Culture as a distinctive feature of an ethnic group (based on the example of translated handwritten literature of Polish-Lithuanian Tatar)

Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, University of Mikołaj Kopernik in Toruń, Poland
asiakk2@tlen.pl

Abstract

The article is focused on Tatar ethnic group. It tries to show on its example, how one can be open on other cultures without losing one's identity and how to persevere in a different cultural environment. It refers to Tatars' religious writings as the source helpful in maintaining cultural identity. An example of connection between Tatar translations and European tradition of translation, is used to characterize both permeation of cultures and features which served to build cultural separateness of Tatars living in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Key words: diachronic linguistics, cultural heritage, research of texts, translation and interpretation, Kitab studies, Koran, Tatar ethnic group

Introduction

The study belongs to the trend of Kitab Studies[1], led in Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Tatar translation manuscripts are an extremely interesting subject of interdisciplinary research. They originated in the multicultural and multilingual Grand Duchy of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as GDL) among Lithuanian and Polish Muslims who lived in a diaspora in Christian surroundings, which had influence on the multifaceted genetics of the Tatar literature, including chronologically and geographically diverse features of the language variety

---

[1] Kitab Study is a subdiscipline which unites Polish and Slavic philology with Oriental studies (Arabic and Turkish studies) and also with cultural studies and religious studies. The matter of research is material and non-material cultural heritage of Tatars living in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, especially the original, handwritten religious literature. The Centre for Kitab Studies was established in the year 2015 (the web-site: http://www.fil.umk.pl/pl/static_41,210_313_Centrum_Badan_Kitabistycznych.html).

spoken at the Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian borderland, the connection between the literature of GDL Tartars and Renaissance translations of the Bible into the Polish language, and the Quranic translation tradition reflected in such works as Turkish *tafsirs*. Moreover, it is possible to indicate common features of Tatar writings and medieval Bible and Psalter literature. Tatars' relics are also a unique researchable material, serving, among other things, the complementary study of the Slavic-Oriental relations, especially based on the multilingual content of manuscripts (Oriental layer: Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages; Slavic layer: Polish and Belarusian languages) and identification of sources, from which Muslims drew their knowledge about faith, tradition, history or literature of their Christian environment.

The point of departure is a notion of the ethnic group, because Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania are considered as such by sociologists (among others, by Warmińska, 1999; Łyszczarz, 2013).

An ethnic group – in anthropological and social sense – is a community which is recognized by itself or by others as a distinct and specific group, because of one or more following features:
1. Culture (language, dialect, religion, customs and mores, etc.)
2. Genealogy (common fate, common history, common ancestors, etc.)
3. A sense of having own territory and rights to it
4. Distinct personality (stereotypes, auto stereotypes).

One of the most important features making an ethnic group something distinct is culture.

The literature discussing the topic (cf. Paleczny, 2008) singles out inclusive cultures, which are in principle developed in multiethnic structures, open on other cultural wholes. During the process of assimilation they enter an interaction, which leads to emergence of new civilizations, mixed both ethically and religiously. The opposite cultures are the exclusive ones, which tend to maintain separateness and autonomy of a group, thus closed on external cultural influence. They base their status on linguistic, ethnical and religious originality and uniqueness. So they locate themselves close to such an extreme as monoculture. According to sociologists their fate is extinction, or perseverance in their very particular, archaic cultural dens, which take form of territorial enclaves with ethnic and religious homogeneity, etc.

It is proved by a theory of transculturation, formulated by Welsch (1999) which claims that modern cultures are in a big measure characterized by merging, permeation and hybridization. Therefore, exclusive cultures sink into oblivion.

How one can be open on other cultures without losing one's identity?

The matter of reflection is Tatar ethnic group which survived due to combination of inclusive factors with exclusive ones.

1. Specific situation of Tatars in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania

In the Grand Duchy of Lithuania Tatar strangers were treated with great tolerance, which resulted in elimination of differences in customs and language between Tatars and indigenous inhabitants, especially because „Tatar settlers [...] originally presented an image of an ethnic, social and cultural complexity of the Golden Horde, whose ruler was a Turkish Mongol, and its population consisted of many Turkish tribes absorbed by Mongolian army during the conquests of Central Asia and Kipchak Plain" (cf. Łapicz 1986: 29). They also used different Kipchak dialects. They presented a type of inclusive culture, and as a result the process of their assimilation with indigenous inhabitants progressed amazingly fast. As early as in the second part of the 16th century Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were a homogeneous group of people. Text of *The Tract on Polish Tatars*, published in 1558 (produced in Turkish language by anonymous Tatar, a pilgrim to Mecca, for Rustem Pasha, son-in-law of Turkish sultan), proves that Tatars in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania used Polish and Belorussian languages.

