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## **Livonian Source Information about Tatars**

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**Abstract:**

*Relevance of the issue under study is caused by the necessity to expand the source of study database of the history and culture of Tatars of the 13th - 16th cent.*

*The purpose of the article lies in revealing the data about Tatars in the Livonian written sources of the XIII – XVI cent.*

*The main approach to the study of this issue is the problematic chronological approach. Main results of the study lay in the expansion and addition of the information on history and culture of the Ulus of Jochi (The Golden Horde) and of Tatar states – her heirs.*

*There are selected main groups of Livonian written sources. Materials may be useful for researchers of the Mongol Empire, the Golden Horde, the Tatar khanates of Eastern Europe.*

**Keywords:** *Livonian Order, Teutonic Order, the Golden Horde, the Ulus of Jochi, the Tatars.*

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## 1. Introduction

Tatars are considered one of the main turning points in the history of Eastern Europe. This historical period has always attracted the attention of historians and especially in the difficult and fatal time of major social and political transformations and upheavals. The urgency of the problem under investigation is due to the tendency in historical science of the reconsideration of the events of the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, caused by changes in the economic, political and socio-cultural spheres, in the theoretical and methodological methods of research. As is well known, a research of sources takes a paramount place in a study of history side by side with a publication of scientific articles, monographs and other works. This article is dedicated to the information of the Livonian historical sources about Tatars of XIII-XVI cent.

## 2. Methodological Framework

When writing this article, the descriptive narrative or narrative method was used. The usage of the method is caused by the scarcity of the using and analysis of the historical sources on history of Tatars, originating from remote from places of their compact residence in regions of Eurasia. In the course of working with source material, we used the following analysis methods: critical analysis, discourse analysis, etymological analysis. Livonian historical sources, which inform us about Tatars of that time, can be divided on two main groups: 1) narrative; 2) documental.

## 3. Results

Livonian historical sources, which inform us about Tatars of that time, can be divided on two main groups:

1. Narrative (The Livonian Chronicle of Henry, *Chronicon Livoniae* of Hermann von Wartberge, *Chronica der Provinz Lyfflandt* of Balthasar Rüssow);
2. Documental, which were published in the collections of C.E. Napiersky and F.G. von Bunge.

### 3.1 Narrative sources

#### 3.1.1 *The Livonian Chronicle of Henry*

The author of the opus «*Chronicon Livoniae*» is German priest Henry of Latvia (German: Heinrich von Lettland, Latin: Henricus de Lettis), originating perhaps from Magdeburg district by birth. Since his childhood he was already in Livonia. Henry died after 1259. The Livonian Chronicle of Henry was written in Latin ca. 1227. Perhaps, the opus was addressed to the papal legate William of Modena, who arrived in Livonia for solving land disputes between ecclesiastic and secular feudal lords (Henry of Latvia, 1938; Arbusow and Bauer, 1955). An information about Tatars of Henry of Latvia is given in Russian translation by S.A. Anninsky below.

Henry of Latvia in the spirit of the classic Middle Ages considers Tatar's actions as a divine instrument. So, about the death of unnamed prince of Novgorod obviously on Kalka river after 1221 the author writes: "Did not She [the Virgin Mary] send the death by the hands of the Tatars to another prince of Novgorod, who robbed Livonia for the second time?" The issue of what the prince had in mind Henry of Latvia, obviously cannot be solved. Perhaps several historical personalities were combined in this image (Henry of Latvia, 1938; Arbusow and Bauer, 1955). It seems that here should be an explanation. Which prince Henry of Latvia writes about? Perhaps this is about Vsevolod Yuryevich. In 1222 in the Novgorod Fourth Chronicle it is written that Vsevolod Yuryevich, the son of the Grand Duke of Vladimir Yuri Vsevolodovich, escaped from the city due to the conflicts with boyars (Novgorod Fourth Chronicle, 1915). Laurentian Codex takes this events to 1223 (Chronicle of the Laurentian list, 1897).

