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TARTAR CONVEYORS — VECTORES ET AURIGAE —
IN THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN STATE,
THE 16th – THE FIRST HALF OF THE 17th CENTURY

As a rule, research dealing with the history of the Lithuanian and Polish Tartars examined assimilation, acculturation, tolerance, determination of the degree of distinctness (ethnic, linguistic, religious), military issues and, in particular, the noble status or legal rank of all the Moslems in the Christian state. Rarely was interest focused on the so-called simple Tartars and Tartar inhabitants of villages devoid of gentry privileges, who can be generally described as plebeians. Nonetheless, Christian plebeians enjoyed different rights. The distinct rights of the Muslim Tartars and Christians and the discrepancies between rights in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Crown were rendered additionally complicated by the emergence of social estates throughout the whole state¹. Those problems are worthy of closer

¹ Cf. especially the studies by Piotr Borawski and Andrzej Zakrzewski. E.g. A. Zakrzewski, *O asymilacji Tatarów w Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVII w. Tryumfy i porażki (On the Assimilation of Tartars in the Commonwealth during the Sixteenth–Seventeenth Century. Triumphs and Failures)*, Warszawa 1989, pp. 76–96; P. Borawski, W. Sienkiewicz, *Chryścianizacja Tatarów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (The Christianisation of Tartars in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania)*, "Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce", vol. 34, 1989, pp. 87–114; P. Borawski, *Asymilacja kulturowa Tatarów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (The Cultural Assimilation of Tartars in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania)*, "Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce", vol. 36, 1991, pp. 163–190. On privileges in: J. Sobczak, *Położenie prawne ludności tatarskiej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (The Legal Position of the Tartar Population in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania)*, Warszawa 1984. The widely discussed problem of the noble status of part of the Tartars is closed by an analysis of a period up to the nineteenth century: I. Rychlikowa, *Tatarzy litewscy 1764–1831 częścią szlacheckiego stanu? (Lithuanian Tartars — Are They a Part of Gentry in 1764–1831?)*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny", vol. 97, 1990, № 3–4, pp. 77–122; S. Dumin, *Szlachta tatarska w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim i zmiany w jej sytuacji prawnej w XVI–XVIII w. (The Tartar Gentry in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Changes in Its Legal Situation in the Sixteenth–Eighteenth*

studies. It is necessary to investigate more thoroughly the economic foundations and professions of the plebeian Tartars, who comprised a separate group within a multi-ethnic community. This task is associated with a certain general problem, concerning the history of Tartars in Lithuania and Poland. The centuries-long presence and co-existence of the Tartars with other nationalities in the Polish-Lithuanian state was not tantamount to the decadence and disappearance of culture, but to its transformation and adaptation. Only the tongue of the arrivals, usually Kipchak or Bashkir, faded away since the Tartar settlers constituted a multi-ethnic community of diverse origin². Within a definite legal framework, both in Poland and in Lithuania, the group of the assorted Moslem incomers formed a new community, distinct in those countries.

The centuries-old status of the Tartars in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and certain voivodeships of the Crown is an example of relatively stable existence, due to land grants issued by the hospodar according to military law, and enjoyed by the so-called hospodar and Cossack Tartars, as well as owing to the pursuit of certain professions by the so-called simple Tartars. It is precisely the latter who undertook jobs and duties that supplemented the economic needs of the country, introduced new skills, and effectively competed with various crafts. In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, land grants intended for the simple warriors (*ordynicy*), who in their native steppes were servile and dependent *vis à vis* the mirzas and the tribal aristocracy, led to the creation of a social group of so-called Cossack Tartars. At the end of the fourteenth century and during the fifteenth century, the majority of the Cossack Tartars settled down between Wilno, Troki, and Grodno, in Łukiszki, Zatrocze, Waka, Niemieża, Łosośna, Rudomino, Kozakłary, Soroki Tatars and other localities.

