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ULUS OF JOCHI AND THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA, 1380–1395 FROM VASSALAGE TO ALLIANCE

Dinara Kaisarovna Suleimenova ¹, Otkirbay Multiqbayuli Agatay ²

¹ Scientific Institute for the Study of the Ulus of Jochi
(15 B, Pushkin str. 010008, Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan)
PhD doctoral student, Research Fellow
<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6344-1222>. E-mail: Suleimenova911@gmail.com

² National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan
(54 Tauelsizdik Avenue, Astana, 010000, Republic of Kazakhstan)
PhD, Senior Research Fellow
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8840-010X>. E-mail: agatayotkirbay@gmail.com

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Abstract. *Introduction* This article examines relations between the Ulus of Jochi and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1380–1395 in their military-political, diplomatic, and legal-fiscal dimensions. *Aim and objectives.* The study aims to identify the mechanisms through which Jochid legitimacy shaped the Grand Duchy's rights over the Ruthenian lands while simultaneously preserving the khan's sovereign prerogatives. *Materials and methods.* The source base comprises materials of the Lithuanian Metrica, including correspondence and embassy books, khanly yarlyks (above all Tokhtamysh's yarlyk to Jogaila of 1393), comparative evidence from Ruthenian princely charters, as well as Western European testimonies and Crimean commercial documentation. *Results.* It is shown that the crisis of 1380–1382 reflects a shift in Horde supremacy and the necessity of recognizing the new ruling authority; in the 1390s, diplomatic language functioned as a rhetorical-legal code of status embedded in established embassy practice. The 1393 yarlyk is demonstrated to articulate a legal model of delegated governance: Lithuanian administration was combined with the khan's fiscal sovereignty through the collection of "vykhod" and the transfer of payments via envoys, reinforced by provisions safeguarding trade. *In conclusion.* The article's scholarly novelty lies in linking the diplomatic analysis of the yarlyk with the diplomatic memory preserved in the Lithuanian Metrica and in interpreting Vytautas's policy in 1392–1395 as the conversion of Jochid sanction into a tool of internal centralization while retaining elements of Horde sovereignty; the watershed of 1395 is presented as a transition to a phase in which the Grand Duchy became a patron and resource base for Jochid claimants. **Keywords:** Ulus of Jochi; Grand Duchy of Lithuania; Tokhtamysh; Vytautas; Jogaila; yarlyk of 1393; Lithuanian Metrica.

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ЖОШЫ ҰЛЫСЫ МЕН ЛИТВА ҰЛЫ КНЯЗДІГІНІҢ 1380–1395 ЖЫЛДАРДАҒЫ ҚАРЫМ-ҚАТЫНАСТАРЫ: ВАССАЛДЫҚТАН САЯСИ ОДАҚА ДЕЙІН

Динара Кайсаровна Сулейменова¹ Өткірбай Мылтықбайұлы Ағатай²

¹ Жошы Ұлысы ғылыми зерттеу институты
(15 Б, Пушкин көш. 010008, Астана қ., Қазақстан Республикасы)
PhD докторант, ғылыми қызметкер
<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6344-1222>. E-mail: Suleimenova911@gmail.com

² Қазақстан Республикасының Ұлттық музейі
(Тәуелсіздік даңғылы, 54, 010000, Астана, Қазақстан)
PhD аға ғылыми қызметкер
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8840-010X>. E-mail: agatayotkirbay@gmail.com

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Аңдатпа. *Kіріспе.* Мақалада 1380–1395 жылдар аралығындағы Жошы Ұлысы мен Литва Ұлы князьдігі арасындағы қарым-қатынастар әскери-саяси, дипломатиялық және құқықтық-фискалдық қырлар тұрғысынан қарастырылады. Зерттеудің мақсаты – ордалық легитимділіктің Литва Ұлы князьдігінің орыс жерлеріне қатысты құқықтарын рәсімдеу тетіктерін және сонымен қатар хан билігінің егемендік құзыреттерінің сақталу жолдарын анықтау. *Материалдар мен әдістер.* Зерттеудің дереккөздік негізін Литва метрикасының материалдары, хат-хабарлар мен елшілік кітаптары, хан жарлықтары (ең алдымен, Тоқтамыстың 1393 жылы Ягайлоға берген жарлығы), Русь князьдерінің грамоталарынан алынған салыстырмалы деректер, сондай-ақ Батыс Еуропа деректері мен Қырымның сауда құжаттары құрады. *Нәтижелер.* 1380–1382 жылдардағы дағдарыс ордалық жоғарғы биліктің ауысуын және жаңа билікті мойындау қажеттігін айқындағаны көрсетілді. 1390-жылдары дипломатиялық тіл мәртебені білдіретін риторикалық-құқықтық код қызметін атқарып, елшілік қатынастар дәстүрінде орныққаны анықталды. 1393 жылғы жарлықтың бөліп басқарудың құқықтық моделін қалыптастырғаны дәлелденді: Литва әкімшілік басқаруы ханның фискалдық егемендігімен ұштасып, бұл байланыс алым-салық («шығыс») төлеу және төлемдерді елшіліктер арқылы жеткізу тетіктері арқылы жүзеге асқан, сондай-ақ сауда кепілдіктерімен толықтырылған. *Қорытынды.* Мақаланың ғылыми жаңалығы жарлыққа жасалған актілік-құқықтық талдауды Литва метрикасында сақталған дипломатиялық жадпен сабақтастыра қарастырудан және Витовттың 1392-1395 жылдардағы саясатын ордалық санкцияны орталықтандыру ресурсына айналдыру үдерісі ретінде түсіндіруден көрінеді. Бұл ретте ордалық егемендіктің жекелеген элементтері сақталған. 1395 жыл межесі билікке үміткерлерге Литва тарапынан саяси қамқорлық көрсету кезеңіне өтудің басталуы ретінде сипатталады.

