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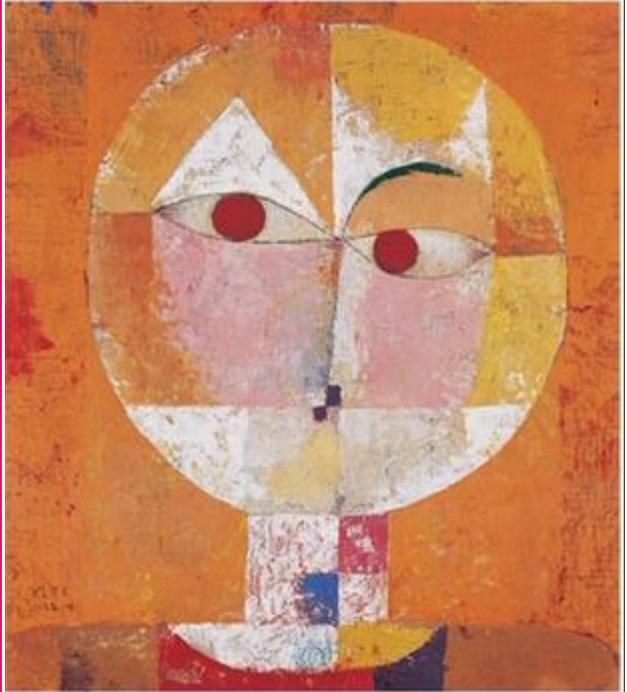
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Universidad del Zulia
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas
Maracaibo - Venezuela

The chancellery of the golden horde's Khans

L. Abzalov¹

¹Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
len_afzal@mail.ru

M. Gatin²

²Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
M_gatin@mail.ru

R. Fakhrutdinov³

³Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
R_fakhrutdinov@mail.ru

B. Fakhrutdinov⁴

⁴Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
B_fakhrutdinov@mail.ru

D. Mustafina⁵

⁵Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
D_mustafina@mail.ru

Z. Minnullin⁶

⁶Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
Z_minnullin@mail.ru

A. Gatin⁷

⁷Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
A_gatin@mail.ru

G. Gali⁸

⁸Kazan Federal University
420080, Kazan, Kremlin Street, 18Kazan, Russia
G_gali@mail.ru

Abstract

This article provides an overview of the chancellery service of the Golden Horde via comparative qualitative research methods. As a result, the main work in the office was carried out by scribes - bitikchi. They prepared the decrees of the ruler, diplomatic messages, kept documents, were engaged in translation and

financial and fiscal issues. The bitikchi should have mastered the Mongolian and Turkic languages and the Uigur script. In conclusion, the chancellery culture of UlusJuchi was at a high level of development and was able to ensure the effective management of such a large and powerful state.

Keywords: UlusJuchi, chancellery practice, bitikchi, official.

La cancillería de los khans de la horda de oro

Resumen

Este artículo proporciona una descripción general del servicio de cancillería de la Horda de Oro a través de métodos comparativos de investigación cualitativa. Como resultado, el trabajo principal en la oficina fue realizado por escribas: bitikchi. Prepararon los decretos del gobernante, mensajes diplomáticos, guardaron documentos, se dedicaron a la traducción y cuestiones financieras y fiscales. El bitikchi debería haber dominado los idiomas mongol y turco y la escritura Uigur. En conclusión, la cultura de la cancillería de UlusJuchi estaba en un alto nivel de desarrollo y fue capaz de garantizar la gestión eficaz de un estado tan grande y poderoso.

Palabras clave: UlusJuchi, práctica de cancillería, bitikchi, oficial.

1. INTRODUCTION

The power of the Golden Horde was determined not only by military successes, but also by a well-established control system. It was the particular popularity of military-political history that predetermined the one-sided feature of this state, both in Russian and foreign historiography. The Golden Horde seemed to be a purely belligerent power, with a primitive system of organization of the administrative apparatus. It is known that the state of Dzhuchidov retained the status of the most influential political force of the region for several centuries

which would have been difficult to implement without a well-established system of governance of subordinate territories.

One of the aspects of UlusJuchi history is the chancellery service of the Golden Horde. It has not been properly reflected in historiography. Therefore, our article will be devoted to the consideration of the certain aspects of the chancellery service of the Golden Horde's khans (ABZALOV, 2013: TAJVIDI & ARJANI, 2017).

2. MATERIALS AND TOOLS OF WRITING

The paper was the most common and almost the only writing material in Juchi chancellery. Obviously, the original paper was imported from Central Asia and China, and later the paper of Western European production began to be applied. Paper processing was in the competence of the scribe-bitikchi, who was supposed to know the technology of glossing and glossing paper. Before starting to write the text of the document, the sheets were glued together, after which the fields were made. Then it was put down on a flat place and a narrow strip was folded on the right side vertically, from 2-3 to 5-6 fingers wide, depending on the overall size and format of the scroll (USMANOV, 1979).