The Cossack Tartars were non-wealthy landowners, without serfs, and obligated to provide military service for the Grand

Century), "Roczniki Historyczne", vol. 57, 1991, pp. 147-163; T. Bairašauskaite, *Sytuacja prawna Tatarów litewskich w guberniach zachodnich Cesarstwa Rosyjskiego (przed rokiem 1869) (The Legal Situation of Lithuanian Tartars in the Western Gubernias of the Russian Empire, prior to 1869)*, "Przegląd Wschodni", vol. II, 1992/1993, № 3 (7), pp. 573-593.

² S. Szapieża, *O zatraceniu języka ojczystego przez Tatarów w Polsce (On the Loss of the Native Tongue by the Tartars in Poland)*, "Rocznik Tatarski", vol. I, 1932, pp. 34-48; C. Łapicz, *Kitab Tatarów litewsko-polskich (The Kitab of Polish-Lithuanian Tartars)*, Toruń 1986.

Duke. They were also expected to carry correspondence, escort officials, seize criminals, and accompany the ruler during hunting expeditions. In the first half of the sixteenth century, King Sigismund the Old protected them against the illegal claims of the high Lithuanian officials, who demanded services and activity due only to the ruler (*hospodar*). Separate documents, issued as late as 1667 by King John III Sobieski and 1731 by King Augustus II the Wettin, confirmed the exemption of the Tartars from Nemieža, Rudomino and Łukiszki from additional duties, with the exception of military service³. This fact proves both the lengthy tradition of an illegal expansion of the obligations of those Tartars by the officials, and an insufficiently stabilised social (estate) position.

The land owning so-called *hospodar* Tartars were burdened with the duty of military service during wartime or at the special order of the Grand Duke of Lithuania. This basic system of Tartar service broke down at the end of the sixteenth century. The number of Tartars who had at their disposal landed estates granted by the ruler (the so-called *tatarszczyzna*) diminished, owing to pauperisation, the ravages of war, and the fact that the land was handed over to the gentry. Some of the *hospodar* Tartars moved to magnate estates, in this manner enlarging the group of the dependent gentry, and leased land on favourable terms⁴. In this situation, the prevailing tendency throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth century was towards a uniformisation of the rights of the former Cossack Tartars with the *hospodar* Tartars. The aim of this process, performed by the ruler, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, who was simultaneously the King of Poland, was probably to guarantee a sufficiently extensive recruitment basis for the Tartar detachments, which played the role of royal troops.

³ *Russkaya Isstoricheskaya Biblioteka*, vol. XX, *Litovskaya Metrika*, Petersburg 1903, № 267, p. 353; *Akti Vllenskoy Arkheograficheskoy Kommissii*, vol. XIII, Vilno 1887, pp. 108–112; P. Borawski, *Tatarzy-kozacy w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (Cossack Tartars in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania)*, "Rocznik Muzułmański", vol. I, 1413 h. (1992), pp. 50–51.

⁴ J. Sobczak, *Położenie prawne*, pp. 80–91; P. Borawski, W. Stenkiwicz, T. Wasilewski, *Rewizja dóbr tatarskich 1631 roku. Summariusz i wypisy (Revision of Tartar estates in 1631. Summary and Excerpts)*, "Acta Baltico-Slavica", vol. XX, 1991, pp. 59–135. Here further literature. Also: P. Borawski, *Tatarzy ziemianie w dobrach Radziwiłłów: XVI–XVIII wiek (Tartar Landowners in the Radziwiłł Estates: Sixteenth–Eighteenth Century)*, "Przegląd Historyczny", vol. 82, 1991, № 1, pp. 33–49.