Түйін сөздер: Жошы Ұлұсы; Литва Ұлы князьдігі; Тоқтамыс; Витовт; Ягайло; 1393 жылғы жарлық; Литва метрикасы; ордалық легитимділік; шығым; дипломатиялық қатынас; фискалдық егемендік; Русь жерлері

Алғыс. Мақала Қазақстан Республикасы Ғылым және жоғары білім министрлігінің «Сарайшық ортағасырлық қалашығы тарихын кешенді зерттеу» тақырыбындағы гранттық қаржыландыру жобасын жүзеге асыру аясында орындалды (ЖТН АР26103999).

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ОТ ВАССАЛИТЕТА К СОЮЗУ: ТРАНСФОРМАЦИЯ ОТНОШЕНИЙ УЛУСА ДЖУЧИ И ВКЛ (1380-1395 гг.)

Динара Кайсаровна Сулейменова¹, Уткирбай Мылтыкбайұлы Ағатай²

¹ Научный институт изучения Улуса Джучи
(д.15Б, ул. Пушкина, 010008, Астана, Республика Казахстан)
Докторант PhD, научный сотрудник
<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6344-1222>. E-mail: Suleimenova911@gmail.com

² Национальный музей Республики Казахстан
(пр. Тауелсиздик 54, 010000, Астана Республика Казахстан)
PhD, Старший научный сотрудник
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8840-010X>. E-mail: agatayotkirbay@gmail.com

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Аннотация. *Введение.* В статье рассматриваются взаимоотношения Улуса Джучи и Великого княжества Литовского (ВКЛ) в 1380-1395 гг. в их военно-политическом, дипломатическом и правово-фискальном измерениях. *Цель исследования* состоит в выявлении механизмов, посредством которых ордынская легитимность оформляла права ВКЛ на русские земли и одновременно сохраняла ханские суверенные prerogatives. *Материалы и методы.* Источниковую основу составили материалы Литовской метрики переписка и посольские книги, ханские ярлыки (прежде всего ярлык Токтамыша Ягайло 1393 г.), сопоставительные данные княжеских грамот Руси, а также западноевропейские свидетельства и крымская торговая документация. *Результаты.* Показано, что кризис 1380-1382 гг. фиксирует смену ордынского верховенства и необходимость признания новой власти; в 1390-е гг. дипломатический язык функционировал как риторико-правовой код статуса, закреплённый в традиции посольского общения. Установлено, что ярлык 1393 г. задаёт юридическую модель делегированного управления: литовское администрирование сочетается с ханским фискальным суверенитетом через «выход» и посольскую передачу платежей, дополненные торговыми гарантиями. *Заключение.* Научная новизна статьи заключается в сопряжении актового анализа ярлыка с дипломатической памятью Метрики и в интерпретации политики Витовта 1392-1395 гг. как конверсии ордынской санкции в ресурс централизации при сохранении элементов ордынского суверенитета; рубеж 1395 г. раскрыт как переход к фазе литовского патронажа претендентов.
Ключевые слова: Улус Джучи; Великое княжество Литовское; Токтамыш; Витовт; Ягайло; ярлык 1393 г.; Литовская метрика.

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Introduction. The issue of relations between the Ulus of Jochi and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the period from 1380 to 1395 takes a significant place in the reconstruction of the political geography of Eastern Europe in the late XIV century. Having survived the battle on the Kulikovo field, the power balance in the steppe has been radically changed, creating the new mechanisms of political legitimation, vassalage, and consensual dependency. It is exactly in the defined period when transformation in the contacts from perception of the Lithuanian top leadership depending on the centres of the Jochids' power comes into a stage of their pragmatic realization by means of diplomatic correspondence and redistribution of the rights over the Ruthenian lands. And it gives additional meaning to the problem since the given interval is characterized not just by military clashes but the policy and status language of the representatives and “the Horde's Past” was activated in the political struggle in the region as a means of legitimation. Notably, evidence found in documents and subsequent diplomatic memoirs prove that the application of the standards, established by

former Jochids might become the basis for the current policy and a pretext for inheritance of the Jochid sovereign legacy. This article aims to analyse and reveal the nature and dynamics, as well as the political sense of the relationship between Ulus of Jochi and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from 1380 to 1395 as a complex system of constantly evolving alliances as a phenomenon as they were defined within diplomatic sphere and represented in legal sources. Therefore, the goals of the article include to research the logic of interactions between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Ulus of Jochi in the context of the collapse of Mamai's system of rule (1380–1382), replacement of the Horde supreme authority and its influence on the foreign policy decisions of the Lithuania; to define the essence and implications of diplomatic activities in the 1390s: the meaning of the status principle of brotherhood in inter-state language, role of diplomatic exchange, its prerequisites and legal ground for acknowledgment of Lithuanian authority over the Ruthenian lands; and to examine how the Jochids' legitimation (received in the form of *yarlyk* grant, diplomatic status formulas and fiscal commitments) turned into one of the important assets of Lithuanian foreign policy (1392–1395), to be used for internal centralization and redistribution of political influence in Ruthenian lands without losing Jochid elements such as tax-tribute system or commercial guarantees and rights of transportation through the lands.

