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THE PORT OF MAUROCASTRO, EMPEROR THEODORE SVETOSLAV AND THE TATAR ELITE IN THE PONTIC STEPPES**

Abstract: The article is dedicated to the question of the disputed Bulgarian rule over the Black sea port of Maurocastro at the beginning of the fourteenth century. On the basis of relevant sources, it is concluded that Maurocastro was in Bulgarian hands during 1314–1316. It has been argued that the establishment of Bulgarian rule ensued as a consequence of internal dissensions in the lands of the Golden Horde that followed the accession of Khan Mohammad Uzbek. A focus is placed also on the relations between Emperor Theodore Svetoslav and influential Tatar nobles in the western parts of the Pontic Steppes. A new hypothesis is proposed with respect to the origin of empress Euphrosyne, the wife of Theodore Svetoslav.

Keywords: Maurocastro, Theodore Svetoslav, Bulgaria, Tatars, the Golden Horde, Tokhta, Bulgarian Empress Euphrosyne, center – periphery

One of the most disputed and vexed questions in late medieval Bulgarian history is whether Emperor Theodore Svetoslav (1300–1322), and under which circumstances, controlled the Black Sea port of Maurocastro (Akkerman, Belgorod–Dnestrovskiy), situated at the mouth of the Dniester river.¹ According to the interpretation formulated some nine decades ago by Romanian

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¹ For the purpose of this text there is no need to delve into the question of existence of the two fortresses on the banks of the Lower Dniester near modern Belgorod, situated opposite to each other and named ‘White’ and ‘Black’ respectively, which could explain the variations of the name of the city in Latin and oriental sources. See: R. Velussi-Iosipescu,

scholar Gh. Brătianu and frequently repeated thereafter, it was Tokhta (1291–1312/3), khan of the Golden Horde, who gave Maurocastro to the Bulgarian ruler, along with the region between the Lower Danube and Dniester. It was allegedly a sign of gratitude for the elimination of Chaka, the son of khan's bitter enemy Nogai (1300/1).² Usually, it is assumed that Maurocastro stayed in Bulgarian hands during the rule of Theodore Svetoslav.³ However, some historians dismissed the earlier interpretations and completely rejected the possibility that the city was under the control of the Empire of Tarnovo; an example of such viewpoint is a short and punctual analysis, carried out by A. Kuzev.⁴

Sources

Before giving a brief overview of the sources related to this historiographical problem, we must emphasize that the issue itself has to be considered from the perspective of the frontier area of the Golden Horde and the Christian world, where the terms 'control' or 'sway' did not have the same meaning when used in relation to the coastal towns and their hinterland.⁵

Cetatea Albă, Cetatea Neagră, *Revista de Istorie Militară* 3–4 (2012) 18–24. (with cited sources and bibliography).

² Gh. Bătianu, *Les Bulgares à Cetatea Alba (Akkerman) au début du XIVe siècle*, *Byzantion* 2 (1926) 153–168; Gh. Bătianu, *Recherches sur Vicina et Cetatea Albă*, Bucharest 1935, 104–119 (=Bătianu, *Recherches*).

³ П. Ников, *Българи и татари въ средните векове*, Българска историческа библиотека 2 (1929) 138–139; П. Коледаров, *Политическа география на средновековната българска държава*, т. 2, 1186-1393, София 1989, 87–88; П. Павлов, *Бележки по въпроса за българско етническо и политическо присъствие в междуречието на Дунав и Днестр през XII-XIV в.*, Българите в северното причерноморие – изследвания и материали, т. I, Велико Търново 1992, 63; I. Vasary, *Cumans and Tatars – Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans 1185-1365*, Cambridge 2005, 161–162 (=Vasary, *Cumans and Tatars*); Г. Атанасов, *Добруджанско деспотство (към политическата, църковната, стопанската и културната история на Добруджа през XIV в.)*, Велико Търново 2009, 35–36. Some historians tried to extend chronology of the Bulgarian rule to the larger part of the century, see for example *История на България*, III, ed. С. Лишев, София 1981, 299.