The legal stand of the simple Tartars was not subjected to any formal changes. Already prior to 1528, the hospodar Tartars had at their disposal the right to the gentry "nawiązka" (a penalty for incurring wounds, which equalled the penalty reserved for the gentry). The Second Lithuanian Statute of 1566 distinctly granted the *nawiązka* to all Tartars serving in the army, in this manner regarding them as members of the gentry estate, albeit without the right to sit in the Sejm and to hold offices. An essential factor was the exclusion outside the privileged estate of all the simple Tartars, whose means of subsistence were the crafts, gardening, transport, and petty trade. The Polish text of the Second Statute made separate mention of Tartars who "subsist thanks to transport, gardening, the cattle trade, tanning hides" and pursued other crafts⁵. During the seventeenth century, and especially in the second half of that century, numerous Tartars of assorted social origin as well as many foreigners, Circassians, Tartars from the Crimea, Kazan, the Volga region, and the Budzhak Steppes as well as Moldavia (Valachians) started to serve in the mercenary Tartar and so-called Valachian detachments. The simple Lithuanian-Polish Tartar enjoyed a chance to join either the Lithuanian light cavalry (the Grand Duchy of Lithuania), the Crown armies (the Kingdom of Poland), or private magnate troops⁶. As a result, his estate affiliation, or that of his heirs, could change favourably.

In the wake of the unsuccessful Moldavian expedition of King John Olbracht (1497) and the territorial losses of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in favour of Muscovy (1500), the newly enthroned King Alexander the Jagiellon (coronation: 12 December 1501) found himself in a difficult situation. Not until 1503 did he sign a six-year truce with Moscow and a five-year one with Turkey. In the course of negotiations with Turkey, King Alexander wished to win access for Polish traders to Akkerman. The trade

⁵ *Statut litewski drugiej redakcji (1566 r.) (Second Edition of the Lithuanian Statute, 1566)*, chapter XII, art. 6, Archiwum Komisji Prawniczej Akademii Umiejętności, vol. VI, Kraków 1900, pp. 220–221; S. D u m i n, *Szlachta tatarska*, p. 155 sqq.

⁶ Central Archives of Historical Records (further as: AGAD), Treasury-Military Documents, Dept. 85, № 68–76, 79–80, 100–104; M. K o s o w s k i, *Chorągwie wołoskie w wojsku koronnym w 2 poł. XVII wieku (Walachian Detachments in the Crown Army during the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century)*, Warszawa 1990, diploma dissertation in the Historical Institute at Warsaw University, an analysis of material from 1648–1698. See also: M. P l e w c z y ń s k i, *Ludzie Wschodu w wojsku ostatnich Jagiellonów (People of the East in the Army of the Last Jagiellons)*, Warszawa 1995, Tartars, pp. 71–102, Moldavians, pp. 108–138.

routes remained uncertain until the signing of a treaty with Turkey in 1533 and the death of the hostile Peter IV Raresh, the Hospodar of Moldavia (1538). In those conditions, King Alexander tried to stimulate commerce by granting a privilege to his Lithuanian subject, the Tartar Karko; the document was issued probably in 1502–1503 and confirmed on 24 June 1507 by Sigismund I. It follows from its contents that Karko was a simple Tartar, without any land of his own. The King thus performed a formal “ennoblement”, by obligating him to provide ordinary military service together with landowning Tartars: “armed service, mounted, on par with other Tartars”. Personal estate and financial aid made it possible for the recipient of the grant to be replaced by an armed knight. Both Polish monarchs freed Karko from paying all customs and tolls, similarly to later Turkish merchants of the Sultan⁷.

Maciej of Miechów who studiously collected information from merchants, envoys and soldiers, was able to write a true description of Eastern Europe. In 1517, he noted down: “In the Duchy of Lithuania, Tartars residing near Wilno have their own villages. They cultivate land just as we do, work and carry commodities, and set off for war at the order of the Duke of Lithuania, but they speak Tartar and worship Mohammed since they are of the Saracene faith”. Some of the Tartars undertook relatively distant trade expeditions. In 1540, a Tartar named Bielasz transported hops from a merchant in Grodno to Germany, probably *via* Poznań to Frankfurt⁸. Royal accounts contain extensive documentation of the fact that at least from the turn of the fifteenth century the Cossack Tartars on the river Waka specialised in transport commissioned by the monarch. Fifty years later, in 1553–1559, they carried building material and interior outfitting needed for the expansion of Wilno Castle⁹. Escorting the court, as well as participation in tours and royal