Materials and Methods. The article is based on a combined corpus of materials – documents, administrative sources and narratives – enabling the researchers to define the process of Jochid–Lithuanian interaction in 1380–1395, including events, diplomatic practices and a fiscal-legal regime framework. The Lithuanian *Metrica* serves as the core corpus of documents dealing with relations between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Turkic states including those concerning the Crimea, the Golden Horde and the Nogay Horde. Diplomatic communication, various forms of diplomatic discourse regarding sovereignty rights over Ruthenian lands and diplomatic memory, including the idiom of brotherhood as an element of common state-related communication, all come from such evidence. Khanly *yarlyks* occupy the central place among charter materials for our study. A prime source remains khanly *yarlyk* attributed to Tokhtamysh and presented to King Jogaila (provisionally dated 1393), printed according to I.N. Berezin's translation, alongside a number of diplomatic acts toward Vytautas also linked to the legal justification of Lithuanian power over Ruthenian lands in academic sources [Berezin, 1998]. Moreover, our consideration also takes into account other khanly *yarlyks* for the Russian Church, particularly granted by Meng-Timur, Zhanibeg, Berdibeg and etc., because those documents display Juridical language in the practice of granting immunities or other privileges, as well as reflect the mechanisms of fulfilment and violation of the obligations within the state. Thus to make sure typologically correct identification of both mechanisms of recognition of the Jochid status of autonomy and explanation of taxation as a mechanism of its assertion, we have used the data of charters issued by Rus' Princes, that include their spiritual testaments and agreements. These documents from Ivana Kalita, Dmitrii Donskoj, Vasilij I, and II serve to define financial and legal dependence without replacement of it with the model relevant for Muscovy [Pochekaev, 2022]. For interpretative work we have made use of a wide range of historiographical studies. In evaluating Jochid *yarlyks* and descriptions of the Internal social and administrative structure of the Jochids' Ulus we have taken into consideration work of Berezin, Sablukov, Veselevskii [Berezin, 1998; Sablukov, 1881; Veselevskii, 1910]. For an introduction to views on the Horde's legacy in East Europe we have reviewed sources for Solomon Mikhailovich, Solov'ev, Vasilij O. Kljuchevskij, Nikolai I. Kostomarov and others. The Jochid political body and periphery as well are examined based on V.V. Trepavlov's monographical analysis and I.M. Mirgaleev's works, focusing on Tokhtamysh's military and dynastic aspects in the complex of power of the last decade of XIV century [Trepavlov, 2010; Mirgaleev, 2003]. The Jochid lines used in for later continuity and specific family issues are described following J.M. Sabitov works [Sabitov, 2009]. The Jochid legal code, the practice of issuing charters *yarlyk* and Juridical nuances of interaction between the Horde and the Rus' princes are analyzed in publications by R. Yu. Pochekaev as well as M.A. Usmanov devoted to diplomatiics and textological classification of Jochids' grant charters [Pochekaev, 2022; Usmanov, 1979]. The Integration of the Rus' princes into the Horde political system and their perception of the political space of the Horde in written sources has been reviewed through studies by Yu.V. Seleznev [Seleznev, 2013]. For understanding traditional views on Golden Horde history and its further reflection we referred to scholarly output of B.D. Grekov and A. Yu. Jakubovskii [Grekov & Yakubovskii, 1950]. Regional historical perspective as for a southern Russia under the Jochids' rule and influence and by Lithuania is illuminated in works by M.S. Grushevski and O.V. Rusina respectively [Hrushevskiy, 1993; Rusina, 2001], E. Gudavicius [Gudavicius, 2005]. B. Spuler's comparative review on the Horde states is another major source for this discussion [Spuler, 2016]. Issues of military-political and operational aspects in connection with military

campaign of Tokhtamysh covered by B. Cherkas's works [Cherkas, 2011]. This integrated approach allows us to see the relationships between Ulus of Jochi and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from 1380–1395 not just as military events and turnings, but as a process which correlates military clashes and turning of circumstances with juridical means for legitimation like the *yarlyks* and fiscal commitments, and diplomatic language defining the parties' statuses within an overall continuum of mutual communications.

