

ОРИГИНАЛЬНЫЕ СТАТЬИ

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**TATARS OF THE JOCHID ULUS:
THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT
OF AN ETHNOPOLITICAL IDENTITY
IN THE 13th–15th CENTURIES***I.L. Izmailov*

*Marjani Institute of History of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences
Kazan, Russian Federation
ismail@inbox.ru*

Abstract: *Research objectives:* To analyze the processes behind the formation and development of the Tatar ethnopolitical community in the Ulus of Jochi in the XIII–XV centuries.

Research materials: The author of the article examines a variety of sources that reflect the progressive development of the Tatar ethnopolitical community in the Ulus of Jochi during the XIII–XV centuries.

Results and novelty of the research: The Tatars of the Jochid Ulus during the XIII–XV centuries were usually studied from a socio-political point of view, with little attention being paid to the study of mental structures. Nevertheless, the formation of the ethnopolitical community of the Tatars – something which determines the mental universe of the population of the Ulus of Jochi – deserves and receives here more intensive study.

The Mongol invasion brought not only destruction to the countries of Eurasia, but also led to the formation of a new Mongol Empire, and at the end of the XIII century, the successor Chingisid states. In all these khanates, there was a process of formation of their statehood and ethnopolitical consolidation. In the Ulus of Jochi, this process was associated with the formation of the Tatar ethnopolitical community. It turns out that during the conquests of Chingis Khan and his heirs in different countries of Eurasia from the Near and Middle East to Central Asia and Eastern Europe, Tatars were present among the troops of the Khans, playing the role of a military aristocracy. Due to these objective and other subjective reasons, the Tatar identity became the leading one in the Jochid Ulus, manifesting itself in the ideas that the Jochid Ulus was a country of the Tatars, the term itself becoming synonymous with the military service aristocracy. Tatars were also understood as Turkic nomadic people with their own clan structure.

Keywords: ethnos, ethnopolitical community, medieval Tatars, Mongols, service class, military aristocracy, nomads, Ulus of Jochi (Golden Horde), Chingisids

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The Mongol invasion had a great influence on the historical destiny of many European and Asian peoples and completely changed the established order of things in the whole world. The consequences of the war campaigns of Chingis Khan and his descendants were immense. Although they did not result in the mass migration of new nomadic tribes to eastern Europe and the Middle East, nonetheless, as their result, the Chingisid Empire was formed and the new ethnonym *Tatar* came into being and spread all over this empire. Coming into being and the wide use of this term among the Eastern European peoples in the XIII–XVI centuries gave rise to many legends and attempts to account for it as early as in the XIII century, and the number of them is still quite numerous at present. The origin of the *Tatar* ethnonym still provokes almost as many discussions as was the case a hundred years ago. The reason why this problem is so acute is that it has been ignored for a long period; consequently, there is no common opinion on the way how it came into use among the population of the Jochid Ulus (that is, the Golden Horde) and its interrelations with other forms of identity. All these contribute to the conservation of old approaches to the problem and put obstacles in the way of studying the ethnic history of the present Tatar people. It goes without saying that within the framework of this article we cannot consider all aspects of this process, so it is worth examining only the ethnopolitical and religious aspects.

In the historical studies of the Soviet era several views on the way how the ethnonym *Tatar* has taken root were developed. The traditional point of view was trying to prove that a people's history and its ethnonym's origin very often cannot be joined together and that the name *Tatar* was imposed upon the presently existing people by the colonial policies of the tsarist government and by the local national bourgeoisie in the early XX century [25, p. 98–104]. Another opinion is that Tatars were ancient Turkic tribes that had been penetrating to Western Europe before and especially after the Mongol-initiated war campaigns. They also point out to the long duration of the process of changing the old ethnonyms (*Kipchak*, *Bulgar*) into *Tatar* which originally came into use only amidst nomadic nobility [26, p. 235–268; 11, p. 292].