⁴ А. Кузев, *Владял ли е цар Тодор Светослав над Маврокастро?*, *Годишник на Софийския Университет – Научен Център за Славяно-византийски проучвания “Иван Дуйчев”* 1 (1987) 101–106 (=Кузев, *Маврокастро*).

⁵ D. Deletant, *Genoese, Tatars and Romanians at the Mouth of Danube in the Fourteenth Century*, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 62/4 (1984) 516, n. 24 (=Deletant, *Genoese, Tatars and Romanians*).

Furthermore, as it was shown in the analysis of Kuzev, many sources on which researchers relied to corroborate the Bulgarian rule, have to be dismissed due to the wrong or inaccurate interpretation. Such is the case with the report of Arabic geographer Abulfeda (Isma'il Abul-Fida' al-Hamawi, 1273–1331). He wrote that the city of Akchakerman, that is Maurocastro, is situated in the lands of 'Bulgars and Turks', i.e. Tatars.⁶ However, in the work of the Arabic writer the name 'Bulgars' is consistently related to Volga Bulgars, while for their Danubian counterparts, Abulfeda constantly employed the term 'Vlachs' (al-awlak).⁷ The same may be said for many portolans and maps, originated in the Italian and Maiorcan cartographical school of the fourteenth century. They mark the name Bulgaria in the area north of the Danube,⁸ but not a single one of them depicts Maurocastro as a Bulgarian port (quite the contrary, as it will be shown further on).

Another proposed argument in favor of the hypothesis is a mention of Belgorod among 'the Bulgarian and Wallachian places' in a fifteenth century Slavic text, called 'The list of far and nearby Russian cities' (*Список русских городов дальних и ближних*).⁹ However, in this source, Belgorod is not mentioned as a Bulgarian, but as a Wallachian city,¹⁰ which is obviously a reminiscence of the Moldavian rule over the Black Sea port at the end of the fourteenth century.¹¹

⁶ *Géographie d'Aboulféda: texte arabe publié d'après les manuscrits de Paris et de Leyde*, ed. P. Reynaud, II/1, Paris 1848, 317 (=Aboulfeda/Reinaud); И.Г. Коновалова, *Восточная Европа в сочинениях арабских географов XIII-XIV вв. – текст, перевод, комментарий*, Москва 2009, 120 (=Коновалова, *Восточная Европа*).

⁷ Aboulfeda/Reinaud, II/1, 288–289, 316, 318; Коновалова, *Восточная Европа*, 113, 119.

⁸ П. Коледаров, *Втората българска държава в старинните карти от XIII-XIV век*, Векове 4 (1975) 17, 20.

⁹ В. Гюзелев, *Българските земи в чуждестранните географски представи през XIII – началото на XV век*, Военноисторически Сборник 2 (1984) 24.

¹⁰ 'На Дунаи, Видычев град, о седми стенах каменных, Мдин. И об ону страну Дунаа. Тернов, ту лежить святаа Пятница. А по Дунаю, Дрествин. Дичин, Килиа. А на усть Дунаа, Новое село. Аколякра. На море, Карна. Каварна. А на сей стороне Дунаа. На усть Днестра над морем, Бельгород. Черн, Ясьскыйи торг на Пруте реце. Романов торг на Молдове. Немечь в горах. Корочюнов камен. Сочява. Серет. Баня. Чечюнь. Коломыя. Городок на Черемоше. На Днестре Хотень. А се болгарскыйи и волоскыйи гради', М.Н. Тихомиров, *Русское летописание*, Москва 1979, 94, 99.

¹¹ Cf. A. Ghiața, *Formations politiques au bas Danube et a la Mer Noire (fin du XIII – XV s.)*, *Revue des études sud-est européennes* 24 (1986) 36; Deletant, *Genoese, Tatars and Romanians*, 526sq; Vasary, *Cumans and Tatars*, 164–165.