Discussion. The article covers the relationship between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Ulus of Jochi in 1380–1395, shows that a notion of unbrooken confrontation is mainly a later ideology, in reality in the late 14th century political interactions were much more complicated, there were military clashes, border wars as well as protracted diplomacy and a network of pragmatic agreements. The author prove, that the accession of the southern Ruthenian lands in the Grand Duchy didn't lead to abandoning the Jochid rights over them, and main documents of the late 14th cent. Proclaimed not the renunciation by the Hordes of Ruthenia but a possibility of Lithuanian rule to exist under condition of Jochid authority and taxes to be collected. Tokhtamysh's *yarlyk* of 1393 is here presented as a formula of delegated power in which khanly administration recognises actual possession and taxation by the Lithuanian administration but retain ultimate authority by demands of *vykhod* and tax to be delivered by means of envoys, and makes trade conditions necessary for peaceful relationship. Comparison of *yarlyk* with the texts in later 15th - beginning 16th cent. Lithuanischen Metric allows clarifying some aspects of the rhetoric of "fraternalhood", which should be interpreted as the language of status diplomacy by which a specific political tradition was approved and forms of interaction established, rather than of full equality. And it's also possible to demonstrate how Vytautas started using Jochid legitimacy as a form of domestic politics aiming at increasing power and making relations with Poland more independent. The crucial moment in development of Jochid-Lithuanian relations was 1395 with defeating of Tokhtamysh, when the Grand Duchy turns to the stronghold and tool of Chinggisid princes; support of ex khans becomes the productive mechanism of control over the steppe with eventual *yarlyk* approval over Ruthenian lands. Novelty consists of the study on Jochid-Lithuanian relations not from the opposition of Dependence and Liberation but on model of the shared regime where fiscal suzerainty of Jochids and effective Lithuanian administration had their places. The results based on integration of 1393 *yarlyk*, diplomacy in Lithuanian Metrica and critical re-evaluation of sources geographically.

Results. Tokhtamysh's consolidation of power in Sarai brought about the end of the Great Trouble and restored the Ulus of Jochi's central position in control over frontier lands and dependent domains. In this new context, Tokhtamysh's punitive expedition of 1380-1381 into Podolia and Kyiv region became viewed as proof of Jochid capacity for military action on territory that had been undergoing gradual absorption by Lithuanian dynasties, predominantly Koriatoviches. The narrative conclusion of the raid contained a salient marker of physical conflict and direct confrontation: the killing of Prince Aleksandr Koriatovich in battle against Tatar troops. This detail, which numerous historians emphasize, establishes that the event was not a verbal dispute between opposing claims but a forceful attempt to redress power relations in the region [Cherkas, 2011, p. 168]. Politically, the campaign put a temporary brake on Lithuanian advance into territories ruled by the Mongols and signalled a new phase in interactions between the two entities, in which a rehabilitated center of the Jochi Ulus forcefully demonstrated itself to be a effective suzerain capable of bolstering regional subordinates and establishing order over frontier lands. It can therefore be concluded that 1380–1381 should be understood not as a spontaneous raid, but as a calculated geopolitical statement regarding the current nature of power in the Horde. Tokhtamysh deliberately steered out of the post-Mamai chaos and instituted a system of statecraft, wherein acknowledgement of Sarai once again became a precondition for a stably maintained command of southern Ruthenian areas. The seizure of Moscow in 1382 catapulted Tokhtamysh beyond purely internal Rus' dynamics, expanding its reach into all of East Europe. He was elevated from the status of conqueror of Mamai to the khan who reinstated what texts describe as the natural hierarchy between the Horde as ruler and Ruthenian lands subject to its authority. A major outcome of the episode was the establishing of a diplomatic procedure for informing chief regional rulers of their new suzerain and seeking acknowledgement of their allegiance. The records indicate clearly that in 1382 Tokhtamysh personally contacted Jogaila and Dmitrii Donskoi and conveyed information about his accession to the khanate, thereby implicitly demanding obedience to his authority [Aleksandrov, 2011: 101].

Two aspects of this event are analytically significant: First, the act itself – a dispatch of communication by Khan – signifies the Horde's assumption of overall supremacy over Lithuania: jogaila is placed within the same interlocutory framework as the grand duke of Moscow, as a principal actor to whom confirmation of the new center of power is due.

Second, the act of seeking obedience sets the tone for events to come in the 1390s. The establishment of Lithuanian rights to the lands of Ruthenia, negotiation over tribute, and the trade terms imposed by the Horde through theyarlyk can thus be traced to 1382, the point of departure for the newly enthroned ruler; all presuppose a recognition of his power and appropriate subordination. Hence, 1382 represents a pivotal moment for the change of order from «Mamai's patronage and submission» to the need of defining relationship with a reassertive khan ready to employ an imperial power structure. After 1382, the interaction between Grand Duchy and the Horde transitioned from periodic conflict (in 1380s) to a stable and ordered format through the integration of diplomatic formulae, khanly yarlyks and obligations. Not only, it should be taken as sign of relinquishment by the Horde of supreme authority over Ruthenia, but as a reorganization of existing governing structures; whilst Lithuania managed to effectively control and govern large regions, the Horde preserved its hierarchical position and demanded monetary tribute. This interpretation helps to avoid the old dichotomy of 'dependence vs. Liberation' and better describes the reality of late 14th century: while Lithuania succeeded in increasing its effective command and power, the Horde remained in a general status position of the ruling power and continued to receive payment as tax [Gudavicius, 2005: 189].