However, we suppose that the above-mentioned points of view take very little account of the complicated structure of medieval ethnic identity. The majority of researchers who have examined the problem of spreading this ethnonym among East European peoples believe that it was due to the fact they had a common language and territory, as well as the influence of the neighbouring peoples. Meanwhile, these factors do not seem to play a key part in this process. The major factor that has to be acknowledged is the change in ethnic identity which is, according to many researchers, the most important feature of every ethnos [See: 37; 38]. In the medieval time, human identity, being the perception of one's place in some social group and by means of it in the whole world, was dependent mostly on confession-al and (or) social identity [38, p. 147–154; 39, p. 55–74, 214–217], on the social status of a person and their membership in a state and political system, while such things like having a common language, territory, household and cultural pattern were of secondary importance. It is common knowledge that in the Middle Age identity structure it is quite difficult to distinguish between ethnic, political and religious aspects. When considering the medieval period, especially within nomadic social communities, these kinds of identities cannot be separated because they were quite syncretic [32, p. 26, 67, 185–188].

We can probably raise the problem of revealing some significant aspects characterizing the identity of a people. For this reason, we can hardly speak of some special “ethnic identity” of the medieval population. The right word to use here is “ethnopolitical identity”, taking into consideration that in the conditions of forming the social and class structure of a state membership in its institutions is becoming the main aspect of identity. This aspect becomes most clearly apparent in an endoethnonym (own name) of a people, and in the conditions of the medieval hierarchical society any endoethnonym was pointing out social origin first of all, ethnic and linguistic unity being of lesser importance. That was exactly the case with the spread and consolidation of different kinds of ethnic identities (*Tatars, Muslims*, etc.)

The name *Tatars* appeared in history at least in the V–VIII centuries, when tribes with the such name were mentioned in Chinese and Turkic runic sources [31, p. 255–272]. Those ancient Tatar tribes (most probably, Mongol-speaking) definitely played a prominent part in political events in Central Asia during that period. They became quite notorious after having formed a mighty union against Mongols in a struggle for domination in the steppe area. However, they gained the utmost fame in the 13th century when they were defeated and after being incorporated into Chingis Khan’s army, appeared as invaders on the border of the civilized world.

The vast territories conquered by Mongol Khans, destruction of established borders and order of things and appearance of new empires within a short historical period – “chronicles do not contain any facts that can be compared with Mongols’ conquest” [51, p.2] – these events made contemporaries stunned and encouraged them to learn as much as possible about mysterious newcomers. The first thing they got to know was their name *Tatars*. Different European and Oriental scholars tried to explain their origin and to link it with legendary peoples (Christian Gog and Magog, or Oriental Yajudge and Majudge) who had been expelled by Alexander the Great to the edge of the universe. As to Europeans, they often interpreted their name as *Tartars*, that is, people coming from Tartar (the Hell). It was due to works of many well-known historians of the XIII century (Matthew Paris, Rodger Bacon, etc.) that this word penetrated and has remained in the public discourse of many European peoples until recent times [14, p.125–127; 33, p. 137, 148, 153, 157, 207].

However, by the late XIII century, after Europeans learned more about the life and the history of Tatars from Christian missionaries who had travelled to the court of Mongol Khans, some new, more realistic versions concerning their origin appeared. The very first European monks (who managed to get to the steppes of Asia hoping to find allies among inhabitants of Prester John’s kingdom) were surprised to hear that Tatars were not conquerors at all, but also subjugated people. Moreover, it turned out that a number of subjugated peoples were hidden behind the name *Tatars*. An extract from the letter of Hungarian monk Julian, a member of the Dominican monastic order, sounds very typical: “In all conquered states they immediately murder nobility and all people who could in any way resist them. As for warriors and peasants who are able to fight, they give them arms and send them against their will to the battlefield in front of themselves. Those peasants who are not suitable for fighting are left for tillage...they force them to name themselves *Tatars* henceforth” [2, p.67; 27, p. 387–388]. The other traveller, John of Pian de Carpine (who had visited the court of the Great Khan in Karakorum at the head of the

