THE TATAR RULING HOUSES
IN RUSSIAN GENEALOGICAL SOURCES

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The “Genealogy of the Tatar Sovereigns” (Rodoslovnaia tatarskikh tsarei) preserved in various (official and private) genealogical books of the 16th–17th centuries is a unique and precious monument of both Tatar and Russian history. This text owes its existence to the lively interest of the Russian state in the inner relations of the declining Tatar states towards the middle of the 16th century. Its genesis cannot be disconnected from the Russian conquests of Kazan and Astrakhan. The bulk of the genealogies was compiled in the 1550s and based on Tatar sources. A critical analysis of these genealogies, comparing every piece of data with other contemporary (Russian and Oriental) sources, is a task yet to be accomplished, but the significance of these texts is beyond doubt. What I tried to do in this paper was to emphasise and analyse a few noteworthy aspects of this group of monuments.

Key words: Tatar dynasties, genealogy, Chingisids, Russian genealogical sources.

Genealogy has always been an important branch and integral part of any scrutiny of the past. After the pre-1917 period, which was the golden age of Russian genealogical research, in the Soviet period genealogy was practically banished from historical investigation. It was only a few outstanding scholars who dared and could devote their efforts to Russian genealogy, such as S. B. Veselovskii (1876–1952) and A. A. Zimin (1920–1980), but even their works could be published only posthumously (cf. Veselovskii 1969; Zimin 1988). From the 1970s onwards genealogy has gained again citizenship in Russian-Soviet research,¹ and the past fifteen years, the period following the disintegration of the Soviet Union saw a real boom in Russian genealogical research. Russian genealogical literature contains valuable data also concerning Rus-

¹ Bychkova’s studies concerning the genealogical books are of special interest, see Bychkova (1975; 1986).
sian families of Tatar origin and the ruling houses of different Tatar dynasties. Now, it is one aspect of the latter that forms the subject-matter of this paper.

The first official Russian genealogical book was the *Gosudarev rodoslovets* “the Sovereign’s Genealogical Book” (hereafter: *Gos. rod.*) compiled in 15552 and its supplemented and rewritten version from 1687, the so-called *Barkhatnaia kniga* “Velvet Book” (hereafter: *BK*). N. I. Novikov published them a century later.3 In addition to the upper layer of the Russian aristocracy, the Riurukovich and Gedyminovich princes, the Chingisid clans of the Astrakhan, Crimean and Kazan sovereigns were also registered in the *BK*.4 So after the capture of Kazan and prior to the siege of Astrakhan, the *Gos. rod.* described the different Tatar ruling elites at the first stage of a century-long transitional period which has gradually resulted in their incorporation into the Russian elite. The Nogay princes were also planned to be included in the *Gos. rod.*, in the list of contents of the original copy of the *BK* it is written: “Rod Magnitskikh kniazei Nagaiskikh. Ne pisan” (Rummel’ 1900, p. 68). Their omission must have been quite accidental, according to Likhachev’s view no authentic clan register was at hand during the time of the compilation (Likhachev 1900, pp. 56–57). Yet a very nice compilation of the genealogy of the Nogay princes has been preserved in a private genealogical book compiled at the beginning of the 17th century.5 It begins like this: “Magnit sil’nyi Edigei Kniaz’ Nagaiskoi”.

Later, in the 17th century, this habit of inclusion of the Chingisid ruling houses, moreover the Ottoman House, into collections of genealogical registers was maintained also in the private genealogical books. This paper deals with this special group of texts in the Russian genealogical sources traditionally called *Rodoslovnaia tatarskikh tsarei* “Genealogy of the Tatar Sovereigns” (hereafter: *RTTs*).