Somewhat dubious evidence is recorded in the Franciscan tradition, describing the martyrdom of friar Angelo of Spoleto in the city by Bulgarians in 1314.¹² Naturally, presence of Bulgarians in the city does not exclusively signify their political control. Besides, there is a possibility that the perpetrators were Bulgars settled from the Middle Volga region. It is striking that, according to the words of Abulfeda, the inhabitants of the city were ‘infidels’, as well as Muslims.¹³ Archaeological finds also point out to the existence of the emigrants from the East in medieval Belgorod.¹⁴

Last, but certainly not least important testimony is a well-known decree of Genoese chancery of Gazaria, issued on March 22, 1316. The decree forbade traders to go to *Zagora* (Bulgaria) whose emperor, despite the assurances given to the commissioner Barnabas de Moniardino, refused to provide compensation for the damage done ‘in Mau[r]ocastro as well as elsewhere’.¹⁵ The critics used the fact that the city is mentioned in the somewhat corrupted form – Mauocastro. They tried to identify the place with the port of Emona (Emanocastro?), north of Mesembria (modern Nesebar),¹⁶ or with a small

¹² ‘Item, in Mauro Castro, frater Angelus de Spoleto, tunc custos fratrum, interemptus est per Bulgaros’, G. Golubovich, *Biblioteca Bio-Bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell’Oriente Francese*, II, Quaracchi – Firenze 1913, 72; P. Хаутала, *Исламизация татар согласно латинским источникам конца XIII – первой половины XIV века*, Ислам и власть в Золотой орде, edd. И.М. Миргалеев – Э.Г. Сайфетдинова, Казань 2012, 39, 57; P. Хаутала, *Два письма францисканцев из Крыма 1323 года: латинский текст, русский перевод и комментарии*, Золотоордынская цивилизация 7 (2014) 91, 96.

¹³ Aboulfeda/Reinaud, II/1, 317; Коновалова, *Восточная Европа*, 120; J. Bromberg, *Toponymical and Historical Miscellanies on Medieval Dobrudja, Bessarabia and Moldo-Wallachia*, Byzantion 13 (1938) 65–66 (=Bromberg, *Miscellanies*); I. Dujčev, *Medioevo Bizantino-slavo*, I, Roma 1965, 406–413 (=Dujčev, *Medioevo Bizantino-slavo*); Кузев, *Маврокастро*, 102.

¹⁴ А.А. Кравченко, *Средневековый Белгород на Днестре (конец XIII – XIV в.)*, Киев 1986, 20sq, 115–116.

¹⁵ ‘Deuetum de non eundo a Zagora: nobilis vir Bernabos de Monyardino ciuis Ianuae abaxator... accessit pro parte dicti comunis ad dominum Fedixclauum Dei gracia imperatorem et dominatorem Burgarie ad requirendum emendacionem de dampnis illactis Ianuensibus in terris subdictis dicto domino imperatori tam in Mauocastro quam alibi.’, *Monumenta historiae Patriae edita jussu regis Caroli Alberti*, ed. L. Cibrario, Augustae Taurinorum 1838, col. 382; *Árpádkori új okmánytár – Codex diplomaticus Arpadianus continuatus*, ed. G. Wenzel, VIII, Pest 1870, 469.

¹⁶ К. Иречек. *История на българите, с поправки и добавки от самия автор*, ред. П. Петров, София 1978, 337, n. 12; Кузев, *Маврокастро*, 103–104.

harbor of Mauro, situated south of Varna.¹⁷ These attempts are nothing but conjectures, lacking solid ground, especially in the light of the fact that the name of the city was frequently written in corrupted forms. Striking examples are the forms ‘Mauro Castro’ on the map of Angelino Dulcert (1339), and ‘Maocastro’, recorded in the famous trading manual of Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, written around 1340.¹⁸ According to one opinion, while there is no doubt that the Genoese document refers to the port on the mouth of the Dniester, it is possible that the Bulgarians who made damage to Genoese traders were present there as a detachment under Tatar command.¹⁹ This interpretation cannot be accepted either; namely, the decree claims that the damage was done in the lands subjected ‘to the emperor of Zagora’.