Pope's embassy) named his work "The history of Mongols whom we call the Tatars" [47, p.57; See: 53, p. 33–39]. In the text of the work he uses the word *Tatars* that had become very common for Europeans meaning conquerors, noting however that "the land of Tatars" consisted of different tribes. The same statement was made by William of Rubruck who seemed to base his book on evidence of Mongols from Karakorum. He writes that "they do not want to be named Christians, willing to put their own name, that is Moal, above the other names; they are also against calling them *Tatars* since Tatars are quite different people" [53, p. 112–114; 47, p. 114–115]. He managed to learn the following things about Tatars: they were one of the tribes who lived in the neighbourhood with Mongols and contributed to Chingis Khan's taking of leading position; he always sent them in front of his army "Now this Chingis used to dispatch the Tatars in every direction, and so their name spread abroad, for everywhere was heard the cry: 'The Tatars are coming!'. But through the many wars they have been nearly all killed off, and now these Moal would like to extinguish even the name and raise their own in its stead" [53, p. 115; 47, p.116]. This evidence enjoyed popularity in Europe – for it can be read in unchangeable way a number historical and geographical works, Roger Bacon's for instance [33, p. 213–219]. Later, in the late XIII – early XIV century, a considerable number of merchants and Catholic priests visited Mongolia and China and left their memories, Marko Polo, Montecorvino, Odoric and J. Marignolli being most remarkable [30; 45]. Marco Polo's memories were considered to be the most detailed and accurate ones; they were widely used by politicians, merchants and cartographers up to the XVI century [12, p.24–28]. He constantly names people living in the Chingisid empire as *Tatars* (providing that it is not the corrections of the copyists) (30). Anyway, it becomes clear from the above written that even Europeans who were aware of real life in Mongolia when speaking of people of this country used the name *Tatars*, probably following the tradition, and only occasionally the word *Mongols*.

Ancient Armenian historians who also knew conquerors of the Transcaucasia quite well, distinguished between "*Tatars*" and "*Mugal-Tatars*", noting that the latter tribe was descending "from Khazars, Gatians, Ankitans and other barbaric tribes". Armenians also referred to them as "the people of archers" [3; 9, p. 166–167].

In Oriental (Arabic and Persian) sources they were named both as *Mongols* (Rashid al-Din, Juvaini) and *Tatars* (particularly, Ibn al-Asir, an-Hasavi), very often telling the difference between them. A well-known Ilkhanid court historian Rashid al-Din, aware of the real situation in Mongolia, wrote: "In the very ancient times they (Tatars) were most of the time patrons and rulers of the greater part of (Mongolian) tribes and areas, being notable for their dignity, might and respect (from others). Because of their utmost dignity and honoured position many other Turkic clans, in spite having different name and importance, took over their name and all became known as *Tatars*" [48, p.102]. However, in the early XIII century Tatars lost their importance, and domination was taken by Mongolian tribes supporting Chingis Khan [5, p. 359–365].

Russian chronicles and other ancient documents, in contrast to other sources, almost always refer to Mongol conquerors as *Tatars*. "Priydosha yazici neznayemi... bezbozhniki Moavityane, rekomii Tatarove, ikh zhe dobre nikto vest' yasno kto sut' i otkole priydosha i chto yazik ikh i kotorogo plemeni sut' i chto

vera ikh. I zovut ikh tatari, a iniyi glagolyat taurmeni, a družii pechenezi...” (the translation from Old Slavonic: “*An unknown people came...Moavites, not believing in our God... known as Tatars, nobody knows exactly who they are and where they come from and what their language is and what their religion is. And they are named Tatars, others are named Turkomen, others are named Pechenegs*”) [41, p.453]. The chronicler possibly wanted to emphasise the fact that actually conquerors consisted of many peoples hidden under the name *Tatars* [See: 50].

Chinese sources of that historic period mention both Tatars and Mongols. It follows from the Yuan’ history “Man-da bey-lu” (“Complete description of Mongol-Tatars”) that there were altogether three ranks of Tatars, and that they comprised Mongol and Turkic tribes, as well as Tungusic-Manchurian tribes [36, p. 92–94].

The most reasonable assumption was made by Chuluuni Dalay who thinks that Chinese historiography, by extending the term “da-da” (Tatars) on Mongols (“mangu dgen”) was pursuing the goal to humiliate the latter, because in Chinese tradition the above mentioned term had a hidden derogatory meaning, the same as “wild” and “coarse” [13, p.53]. It is indicative that the term *Tatars* here did not mean ethnic Tatars; actually, it meant all kinds of nomadic conquerors. At the same time the Chinese referred to the Mongol ruling dynasty of the Yuan’ era as “the ruling dynasty” (“go-chao”), and respectively to Mongols as “the people of the ruling dynasty” (“go-chao zhen”), that is, the privileged social layer belonging to Mongol clans [13, p.51]. Speaking of Mongol traditions, we can see that according to “The secret history of Mongols” and “Description of personal war campaigns of the holy and militant (Chingis-Khan)” the ethnonym *Mongol* had taken strong root, as well as its derivatives, and the Chingis Khan’s state got the name “Eke Mongol Ulus” (“The great Mongol state”) [34, p. 378–385]. Moreover, according to Rashid al-Din, a number of tribes “like Jalairs, Tatars, Oyrats, Onguts, Keraits, Naimans, Tanguts and others, all of them having their own name and a special nickname, call themselves Mongols to rise themselves above, in spite of the fact that they didn’t want to acknowledge this name in the ancient times” [48, p.102].

