Turkish-Tatar

REFERENCES


BLAN = Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences.

BUVil = Library of the University of Vilnius. 52

52 The catalogue symbols of this and the preceding item are from the Soviet time. Most probably, both libraries have now a Lithuanian catalogue system.


Miaškinene, Galina Aleksandrovitch, Sjarjej Šupa. 1995. Turècka-belaruski razmožnik 1836 godu z zboramû Nacyjanal'naga Muzëju Li-
Muxliński, Antoni. 1857. *Izslědovanie o proisxoždenii i sostajaniî litovskix" tatar". Sа[n]tpeterburg*.

Muchliński, Antoni. 1858. “Zdanie sprawy o Tatarach litewskich”, *Teka Wileńska* 4, 241-272; 5, 121-179; 6, 139-183.