Juchi's office work involved the use of inks of different colors (red, yellow, and blue). As in the other countries of the medieval

world, the main ink was black one of different shades. It was produced using traditional technologies (KISELEVA, 2003). As well as in other countries of the medieval East, the Horde scribes prepared ink in advance and stored it in the form of tablets and biscuits (BIBIKOVA, 2005).

Bitikchis used feathers or kalyams as traditional writing instruments. The evidence of a high level of development of Juchi chancellery culture was a metal pen, found in the ancient settlement Tsarevo. Analyzing this find, M.A. Usmanov notes that this kalyam is one of the earliest facts of the use of a metal pen in Eastern Europe (USMANOV, 1979). Kalyams usually stored in special canisters or cases. In this regard, the most notable find is the case with the scribe's accessories, discovered by archaeologist I.P. Lisitsin in Bakhtiyarovka Leninsky district of the Volgograd region (EXCAVATED IN 1967) (KRAMAROVSKY, 2005). Along with reed feathers, other instruments of writing were used in the Khan's chancellery, namely bones, bird feathers and brushes. With brushes, for example, they could write large outlines of signs (theology, the addresser in official acts).

After the scroll was fully prepared, the scribe proceeded to his main work - the rewriting of the text. Bitikchi wrote sitting on the ground, putting the paper on a slightly raised knee. This practice is typical for most countries in Europe and Asia. For example, in Russia, the clerks held their ink-pot and paper in their left hand and copied the letter on their knee with their right hand (STOLYAROVA, 2003). For

comparison, P. Nebolsin, who observed the writing process among the nomadic Kalmyks, also notes that they write while holding the paper on their knees (NEBOLSIN, 1852). Written completely and dried label was rolled up-starting from the end. In some cases, the scribes glued a piece of morocco leather to the upper part of the important acts, which served as a case for the document (for example, a message from Ulug-Muhammad to the Turkish Sultan Murad II dated March 14, 1428, and a letter from Ahmad Khan to Sultan Mehmed). For easy storage of the label, before handing it to the holder, the names of the main performer, secretary and future owner of the salary were indicated on the back of the initial or last part of the scroll (USMANOV, 1979).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The formation of the chancellery culture of the Golden Horde

The chancellery traditions of all Mongol uluses, including UlusJuchi, were formed within the framework of the united Mongol empire. The origin of the chancellery service was associated with the activities of Genghis Khan, who attached importance to writing in the organization of government. Thus, he attracted literate foreigners to the service, primarily the Uigurs and the Khitans, who influenced the formation of the Mongolian or Genghis Khan Chancellery culture.

3.2. Official service in the public administration and the Khan chancellery of UlusJuchi

The general management structure of UlusJuchi can be divided into military and civil spheres. Financial and fiscal issues were under control of civilian officials, but this did not rule out their active participation and interference in the affairs of the military feudal elite, which indicated the absence of a clear functional delimitation of the competence of separate government bodies.

The khan's governors –Darughachi had controlling and fiscal functions. They were at the head of the urban or agricultural centers. In some areas, the former administrative apparatus was retained along with the imperial administration. It was often headed by a local ruler, who was loyal to the Mongolian government. Also, he was under the control of Basqaqs or Darughachi.

The record-keeping traditions were primarily formed in the central government bodies with the concentration in the Khan's Horde. Probably, the government administration was finally formed in the JuchiUlusat the beginning of the XIV century during the reign of Tokta Khan and Uzbek Khan (EL ISLAMI ET AL, 2018).

The main financial and fiscal government body was the central divan. Divans as government bodies were known long before the Mongol conquests. They were represented in most Muslim countries (LEWIS ET AL, 1991). At the head of the central divan was the vizier

appointed by the khan, who apparently had his deputy Naib. The secretary-bitikchi (the ancient Turkic bitkäči (scribe)), bakhshi and katibs were among the servants of the divan (LEWIS ET AL, 1991). The vizier and his naibs carried out the orders and instructions of the ruler, organized and supervised the activities of other departments and their employees. The vizier was also competent in office work. The head of the main civil department was directly involved in the preparation of particularly important documents, especially in the early stages of the formation of the state. Also, he was in charge of writing of the khan's decrees.

There were also financial departments (probably they were called divans) in large urban centers. They were built on analogy with central government institutions. We must assume that these departments were under control of the Khan's governors (Darughachi). At the same time, they could be accountable to the central divan. It is obvious that each divan had its own Treasury Department called hazine with the conforming service personnel (NAHCHIVANI, 1976). A treasurer was in charge of the Khan's treasury and probably he obeyed the vizier.