Thus, proceeding from the brief survey of the sources, we can state that the terms *Tatar* and *Mongol* in the XII–XIII centuries were often used concurrently and used to mean quite different ethnic groups taking part in war campaigns of the Chingisids, keeping in mind that both names were accepted by various nomadic tribes depending on which one (Tatars or Mongols) was holding the dominating position. After the establishing of the Mongol Empire both terms spread widely around Asia and Europe, emphasizing noble origin and relation to the ruling dynasty. Unfortunately, due to the fragmentary source material, it is not always possible to distinguish clearly between these two terms and to find out in which case they were used as endoethnonyms, and when as exoethnonyms. We can surely state only the fact that the highest ranks of Mongolian nobility (and later it spread on the whole Mongolian population) preferred to name themselves *Mongol*. As for the name *Tatar*, it meant the remains of defeated peoples arranged in special armies. It must not be ruled out that the main part of these mixed troops was inherited by Jochi and his descendants, since proper Mongols constituted only four thousand men, all the rest coming from “Russian, Cherkess, Kipchak, Madjar and other armies who had joined them” [48, p. 275].

Despite the fact that in the steppes of Eastern Europe there were not so many proper Tatars and Mongols, their invasion resulted in the complete change of the ethnopolitical situation in this area. Meanwhile, in some historical works we come across the statement that Mongols were soon assimilated by Kipchaks. Usually, to prove it they use the quotation from al-Omari, an Arabic historian who lived in the middle of the XIV century: "...Mother Nature gained a victory over their (Tatar) race features, and they all became like Kipchaks, as if they were of the same breed; it happened because they had settled on the Kipchak land, married them and kept living there" [51, p. 235], "and gradually only the name was left from the invaders" [40, p. 186–187]. Nonetheless, the real situation in Dasht-i-Kipchak seemed to be far from that idyllic picture. The Mongol invasion not only destroyed thousands of lives and devastated European peoples, but also subjugated them to the military state system of Jochids. Joining nomadic tribes to the Mongol tribe structure was followed by eliminating old tribal elite, mass migrations of tribes and breaking of old tribal ties [40, p. 182–184; 17, p. 35–43]. At the same time a part of these Kipchak clans and tribes was incorporated into the Mongol tribal structure as dependent ones. It was probably then that old tribal and clan ethnonyms disappeared (*Burchevitch, Toksobitch, Yetebitch, Kulobich* etc.) and new, Mongol ones came into being (*Mangit, Kungrat, Barin, Naiman, Argin, Kiyat* etc.) As for the lists of some Kipchak tribes (including clans *Toksoba, Burdjogli, Durut, Kangarogli, Karabogli* etc.) that have been preserved in sources of the Mamluk Egypt before the 14th century [51, p.540–541], their analysis makes it clear that even in the Mamluk environment which preserved the Kipchak cultural traditions, these names were just paying a tribute to the old tradition that was gradually fading away, and the above clan names were not used regularly. That is why they were often distorted when copying and explained through really existing concepts (e.g. "*Taksoba* is a tribe that comes from *Tatars*"). It should be also noticed that in the Mamluk environment the process of forming their own ethnos was going on, e.g. "*Kipchak Mamluks, Cherkess Mamluks*" [51, p. 540–542].

In the Dasht-i-Kipchak where similar ethnic consolidation processes were taking place inside the Mongol-ruled ethnopolitical system, it probably turned out that the name *Tatars* became common for all these tribes. Particularly, Rashid al-Din provides evidence of that: "because of Tatars being so powerful and mighty...(nowadays) in the land of Kirgiz, Kelar and Bashkort peoples, in the Dasht-i-Kipchak and to the north of it...all Turkic tribes are called *Tatars*" [48, p.103]. In the situation of the collapse of old identity and its peculiar aberration it was not by chance that some part of population, especially the nobility, was striving to be involved into a new ethnopolitical system along with taking over the new, "Tatar" identity.