Therefore, Tatar followers of Islam lost their knowledge of their own ethnic (Turkish) dialects and – in condition of isolation from sources and roots of Islam – they also lost an active knowledge of liturgical Arabic language.

Arabic religious texts which they had to use because of doctrinal matters became unintelligible for them. Full linguistic assimilation and the difficulty involved in that, and in time, inability to know and understand the principles of Islam, belonged to main reasons leading to the rise of *Tatar literature* in Slavic languages.

Religious writings were provided in order to maintain ethnical separateness and cultural identity, which already in the 16th century were identified by Islam alone.

2. Tatar religious writings as the source keeping cultural identity

Probably in the second part of the 16th century Tatar religious literature was produced. There are several types of the old Tatar writings which remained to our times:

Manuscripts of Quran (ar. qur'ān 'reading, lecture'; 'Koran') – till the beginning of the 20th century the original, Arabic text of Quran was copied and transmitted from generation to generation as the one of the most precious goods of GDL Tatars,

however, printed copies of Quran, belonging to Lithuanian and Polish Muslims had their origin in Kazan or Bakhchysaray (second part of the 19th century);

sufry (ar. safar 'a book – especially the sacred one') – divided in 30 parts, known as dżuz [djuz] (from ar. ğuz' 'part, share'; 'element, ingredient'), text of Quran;

tefsiry (ar. tafsīr 'explanation, interpretation, exposition, commentary – especially to Quran') – These are commentaries to Quran in Islam. Among GDL Tatars tefsiry were the manuscripts containing Arabic text of Quran with interlinear translation to Polish language of the northern border;

tedżwidy (ar. tağwīd 'recitation') – handbooks helping to learn the recitation of Quran, explaining grammatical rules;

kitaby (ar. kitāb 'writing, letter, document, book', with the definite article Al-Kitāb 'Quran, Bible') – collections containing texts devoted to various topics: principles of Muslim religion, moralizing stories connected to the content of Quran and hadiths, translations of prayers and prayers for various circumstances, ritual principles, legends of prophets' life, apocrypha, etc.;

chamaiły (ar. ḥamala 'to carry') – destined for home use, practical Muslim handbooks, prayer books of less official character than kitaby; they were written for clergymen, they were supplied with information helpful to imam to conduct religious rituals, e.g. marrying people, giving names, funerals and others;

short handbooks and dictionaries of Turkish language;

excerpts from kitabs containing mainly principles of religious practice;

dаławary (tur.-ar. du'âlar 'prayers, collection of prayers'), *hramotki*, *duajki* – prayer scrolls and other written talismans, e.g. *nuski*.

3. Systematic similarities between Old Polish writings and manuscripts of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's Tatars

Manuscripts from the oldest times till the half of the 16th century and the first printed texts till 1520 are recognized as Old Polish written relics by *Principles of publishing Old Polish texts. A Project* (*Zasady wydawania tekstów staropolskich. Projekt* – 1955). According to the above criterion the manuscripts of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's Tatars cannot be counted among Old Polish relics, however – as it becomes obvious – one can point to several features uniting them with medieval religious writings, including Biblical and Psalter literature, and also Renaissance humanistic translations.
These are the following:

a. Influence in the sphere of dialect

Slavic layer of Lithuanian and Polish Muslims' written relics is Polish language of the northern border or/and Belorussian language. A good illustration is *Kitab of Milkamanowicz* with a mixed, Belorussian and Polish linguistic character.

Mixed character is seen also in Tatar chamaiły. However, tefsiry are relics written in Polish language of the northern border, because they are translations of the sacred book of Islam – Quran and that is why they were treated with high esteem. Hierarchical order of the relics reflects social and linguistic relationships which dominated in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, where Belorussian substrate was covered with Polish language as the language of the higher culture.

Graphs

Tatar authors and copyists, using Arabic alphabet, unsuitable to Slavic phonological system, had similar problems which accompanied writers of Old Polish texts, with that reservation that they already possessed sophisticated Polish spelling, based on two signs or many sings and diacritics.