First, I would like to outline the history of their investigation, present the extant variants in different manuscripts and publications, then make an attempt at elucidating their filiations. A variant under the title “Rod Astrakhanskikh, Krymskikh i Kazanskikh Tsarei” was first published in 1787 by N. I. Novikov (*BK* I, pp. 23–28). Actually, it can be found in the *BK* which ultimately goes back to the *Gos. rod.*. Next time, in 1851 three private genealogical books were published in the *Vremennik* (1851, pp. 1–286). Two of them contain variants of the *RTTs*, the first belongs to the “redaction of the beginning of the 17th century” type of genealogical books, designated as *Sinodal’nyi II* and is now preserved in Moscow, in the Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Muzei, Sinodal’noe sobranie, No. 860. It must have been compiled at the beginning of the 17th century, probably during the reign of Tsar Vasilii Shuiskii.6 The rather detailed genealogy of the Turkish and different Chingisid ruling houses in

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2 It was N. P. Likhachev (1888, pp. 405–415) who pointed out in a fine analysis that the version of the *Gos. rod.* compiled by the d’iak Ivan Elizarov, must have come about after the conquest of Kazan (1551) and before the capture of Astrakhan (1556). The fact that the official genealogical book was compiled in the heyday of Tatar campaigns deserves special attention and study.

3 For this source see further below.

4 *BK* I, pp. 23–28: Rod astrakhanskikh tsarei; Rod krymskikh tsarei; Rod kazanskikh tsarei.

5 Novikov (1787); see also on the web as http://www.genealogia.ru/projects/barhat/index.htm.

6 For its description see Bychkova (1975, p. 111); its publication is in *Vremennik* (1851, pp. 1–130).
this synodic copy deserves special attention. It contains the following chapters: Rod tiurkshikh tsarei; Rod tsarei Bol’she Ordy; Rod tsarei Krymskikh, Kazanskikh i Astrakhanskikh; Nachalo Orde Nagaiskoi, i Rodoslovie kniaziam i Murzam Nagaiskim. The other private genealogical book is preserved also in Moscow, in the RGADA, in the former collection of MID. It was compiled during the reign of Ivan IV (reference is made in the text to his son Ivan Ivanovich who was then still alive) (Vremennik 1851, p. 1). The third text containing the RTTs is a genealogical book to be found in the Sinopsis Storozhevskego monastyrja, compiled in 1676 and preserved now in the royal library of Copenhagen. It was copied by I. I. Sreznevskii and handed over to V. V. Vel’iaminov Zernov who published it in 1853 (Vel’iaminov-Zernov 1853, pp. 43–44). The fourth text of the RTTs can be found in an unpublished private genealogical book of the 17th century, and similarly preserved in Moscow, in the RGADA, in the former collection of MID. The origins of this private genealogical book must be sought in the family circle of the Narbekovy and Derzhaviny, since special emphasis was laid on the genealogies of these two kindred clans.

Basing on these texts we may proceed to make an attempt at their grouping and fixing the chronology of their compilation. Actually, three groups of texts can be separated in these genealogical collections. The first can be called “Genealogy of the Great Horde” (Rod Bol’she Ordy = RBO), the second is the “Genealogy of the Crimean, Kazanian and Astrakhan Sovereigns” (Rod tsarei krymskikh, kazanskikh i astrakhanskikh = RKKA) and the third one concerns the “Genealogy of the Nogay Horde” (Nachalo Orde Nogaiskoi, i Rodoslovie kniaziam i murzam nogaisskim = RNO). Evidently, the bulk of these texts concerning the Tatar ruling houses were prepared in the feverish 1550s, during and after the sieges of Kazan and Astrakhan, their primary goal being to meet the urgent demands and keen interest of the Muscovite state in the Tatar affairs. Part of this genealogical material was included in the official Gos. rod. and later the BK, part of the data were preserved in later private genealogical books. But even later copies preserved the character of these texts, namely their information hardly exceeds the time limit of the 1560s. The text of RBO, clearly expounds: Devlet Girei Tsar’, chto nyne na Krymu (Vremennik 1851, p. 128). Devlet-Girey I was the Crimean sovereign in 1550–1577, so this remarks clearly indicates the chronological framework of the text in question. The sovereignty of the Kazan Khanate ended in 1551, that of the Astrakhan Khanate in 1555, so it is not by chance that the genealogies mention only a few persons and episodes after the annexation of these khanates. Tsars and tsareviches from Kazan and Astrakhan, who converted to Christianity and were absorbed in the Russian ruling elite, such as Ötemish-Girey (alias Aleksandr), Ediger (alias Semion), Kudaikul (alias Petr) and Melegdar Khan’s baptised sons, Princes Vasilii and Fedor are the last representatives of these khanates mentioned. But even complementing the list of rulers of the still existing Crimean Khanate with a few more persons ends with the 1580s. For example at the end of RKKA2 the sons