We should not map out the element of subjugated peoples' opposition (it probably contributed to choosing the name *Tatar*) to the Mongol dynasty at power. It is quite possible that at the early stage of forming the state system in the Ulus of Jochi such social trends were supported by its khans to justify their separatism. It can probably explain the fact that in the XIV c. the term *Tatar* was widely used only in the Jochid Ulus while in the other parts of the empire people began to use some different ethnonyms (*Chagatays* in Middle Asia and Khorasan, *Mogols* in Eastern Turkistan and India etc.). In essence, it was not the Kipchaks who assimilated Mongols; quite the contrary, the Mongols managed to dissolve Kipchaks,

Bulgars, Madjars and other peoples in their state and to introduce quite new identity in their environment. The study of Persian sources shows that although the term *Dasht-i-Kipchak* kept being used by neighbouring peoples with reference to East European and Volga region steppes, in the XIII–XIV centuries, it gradually lost its ethnic connotation and started to mean the territory of Jochid state [4, p. 175–192].

The prosperity of the empire's cities, development of the common syncretic culture, the spread of the Muslim religion, forming of the common literary language (called *the Volga region Turkic*) and the active process of mixing the military and feudal nobility resulted in moulding a new ethnic community on the territory of the Ulus of Jochi [15; 19, p. 244–262; 37; 21, p. 365–381]. Simultaneously with it, along with the development of the ethnopolitical social structure some changes in the use of the term *Tatar* can be noticed. In the XIV–XV centuries, it has taken root and was used quite frequently, being polysemantic. Its meaning can be decomposed into several semantic blocks.

1. The Jochi Ulus (or Golden Horde) as the state of Tatars. In this meaning it is used by Arabic authors (“the state of Tatars”, “the kingdom of northern Tatars”), Russian chronicles, European travelers [41, p.40; 15, p.152–153; 6, p.140, 157; 28, p.72, 143–145] and it can be also found in the people's epic poem “Idegey” (18). Such regular use of a country name in different sources (including authentic ones) makes us think that it reveals one of the really existing names and represents the definition of the people living in this country according to the ruling Tatar clan.

2. Tatars as a layer of military and feudal nobility. This semantic meaning can be proved (apart from the above mentioned evidences by Rashid al-Din and West European travellers and merchants) by some notices from Arabic sources informing about the arrival in Egypt of a considerable number of Kipchak emirs called *Tatars* during the rule of Beybars (1260–1277) [37, p.86]. Notable is the fact when the Arabic scholar, explaining the name *Toksuba* of a noble Kipchak clan, says that it is a tribe “coming from Kipchak Tatars” (that is, “a noble clan of people coming from Dasht-i-Kipchak”) [37, p.86]. The historian Ibn-Khaldun also mentions “a tribe named *Toksoba* coming from Tatars”. It is important to note that already in the late XIII century the name of one of the most well-known Kipchak clans in the environment using old ethnonyms very actively requires explanation – this fact evidences of replacing the old identity by the new, “Tatar” one and emphasizing the membership of the contemporary nobility, that is Tatars. Similar processes were characteristic for the settled areas of the Ulus of Jochi, including Rus'. For example, many native Russian princes and boyars began to include in their family trees some invented Tatar murzes and tzareviches [54, p. 162–168; 8, p. 50–81]. When in the dastan (epic poem) “Idegey” the main hero boasts of belonging to “a glorious Tatar (Tat) clan” [18, p. 70, 108,128,135], it can be viewed as an important evidence reflecting ethnopolitical identity of a certain part of the population of Volga and Ural region in the XV–XVI centuries.

The beginning of the formation of this social stratum is fixed in the XIII century sources when some tribes, getting dependent on Mongols, used to become their vassals [17, p. 35–43]. However, gradually, as the ulus system was developing and strengthening, the stratification process was going on inside the former tribes and a kind of imperial military nobility using the prestigious name *Tatar* came into being [24, p. 178–203]. No doubt, it was in this environment that a special class knight

culture having over-ethnic character was developed. It involved similar types of armour and military equipment [31, p. 255–273], harness, heraldry, the mode of life and genealogy (including some legendary Tatar ancestor, without exception) [19, p. 244–262]. It goes without saying that particular elements of this culture will require more detailed study, but it is already clear that in the XIV–XV century and later this culture had over-ethnic character and could not be just equivalent to the ethnolinguistical unity of its bearers, especially since the ruling khan and the elite kept the Mongolian language in clan communication up to the middle of the XIV century [51, p. 251, 395].