Problems involved:
- writing of nasals *ę*, *ą* and other vowel phonemes,
- signing softness of consonants preceding a vowel,
- signing three line S-Ś-Š and other consonant phonemes.

Some Slavic sounds were signed in text by several Arabic letters with parallel function, e.g. phoneme [z] by graphs ض and ظ, and at the same time one letter served to write several sounds. Therefore, there was a problem of multifunctional use of letters. Also a record was in a big measure a reflection of the northern border pronunciation.

Difficulties in recording of the Slavic phonological system implicated a modification of Arabic alphabet by (among other things) a use of vocalization signs: *fatḥy*, *kasry* i *ḍammy* for graphical presentation of vowel phonemes, e.g. from Turkish or Persian – cf. پ as sign of [p], چ as sign of [č], ژ as sign of [ž], ڭ as sign of [ŋ] or ك to write [g] and forming new graphemes, e.g. ج [ʒ] or څ [c], etc. So there is an analogy in adaptation of the Latin alphabet to the needs of phonological system of Polish language.

b. Handwritten documents and anonymous character of authors

Literature of GDL Tatars should be considered as almost entirely anonymous. The reason for that anonymity could be a religious motivation – aim to perform an ideal work to the glory of God, and also a handwritten message. So, it is difficult to establish names of certain translators, and also to establish if certain translation is a work of one or more translators. In that area we can rely only on historical and linguistic and social premises. We only know that:

The first creators of Tatar literature may be found among educated elite, proficient in Oriental languages [...] to that elite belonged the translators and „Arabic" writers who resided at the royal court. To that group belonged, among

others: Alej Kulzimanowicz Talkowski, who was granted in 1580 by Batory with Rodejkowicze estate in Trocki county, prince Chasień Dajko from Łosośny in Grodno county (writer in 1591-1595), Dawid Bachtyr – translator of Zygmunt III. From the circle of clergymen one can mention Derwisz-Czelebi Murzicz, from 1586 a religious judge (Drozd, 1995a, p. 37; cf. Konopacki, 2010, p. 158).

Artur Konopacki quotes names of two writers and copyists, namely „Hodyna (kitab of 1645) and imam of Minsk Urjasz, the son of Ismail (tefsir dated at 1686)" (2010, p. 159). Research proves that they were also translators (cf. Antonowicz 1968; Drozd 2004).

Thus, both in Christianity and in Islam, the duty to promote faith was in the hands of moral and intellectual elite. (cf. Walczak, 1993, p. 36-37).

c. Mixture of archaic and innovative language qualities

Although the oldest GDL Tatars' writings known to researchers come from the first part of the 17th century, it is supposed that they were created much earlier, i.e. in the second half of the 16th century. It is confirmed by contemporary sources: a tract *Risāle-i Tātār-i Leh* (1558) and the work of Ottoman historian Ibrahim Peçevî (ob. 1642). Moreover, in the 16th century, Tatars, due to pilgrimages, diplomatic missions and trade expeditions, had an access to current religious literature, from which they could make translations. Also the text of translation itself, gives directions: nomenclature and threads referring to the reformation. Also linguistic analysis of the relics gives further proof. As a rule, researchers of Tatars' religious writings claim in their analyzed texts that intermixture of forms typical for the system of Polish or Belorussian language of the 16th and even 15th century with the newer forms of the 17th, 18th and 19th century. Common presence of older features with newer features may be a testimony of the modernization applied to those relics by subsequent generations of copyists. The problem seems to be even more complex not only because of the qualities of the northern border Polish, but also because of sacred dimension of the texts, which involved referring to certain sources (Psalters, Bible translations) and a conservative role of religious language. So there can be included a switch to a different code – a code of religious language.

d. Lost autograph. Possession of copies which vary both chronologically and geographically.

Relics of GDL Tatars' writings provide many various linguistic facts, characteristic for the northern border Polish in the period of the 16th to 20th century. Unfortunately, the originals were lost. Probably in the late 16th century the first Slavic translation of Quran was made, in the form of Tatar tefsir. Its Polish archetype, prototype, original did not remain to our times. There are

known only later copies and editions of Tatar translation. A. Konopacki states that Quran of 1682 remained and is kept in Pskov, and glosses containing Polish translations are present in the text. But tefsir of 1686 was found among collections of Central National Library of Belorussian Academy of Sciences in Minsk. Such are the oldest copies known to researchers.