⁷ *Akta Aleksandra króla polskiego, wielkiego księcia litewskiego, 1501–1506 (Documents of Alexander, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania)*, publ. F. Papée, Kraków 1927, № 83, pp. 103–104; AGAD, *Kopła Metryki Litewskiej (Copy of the Lithuanian Metryka)*, vol. 194, p. 291. This was not the land service of a Tartar burgher, but his transference to another social group. A contrary view in: P. Borawski, *Tatarzy w miastach i jurydykach Radziwiłłów (Tatars in Radziwiłł Towns and Jurisdictions)*, “Przegląd Historyczny”, vol. 83, 1992, № 1, p. 66.

⁸ Maciej of Miechów, *Opis Sarmacji Azjatyckiej i Europejskiej (Description of Asian and European Sarmatia)*, prep. by H. Barycz, Wrocław 1972, p. 71; *Akti Vilenskoy Archeograficheskoy Kommissii*, vol. XVII, Vilno 1890, № 642, p. 236.

hunting expeditions provided them with excellent orientation in the possibilities for travelling and an opportunity for acting as a private postal service. Royal messengers–Tartars, travelling from Cracow or Warsaw *via* Malbork, where a special Tartar detachment was stationed¹⁰, could pass information or organise the conveying of smaller consignments. Some were capable of putting their experience to use in subsequent work associated with transport.

In 1616, Piotr Czyżewski, familiar with daily life in Wilno and Troki, wrote, with a certain dose of animosity, that the Tartars successfully competed with the Christians in providing commodities and material, since they had good horses and worked on Sundays¹¹. The residents of Wilno enjoyed obvious benefits in the form of fresh food supplied to the local market-places on Mondays. Other sources show that already before 1477 the Tartars of Troki were expected to pay a tax known as *serebszczyzna*, on par with other burghers. In 1552, King Sigismund Augustus obligated all the Tartars of Troki, without exception, to observe this duty in view of the fact that some evaded it, probably in their capacity as landowners serving in the army. King Steven Batory expanded the privileges enjoyed by Troki residents of all creeds and nationalities, Poles, Ruthenians, Jews, Tartars and Karaims, without changing the rate of taxes paid in money¹². Tartar commerce in Troki probably encompassed predominantly foodstuffs. Vegetables from Tartar and Karaim gar-

⁹ *Rachunki dworu królewskiego 1544–1567 (Accounts of the Royal Court 1544–1567)*, publ. by A. Chmiel, *Źródła do historii sztuki i cywilizacji w Polsce (Sources for the History of Art and Civilization in Poland)*, vol. I, Kraków 1911, pp. 28–29 *passim*; M. Baliński, *Historia miasta Wilna (History of the Town of Wilno)*, vol. II, Wilno 1837, p. 6. Cf. S. Kryczyński, *Tatarzy litewscy. Próba monografii historyczno-etnograficznej (Lithuanian Tartars. An Attempt at an Historical–Ethnographic Monographic Study)*, Warszawa 1938, p. 149.

¹⁰ *Ordinatio castrı Marıenburgensis, Cracovıae 30 October 1521*, pp. 12–14. *Corpus iuris Polonicı*, publ. O. Balzer, vol. III, Kraków 1906, N° 259, pp. 639–642; J. Tyszkiewicz, *Ostatnia wojna z zakonem krzyżackim 1519–1521 (The Last War against the Teutonic Knights 1519–1521)*, Warszawa 1991, p. 107.

¹¹ Piotr Czyżewski, *Alfurkan prawdziwy na czterdzieści części rozdzielony, który zamyka w sobie początki tatarskie, y przygnanie ich do Wielkiego Xięstwa Litewskiego (A True Alfurkan, Divided into Forty Parts, Containing the Origin of the Tartars and their Arrival in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania)*, Wilno 1617 (2nd. ed.), p. 31.