Therefore, the decree itself provides an indisputable indication that the Bulgarian ruler held Maurocastro in 1316. If one takes into account the martyrdom of Angelino of Spoleto as another sign of Bulgarian rule (or at least their presence) in Maurocastro, it may be concluded that the city was indeed in the hands of Theodore Svetoslav in the middle of the second decade of the fourteenth century.

Role of Khan Tokhta

At the end of the thirteenth century, a civil war erupted in the Golden Horde, between the young khan Tokhta and his older cousin Nogai, who ruled the steppe region on the northern coasts of the Black Sea. Tokhta managed to defeat and kill his opponent in late 1299. Afterwards, he made decisive steps in order to establish direct control in the lands of his adversary. Tokhta’s first move was to invest his brother Sarai-Buka ‘at Nogai’s place’, i.e. as the commander of the western wing of the Golden Horde. After he joined forces with Nogai’s youngest son Turai in an attempt to overthrow the central government in Sarai – which eventually led to their downfall (in 1301/02) – the khan decided to send two of his sons to the west. Older Ilbasar eventually took the position enjoyed previously by Sarai-Buka, while younger Tukul-Buka

¹⁷ Bromberg, *Miscellanies*, 64

¹⁸ А.Л Бертье-Делагард, *К вопросу о местонахождении Маврокастро* “*Записки готского топарха*”, *Записки Одесского общества истории и древностей* 33 (1919) 14–15; Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, *La pratica della mercatura*, ed. A. Evans, Cambridge MA 1936, 42; L. Rădvan, *At Europe’s Borders. Medieval Towns in the Romanian Principalities*, Leiden 2010, 473sq.

¹⁹ V. Spinei, *Moldavia in the 11th – 14th Centuries*, Bucharest 1986, 124 (=Spinei, *Moldavia*).

established himself in Sakchi (modern Isaccea) ‘on the [Lower] Danube and in the lands stretching as far as the Iron Gates’.²⁰

Earlier scholarship has shown beyond doubt that during the first decade of the fourteenth century, the left bank of the Danube remained under Tatar direct control. The Tatar mint in Sakchi worked intermittently up to 711 A.H. (1311/12).²¹ At that time the monetary reform was carried out in the lands of the Golden Horde,²² and according to one view, its reflection can be even seen on coins minted in Bulgaria during the reign of Theodore Svetoslav.²³ The Bulgarian ruler was elevated to the power with the Tatar support and he remained loyal to Tokhta until the end of his reign. That the Empire of Tarnovo remained part of the sphere of influence of the Golden Horde is recorded by western,²⁴ as well as Arabic contemporaries. The latter stated that all lands from Caucasian Derbend and Khwarism to Constantinople had been under the sway of Tokhta.²⁵ Even the westernmost Bulgarian state – the Principality of Vidin that managed to secure its independence despite the aspirations of Theodore Svetoslav, remained in the Tatar orbit. Its tributary status towards the Tatars is recorded in a Latin anonymous contemporary source conventionally titled *Descriptio Europae Orientalis*.²⁶

Taking these circumstances into account, even if one accepts the possibility that Tokhta would relinquish parts of his territories willingly, it is not plausible to suppose that he would cede the basin of the Lower Dniester to

²⁰ В.Г. Тизенгаузен, *Сборник материалов, относящихся к истории Золотой Орды*, т. I, *Извлечения из арабских источников*, Санкт-Петербург 1884, 117, 161, 384 (Baybars al-Mansūrī, al-Nuwayri, Ibn Khaldun, = Тизенгаузен, I).