So, the issue of the date and authorship of a copy of a manuscript should be treated differently than the matter of time when the text was written and by what author, because copyists often informed about the date and place of the completion of the work, about a surname of a copyist, and sometimes about a person who ordered that book. Copyists were usually mullahs, muezzins and healers, and also „older men who treated their work as one of godly deeds" (Borawski, Dubiński 1986: 250). Main places where Tatars' religious literature was copied were: Minsk, Lachowicze, Śmiłowicze, Słonim, Nowogródek.

e. Presence of glosses

One feature of Tatars' religious writings' is a presence of glosses with different typology and functions. Taking into account a criterion of its placement in handwritings, Cz. Łapicz (cf. 2008, p. 71-77) divides them into: external glosses to the text (systematizing notes, e.g. numbers of Quran's parts, known as dżuz, sur i ajats; supplementary, e.g. texts of prayers to say before or after reading Quran, prayer intentions, lists of prophets and people, for whom one should pray; chronicle and family information (also notes about authors, donations and ownership), which set large manuscripts in order at the technical side and supplying them with appendixes desired by other users, which were not directly connected to the text of Quran; and internal glosses to the (interpretative, expository, reference notes, corrective ones), which apply directly or indirectly to the text and Quran's content.

4. Inclusion in the European tradition of translation. The use of sources and their modification.

Tatar translators translated directly from Arabic language, availing themselves of Turkish translations or translating directly from Turkish (cf. role of the Latin and Czech translations in Polish Psalter and Biblical tradition), using earlier developed methods of translation of sacred books to national languages, beginning with a choice of translation's type through precise solutions in translation, and ending with adaptation of Old Polish lexis, especially the religious one, to terms and terminology of Islam.

Moreover, a characteristic feature of Muslim translation is – justified by Christian environment – referring to the Old Polish Biblical-Psalter literature and

144

to Polish translations of the Holy Scriptures, seen in using them in translation of Islamic source texts.

Research in that area is led in two directions: using in the translation process such a pattern as the Christian tradition of translation and inclusion of modified Christian sources in the Muslim religious writings (cf. Kulwicka-Kamińska 2013).

One can point to permeation of cultures and to features which helped to maintain cultural separateness and identity of Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which is illustrated by the connection of Tatar translations with European tradition of translation.

There are also marks of faithful translation in Tatar translations, expressed in strict preservation of the morphological, syntactical and even graphical (e.g. Arabic alphabet) structure of the original and also free translation, e.g. consisting of the following:

- Differentiation of words' meanings according to the context, e.g. ar. rasūl 'messenger, envoy' is *prōrōk pōslanec*;
- Adding explanations of some proper names and nominations with the foreign background, e.g. ar. āya[t] 'sign, feature; verse of Quran' is expressed by *ãjeťami rōzdzelami*;
- Adding various qualifications and epithets or contemporary titles to the names of the more important characters, e.g. prophets' names are principally preceded by a qualification *święty*;
- Supplementing translations with various added remarks and details helping to understand the meaning by: such a definition of subject or object that is stronger than in the original, e.g. ar. ašraka 'to draw someone to something (to participation in something)' to *s-tich ktōre bōgū* **spōlenčnik'i najdūjų**; or by specification of the larger context, e.g. connecting ar. pronoun mā 'what' and ar. verb anzala 'to lower, to let down'; 'to reveal something (about God)', is rendered by a phrase *cō zesłał*, and afterwards certain books and prophets, who received revelation, are mentioned, namely: *cō zeslal nam* **korãn** *i cō zeslal* ***świtk'ī prikezana dō abraháma i dō izma'īle i dō izika i dō je'kūba i dō prōrōkōw sinōw je'kūbōwich jezusa i cōśmi dali mōjžešu ťewrīt' ã jezūsu inǧīl***, inclusion of suitable noun in the function of subject in sentences with the default subject, e.g. ar. qawl 'talk, speech'; 'words' from ar. [qāla] 'to speak, to say' – *rekl* **ibrahīm** or *mowī* **muchemmed**;
- Inclusion of many explanations in the translation text, which are signaled by meta language discussion *to jest* (it is), *znači śe* (*to znaczy* – it means), e.g. *furkan to jest kur'an* etc.