7 RGADA, f. 181 (Ruk. Sobr. Bibl. MGAMID), ed. khr. 385, 17ob–19 which contains the following parts: Rod tsarei Bolshii Ordy, Rod Nagaiskia Ordy, Rod turshikh tsarei.
8 For the affiliation of these texts and their editions, if any, see Abbreviations, at the end of this paper.

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of Devlet-Girey are mentioned amongst whom two became Crimean khans later: Gazi-Girey II (1588–1608) and Salamat-Girey (1608–1610).

Having established the types and chronology of the RTTs we may venture to answer the question whence these genealogies derive and whether they can be considered authentic. In doing so we may partly live up to the expectations of the one-time publisher of the Vremennik who claimed one and a half centuries ago: “Zhelatel’no by bylo, chtoby orientalisty obratili vnimanie na sei rosdolovets i poverili ego s svoimi istochnikami” (Vremennik 1851, p. IV). For the most part, the authenticity of these genealogies is beyond doubt. Some of the persons figuring in the registers were contemporary actors on the political scene of the day, and their direct and collateral ancestors went back to the sixth to seventh generations. As is known, remembrance of one’s ancestors back to seven generations is common knowledge even for the simplest warrior in a nomadic society. The lifetimes of the persons figuring in these genealogies encompass roughly one hundred and fifty years, expanding from 1400 to 1550. The data relating to persons who had lived within this timespan are mainly trustworthy, since they must have been taken from Tatar sources. But despite the overall picture of reliability, some typical errors were committed that derived from the character of genealogical sources. These sources contain names of persons, for the most part unknown to the copyist, so a shift in the direct lineage and the omission of one generation, both by negligence or inattention of the copyist, are frequently encountered. Consequently, each and every paternal and filial relationship in a genealogical table must be controlled in the light of all extant data. Vel’aminov-Zernov was right in saying that the more text variants exist, the more possibility we have in reconstructing the Tatar original. The errors and blunders in one text can automatically be amended by the corresponding section containing the correct data in another text (Vel’iaminov-Zernov 1853, p. 44).

Bearing in mind what has been said do far, I will try to determine and establish the most authentic version of the RTTs and comment on all persons figuring in it, on a separate occasion, since this work demands a careful and meticulous analysis. This time I would limit my remarks only to the section of the RTTs that treats of the genealogy of the Astrakhan branch of the Jochids. I have three comments.

1. The really striking fact that catches one’s eyes is that the persons figuring in the RBO (“Genealogy of the Great Horde”) are more or less the same as those in the section on the Astrakhan ruling house in the RKKA (“Genealogy of the Crimean, Kazanian and Astrakhan Sovereigns”), namely both lists contain the names of Timur-Qutluq’s offspring. Seemingly, this means that Timur-Qutluq’s descendants became the khans of the Great Horde after the secession of the Kazan yurt (under the sovereignty of Hājji-Girey’s lineage) and the Crimean yurt (under the sovereignty of Uluğ-Muḥammad’s lineage). Consequently, Timur-Qutluq’s offspring possessed the central region of the one-time united Golden Horde: the Lower Volga region with the capital Saray and Astrakhan. As I. V. Zaitsev convincingly demonstrated (Zaitsev 2006, pp. 58–59), Astrakhan was only a large town of the Great Horde, and only after the devastation and destruction of Saray by Timur’s army in 1480 did some of the khans of
the Horde transfer their abode to Astrakhan. But the Great Horde survived for twenty more years, and only in 1502 was it finally crushed by the Crimean Khan Mengli-Girey supported by his Russian ally, the Grand Prince Ivan III Vasil’evich. So the birth date of a separate Astrakhan Khanate can be placed to 1502, this khanate being established at the latest among the successor states of the Golden Horde. During the 15th century it belonged to the Great Horde, so it is natural that with the fall of the Khanate the same Jochid line, that of Timur-Qutluğ occupied the throne of the new khanate. Bearing in mind the intimate connection of Timur-Qutluğ’s offspring with the town of Astrakhan, it is no wonder that in one version of the RTTs (RKKA1), Timur-Qutluğ is mentioned as “pervoi tsar’ na Astrakhani”; so retrospectively he was considered the first sovereign of Astrakhan. The RTTs fully corroborates the opinion of Zaitsev and some other researchers that the Astrakhan Khanate was the successor and heir to the Great Horde which in turn was the direct successor to the Golden Horde.