²¹ E. Oberländer-Târnoveanu, *Byzantino-tartarica – Le monnayage dans la zone des bouches du Danube à la fin du XIIIe et au commencement du XIVe siècle*, *Il Mar Nero: Annali di archeologia e storia* II, Roma 1996, 193.

²² А.Г. Мухамадиев, *Булгаро-татарская монетная система в XII – XV вв.*, Москва 1983, 62–67.

²³ С. Авдев, *Монетната система в Средновековна България през XIII-XIV в.*, София 2005, 104–112.

²⁴ P. Gautier Dalché, *Une géographie provenant du milieu des marchands toscans (début du XIVe siècle)*, in: idem, *L'espace géographique au Moyen Âge*, Firenze 2013, 176.

²⁵ Тизенгаузен, I, 197, 206, 447 (al-Muffadal, al-Zahabi, al-Assadi).

²⁶ ‘Sedes autem imperii dicti est apud Budinium [=Vidin], ciuitatem magnam. Imperatores autem eiusdem imperii omnes uocantur Cysmani... Vacillante autem vngaria tartari preoccupauerunt dictum imperium et fecerunt eum sibi tributarium; nunc seruit tartaris sub tributo’, *Anonymi Descriptio Europae Orientalis: „Imperium Constantinopolitanum, Albania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Ruthenia, Ungaria, Polonia, Bohemia., anno MCCCVIII exarata*, ed. O. Górká, Cracoviae 1916, 38, 39–40.

his dependant, thereby breaking a direct link between the Danube delta and Pontic steppes. Therefore, his role in the establishment of Bulgarian rule over Maurocastro has to be dismissed.²⁷ Another opinion, according to which joint Bulgarian-Tatar condominium was established in the region under the Tokhta's auspices can hardly be accepted. It does not have any foundation in the sources and represents nothing else than a conjecture in an attempt to reconcile two, at first glance, contradictory, but chronologically simultaneous facts: Tatar rule in Sakchi in the Danube Delta and Bulgarian control over Maurocastro to the northeast. But do they really contradict each other? As it was pointed out, Bulgarian rule in Maurocastro is documented in the time span of 1314–1316, while Tokhta died as early as 712 A.H. (1312/13).²⁸

Internal Dissensions in the Golden Horde

The accession to power of Tokhta's successor and nephew, Mohammad Uzbek (1313–1341), was marked with strong internal dissensions in the Tatar domains. Among the victims of the purge that the new ruler conducted, the sources mention one of Tokhta's sons, numerous 'bakhshis' and 'magicians' and one hundred and twenty influential members of the Tatar elite.²⁹ Followed by the bloody struggle in Sarai, the beginnings of the reign of Uzbek further led to the disturbances in Western steppes, where two emirs Taz and Tonguz conspired to overthrow him. According to Arabic writers Ibn Dukmāk (1308–1388) and Al-Ayni (1360–1453), their discontent was caused by the religious policies of the new khan and his adherence to the Islamic faith. Be that as it may, the rebellion spread, but Uzbek eventually defeated and killed the rebellious leaders, as well as other influential magnates who supported them.³⁰

²⁷ V. Ciocîltan, *Hegemonia hoardei de Aur la Dunărea de Jos (1301-1341)*, Revista Istorica: Serie nouă 5/11–12 (1994) 1102sq; Кузев, *Маврокастро*, 104.

²⁸ Тизенгаузен, I, 174, 197, 206 (al-Birzālī, al-Muffadal, al-Zahabi); *История Казахстана в персидских источниках*, т. III, *Му'изз ал-Ансаб*, edd. Ш.Х. Вохидов et al., Алматы 2006, Р.Ю. Почекаев, *Цари Ордынские: Биографии ханов и правителей Золотой Орды*, Санкт-Петербург 2010, 288, n. 185 (=Почекаев, *Цари Ордынские*).