It is possible that the scribes (bitikchi and bakhshi) were at the disposal of the treasurer. According to the materials of later origin, it is known about the existence of treasury scribes. It is said in the Personal list of the Crimean princes, dukes, murzas and all official people who swore the grand duke Vasily Ivanovich with the tsar Saadet-Giray in front of the envoy Astafye Andreev from 1524: Shah Kuli is a courtier

scribe, Ghulam Ali is a state scribe, Suleiman is a state scribe, Asan Ordabazarska is a scribe [...] Isufis the scribe of the treasury, [...] Magmut is a stable scribe (MALINOVSKY, 1863: 413-414).

Bitikchi were initially engaged in office work in Khan's Chancellery (LIGETTI, 1981). Along with this name, there used another name of scribes - bakhshi. According to M. A. Usmanov, the scribes who came with the conquerors were called bakhshi and later they began to use it in relation to the local scribes. The term bakhshi originally designated the persons of the Buddhist clergy, mentor, a teacher in general, but later it was used to designate scribes of Turkic origin, who were supposed to compose documents in Uigur writing. These documents were intended for the Turkic and Mongolian population. This term was used in both meanings in JuchiUlus - a minister of a cult and a scribe in general (USMANOV, 1979). According to V.V. Trepavlov, the word mullah had exactly the same combination of values in Russian in the XVI century. The Muslim clerics, being literate, conducted diplomatic correspondence in some Turkic states, and the Moscow embassy clerks saw them as their colleagues, noting: the mullah is a Russian clergyman (OMODERO, 2019).

In the government materials, we often find messages about the scribes of the Khan's Chancellery - divan bitkăčeläre (scribes of the divan). In general, this term is common to all varieties of Genghis tailored labels. However, it should be especially emphasized that in the given part of Juchi's legal acts there said about the main inspectors-

clerks of the government chancellery. Therefore, they should be distinguished from the scribes, called as bakhshi and katib (USMANOV, 1979).

With the coming to power of Uzbek Khan, the processes of centralization and Islamization found their further development in the country. Likely, they had an impact on the development of chancellery culture. If the centralization of power mainly contributed to the quantitative growth of the bureaucratic apparatus, then the spread of Islam determined the qualitative changes. In general, these processes were closely interrelated. Nevertheless, it must be assumed that in the first half of the 14th century, the influence of Islamic culture on the official paperwork of UlusJuchi was insignificant.

The materials we have at our disposal led us to this conclusion. It should also be noted that the Muslim canons of clerical work were known in the Golden Horde chancelleries, which were used in contacts with representatives of the Islamic world. Khan, who positioned himself as a Muslim, had to meet certain requirements in his diplomatic correspondence. Obviously, Islamic canons found their use in Arabic writing documents (Muslim theology), but still, the old traditions of office work (Uigur writing, a corresponding form and a typical Genghisid addressee) probably had formal legal supremacy until the last quarter of the 14th century (see Paizu Khan Abdallah).

3.3. The basic functions of bitikchi

The range of duties of scribes – bitikchi was wide enough and that was typical for this era. The main responsibility of the scribes was the documentation of the ruler decrees, diplomatic messages, decisions of the administrative apparatus, as well as the storage of documents. In addition to this basic clerical function, Khan's Chancellery dealt with financial and fiscal issues. The fiscal policy of Mongol khans implied the need to take into account taxable units, the fixing of taxes and receipts. For this purpose, population counts were conducted in the conquered areas (ABZALOV, 2011; NEBOLSIN, 1852). Also, the scribes could serve as translators.

3.4. Social status and origin of the scribes

At all times, high requirements were made for bitikchi. Khan's bitikchies were supposed to possess a wide range of knowledge and perfectly know calligraphy.

Presumably, non-Mongolian scribes prevailed in the Juchids' chancellery. In the initial stages, they were Uigurs, Kereites, Naimans, Khitans and Muslims, people from Central Asia (Persians and Turks). Genghisids realized the importance of the political potential of the Muslim community and could not use it to their advantage. Written sources are replete with the information about Muslims who served the Mongols, both in the nomadic hordes and in the settled agricultural

centers. The most famous among them was the clan Yalavachey (ALQARSHI, 2005).

Among the Muslims, it was the Persians who had a significant influence on the development of the UlusJuchi state. It is likely that already at the initial stages of the development of UlusJuchi in the Horde administration there were quite a few Armenians who carried out all sorts of assignments, translation and writing. It is obvious that Khan's administration also resorted to the help of the Russian population (CARPINI, 1997). Clerks of Kipchak origin, who, for example, served as translators, were represented in the Khan's Horde. Brother John, in his report, informs about two Kumah translators, Temer the Sangor (CARPINI, 1997). Possibly, they were Kypchak representatives who were Christianized (it explains their knowledge of Russian or Latin).