The linchpin of the diplomatic-legal architecture of the 1390s is Tokhtamysh's yarlyk to Jogaila, a document dated in scholarship conventionally to 1393. The yarlyk stands as a landmark due to its peculiar function as the document to have simultaneously formalized recognition of the *de facto* administration by the Grand Duchy of some Rus' land and preserved for the khanly authority its own fiscal sovereignty, a claim embodied in the collection of *ofvykhod* from these dependencies. The act's own logic renders the recognition of ownership as the renunciation of rather than the consolidation of khanly sovereignty; indeed, the text sketches out a regime of indirect rule under which the Lithuanian side receives authorization to rule and exact revenues, while the Jochid center validates its ultimate authority by stipulating a schedule of regular payments and stipulating controls over their conveyance. Even before detailing content, one can grasp the yarlyk's underlying principle from the introductory preamble. For example, the scholarly study that the section on this yarlyk is derived from consistently places 1393 within the backdrop of the 1380–1382 period; for example, this scholarship points out how Rus' writings within the Kulikovo Cycle regard Jogaila's participation in events as one of subordination to the Horde, and after the sack of 1382, how Tokhtamysh communicates news of his enthronement to Jogaila and Dmitrii Donskoi and (most likely) seeks acknowledgment of his paramountship. Why these continuities and continuities? One need not write a full diplomatic history to recognize how the narrative pattern of the sources shows clearly structured vertical interaction in which any shift in supremacy at the very top of the Horde warranted a ritualized notification and acceptance process, before an accord could formally lay out specific rules governing the relationships between those two parties [Berezin, 1998: 140–142].

A particularly significant observation here is the divergence between the diplomatic tone of the Rus' and the less diplomatic, imperative tone of the yarlyk. It matters that it is even at this point possible, given that one most likely does not read yarlyks in original manuscripts, that the text not an independent agreement to form a political or military partnership; this document has within it notice of political events, including internal unrest, as preamble to a prescriptive declaration on issues relating to finance and information management. At this point, the Yarlyk becomes an instrument of rule rather than merely the documentation of diplomacy. At the core of the normative component of the yarlyk is an directive that *ofvykhod* is to be exacted and transmitted: It is khanly command that revenues collected from territories under Us be designated for the collection of an expeditionary force (i.e. An envoy). The wording has broad implications on the positioning of the Grand Duchy within the territories of the Ruthenian lands: First, it suggests that the recognition of Lithuanian sovereignty is contained within the framework of Khanly Rule; therefore, though the territory in question can be under Lithuanian jurisdiction, it remains indebted to the Ulus, and responsibility to pay remains in the form of expeditions organized by Khans.

The nature of this pay implies also that it will not be given by way of voluntary gift, but given in keeping with Horde administrative principles. By specifying the lands involved as having the status of the *volosti* and also requiring transport through the expeditionaries, it is stated explicitly what would normally only be implied and confirmed indirectly; i.e., those that remain tributary areas are sources of revenues that the formalization is really all about. Yarlyk formulation provides additional insight into the genre of the text. It says of yarlyk that begin with "My words", that this writing, for the reasons listed above, would be delivered "solely to subjects". While such wording will vary with later diplomatically focused language such as "My words brother..." This establishes that theyarlyk is a command that issues from the ultimate ruler, assuming the compliance of the subordinate authority with set norms. In others instances, «My words», for

example, refers specifically to how “khan commands toemirs and to all the lands of Rus”, indicating clearly that ouryarlyk to Jogaila can also fit the category of a khanly edict establishing specific rules for behavior and expectations among subservient entities.

From this perspective, the acknowledgment of Lithuanian ownership of the Ruthenian lands might be considered less an expression of surrender than validation of existing patterns of relative strength, whereby the Grand Duchy gains mandate to exercise jurisdiction but with expectation that the mandate involves the obligation to facilitatevykhodcollection and adherence to the khanly command [Usmanov, 1979: 277]. One compares this provision of the yarlyk of 1393 to similar provisions that mandate regular tribute, active participation in khanly wars, responding to summons, and other duties common inYarlyks for tributary rulers. From the standpoint of this project, it should be underscored most strongly, not as a complete catalogue of every demand or duty, but because the yarlyk of 1393 lays out precisely the parameters of financial dependence that is, the component most resiliently evidenced by the document. Finally, in the body of theyarlykl is set out a clause on trade, stating: «same rules for mutual trade of merchants as in previous times»; the yarlyk is also ratified with a “khanly imperial Charter with gold emblem” and is accompanied with precise chronotope and placename specifications-e.g. “The Horde [is on the] Don’. From the viewpoint of a research project, the latter provision should perhaps be viewed not just as an afterthought but a necessary component to a political compromise, given that safe commercial routes encourage relationship stability and enable the payment of tribute, because trade revenues directly support state expenditures. Consequently, one concludes that the Yarlyk of 1393 ties these components together into one, unifying charter: rights of possession, demands relating to tribute collection, and an assurance of communications protocol, rendering the text the prime source-based authority on the state of Jochid-Lithuanian relations in the period being analyzed [Aleksandrov, 2011: 101–102].