¹² S. A. Bieršadskij, *Russko–yevrlejskiy arkhiv*, vol. II, Petersburg 1898, N° 37–38, *Sobranıye drevnikh gramot i aktov gorodov Vilna, Kouno, Trok, part II*, Vilno 1843, pp. 168–169.

dens were purchased in Troki and transported to Wilno. In 1558, the “Risale” declared clearly: “Our coreligionists who live in towns ... must pay the established taxes, either from their crafts or other forms of employment ... They usually tan morocco, cultivate gardens, trade in horses, and drive wagons. No one is engaged in trade, i. e. the sale of goods, only in regions closer to Crimea, from which certain drivers bring various Turkish articles: fabrics, cloth, shawls, towels, and belts, which they sell to their coreligionists and others, without contributing anything to the treasury”¹³.

Apart from the crafts and gardening, Tartars living in towns worked as members of convoy escorts, drivers and conveyance entrepreneurs, who organised caravans of wagons travelling great distances. The Latin term, encountered in the sources — *vectores* — described a transport entrepreneur and not a wagon driver in the contemporary meaning of the term. Such an entrepreneur employed trusted drivers (Latin: *aurigae*), who were additionally helped by hired hands. In order to supervise effective and cheap conveyance, the entrepreneurs personally participated in the transport of commodities. They probably enjoyed part of the traders’ profits, and acted as the shareholders of trade companies. In 1582–1588, the weekly wage of a driver in Lvov totalled 10–12 groszes (by way of comparison, that of a watchmaker: 15 groszes). The profits of the conveyor–vector equalled the relatively high profits of petty traders in commerce between Poland (Lvov) and Turkey (Istanbul). The merchants were composed exclusively of Turks, Armenians from both states, Greeks and Turkish Jews. Their hired carriers, who organised the transport, were all Poles¹⁴. Certain analogies, requiring further studies, existed in the organisation of so-called great legations, i.e. ceremonial state missions from Poland to Istanbul, for the purposes of signing a truce or a peace treaty.

¹³ M. Muchliński, *Zdanie sprawy o Tatarach litewskich przez jednego z tych Tatarów złożone sułtanowi Sulejmanowi w 1558 roku* (A Report about Lithuanian Tartars Presented by One of Them to Sultan Suleiman in 1558), “Teka Wileńska”, 1858, № 4, pp. 263–264.

¹⁴ S. Hoszowski, *Ceny we Lwowie w XVI i XVII w.* (Prices in Lvov during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century), Lwów 1928, p. 215 and 219; A. Dziubiński, *Na szlakach Orientu. Handel między Polską a Imperium Osmańskim w XVI–XVIII w.* (Along Oriental Routes. Trade between Poland and the Ottoman Empire from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century), Wrocław 1997, pp. 35–40.

The sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century witnessed the flourishing of Polish trade with the Orient. Routes leading from Teheran, Baghdad and Damascus converged in Istanbul. The main route, from Teheran, ran across Anatolia, Ankara and Bursa, or towards the Black Sea ports (Sinope, Trebizond). From here, *via* sea routes, commodities from Asia were delivered to Crimea (Eupatoria, Kaffa) or to Akkerman and Kilia at the mouths of the Dniester and Seret rivers. Next, all goods were sent to Poland along land routes *via* Iași to Kamieniec Podolski. As a result, the entire Oriental trade from Kamieniec Podolski, *via* Lvov to Jarosław was concentrated along a single route. In Jarosław, the routes divided and led to Cracow and Wrocław, to Sandomierz and Gdańsk, or to Lublin and Brześć. From Brześć they reached Wilno or Minsk, and further — Smolensk and Moscow or Smolensk and Riga¹⁵.

Along the land route from Kamieniec Podolski to Crimea, and Akkerman to Perekop, Kaffa or Tana, the trade exchange was less intensive. Here, the journey was longer, costlier and more dangerous. This route, known as *via tartarica*, was serviced by the Lithuanian-Polish Tartars in their capacity as conveyors organising caravans as well as drivers and armed guards. They were joined by the Karaims from Łuck and Halicz, who specialised in paying ransom for captives¹⁶.