²⁹ Тизенгаузен, I, 197, 206 (al-Muffadal, al-Zahabi); В.Г. Тизенгаузен, *Сборник материалов, относящихся к истории Золотой Орды*, т. II, *Извлечения из персидских сочинений, собранные В. Г. Тизенгаузенем и обработанные А. А. Ромасевичем и С. Л. Волиным*, Москва – Ленинград 1941, 100, 141; Г.А. Федоров-Давыдов, *Общественный строй Золотой Орды*, Москва 1973, 103–105.

³⁰ Тизенгаузен, I, 323, 516. (Ibn Dukmāk, Al-Ayni); D. DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*, University Park PA 1994, 118, 120; Почекаев, *Цари Ордынские*, 290, n. 193.

It is not precisely known how long Taz and Tonguz managed to hold the ground against the central power, but it is conspicuous that khan's mint in Azak was opened in 1317 and numismatic finds suggest that Uzbek managed to establish his control in the area between the Don and Dnieper at that time.³¹

Taz and Tonguz are not unknown historical figures. They played an important role in the turbulent events that shaped political realities in the Pontic Steppes at the end of the thirteenth century. Taz belonged to the group of Tatar leaders who abandoned Tokhta's cause and defected to Nogai in 1297. He married Nogai's daughter Tugulja and thus became his son-in-law.³² After 1299, he joined his forces with Nogai's emir Tonguz in order to overthrow Chaka, who proclaimed himself khan after his father's death. Being defeated, they switched sides and joined Tokhta again. Since they were powerful enough to rebel against central government in 1313, it may be supposed that the khan bestowed them some possessions in the Western Steppes. A vivid testimony of their activities in the Prut-Dniester interfluvium is preserved in the two local toponyms – village and river Tazlău and settlement Tungujeni near Iași.³³

The rebellion of Taz and Tonguz and indications of Bulgarian rule in Maurocastro are referred to in the sources approximately at the same time. When these circumstances are taken into account, the issue of Bulgarian control over the Black Sea port can be discussed in a new light – not only through the analysis of the internal dissensions in the lands of the Golden Horde, but also of relations between the Bulgarian emperor and the Tatar elite in Dasht-i Kipchak.

Ties between Theodore Svetoslav and the Tatar Elite

It is now time to turn our attention to the early years of the life of Theodore Svetoslav, when he was also present in the lands north of the Danube. It was usually supposed that the Bulgarian prince was a hostage, sent by his father emperor George I Terter (1280–1292) to Nogai after 1285; however, there are some indications that he was in fact a political refugee.³⁴ Leaving the

³¹ Н.М. Фомичев, *Джучидские монеты из Азова*, Советская археология 1 (1981) 239; Ф. Шабурдо, *Земли Югозападной Руси в составе великого княжества Литовского*, Киев 1987, 21.

³² *Тизенгаузен*, I, 109 (Baybars al-Mansūrī).

³³ V. Spinei, *The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads North of the Danube Delta from the Tenth to the Mid-Thirteenth Century*, Leiden – Boston 2009, 320.

³⁴ P. Diaconu, *À propos des soi-disant monnaies de Jacob Sviatoslav*, Добруджа 12 (1995) 242–256; А. Узелац, *Под сенком Пса – Татари и јужнословенске земље у другој половини XIII века*, Београд 2015, 199–204.

issue of his status aside, it should be noted that he was present in Chaka's camp after Nogai's defeat, together with Taz and Tonguz. Consequently, the Bulgarian prince must have maintained relations with influential Tatar leaders at the time.

As mentioned previously, Taz and Tonguz rebelled against Chaka as soon as he proclaimed himself the new khan. Defeated in the pitched battle which took place somewhere in 'the land of As' (i.e. Alans, probably southern Moldavia), they received help from Tokhta, who sent his brother Burluk with an army to help the rebels.³⁵ It turned out to be a decisive moment for Chaka, who, faced with superior opponents, decided to cross the Danube and to secure his new base with the help of Theodore Svetoslav. However, he was captured and eventually murdered in the Bulgarian capital of Tarnovo by the newly proclaimed Bulgarian emperor, who, as Arabic writers clearly state, acted on Tokhta's orders.³⁶ It seems quite logical to suppose that during these events the contacts between Theodore Svetoslav and the khan in Sarai were conducted via intermediaries, i.e. khan's representatives in the lands north of the Danube: his brother Burluk and renegades Taz and Tonguz.