According to all these data, such “Tatar” identity was based on the membership in the military feudal stratum (that was devotedly serving to Jochids and having their own ethnos), as well on the Muslim culture and the nomadic way of life. This identity revealing the unity of the Golden Horde elite, did not vanish after the collapse of the state, but was preserved as a social term meaning military nobility serving the Russian rulers that was in existence in the Volga region up to the XVII century and could be found in the Russian sources (“attendant Tatars”). The examination of this term reveals that contemporaries did not use it to name an ethnos; it stood for “a stratum of all non-Russian (Tatar, Mari and Mordva) [16, p.63–67] feudals who were strongly opposing tribute-paying strata of the population (“*yasachniye Chuvashi*”, “*yasachniye Tatari*”) [22, p.140–146].

3. Tatars as nomadic, predominantly Turkic people. This meaning of the name *Tatar* is close to the previous one, though it does not seem to reveal the own name of the people, but is used as an exoethnonym. It is quite possible that the famous angry invective of Mukhammedyar, an educated Muslim poet, does not imply the ethnos, but a nomadic cattle-breeding people for whom that highly cultured person did not cherish kindly feelings [35, p.119–120]. Besides, in the epic poem “Idegey” the “people of Tatars” are mentioned several times as the population of the Golden Horde [18, p. 124, 125, 231]. As a matter of fact, all nomads of the Volga region and the steppes of the Black Sea hinterland were called *Tatars* by all European sources of the XV–XVII centuries. [6, p. 140–157; 10, p. 165–167].

It should be noted that naming a country and a people after the name of the ruling clique or dominating clan was quite typical of medieval societies of Central and Middle Asia. The term *Chagatay* is a striking example. On one hand, it is a name of the state Ulus of Chagatay and, on the other, its nomadic nobility [28, p. 93, 94, 106; 7, p. 35, 36, 49]. Such peoples as Kazakhs, Uzbeks and Mongols got their names from the terms meaning a kind of military brigades [7, p. 49; 17, p. 174–175]. Introducing these names into people’s public mind has natural and regular character, it is caused by the functionality of the social structure and cultural development rather than accepting a nickname given by some neighbouring people. It was for this reason that the speed of this process was dependent upon the complication of the ethnopolitical organisation of the Ulus of Jochi. As far as the Golden Horde was falling into pieces in the late XIV–XV centuries, its ethno-social organism started to split up, a separate ethnos being gradually formed in every ulus. Thus, while the macroethnonym Tatar (which kept staying socially prestigious) was preserved as a background, some new names of the people come into being (*Uzbeks*, *Nogays*, *Sheibanids* – after the name of a khan, or *Kazantsi*, *Krimtsi* – after the name of a city or place). A part of them, having passed through the long historical process of formation, became full-fledged peoples, the rest

splitting up or dissolved among other ethnoses. However, almost all of them (due to the fact of taking root in the Jochid Ulus) have kept within them similar ruling clans – *Shirin*, *Barin*, *Kipchak*, *Argin* and also *Tatars*, as a general term meaning military nobility.

Thus, we would like to emphasise that ethnocultural processes taking part in the Jochid Ulus and Tatar states of the late Golden Horde in the XV–XVI centuries were by no means isolated from each other. There was an ethnic and class stratification and above it – a super-structure of Tatar clans consisting of nobility arranged according to the clan principle. This community was in many respects supported by the system of kindred clans managed by *karachi beys*. At that time everybody was clearly realizing the fact of unity of all Tatars. It can be proved by the letter of the Nogay bey Ismail to the Russian czar Ivan the Terrible. Ismail wrote: “...Astrakhani bez tzarya i bez tatar bitii nel’ze, i ti Kaibullu tzarevitcha tzaryem uchiniv odnovo otpusti. A pokhochesh’ Tatar, ino Tatar mi dobudem. Tatarove ot nas budi” (the translation from Old Slavonic: “...*Astrakhan cannot do without a czar and without Tatars, and you, having appointed tzarevitch Kaibulla as a czar, let him go. If you want Tatars, we will get them. We will send some from us*”) [23, p.107].