One can point to similar solutions in translations which were established in Bible translations, e.g.:

- Inclusion of headlines, announcing the contents of chapters, analogically as in *Biblia brzeska* and *Biblia Wujka*, which unites those translations with the older tradition of translation;
- Presence of certain lexical and phraseological borrows, especially from *Biblia nieświeska*, e.g. *jegova*, *trōjčane* and *trōječnik'i*, *jedinōstwo*, *staršij*, *kaplan*, *ōfarōwnik* and *ōfarnik* etc.;
- Use of medieval names of people performing activities with the suffix *-nik* and 16th century with formatives *-nik*, *-ciel*, *-ca*, and also names of abstract notions with the suffix *-ość*, or using certain word-forming models, e.g. *naṣmewca*, *wiglōndač* (formation having medieval origin, in 16th century used very infrequently), *činicel*, *newernik*, *trōječnik*, *pričinca*, *'ubridliwuść*;
- reaching to colloquial vocabulary and phraseology (including also words with pejorative meaning, diminutives, augmentatives), making a message more easy to understand, more communicative and more expressive, e.g. *kadūk*, *glūpij*, *kōlega*, *sinačkōwe* etc.;
- Use of polite expressions and symbolic titles, e.g. *brace džebra'īl*; *praroku, ej braće*; *džebra'īl jegō milōśt' ãngel itp.*;
- Using legal terminology, including Latin idioms, which is a proof of influence coming from the Western European tradition and a feature of translations produced in the period of reformation, e.g. replacement of ar. bāb m.in. 'chapter (of the book)' by *ārtikul*, ar. expression āya[t] by *peregraf*, and also *rōzdzel* and *wirš*, rendering ar. al-lawḥ 'board' + al-maḥfūẓ 'protected' as *matrika bōža*, interpreting ar. hudan 'right way, tru faith' as *direkcija*, *dekret boži*, ar. umma[t] 'nation, people' as *nacija* and others, e.g. *dekleracija*, *direktōr*, *fatiga*, *kōnwersacija*, *wiktōrija* etc.;
- Unified verbalizations (characteristic even to 14th and 15th century translations of Biblical-Psalter literature and widely practiced in the 16th century Bible translations) and creating synonymic sequences (mannerism in translation, having its source in the 15th century custom of adding glosses to the Latin texts), e.g. ar. rabb 'ruler, lord, owner, proprietor, God' – *pan* and *prōwizor*, ar. nidd 'equal, similar, the same' – *spōlenčnik* i *tōwariš*, ar. ilāh 'idol' – *prōžnij bōg* and *balwan*, ar. hudan – *direkcija*, *priwodca*, *dekret boži* and other.

An internal feature of Tatar translations is an adaptation of the Old Polish lexis, especially the religious one, to the notions and terminology of Islam, e.g. in the area of terms expressing an idea of the one and only God: ar. allāh is *bōg*, *pan bōg*, *bōg jedin*, and even *jahūwā*, *būġ jahūwā* (name used only in BN), ar. rabb is *pan bōg*,

ar. aḥad 'one' – *ōdīn bōg*, ar. waḥīd 'the only, one, sole, unequalled, incomparable, unique, exceptional'; 'solitary, alone, single' – *jedinnij*, *jedin*, and ar. tawḥīd 'standardization, unification'; 'monotheism' is *božjo jedinostvo, jedinnostvo, jedinostvo bośk'e*. Examples just quoted illustrate permeation of Biblical phraseology to Tatar writings.

Despite many similarities with Biblical translations – Tatar translated texts are marked also by high degree of originality and preservation of their own autonomy, e.g. in the sphere of established ways and methods of translation – they cannot be unequivocally categorized as verbal or free. They are heterogenic in that matter.

An attempt to keep autonomy is proved by the creative adaptation of Christian terminology to the canons and principles of Muslim faith – cf. application of a Christian term *przyczyńca* to Muhammad in Tatar writings: *pričinca do śebe za ummet'em* or *pričinca uśiχ nas na sudni ʒen* and to Jesus in the Bible: *a jesliby kto zgrzeszył, przyczyńcę mamy u Ojca, Jezusa Krystusa sprawiedliwego*.

Separateness and individualism of Tatar translated texts is also proved by word-forming innovations, however, they are based on derivative models productive in the 16th century, already mentioned, e.g. substantive names of people performing certain activities, ending with *-ca*, as *dušejemca* 'one who takes souls', with *-ciel*, as *sonʒicel* 'one who judges', with *-(al)nik*, as *pytalnik* 'one who asks', *wiršownik* 'one who writes poems', with *-acz*, e.g. *rōwnacz* 'one who levels (equalizes)' or *šidar* (only in Bielski's *Chronicle* [*Kronika* Bielskiego] of 1564, *szyderz* is present), and also substantive names of features, ending with *-ość*, e.g. *paχvalnaść* etc. and semantic innovations, e.g. names of heathen idols: *prijacele*, *spōlenčniki*, *tōwariše*, *zwodzicele* and other.