Earlier, during his stay in Nogai's lands, occurred yet another important event in the life of Theodore Svetoslav. Byzantine historian Pachymeres relates how the Bulgarian prince, finding himself in poverty, met a certain prosperous merchant named Pantholeon. He eventually concluded a marriage with the merchant's granddaughter Euphrosyne, whose father was a certain Mankous (Μαγκούσης), and whose godmother was the namesake Byzantine princess and Nogai's wife.³⁷ Another testimony about this marriage is recorded by Egyptian historian Baybars al-Mansūrī and repeated by his

³⁵ *Тизенгаузен*, I, 116–117 (Baybars al-Mansūrī).

³⁶ *Тизенгаузен*, I, 117, 161 (Baybars al-Mansūrī, al-Nuwayri); *Abulfedae Annales Muslemici Arabice et Latine*, ed. J. Reiske, V, Hafniae 1794, 176–177. On these events see: also Georges Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, III, ed. A. Failler, Corpus fontium historiae Byzantinae XXIV/3, Paris 1999, 290–293 (=Pachymeres/Failler); E. Oberlander-Târnoveanu, *Numismatical Contributions to the History of South-Eastern Europe at the End of the 13th Century*, *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* 26 (1987) 245–258; П. Павлов, *Бележки към събитията в България и в средновековната столица Търново в края на XIII – началото на XIV в.*, Търновска книжовна школа 5 (1994) 527–534; П. Павлов, *Бил ли е татаринът Чака български цар?*, Историческо бъдеще 1–2 (1999) 71–75; Vasary, *Cumans and Tatars*, 94–96.

³⁷ Pachymeres/Failler, III, 290–291; A. Failler, *Euphrosyne – l'épouse du tsar Théodore Svetoslav*, *BZ* 78 (1985) 92–93; П. Павлов, *Теодор Светослав, Ногай и търговецът Пандолеон*, Историко-археологически изследвания в памет на проф. др. Станчо Ваклинов, Велико Търново 1994, 177–185; К. Кръстев, *Българското царство при династията на Тертеревци (1280-1323)*, Пловдив 2011, 105–106 (=Кръстев, *Тертеревци*).

continuator al-Nuwayri; according to them, ‘the ruler of the Vlachs’ was married with a cousin of Chaka.³⁸ This information is often interpreted as the reflection of marriage between Chaka and daughter of George I Terter (sister of Theodore Svetoslav), also concluded after 1285. However, it needs to be borne in mind that Baybars al-Mansūrī was well-informed on the events in the Pontic steppes and it is hard to conceive that he could have made such a mistake.³⁹ Consequently, if his testimony is accepted, it has to be concluded that Euphrosyne, the first wife of Theodore Svetoslav, belonged to the highest circle of steppe aristocracy and that she was related to Chaka (and Nogai).

As some researchers pointed out, the name of the bride’s father, recorded by Pachymeres is just a grecisized form of a Turkic-Mongol name – either Mongke or Mangush.⁴⁰ It would be futile to search for the person bearing either of these names among Nogai’s nobles and military commanders, enumerated in the works of Arabic writers. However, there is one man whose personal name can be at least remotely connected to the father of the Bulgarian empress mentioned by Pachymeres and who was also related to Nogai and Chaka. It was a certain Manjuk/Munjuk (منجك), for whom nothing is known, but the name and the fact that he was the father of Nogai’s son-in-law – none other than Taz.⁴¹

Euphrosyne, the wife of Theodore Svetoslav and mother of the last descendant of the Terter dynasty George II (1322–1323) was remembered as a pious empress in Bulgarian tradition.⁴² Baptized on the court of Nogai, by his Greek wife, she was undoubtedly of Tatar or half-Tatar origin and his relative,⁴³

³⁸ *Тизенгаузен*, I, 117, 161 (Baybars al-Mansūrī, al-Nuwayri).