2. A version of the RTTs in the RBO1 puts forward a general genealogy of the Chingisids. It traces the lineage of the four sons (Jochi, Ögödei, Cha’adai and Tolu) in a very sketchy way, full of blunders and misspellings of the names. Even the lineage of the first Jochids is haphazard and erroneous. Yet the axis of the genealogy contains precious pieces of information. It gives a sketchy genealogy of the sons of Toqa-Temür, thirteenth son of Jochi (according to Rashīd al-Dīn).9 According to the RBO1 Toqa-Temür is the forefather of four descendant lines of rulers, namely those of Tokhtamysh, Timur-Qutluğ, Uluğ-Muḥammad and Ḥājjī-Girey. If presented in a genealogical table it looks as follows:

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Tuatemir
  | Togozia ulan  Temir Bek ulan  Asan Ulan  Dulat Tek Ulan
  | Takhtamysh'  Temir Kutlui  Ulu Makhmet Ulan  Dulat Bedir
    | A(u)zigirei
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It is very important that the RBO1 regards all these four lines, those of Tokhtamysh, Timur-Qutluğ, Uluğ-Muḥammad and Ḥājjī-Girey as Toqa-Temūrids. The offsprings of Uluğ-Muḥammad, founder of the Kazan Khanate and Ḥājjī-Girey, founder of the Crimean Khanate and Temür-Qutluğ, forefather of the khans of Astrakhan have long been recognised and acknowledged as Toqa-Temūrids in scholarly literature. But the origins of Tokhtamysh Khan and his rival kin, Urus Khan whose progenies, Jānibek and Girey later founded the Kazak Khanate, were subject to debate. The clash of scholarly opinions followed the division of the historical sources: one group of

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9 In the RBO1, Toqa-Temūr (Tuatemir) is called the fifth son of Jochi, in the Bahır al-asrār of Mahmūd ibn Vālī (17th century) he is the fourth son (see Sultanov 2001, p. 142). Rashīd al-Dīn, as ever, seems to be the most authentic.
sources claimed that they were descendants of Orda-Ichen, first son of Jochi, while another group of written sources voted for their Toqa-Temürid descent. The more authentic and reliable sources that had direct information of the Golden Horde such as the Mu'izz al-ansāb and the Ötemish-Hājjī taʾrīkhí asserted that Tokhtamysh and Urus had descended from Toqa-Temür, while the conception of their Ordaid origin goes back practically to one source, Muʾīn al-Dīn Naṭanzī’s Muntakhab al-tavārīkh, one of the less reliable Persian sources. So it is not by chance that M. Kafalı, V. P. Iudin and others accepted the Toqa-Temürid descent (Kafalı 1976, pp. 29–33; Utemish-hadzhi 1992, pp. 63, 67, 148), and I also joined their opinion in one of my latest articles: “After the fall of the Batuid line in the White Horde and the Ordaid line in the Blue Horde in 1360–1361, in Eastern Dasht-i Qipchaq the representatives of a Toqa-Temürid lineage sprang forth and four of them rose to the khan’s throne. To our present knowledge, the fourth khan, Mubārak-Hoja was the first to mint coins in 1367–1368 in Sighnak as an apparent sign of total independence. Under unknown circumstances Urus Khan, a representative of another line of the Toqa-Temürids took over power in Sighnak in 770 AH (1368/69), and from that time onwards the khan’s mint in Sighnak began to issue coins with a regular flow” (Vásáry, in print). In view of this, the information of the RBO1 gains its real significance: a Russian source bearing on an independent Tatar source again testifies to the Toqa-Temürid descent of Tokhtamysh Khan (and in an unexpressed way, his relative Urus Khan).