When historiographical reconstructions point to a set of lands having been included within the sphere of influence associated with Tokhtamysh's practice of yarlyk practice aimed at the Lithuanian ruler, they do not do so through the inventory method, in its mechanical listing of the subjects. This must rather be interpreted as an administrative-fiscal plan map of khanly control rendered through categorization, so as to serve controlling mechanisms and the ensuring of political allegiance on the periphery. To that extent, the nature of the structure of the list itself should be perceived as an instrument for accessing how, from the perspective of the Horde at the end of the fourteenth-century, the Ruthenian lands might be perceived in three distinct ways: as a tuman; as individual frontier hubs; or as fragmented regional complexes depicted, not as a tuman, but as an enumeration of its towns.

In the established tradition with which we are dealing, the grant of the yarlyk has as its object, then, a particular territorial unit. It comprises the Kiyev, Vladimir and Lutsk tumens, and then the territory of Podol'ia together with specification of its tuman components (Kam'ianets, Bratislav, Sokal'), as well as the tuman of Kursk. Also mentioned is the tuman of Yagol'daev (localized in the territory of former Kiyev volost), that of Smolensk, along with some of the isolated towns: at the Kyiv frontier there is Zvenhorod and Cherkassy, on the Severia land–Putyvl', Novgorod-Sever skiy, Ryl'sk, Briansk, Starodub and, finally, several localities in the Black Sea littoral. Even this summary statement concerning the character of the components of the list may, itself, give us sufficient evidence to surmise not all dependent lands, but selected parts of them, are rendered, according to the particular logic of khanly control [Hrushevskiy, 1993: 147–149].

First, the emphasis placed upon the designation of a part of a territory as a tuman illustrates its primary fiscal-administrative importance in view of which that larger territorial-and tributary- unit served to provide for easier organization of the “vykhod” that would be delivered from there and to the officials acting on behalf of the khan. Consequently, the yarlyk-grant complex has to be viewed as a desire to standardize the channel of procurement of revenues that should be channelled from it by the grand ducal administration, which would, for their part-according to yarlyk provision-send them to the Horde via the envoy that was referred to in the yarlyk.

Secondly, the list's disparity-some parts appear as tumens, while others appear as separate, isolated settlements-illustrates that there was not the same measure of control exerted over all territories. So, the Severia land appears not as tuman, but as a constellation of its constituent towns that, according to its scholarly interpretations, can be explained by the very longstanding fragmented structure of settlement at Severia as the presence of several separate hubs within. This point will further allow our discussion to reach key aspects regarding this aspect of the case and that of khanly control as providing not an ideal administrative layout, but merely an operational view of that region where authority—including revenue-

gathering and strategic—could actually be held. Thus, the list reveals an expression of both grant and administrative governability [Trepavlov, 2015: 168].

Thirdly, the presence within list, not only of large portions of territory, but also of localities functioning as centers of the frontier (such as Zvenyhorod and Cherkassy) demonstrates how the individual centers were employed for controlling the traffic and security on the very borderland separating steppe and forest-steppe, and also serve as territorial border markers and locations where legal issues/disputes over taxes/dues are of utmost significance and likely occurred. In this way, the logic of the *yarlyk* requirements related to collecting fees would complement any enforcement of trade.

Fourthly, the context of the problem within that as grant complex, demonstrates how, potentially, the *yarlyk*, or a number of late 14th century *yarlyk* to the grand duke of Lithuania could have constituted an administrative innovation that, unlike some others, granted entire swathes of territory in place of, or supplementarily to individual land-grants to princes, appanages etc. This also would have provided assistance to Vytautas' own claims to legitimacy and supreme command within his own realm via the sanction provided.

Now, it becomes clearer how precisely the list comes into its own not as peripheral addendum, but as the vital to comprehend political action in the 1390's. Explicitly, *yarlyk* sanction was linked to the series of actions taken by Vytautas to restore order and restructure power within many zones such as volynia, vitesk, novogorod-severia, Kyiv, and Podolia, which were later augmented by smolensk. While the precise chronology of these events would still undoubtedly warrant closer attention, the broadly outlined concordance between the logic of *yarlyk* legitimisation and a centralised program has an important and self-explanatory utility and becomes a frame of reference in accordance with which those territories that were considered vital to control by the Horde from a perspective of maintaining stability, whether of economic or politico-military significance would contrast with territories on which the grand dukedom was focusing to concentrate power [Rusina, 2001: 145–149].

Finally, the other key dimension for exploring this concept is the negative evidence, of those included in and excluded from the *yarlyk* (a more or less exhaustive lists of territorial units are being cited to support an argument based on inclusion), which is implicitly offered in study, for here the absence (even as 'separate town) of certain areas, which has historically been demonstrated to fall under grand ducal control or which fell to be a separate land, and which was in the fifteenth-century's fifth century 'a Tatar-driven land' (Tatarshchina) is considered. For instance, not only is their "Tatar-driven" tax contribution from a variety of volosts given as confirmation, but it is even stated as unquestionable the tribute payment and inclusion of some provinces (Verkhov principalities) within a tributary relationship toward khan, which leads us to infer that the prince has likely obtained *yarlyk* as direct ruler of this land.