Conveyance in the Polish-Lithuanian state was the domain of Poles and Jews, and in the Lithuanian regions — also of the local Tartars, willingly employed by Turkish merchants, Turks and Jews. Extant sources enable us to ascertain fragmentarily that important conveyance centres were located in Minsk Litewski and Wilno. The Radziwiłł *jurydyka* of Minsk in the last quarter of the sixteenth century was inhabited by more than ten Tartar

¹⁵ A. Dziubiński, *Na szlakach*, pp. 16–66, map № 1 after p. 16, map № 2 — p. 25 and map № 3 — after p. 32; A. Dziubiński, *Drogi handlowe polsko-tureckie w XVI w.* (*Polish-Turkish Trade Routes in the Sixteenth Century*), "Przegląd Historyczny", vol. 53, 1965, № 2, p. 232 sqq.

¹⁶ B. Baranowski, *Dzieje Jasyru na Gródku Karaïmskim* (*The History of Tartar Rule in Gródek Karaïmski*), "Myśl Karaïmska. Seria Nowa", vol. 2, 1946/1947, pp. 41–52. During the sixteenth century, Turkish traders paid with gold coins, subsequently discovered in treasures in Crimea, Moldavia, Crown Ukraine, on the route leading to Gdańsk (Kaniów, Podhajce, Skolobów near Żytomierz, Sułkowice near Płock, Kwidzyn, Grudziądz, Nowy Dwór near Elbląg) and branches: A. Mikołajczyk, *Polish-Ottoman Monetary Relations in the Light of Numismatic Evidence (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Century)*, "Wiadomości Numizmatyczne", vol. XXIX, 1985, № 1–2, "Polish Numismatic News", vol. IV, 1986, pp. 87–100.

families — tanners, conveyors and assorted artisans. The head of the *jurydyka* in 1592 was Chalej Olejewicz, a Tartar. The townspeople included also Tartars from the estates of Prince Konstanty Ostrogski. Documents of the Minsk municipal court (1592, 1593) contain two complaints about Minsk Tartars, made by one Masiuk Kakowka, a Minsk burgher, and a certain nobleman. At least one of those complaints dealt with conflicts concerning trade and commodity transport. At the end of the sixteenth century a conveyance enterprise was managed by Ilia Łukaszewicz, a hospodar Tartar from the county of Wilno, who organised long-distance transport from Minsk to Wilno and from Wilno to Poznań *via* Grodno and probably Ciechanów. Others at this time carried commodities from Wilno or Minsk to Lublin and Cracow¹⁷.

A publisher of sources about sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Tartars wrote that during the sixteenth century “wagon driving was almost a Tartar monopoly. They formed honest and conscientious links between the most distant towns and localities, a fact which, in the conditions of the small number of roads and the absence of domestic security, was of enormous significance”¹⁸. Nonetheless, it is possible to speak about Tartar monopoly only in the case of sixteenth-century Wilno and the routes leading out of that town. Grodno, Minsk or Brześć were probably destinations serviced not exclusively by the Tartars. The latter could have comprised a majority of drivers and armed guards of the traders’ convoys. The conveyance enterprises (*vectors*) were embroiled in constant rivalry. When the drivers of entrepreneur Ilia Łukaszewicz — Jurko Achmetowicz and Mikołaj Januszewicz — brought goods from Wilno to Minsk, they were unexpectedly arrested, and the first was even incarcerated in the town-hall goal. Their detention was caused by Semen Sawicz and Ondrej Kakowka, two Minsk burghers. The drivers submitted a complaint to the Minsk municipal court, demanding compensa-

¹⁷ *Akta Wileńskiej Arkheograficznej Komisji*, vol. XXXI, Wilno 1906, № 78, p. 114, № 96, pp. 144–145; J. Łukaszewicz, *Obraz historyczno-statystyczny miasta Poznania (Historical-Statistical Likeness of Poznań)*, vol. I, Poznań 1838, pp. 302–304; cf. T. Strykiewicz-Korzon, *Szkic historyczny o Tatarach litewskich w Mińsku Litewskim i jego okolicach (Historical Sketch about Lithuanian Tartars in Minsk Litewski and its Environs)*, Wilno 1932.