Thereupon, it would be wrong to consider Tatars to be a kind of “ethnocrats”. We can consider them as the ruling class (*stratum*) having quite clear ideas of their identity and similar ethnocultural features. However, the process of the ethnopolitical development was gradually going on, and eventually the prerequisites for splitting up were formed. In each khanate their own mythological and historiographic traditions were being created that were linking local clans to their environment and local dynasties. The worship of local saints and local holy places was spreading – they were taking priority above the previous cults that used to be common for the empire of Jochides.

Such trends could not be traced everywhere, but in a number of khanates they were going on in an extremely active way, for instance, in the Kazan Khanate. It is interesting to specify the term which was used by Russian and European historians to mark the ruling clique of the Kazan Khanate – they called them “*the Kazan Tatars*”, “*Tatarovya Kazanskiye*”.

Hence, to sum it up, we can claim that aristocracy and city nobility were named *Tatars*, as for the basic part of population, they determined themselves according to the religious principle, that is *Muslims*.

Unfortunately, the ethnic identity of the major part of the urban and the rural population of the Golden Horde and the khanates which were formed on its territory in the XV century has not been studied well enough. However, based on very scarce and fragmentary sources, we can say it was of confessional type. It is most likely that “the Besermens” often mentioned in Russian chronicles while describing the events in the XIV–XV centuries turned to be the settled population of the Jochi Ulus and Tatars khanates. It should be stressed that in the chronicles texts they are not equivalent to Tatars (the translation from Old Slavonic: e.g. “having robbed Tatars and Besermens” [46, p.382; 43, p. 124], “having killed Besermens” [44, p.192; 42, p.117], “having defeated Tatars and Besermens” [42, p.170], “having destroyed Besermens and Tatars and occupied all Tatar land” [46, p.453; 44, p. 226]. The same peculiarity is mentioned by the Austrian diplomat Siegmund von Herberstein who visited Grand Duchy of Moscow in the early XVI century and collected a lot of information concerning Tatars. Speaking of them, he notes that

“Tatars are divided into hordes” and “all practice Muslim religion; if someone calls them *Turkish*, they get angry, considering it as an insult. But they are pleased to hear the name *Besermen*, the same name is often used by the Turkish to call themselves” [10, p. 167]. On that ground M.N.Tikhomirov came to the conclusion that “Besermen” and “Tatars” are two different ethnic groups, the first one being descendants of pre-Mongol Bulgars that were gradually “tatarized” (assimilated) by newcomers from the Golden Horde. The author emphasises that the word *Besermen* in Russian sources was likely to have two meanings – firstly, a Muslim, a person of another religion, and secondly, the people of the Volga and the Kama Bulgars [52, p.84–90]. Thus, for instance, making comments upon the data found in the Russian chronicles concerning the war campaign of ushkuiniks in 1375, Tikhomirov notes that after the latter had sold some Russian prisoners to “Besermens” in Bolgar they went downstream and destroyed Saray, “robbing Christians and killing Besermens” [46, p.400; 43, p.132]. It turns out that, in accordance with Tikhomirov’s logic, the Russian chronicler, when using the word *Besermen*, meant two different things – in the first case, the Volga Bulgars and in the second case – all Tatar Muslims.

However, we suppose that the above-mentioned approach would be a very artificial obtrusion of some individual ideas on the peoples’ history, and it would only contribute to the already existing mishmash of views concerning the ethnopolitical situation in the Volga region in the XIV–XV centuries. It seems more justified to trust the authors of chronicles and their knowledge of the really existing ethnonyms at that time and certainly, to try to realize the reason for using the two terms simultaneously. Having studied the relevant texts, we can state that the chroniclers almost always used the word *Tatars* or *Tatars and Besermens* when speaking of military conflicts, while the word *Besermens* was used to speak of peaceful population. This data can be used as a ground for social distinguishing between the two terms: the military nobility was called *Tatars*, and the rest of the population were named *Besermens*. The religious aspect in the Middle Ages was extremely important for forming ethnic identity, and this statement is supported by the current existence of the “Besermen” ethnic group in the Upper Kama region – they are very close to Udmurt’s in cultural respect, but differ from them in having Muslim religion [52, p.89; 49, p.140–152]. It can be assumed that the origin of this ethnic group is related to accepting Islam by a group of Turkic speakers (newcomers) at the period of annexing the Kama region to Volga Bulgaria, the Golden Horde or the Kazan Khanate, who were wishing to stand out from kindred language and cultural groups.