So in this specific case the lists accompanying the *yarlyks* of late 14th century function as representation of some particular combination of logics of both two parties, each of which attempts to maintain a dominant position. In the first, Horde establishes effective collection of taxes—as they had obtained a convenient recipient of their payment, and on the second, Grand Duchy gained power to build up control over this very tax-collection system by reinforcing its political prestige through *yarlyk*. For this very reason such lists must shed a light on how it all could have been structured with a respect to the specific territorial logic that *yarlyk* imposed and regulated.

Furthermore the campaign, by which it was ended on the battlefield on the Terek River, is far from merely one more episode in a saga of battle; quite to the contrary, it's been understood as structurally fundamental to how Jochid power interacted with neighborhood domains. At that point of concern the point from a historically and sources-critical standpoint of reliable information must again be underlined. According to the source-critical perspective, it must be underlined as after the clash at Terek center, in which governing authority broke into separate regionally autonomous power concentrations, has resulted into immediate making of western borderlands (with a central region of the Middle Dnieper too) of Ulus of Jochi to zone of competing jurisdictions.

The advancement of Timurid troops on the Jochid territories in after his victorious combat on the Terek, with its subsequent flight of khan, as indicated by documentary sources further solidifying khan-lost-the- battle and undermining the very symbolic foundations of the ruling authority, has brought a structural crisis within the power formation that resulted in disruption of both ability to rule militarily or effectively [Mirgaleev, 2003: 110–112].

It is against this kind of logic, which should be perceived the main plot of this work— Torkhtamish's step towards the western periphery of the steppe (i.e., the zone peripheral with regard to Lithuania and

Ruthenian lands) – after the Terek period of his action. For example, as far as our synopsis shows, the Arab Chroniclers state that Tokhtamysh retired to the lands Urussian, and as for the Persian Chronicler Mu'in al-Din Na'anzi the path was a "Libka" direction, whereas the modern interpretation of these toponyms generally leads us to believe that the «Urus lands» as well as Libka, lay at the middle of Dniepr...and probably are the most important corridor for the horde's lord searching for a sheltering within the influence of Lithuanian culture [Khrapachevsky, 2003:154, 168, 197].

This conclusion is further supported by evidence concerning the geography of Timurid operations and the movements of Jochid emirs associated with them. Timurid authors record actions in the vicinity of Kyiv, referred to as Mankerman, and localize the holdings of particular Jochid figures in the triangle Kyiv-Uzi (the Dnieper)-Tan (the Don). This points to a real military-political activation of the Dnieper frontier as a zone both of tension and of refuge [Khrapachevsky, 2003: 302–303].

Accordingly, 1395 can be interpreted as the end of the negotiated yarlyk-based phase of Ties centered around the 1393 yarlyk and its fiscal norm, it signaled a transition into another, more patron-client-based arrangement. The 1393 yarlyk established a working system for the exaction of vykhod, functioning through a chain of khanly authority, while the post-Terek relationship of patronage and influence gave Chinggisid challengers the ability to leverage their claims by drawing outside political actors into the process of dynastic struggles. As later sources would demonstrate, Tokhtamysh did not merely seek one opportunity of sanctuary within the Lithuanian and Crimean arenas; he returned to and repeatedly found shelter within both. In May 1396 he was in Lithuania and within a year of his departure was once again expelled from the Crimean peninsula by joint Timur-Qutlug and Edig armies, establishing the importance of the Lithuanian axis as a recurrent survival mechanism and locus of power, indirectly enlisting the Grand Duchy in the processes of dynastic politics [Pilipchuk, 2013: 35].

The consequence of the crisis was a considerable enhancement of centrifugalism, and the politicisation of regional political centres, which, to not uncritical an extent to the khan's headquarters, would develop in other directions. Crimea turned to one of the foci of local autonomy: in it accumulated the power of Tash-Timur, in the eastern periferi a separate Manghit yurt formed around Edige, and in Lower Volga, around Hajji-Tarkhan consolidated Timur-Qutlug – in scholarship such figure is often being associated to Edig's political and military influence. At result after 1395 the political structure of the Ulus of Jochi turned essentially polycentristic: Chinggisid legitimacy was remaining a necessary precondition for supreme authority, nevertheless its practical implementation more and more had depended on political and economic capacity of regional coalitions, coercion, and solid nature of client-elites connections.

At the level of political typification this creates conditions for formation of new situation between Jochid and Lithuanian realms after Tokhtamysh defeat, and his move under support of Vytautas.

In such context the Lithuanian ruler would, with support of the khan, in its own turn, reaffirm the ruler's rights to the Ruthenian lands through issuing yarlyks, and most importantly – this form of partnership and collaboration could apparently be reproduce in the xv century also, thereby it appears as a gradually institutionalised interaction format which was originating as consequence to crisis at the centre of the Horde and forced flight of dynast. I is very significant that allied constellation of Lithuania and Tokhtamysh Tatars is registered even in Timurid discourse, since it is T imur's appeal to Sultan B ayezid I to form a common alliance against the Franks and aga inst Tokhtamysh's Tatars containing this point of vital to our analysis importance [Pilipchuk, 2013: 35–36].