First of all, the Mongolian administration took into account the experience and abilities of the appointed officials, and knowledge of the Mongolian and Uighur languages. Uigur writing was one of the conditions for getting a position. The eloquent fact of this routine can be found in the works of Persian author ATA-MALIK JUVAINI (1226–1283):

KhojaFakhr ad-Din Bihishti died in the horde. His position was transferred to his son Hussam ad-Din Ami-Hussein, although he was younger than his other sons, because he could read Mongolian texts written in Uigur writing (CLEAVES, 1951: 374).

Knowledge in this area contributed to the rapid career growth of the official. Ata-Malik Juvaini wrote on this topic the following:

They consider Uigur language and writing as the peak of knowledge. Any market trader in the dress of unrighteousness becomes an emir; a mercenary - a minister [...] and any unfortunate - a secretary (JUVAINI, 2004: 92).

3.5. Official language and writing

It is likely that the Mongolian and Turk languages were used as official languages in the epoch of UlusJuchi formation. For obvious reasons, the Mongolian chancellery service practiced the duplication of official documents in languages available in a particular area of the state. Since the beginning of the XIII century, the official writing of Genghisids was the Uigur graphics, adopted by the Mongols in 1204. Along with the Uigur graphics, the Arabic writing found its use in the Golden Horde, which ultimately displaced the Uiguritsa from office work.

3.6. Documentation and design process

The materials at our disposal allow us to speak only about certain types of Juchi official documents. Perhaps the most famous among them are the labels and bitiki (letters of the message) of the Golden Horde khans. In addition to this the registry books – daftari

should be noted. The practice of registering of the most essential information for the state power was laid down by the founder of the Mongolian state (KOZIN, 1941).

The labels were one of the main types of official documents of Jochichancelleries. Very often the labels were the sources of law in UlusJuchi (POCHEKAEV, 2009). The assignment to the position of an ulus was accompanied by the issuance of a label and a payzi (JUVAINI, 2004).

Saved Golden Horde documents allow us to make a clear conclusion about the existence of certain norms for formalizing official documentation. Golden Horde labels were fairly simple in design and did not have any decorative excesses. Unlike the tradition of formalizing state acts of most eastern countries, the Golden Horde office culture did not involve the use of Tugri, which was primarily associated with the peculiarities of the Uigur writing. The origins of this tradition go back to Genghis Khan, who urged his sons to abandon the lush titulatura, which should also be manifested in the state materials (JUVAINI, 2004). Later, this requirement was confirmed by the great Guyuk khan (JUVAINI, 2004).

3.7. Scribes at work

Wilhelm de Rubruk reports that there were palaces for scribes in Karakorum: “there are large palaces belonging to the court secretaries”

(RUBRUCK, 1997: 161). Based on the available materials, it is difficult to talk about separate premises of the chancelleries in Sarai, but still, we have no serious reason to doubt their existence. Also, it can be said that all affairs were conducted in the homes of officials, where reception rooms for applicants could be arranged, as it was described by Ibn Battuta (GATINA & ABZALOVA, 2011).

In the nomadic horde, the scribes were located in separate yurts. Probably, there was some cooperation, and the bitikchis and other civilian officials were in a special place for them (on the left side), since it is known that the location of the yurts in the khan's horde regulated in accordance with the social hierarchy (RUBRUCK, 1997; CLAVIJO, 1990).

Obviously, most clerks worked in the open air, since the semi-dark yurt was poorly adapted for writing and reading. For comparison, you can refer to Franciscan Simon de Saint-Quentin, who wrote about how Pope Innocent IV read the letter in the camp of the Mongolian commander Baiju-noyon:

Then Brother Ascelin, with his three brothers, his translators and the scribes of the NoyonBiota, retired from the crowd of people around them to a place completely unprotected by shadow, and translated the message of Mr. Pope from word to word using other translators. The Persian notaries wrote what they had heard from Turkic and Greek translators and brothers (YURCHENKO, 2006: 103).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The chancellery traditions introduced by Genghisids in the Dasht-iKypchak steppes were preserved here for several centuries. The new chancellery canons found their wide distribution in the entire territory of UlusJuchi, which indicated the existence of a well-established management structure in the state, its uniformity, where the norms of office work defined by the supreme authority, where the composition and functions of these institutions were clearly defined. Thus, the chancellery culture of UlusJuchi was at a high level of development and was able to ensure the effective management of such a large and powerful state.

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