Tatar translations are also marked by high degree of frequency of translocated terms or terms changed to Slavic style. Translators were fully aware that specific Muslim terminology is untranslatable in case of Slavic languages. Therefore, they often left the religious terms of the foreign origin without translation; on the one hand, because of the lack of Slavic adequate counterparts, on the other hand, they had an assumption that they were clear for practicing Muslims.

They preserved terms which were important doctrinally and specific only for the Muslim religion, in their original form, especially proper names. One of researchers studying Tatar religious writings stated that *70 of them refer to the central notions of Islamic religion* (cf. Suter, 2004, p. 57-61). Moreover, he mentions ar. ḥalāl i ḥarām, names of Quran's and other sacred books' parts. He counts among the most frequently used Arabic idioms the following: farḍ, kāfir,

šayṭān, zakā, ẓalim and the formula of the confession of faith lā ilāha illā llāh and the term ġāzī.

A philological problem is to resolve what was the Bible translation used by GDL Tatars. It is known that they made a wide use of heretical versions – *Biblia brzeska* i *Biblia nieświeska*, whose translators represented similar views like Lithuanian and Polish Muslims, in such vital issues as e.g. the dogma of the Holy Trinity, deity of Jesus Christ, common priesthood. They especially used a literature of reformation's Christianity, precisely religious writings of Arians. Besides, researchers point to the presence in Tatar manuscripts such works like *Historya barzo cudna*... (A very miraculous history) of 1543 by Krzysztof Pussman, (Adamczyk, 1980; Drozd, 1996), *Psalmy* (Psalms) translated by J. Kochanowski (Tarełka & Synkowa, 2009), *Psalmy* (Psalms) translated by bishop I. Krasicki (Radziszewska, 2010), excerpts of tragicomedy by G. B. Guarni, *Pastor Fido, albo Konterfekt Wierny Miłości* (The Faithful Shepherd), also translated by I. Krasicki (Radziszewska, 2010), *Legenda o św. Hiobie* (The legend of St. Job; Drozd, 1995b); *Legenda o św. Grzegorzu* (The legend of St. Gregory; Dufala, 2008-2009) and other sources coming from the circle of Christian culture.

At the same time, researchers emphasize the fact that Tatars did not always use original sources which can be correctly identified, because the larger part of them points to the use of religious polemics and debates, citing from memory, compilations, etc. Besides, they always adapted the used sources to the needs of Islam, their religion. Konopacki (2010, p. 155) formulated a thesis that theological writings of Tatars were composed as their own works on the basis of Christian religious writings from which they deleted contents incompatible with Islam. M. Tarełka and I. Synkowa (2009, p. 273-284) pointed to a kind and character of modifications applied by Tatars, as for example:

- changes motivated by religious and ideological reasons (eliminating or transforming citations incompatible with Islamic doctrine, e.g. teaching the deity of Jesus, Holy Trinity, or who may be counted as the offspring of Abraham – Isaac or Ishmael?, the person of the Holy Spirit, etc.) – cf. regular replacing in the words of Jesus the phrase *Oycże moy* (Matthew 26: 39) with *būža mōj*, omitting pronouns in phrases as *po prawicy twoiey* (Matthew 20:21), change of *Bog Izraelow* (1 Kings 11:31) to *būġ*, from *kośćiołá* (2 Kings 23:4) to *z dūmū*, adding to the proper name of God such epithets which emphasize His separateness, uniqueness, e.g. *ṣṭwurical* (Mark 12:28) etc.;
- Exegetical changes, e.g. *skała* (2 Samuel 22:32) to *'ūbruncā* or *cudne* (Genesis 6:2) to *bārẓdu paqna* and other;

- Stylistic changes, e.g. omitting this what from the author's or copyist's viewpoint lacked serious meaning – cf. *Iehowo Boże nasz zbaw nas proszę* (2 Kings 19:19) to *jahūwā żbāw nāṣ*,
- Attempts of interpretation and explanation of the meaning – cf. *wszedł na gorę osobno modlić się* (Matthew 14:3) – *pān jaẓuṣ wšadl na ġūrā 'ūṣūbnū mūdlicśa pānū būġu*, adding titles – cf. *qrūlā kidarlihāmā* (Genesis 14:17) or addition of proper name to a title – cf. *qrūl jūra[wa]hām* (1 Kings 13:4), replacing pronoun with certain subject, and also replacing proper name with pronoun, using abbreviations, simplifications and also amplifications – cf. *Co chcesz* (Matthew 20:21) to *cū ḥcaš čaġu žūndāš čaġu prūśiš* and other.