With the loss on Vorskla, however, the previous scenario for cooperation between the Lithuania and Tokhtamysh was clearly invalidated. The military catastrophe eliminated the foundation of the coalition and thus prevented formalisation of existing agreements. Nevertheless, the content of the supposed Vytautas and Tokhtamysh arrangement is still not too transparent.

Considering the general logic of relationships of the end of the 14th century, Tokhtamysh was presumably willing to allow the extent of Lithuania to become larger with respect to some Rus' Principalities with the help of similar system used for integrating north-western and south-western Rus' regions.

The Lithuanians receive management and revenue whilst retaining an obligation to pay tributes toTokhtamysh. Perhaps there was a deal not against Moscow, but with Tver, which was easier to come to a decision regarding all possible complications. There is a possibility that an military component was an element of an alliance of these parties. The Tokhtamysh presumably assured assistance for Lithuanian ruler to campaign against the Teutonic Knights.

Further events give the impression that a conception of alliance against teutons had not died out since the son of Tokhtamysh, Jalal al-Din was in a union on a Lithuanian side at the Grunwald campaign in 1410.

After the lost battles Tokhtamysh finally lost the power on the Horde and had been living hidden out in northern frontiers of the Shibanid ulus in the Western Siberia where Tokhtamysh had got a helping power. His pursuers helped by Tokhtamysh-Qutlug death did not managed to eliminate him successfully and as a result a kind of civil wars was developed and different groupings fought with each other [Mirgaleev, 2003: 145–147].

Against this background, the specific features of fiscal and economic ties become especially visible. The Grand Duchy did not experience the same form of dependence that took shape in northeastern Rus', where Moscow paid a mandatory annual vykhod. Lithuania more often limited itself to upominki, that is, gifts to the khans, which could be regular but were more strongly dependent on the political situation [Trepavlov, 2015: 94–95].

Economic contacts were sustained by trade routes through Crimea and the Dnieper region, linking the Grand Duchy with the East. At the same time, a major component of this economy remained the slave trade: captives from the lands of the Grand Duchy and Rus' brought significant income to the Jochid elite and were channelled through Caffa to Mediterranean markets [Koshechkina, 2020: 25].

At the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Grand Duchy attempted to build an alliance with the Great Horde against the growing power of Moscow and Crimea. However, the defeat of the Great Horde in 1502, when Khan Sheikh-Ahmad was beaten by the Crimean Khan Mengli-Girei on the Sula River, dealt a heavy blow to Lithuanian policy. Lithuanian chronicles express sympathy for Sheikh-Ahmad and reproach Grand Duke Alexander for failing to assist an ally. The consequences were direct: the disappearance of the Great Horde removed the buffer between Lithuania and Crimea, and already from 1503 the Crimean Tatars began regular devastating raids on the lands of the Grand Duchy [Spuler, 2016: 231].

Thus, for the Grand Principality, Jochi's ulus continued to provide legitimacy externally for its authority in Ruthenian lands and served an important role as a regional equilibrium factor. Its disintegration disrupted the balance of power in Eastern Europe and enforced more defensive politics on the side of Lithuania on steppe.

Conclusion. The given material demonstrates that contacts between Jochi's ulus and the Grand Principality of Lithuania at the end of the fourteenth century weren't sporadic events, but formed a part of a solid system of power relations.

Although in the early 1380s it consisted mostly of clashes and mutual claims, by the 1390s it already assumed a more formalized pattern: Embassies were utilized regularly, norms of conduct and interaction were established, the exchange of yarlyks and obligations to pay formed an important component of interactions. As a result, Lithuania extended real power and direct administration over the Ruthenian lands, whilst a sense of Jochid authority was preserved not by physical force, but in form of an obligation to pay vykhod and through acknowledging the khan's supreme status. The yarlyk of 1393 from Toqtamış demonstrates its essence clearly: Lithuania obtained the rights to run its Ruthenian lands and was yet forbidden to dispute claims to ultimate superiority over them held by the Horde, which in its turn preserved key elements of it in the form of a duty to pay and to deliver vykhod to the agents of the khanly authority and of the right to control adherence to general norms of order in them. The presence of trade articles within this document proves that this system brought also tangible material benefits.

A good example of the actual implementation of the above mentioned system can be provided by Vytautas's deeds of 1392-1395 when he used the support of the acknowledgement of his authority from the Jochid dynasty in order to consolidate his power within the Grand Duchy and decrease autonomy of appanage princes, as well as to reaffirm his authority to rule the Ruthenian incomes and utilize money thereof for internal policies.

However, the turning point seems to arrive in 1395 when, after defeat of Tokhtamysh, it transformed into a refuge for candidates for the Jochid throne. The Lithuanian side received additional leverage and a tool in matters of controlling steppe politics.

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Ш.Ш. Уәлиханов ат. Тарих және этнология институты
Алматы қ., Шевченко көш., 28
Тел/факс: +7 727 261 67 19
e-mail: kazhistory@bk.ru