Henry of Latvia also gives an information about Tatar's actions in 1222/1223 on a territory of Eastern Europe, where we can see events of The Battle of the Kalka River. "That year [1222/23] on a land of Valvae heathens there were Tatars. Someone calls Valvae Parthos. They do not eat bread, but eat raw meat of their livestock. And the Tatars fought with them, and won them, and exterminate them all with a sword, but the others ran to Russians with a call of help. And an appeal ran through Russia for fighting with Tatars, and the kings from all over Russia came out against Tatars, but there was not enough power for the battle, and they escaped from their enemies. And the great King Mstislav of Kiev fell with forty thousand warriors that were with him.

The other King Mstislav Galician fled. About fifty remaining kings died in this battle. And Tatars chased them for six days and killed about hundred thousand people of their own (only God knows the exact number), the others fled [...]" (Henry of Latvia, 1938).

### *3.1.2 Chronicon Livoniale of Hermann von Wartberge*

Hermann von Wartberge (ca. 1330- ca. 1380) – a chaplain supposedly from Westphalia by birth, personally participated in crusades against heathens. The language of *Chronicon Livoniale* – Latin. The work dates to 1380. The Russian translation was made by Chehishin-Vetrinsky (1879a). The author also gives an information about Tatars. In 1358 in a story about negotiations of Grand Master's ambassadors with the Grand Duke of Lithuania on the issue of acceptance of Catholicism among other suggestions there was following: "Then, they required that the Order, for the sake of defending them from Tatar's attacks, was relocated to deserts between Tatars and Russians and that the Order should not hold the right to Russian, but the whole Russia was in property of Lithuania".

### *3.1.3 Chronica der Provinz Lyfflandt of Balthasar Rüssow*

Balthasar Rüssow (1536-1600) was a German (or Estonian) Christian preacher and a teacher in Revelle. His work he left in German – "Chronica der Provinz Lyfflandt".

The opus dates to 1584. The Russian translation was made by Chehishin-Vetrinsky (1879b).

Balthasar Rüssow, among other things, gives an information about Kazan and Astrakhan Khanates in his opus (Rüssow, 1848). In 1551 and 1552 Balthasar Rüssow describes the campaigns of Ivan the Terrible to Kazan. Characterizing Khanates of Volga river, author concludes: “Until both Tatar kings owned their kingdoms it was a great support and profit for Livonian. But after the conquest of these kingdoms, Moscovians became too strong not only for provinces of Livonia, but also for all other states”. “When Livonian estates heard about happiness of Moscovians and their victory over the Tatar kingdoms, they knew this well that here is the end of a lasting peace and from this moment everything will be bad for them.

The author also blames Livonians in death of Tatar states on Volga river: “Gunpowder and lead and various combat instruments were brought from Germany, German and Livonian merchants sold them to Moscovians plentifully, so from this moment Moscovians could conquer them and other nations with this ammunition. Besides, the data about Tatar revolt in Volga region against new regime of king of Moscow in 1580 was given. Describing events of Livonian War, Balthasar Rüssow claims many times about participation of Tatar squads as a part of Russian army against Livonians, describing their robberies and violence. At the same time the author deftly noticed that Shahghali (also Shah Ghaly or Shah Ali) is a “captive Tatar king”. It is mentioned about visit of Tatar embassy to Livonia in 1559 (obviously Crimean khan Devlet Geray), his campaign in Moscow in 1571, Crimean embassies in Sweden (1579,1581).

### **3.2. Documental sources**

*3.2.1 Index corporis historico-diplomatici Livoniae, Esthoniae, Curoniae; oder Kurzer Auszug aus derjenigen Urkunden-Sammlung, welche für Geschichte und das alte Staatsrecht Liv-, Ehst- und Kurland's. Riga; Dorpat, 1833–1835.*

A compiler of the collection of documents is a Livonian historian, corresponding member of St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences Carl Edward (Edward Yakovlevich) Napiersky (1793-1864). The language of edition is German.

In the collection we can find out next data about Tatars.

The message from Casimir the Great ca. 1343-1346, perhaps from Krakow, that seven Tatar princes are on the way to him for fighting against Lithuanians (Index corporis..., 1833-1835).