Borrowing whole *passages* from Christian texts could on the one hand, prove that there was a desire to show closeness of both religions, Islam and Christianity, but on the other hand, reaching to those texts was intended to prove their falsehood (falsifying the word of God). The greater part of that religious literature had the apologetic character and aim – proving the truthfulness of Islamic views, including extreme monotheism.

Religious literature of the Slavic believers in Allah illustrates both permeation of cultures and building one's own identity and ethnic separateness.

5. Many languages

In the old writings of GDL Tatars the Slavic layer (Polish and Belorussian) merges with Oriental layer (Arabic, Turkish – mainly Ottoman Turkish and Persian).

However, one cannot say that all the manuscripts are entirely a translation of Arabic and/or Turkish original. In Tatar religious writings one finds mixed texts, containing not only translations to Slavic languages, but also untranslated excerpts or the whole Turkish or Arabic works, sometimes only commented, and also texts written by GDL Tatars. Such relics are for example: kitaby and chamaiły (kitabs and khamails).

Conclusions

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania is an example of peaceful coexistence of many nations, cultures and religions which is unique in the history of Europe. Since the 14th century Tatar settlers shared their lot with the Duchy's land, and they represented the type of inclusive culture. Full assimilation with Christian environment found its expression in material and non-material cultural heritage of that ethnic group, including architectural objects, and also curious religious literature, for example the first European translation of Quran on Slavic language in the form of Tatar tefsir (cf. International project „TEFSIR", led by the authors

Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska and Czesław Łapicz, carried out as a part of the National Program of the Humanities Development, module 1.2 no. 12 H 12 0041 81). Writings of Tatars living in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is a priceless source for the study of heritage with special significance, namely the group of the Old Poland's relics and it also helps to lead the research on the scope encompassing translation of religious Muslim texts on languages beyond the circle of Islamic culture and tradition. It may also become a foundation for leading scholastic studies of many fields – including Oriental studies, cultural studies, religious studies, political science, history, ethnology, theology, etc.

Source materials

KK – *Kitab z Kazania* (transliteration: Miškinienė, G. (2001). *Sieniausi lietuvos totorių rankrašciai. Grafika. Transliteracija. Vertimas. Tekstų struktūra ir turinys*. Vilnius)

ChL – *Chamaił lipski* (transliteration: Miškinienė, G. (2001). *Sieniausi lietuvos totorių rankrašciai. Grafika. Transliteracija. Vertimas. Tekstų struktūra ir turinys*. Vilnius)

T1 – *Tefsir* z 1725r. (transliteration: Meredith-Owens, G.M., Nadson, A. (1970). The Byelorussian Tartars and their Writings. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*, 2. London, No. 2, 141–176; Suter, P. (2004). *Alfurkan Tatarski. Der litauisch-tatarische Koran-Tefsir*. Köln-Weimar-Wien, 374–446)

T2 – *Tefsir* z 1788r. (transliteration in manuscript form – Łapicz Cz.)

KL – Kitab „londyński" (transliteration: Akiner, S. (1973). The Vocabulary of a Byelorussian K'it'ab in the British Museum. *The Journal of Byelorussian Studies*, 3. London, No. 1, 55–84)

KŁ – *Kitab Łuckiewicza* (transliteration: Stankievič, J. (1933-1934). Přispěvky k dějinám běloruského jazyka na zǎkladě rukopisu 'Al-Kitab'. *Slavia*, 12, 357–390 and: Miškinienė, G. (2009). *Ivano Luckevičiaus kitabas – Lietuvos totorių kultūros paminklas*. Vilnius)

KM – *Kitab Milkamanowicza* (transliteration: Łapicz, Cz. (1986). *Kitab Tatarów litewsko-polskich. (Paleografia. Grafia. Język)*. Toruń and in manuscript form – Łapicz Cz.)