3. Finally, having had a glimpse at all versions of the RTTs I observed a peculiar fact concerning the genealogy of Temür-Qutluği and the sovereigns of Astrakhan. This genealogy is the backbone of the RTTs since it is not missing from any of the seven extant versions (RBO1–3, RKKA1–4). For four generations the genealogy gives the same names (Temir Bek ulan → Temir Kutlui → Temir → Kichi-Magmet; sometimes with omission of a name or two), but after Küchük-Muḥammad five genealogies go on only with ʿAbd al-Rahman’s offspring, and only two versions make mention of Küchük-Muḥammad’s other descendants. Thus RBO1 mentions Maḥmūd (Magmet) and his sons, and the RKKA1 speaks of Maḥmūd and Yaʿqūb (Egup), but their treatment is very cursory and incomplete. On the other hand, ʿAbd al-Rahman’s line is very detailed, and a rather precise and reliable genealogy can be compiled on the basis of the seven versions; especially RKKA2 excels with its reliability, it contains practically no mistake. Out of Maḥmūd’s descendants on the throne, ʿAbd-al-Karīm and his son, ʿAbd al-Rahman are not mentioned at all in any of the versions. This striking negligence of Maḥmūd’s line in the genealogies cannot be accidental. One must remember the bitter fight between the brothers Maḥmūd and ʿAbd al-Rahman and theirs sons for the possession and throne of Astrakhan. Maḥmūd’s progenies were the first to ascend the throne of Astrakhan but soon Ahmad’s sons (Akhatovy deti) followed. Seemingly, they wanted to extirpate even the memory of Maḥmūd’s sons (Makhmetevy deti) and their efforts were successful to a great extent. The Russian texts of the RTTs reflect this tendentiousness and bias of the Tatar political circles supporting ʿAbd al-Rahman’s progeny.

10 For these two groups of sources, see Sultanov (2001, pp. 140–141).
In sum, the “Genealogy of the Tatar Sovereigns” (Rodoslovnaia tatarskikh tsa-rei) preserved in various (official and private) genealogical books of the 16th–17th centuries is a unique and precious monument of both Tatar and Russian history. This text owes its existence to the lively interest of the Russian state in the inner relations of the declining Tatar states towards the middle of the 16th century. Its genesis cannot be disconnected from the Russian conquests of Kazan and Astrakhan. The bulk of the genealogies was compiled in the 1550s and based on Tatar sources. A critical analysis of these genealogies, comparing every piece of data with other contemporary (Russian and Oriental) sources, is a task yet to be accomplished but the significance of these texts is beyond doubt. What I tried to do in this paper was to underline and analyse a few noteworthy aspects of this group of monuments.

Abbreviations

GIM = Gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii muzei. Moscow.
MID = Ministerstvo inostrannykh del. Moscow.
RGADA = Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arhiv drevnikh aktov. Moscow.
RKKA1 = Rod tsarei krymskikh, kazanskikh i astrakhanskikh “Genealogy of the Crimean, Kazanian and Astrakhan Sovereigns”: BK I, pp. 23–28.
RNO1 = Rod Nogaiskoi Ordy “Genealogy of the Nogay Horde”: Vremennik 1851, p. 130.
RTTs = Rodoslovnaia tatarskikh tsarei “Genealogy of the Tatar Sovereigns”.

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