The message from 1397 from Dünaburg about the war between Tokhtamysh and Temür Qutluğ and about the shipment of mortars by Vytautas for the siege of Kiev. The message perhaps from 1399 about the conclusion of peace between Vytautas and Tatar emperor.

The message from 1400 about the embassy of new Tatar emperor to Vytautas (Index corporis..., 1833-1835).

The message from July 6th, 1412 from Trakai about the war of Vytautas with Tatars. News from 1418 that Vytautas succeeded in christianizing Tatars.

The message from 1420 about the intention of Vytautas to invade Livonia and Prussia by dint of eight thousand Tatar army.

The report from March 31st, 1421 from Dünaburg about Tatars leaving Lithuania, which broke up Švitrigaila, his thirty-captive people were sent to Vytautas, who ordered to decapitate them.

News from 1422 about the help of Tatar emperor to Vytautas while besieging Löbau (Index corporis..., 1833-1835).

The message from Švitrigaila from September 4th, 1432 from Polotsk that he had in his dispositions three Tatar generals (Index corporis..., 1833-1835).

News from April 20th, 1511 about successful negotiations between Kristof von Schleinitz and Mikhail Glinsky on counteractions of the Polish-Tatar rapprochement.

*3.2.2 Liv-, Esth- und Churländische Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten. Reval; Riga; Moskau; Hamburg, 1853 — 1958.*

A compiler of the collection is an Ostsee lawyer and historian, professor of The University of Tartu Friedrich-Georg (Fedor Andreevich) von Bunge (1802-1897). The language of edition is German and Latin.

In the collection we can find out next data about Tatars.

An appeal from July 15th, 1258 from a roman pope Alexander IV to preach in Prussia and Livonia the crusade against heathens and Tatars.

A statement from January 25th, 1260 from the roman pope Alexander IV about the non-recognition of the transfer of the lands of the Order to Russian-Tatar authority.

An appeal from September 9th, 1260 from the roman pope Alexander IV to margrave of Brandenburg to crusade against Tatars, an appeal to the Livonian clergy to preach the crusade against Tatars.

An appeal from April 8th, 1261 from the roman pope Alexander IV to bishops of Kujawy and Chelmno to help crusaders in Prussia and Livonia in a fight against Tatars.

Messages from December 3rd, 1340 of Prussian bishops about the danger of Tatar invasion in Prussia, Livonia and Courland.

News from July 4th, 1415 about the union of Vytautas with Tatar Kaiser.

The message from March 31st, 1421 from commander of Dünaburg about Tatar squads that left Lithuania.

#### 4. Discussions

Livonian historical sources were studied both Russian and German historians. First publishers of Livonian sources were Ostsee historians Johann Gottfried Arndt (1713-1767) (von Lettland, 1747; 1753), Carl Edward (Edward Yakovlevich) Napiersky (1793-1864) (Index corporis..., 1833-1835) and Friedrich Georg (Fedor Andreevich) von Bunge (1802-1897) (Liv-, Esth- und Churländische Urkundenbuch nebst Regesten (1853–1958)) and Edward Pabst (1815-1882) (Rüssow, 1848; Pabst, 1867). They contributed to the collection and publication of sources in history of Livonia. Livonian sources were studied by E.V. Cheshikhin-Vetrinsky in “Chronica der Provinz Lyfflandt of Balthasar Rüssow”, “Chronicon Livoniae of Hermann von Wartberge”, S.A. Anninsky (Henry of Latvia, 1938), Leonid Arbusow & Albert Bauer (1955). In this article the main attention was drawn to the data of Livonian sources about Tatars.

#### 5. Conclusion

Thus, we can notice that the information of Livonian written sources about Tatars XIII-XVI cent. is usually fragmentary. Despite this they give an opportunity to historians to expand their picture of political events in Eastern Baltic in XIII-XVI cent. and Tatars' role in them.

#### 6. Recommendations

The article's material is of interest for specialists, who study the history of Golden Horde, Tatar Khanates, Livonian and Teuton Orders, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Poland and Russia.

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