BB – *Biblia brzeska* (1563), Clifton-Kraków 2003.

BN – *Biblia nieświeska* (1572), Nieśwież: antique book from the collection of a library of Warsaw university.

BW – *Biblia* in the translation by ks. Jakub Wujek (1599), transcription from 16th. century, Warszawa 2000.

References

АНТОНОВИЧ, А. К. (1968). *Белорусские тексты, писанные арабским письмом, и их графико-орфографическая система*. Вильнюс.

ТАРЕЛКА, М. & СЫНКОВА, I. (2009). *Адкуль пайшлі ідалы*. Мінск.

ADAMCZYK, M. (1980). *Biblijno-apokryficzne narracje w literaturze staropolskiej do końca XVI wieku*. Poznań.

BIELSKI, M. (1564). *Kronika*.

BORAWSKI, P. & DUBIŃSKI, A. (1986). *Tatarzy polscy. Dzieje, obrzędy, legendy, tradycje*. Warszawa.

DROZD, A. (1995a). O twórczości literackiej Tatarów w dobie staropolskiej. *Tatarzy w Europie i na świecie*. Poznań, 33–47.

DROZD, A. (1995b). Tatarska wersja pieśni-legendy o św. Hiobie. *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne*, 2, Seria Literacka. Poznań, 163–195.

DROZD, A. (1996). Staropolski apokryf w muzułmańskich księgach. (Tatarska adaptacja Historyji barzo cudnej o stworzeniu nieba i ziemie Krzysztofa Pussmana). *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne*, 3, Seria Literacka. Poznań, 95–134.

DROZD, A. (2004). Koran staropolski. Rozważania w związku z odkryciem tefsiru mińskiego z 1686 roku. *Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej*, 36. Warszawa, 237–248.

DUFALA, K. (2008-2009). Legenda o św. Grzegorzu w kitabie Tatarów – muzułmanów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, In A. Gadomski, Cz. Łapicz (Eds.), *Chrestomatia teolingwistyki* (pp. 205–220). Symferopol.

KONOPACKI, A. (2010*). Życie religijne Tatarów na ziemiach Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w XVI-XIX wieku*. Warszawa.

KULWICKA-KAMIŃSKA, J. (2013). *Przekład terminologii religijnej islamu w polskich tłumaczeniach Koranu na tle biblijnej tradycji translatorycznej*. Toruń.

ŁAPICZ, CZ. (1986). *Kitab Tatarów litewsko-polskich. (Paleografia. Grafia. Język)*. Toruń.

ŁAPICZ, Cz. (2008). Glosy, komentarze, objaśnienia etc., czyli o pozakoranicznych dopiskach w rękopiśmiennych tefsirach muzułmanów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego, In T. Bairašauskaitė, H. Kobeckaitė, G. Miškinienė (Eds.), *Orientas Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos Visuomenės Tradicijoje: Totoriai ir Karaimai* (pp. 69–80). Vilnius.

ŁYSZCZARZ, M. (2013). *Młode pokolenie polskich Tatarów*. Olsztyn-Białystok.

PALECZNY, T. (2008). *Socjologia tożsamości*. Kraków.

RADZISZEWSKA, I. (2010). *Chamaiły jako typ piśmiennictwa religijnego muzułmanów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego (na podstawie słowiańskiej warstwy językowej)*, Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika. Toruń (in press).

SUTER, P. (2004). *Alfurkan Tatarski. Der litauisch-tatarische Koran-Tefsir*. Köln-Weimar-Wien.

WALCZAK, B. (1993). Komu zawdzięczamy polski język literacki? In I. Bajerowa, M. Karpluk, & Z. Leszczyński (Eds.), *Język a chrześcijaństwo* (pp. 23–42). Lublin.

WARMIŃSKA, K. (1999). *Tatarzy polscy. Tożsamość religijna i etniczna*. Kraków.

WELSCH, W. (1999). Transculturality – the Puzzling Form of Cultures Today, *Spaces of Culture: City, Nation, World*. London: Sage, 194–213.

WELSCH, W. (2002). Rethinking identity in the age of globalization – a transcultural perspective. *Aesthetics & Art Science*, No. 1, 85–94.

Zasady wydawania tekstów staropolskich. (1955). Wrocław.

Contact

Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska - Ph.D.
Instytut Języka Polskiego
Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu
ul. Fosa Staromiejska 3
87-100 Toruń
asiakk2@tlen.pl