To sum up, we can pick out several stages of using the term *Tatars*. In the period before the Mongol invasion (XII century) it was used mostly in Central Asian steppes by different ethnoses who entered the political sphere of action or contacted the mighty union of Tatar tribes. After the Tatars were defeated by Chingis Khan and annexed to the Mongol state their name still remained prestigious and spread among the other peoples conquered by Mongols. In the East European steppes where as a result of the Mongol invasion the ruling dynasties were destroyed, the state borders were eliminated and all people got mixed within the new, ulus structure – in these conditions the term *Tatar* was actively introduced into population’s public mind, especially that one of military nobility. Later, in the XIV–XV centuries this term was already used as the synonym of the Ulus of Jochi,

meaning the ruling clique and opposing the nomads, Muslims and vassals of the Jochid clan to other peoples. As to the basic population of the country, they were likely to call themselves Muslims, in accordance with their confession.

While the Golden Horde was breaking into pieces the term *Tatars* gradually became a macroethnonym (and also got tied to the military nobility stratum); at the same time some new forms of identity and their relevant microethnonyms (Nogays, Mangits, Kazantsi, Krimtzi etc.) come into being in the uluses.

Thus, based on the history of the term *Tatar* we can make a conclusion about the considerable effect of the political social structure on coming into being and development of ethnic identity in the medieval period. The concept of ethnic and ethnopolitical identity has to be studied and paid special attention to while examining various problems of ethnic history.

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About the author: Iskander L. Izmailov – Dr. Sci. (History), Leading Research Fellow, Usmanov Center for Research on the Golden Horde and Tatar Khanates, Marjani Institute of History of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences (7A, Baturin Str., Kazan 420111, Russian Federation); ORCID: 0000-0003-2165-2916. E-mail: ismail@inbox.ru

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ТАТАРЫ УЛУСА ДЖУЧИ: ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ И РАЗВИТИЕ ЭТНОПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ В XIII–XV ВЕКАХ

И.Л. Измайлов

*Институт истории им. Ш. Марджани АН РТ
Казань, Российская Федерация
ismail@inbox.ru*

Цели: рассмотреть процессы становления и развития татарской этнополитической общности в Улусе Джучи XIII–XV веков.

Материалы исследования: в статье изучаются разнообразные источники, которые отражают последовательное развитие татарской этнополитической общности в Улусе Джучи XIII–XV веков.

Результаты и научная новизна: Средневековые татары Улуса Джучи XIII–XV вв. обычно изучались с социально-политической точки зрения, в то время как исследованию ментальных структур уделялось мало внимания. Тем не менее формирование этнополитической общности татар, определяющая ментальный универсум населения Улуса Джучи, заслуживает более последовательного изучения.

Монгольское нашествие принесло в страны Евразии не только разрушение, но и привело к становлению новой Монгольской империи, а в конце XIII в. государств Чингизидов. Во всех этих ханствах происходил процесс становления своей государственности и этнополитической консолидации. В Улусе Джучи этот процесс был связан с формированием татарской этнополитической общности. Выясняется, что в период завоеваний Чингиз-хана и его наследников в разных странах Евразии от Ближнего и Переднего Востока до Средней Азии и Восточной Европы среди войск ханов присутствовали татары, которые играли роль военной аристократии. Практически только в Монголии и Китае и возникших позднее на этих территориях улусах Чингизидов возобладали монгольская идентичность. В Улусе Джучи в условиях роста городов, укрепления ислама и мусульманской цивилизации, татарского (поволжский тюрки) языка как общегородского койне и языка высокой литературы, а также надплеменной имперской культуры. В силу этих объективных и других субъективных причин в Улусе Джучи ведущей стала татарская идентичность, которая проявлялась в представлениях о том, что Улус Джучи – это страна татар, татары стали синонимом военно-служилой аристократии, а также татары понимались, как тюркских кочевой народ, имеющий свою клановую структуру.

Ключевые слова: этнос, этнополитическая общность, средневековые татары, монголы, служилое сословие, военная аристократия, кочевники, улус Джучи (Золотая Орда), чингизиды

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Сведения об авторе: Искандер Лерунович Измайлов – доктор исторических наук, ведущий научный сотрудник Центра исследований Золотой Орды и татарских ханств им. М.А. Усманова Института истории им. Ш. Марджани АН РТ (420111, ул. Батурина, 7А, Казань, Российская Федерация); ORCID: 0000-0003-2165-2916. E-mail: ismail@inbox.ru

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