¹⁸ F. Dobryanskiy, *Predsloutye*, in: *Akta Wileńskiej Arkheograficznej Komisji*, vol. XXXI, p. XXXVII.

tion. The unplanned delay of the expedition of commodities from Wilno to Poznań resulted in considerable material losses suffered by the Wilno merchants and Łukaszewicz. In 1594, Sulejman Achmieciewicz (Achmietowicz), a Tartar from Soroki Tatar, and probably a close relative of Jurko, was hired by conveyor Stepan Mohilewicz in Lublin for the purpose of carrying goods along the Lublin — Minsk — Mohylow route. From here, the commodities were probably to be sent further to Moscow (or Riga)¹⁹.

At least from the mid-sixteenth century (1548, 1565, 1575–1578, 1588), Turkish merchants carried goods produced in the East (camel-hair fabric /*camelotum*/, mohair, silk) or spices from Aleppo, *via* Ankara, Istanbul, Kamieniec Podolski, Lvov, Cracow and Poznań to Moscow. Some of the commodities were sold on the way. The Jarosław–Lublin–Brześć–Minsk–Mohylow route was shorter and serviced by merchants and convoys from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Mohylow specialised in the organisation of transport. The local conveyors, frequently with 10–11 wagons at their disposal, serviced the Lublin–Brześć–Minsk–Vitebsk–Riga route. In the third quarter of the sixteenth century, one-fourth of all articles which they carried originated in Lublin²⁰.

A further analysis of sixteenth-century sources will make it possible to determine the role played by Tartar convoys and drivers in the trade of the period. It seems worth noting at the very outset that some of the Tartar drivers and possibly artisans from Minsk, e. g. after 1599, took part in fairs held in smaller urban centres, such as Słuck, Kopyl and, presumably, Pinsk. On

¹⁹ *Akta Vilenskoj Arkhieoграфіcheskoj Kommissyj*, vol. XXXI, № 92, 26 February 1593, pp. 139–140, № 119, 1598, p. 183; S. Kryczyński, *Tatarzy litewscy*, p. 148; J. Tyszkiewicz, *Tatarzy na Litwie i w Polsce, Studia z XIII–XVIII w. (Tatars in Lithuania and Poland. Studies on the Thirteenth–Eighteenth Century)*, Warszawa 1989, p. 225. The growth of Mohylow was probably the outcome of specific conditions: the untypical origin of the town, its social composition and exceptional self-government authorities: S. Wysłouch, *Uwagi o przyczynach rozwoju Mohylewa w XVI i XVII w. (Remarks on the Causes of the Development of Mohylow in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century)*, "Wiadomości Studium Historii Prawa Litewskiego USB", vol. I, Wilno 1938, pp. 331–367.

²⁰ A. Dziubiński, *Na szlakach Orientu*, p. 35, 86–87, 91–93, 135; AGAD, Crown Archive, Turkish dept., fasc. 120, № 234. See: H. Łowmiański, *Struktura gospodarcza Mohylewa w czasach pomiaru włóczęj (The Economic Structure of Mohylow during the Włóka Measurement)*, in: *Studia nad dziejami Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego (Studies on the History of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania)*, Poznań 1983, pp. 499–501. In 1583, the inhabitants of Mohylow included several or more than ten *vectores*, considering that transport was the source of subsistence for about 200 drivers.

14 March 1599, Wasył Maślanka, a toll scribe of the customs house in Minsk, testified before Jan Kursz, the vice-starosta of Minsk, that the Tartars of Prince Krzysztof Radziwiłł and Prince Konstanty Ostrogski, residents of Minsk, did not pay tolls. They were in the habit of leaving Minsk to “travel to assorted localities, to Słuck and Kopylsk (Kopyl) and elsewhere, with various commodities and sold goods, avoiding tolls at the customs house”.

The organisers of this trade and transport were Chalecki Olejewicz, head of the Radziwiłł *jurydyka*, Osjaburk Araz Wasylewicz, a Tartar from the Ostrogski estate, and Araz Reckowicz together with his brother. Olejewicz and Reckowicz should be regarded as the entrepreneurs who arranged a convoy of 12 wagons, with drivers and armed guards. The whole cavalcade was halted at the customs house; the specially summoned Jan Warpach, a Minsk court usher, who arrived in the company of several noblemen, once again demanded that the travellers pay the toll. The Tartars referred to earlier privileges: “We shall defend ourselves if you should wish to seize our commodities ... Up to now, the Tartars paid nothing and we too shall not pay. If you do not resign voluntarily, we shall force you to do so. Then the Tartars brandished the weapons which they carried”²¹.

New Sejm statutes, new tolls, the revoking of Tartar privileges dating from the Jagiellonian or even the Batory period, the intensification of religious controversies and anti-Islam propaganda led to a formal restriction of Tartar trade and transport. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Lithuanian dietines frequently formulated resolutions limiting the economic rights of the Tartars, the latter’s employment of Christians and possession of Christian subjects, and formulated various religious charges. In 1604, upon the request of the Wilno magistrate, Krzysztof Radziwiłł, the voivode of Wilno, issued a decree depriving the Tartars of their right to lease food transports to the town, and established maximum prices. In 1617, a successive voivode, Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, confirmed those resolutions. The Tartars, deprived of their monopoly, became more willing to accept the magnate protection of the two voivodes and settled down in their private

²¹ *Akta Wileńskiej Arkhieograficheskoy Komitssyi*, vol. XXXI, № 181, pp. 286–287 and H. Łowmiański, *Handel Mohylewa w XVI wieku (Trade in Mohylow during the Sixteenth Century)*, in: *Studia historyczne ku czci Stanisława Kutrzeby (Historical Studies in Honour of Stanisław Kutrzeba)*, vol. 2, Kraków 1938, pp. 528–537.

towns and estates. It is precisely in the first decade of the seventeenth century that many of the hospodar Tartars accepted town laws or became dependent landowners in private estates²². Social processes occurring in the towns of the Commonwealth during the seventeenth century require further thorough research, especially as regards ethnic and religious minorities²³.

A general assessment may hazard the opinion that the professions pursued by the Polish-Lithuanian Tartars referred distinctly to the traditional model of the East European steppe and forest-steppe economy. Horse breeding and an all-sided exploitation of this animal as a mount and draft horse played a very large role in winning means of subsistence for numerous Tartar families. It also denoted an opportunity for additional profits for the Tartar landowners, burghers or artisans. Conveyance and participation in trade satisfied the need for travelling, deeply enrooted in nomadic culture, a lifestyle typical for motion and activity, and the facing of challenges posed by assorted situations. Tanning, popular among the Tartar town residents, remained in close connection with animal husbandry owing to the raw material and the indispensable production of saddles and harnesses. Even Tartar gardening was a continuation of vegetable production, characteristic particularly for Crimea.

(Translated by Aleksandra Rodzińska-Chojnowska)

²² J. Nosowski, *Polska literatura polemiczno-antyislamiatyczna XVI, XVII i XVIII w.. Wybór tekstów i komentarz* (Polish Polemical Anti-Islam Literature during the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century. Selected Texts and Commentaries), part 1-2, Warszawa 1974; J. Tyszkiewicz, *Tatarzy na Litwie*, p. 228, 289-296 *passim*. "Alfurkan" mentions that a minaret in Troki was pulled down "quietly and without any tumult" on 2 February 1609.

²³ A. Wyrobisz, *Mniejszości etniczne i wyznaniowe w miastach Europy wczesnonowożytnej (XVI-XVIII w.)* (Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Towns of Early Modern Europe, Sixteenth-Eighteenth Century), in: *Ojczyzna bliższa i dalsza* (The Closer and More Distant Homeland), Warszawa 1993, pp. 471-474, here also pertinent literature.