³⁹ Credibility of the report of Egyptian historian is accepted by Кръстев, *Тертеревци*, 109–110. Possible source of information of Baybars al-Mansūrī is discussed in: А.А. Порсин, *Источник информации Рукн ад-Дина Бейбарса в освещении им междуособной войны в Золотой Орде в конце XIII - начале XIV веков*, Золотоордынское обозрение 4 (2015) 29-53.

⁴⁰ Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica – Die Byzantinischen Quellen Der Geschichte Der Türkvölker*, II, Leiden 1983², 179; Pachymeres/Failler, III, 291, n. 83; Кръстев, *Тертеревци*, 226.

⁴¹ *Тизенгаузен*, I, 109, 323 (Baybars al-Mansūrī, Ibn Dukmāk). The man of the same name is mentioned among Tokhta’s ‘noyons’ in 1299, but whether he was the same person as the father of Taz, remains unclear, cf. *Тизенгаузен*, I, 113 (Baybars al-Mansūrī).

⁴² Ъ. Иванов, *Поменици на български царе и царици*, Известия на историческото дружество в София 4 (1915) 222, 226; *Синодик царя Борила*, ed. М.Г. Попруженко, София 1928, 88.

⁴³ Pantholeon, Euphrosyne’s grandfather by maternal side was Christian, but his ethnicity is not known. Considering numerous examples of Christianized Cumans and Tatars in the Black Sea ports, it is not certain that he was Greek or Genoese, as some historians supposed. However, it is possible that he is also mentioned in a Genoese document

but probably not by blood. As we have seen, there is a strong possibility that she was in fact a daughter of Manjuk, and (half?) sister of the influential Tatar noble Taz who was Nogai's son-in-law and leader of the rebellion against khan Uzbek after 1313. The hypothesis, based on the genealogical material preserved in sources and the identification *Mankous* – *Manjuk* also presents a conjecture, but one that is not without foundation. Moreover, the possible origin of Euphrosyne could explain the Bulgarian activities at the mouth of the Dniester and ties between Theodore Svetoslav and local Tatar elite in the Western Steppes in the middle of the second decade of the fourteenth century. What is certain, it should be taken into account in the future studies of the Bulgarian-Tatar relations and political conditions in the Western steppes during this turbulent era.

Restoration of the Tatar Sphere of Influence

Even if one disregards the previously emphasized possibility about the relationship between Theodore Svetoslav and Taz, it is evident that the establishment of the Bulgarian rule in Maurocastro did not have anything in common with an allegedly benevolent attitude of khan Tokhta. It did not take place in Tokhta's lifetime, but during the struggle between the center and the periphery in the lands of the Golden Horde that followed the khan's death, i.e. at the time of the rebellion of Taz and Tonguz against the central power in Sarai.

Moreover, it is certain that, like the conflict between the khan Uzbek and the Tatar separatist leaders, the Bulgarian rule in Maurocastro also proved to be short-lived. Even before the end of the reign of Theodore Svetoslav, the port was again under the Tatar control. Conspicuously, as early as in 1318, a bull of Pope John XXII, determining the domains of the bishop of Kaffa in Tatar lands (*ad partes Tartarorum*), stated that they stretched from Varna in Bulgaria to Sarai (*a villa de Varia in Bulgaria usque Saray inclusive in longitudine*).⁴⁴ In a document from 1323, containing the list of franciscan monasteries in the lands of 'Northern Tartars', those in Maurocastro and

dating from 1281, where financial activities of certain Pantaleo de Vicina are mentioned, Brătianu, *Recherches*, 48, 173; V. Ciocîltan, *The Mongols and the Black Sea Trade in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, trans. S. Willcocks, Leiden – Boston 2012, 260.

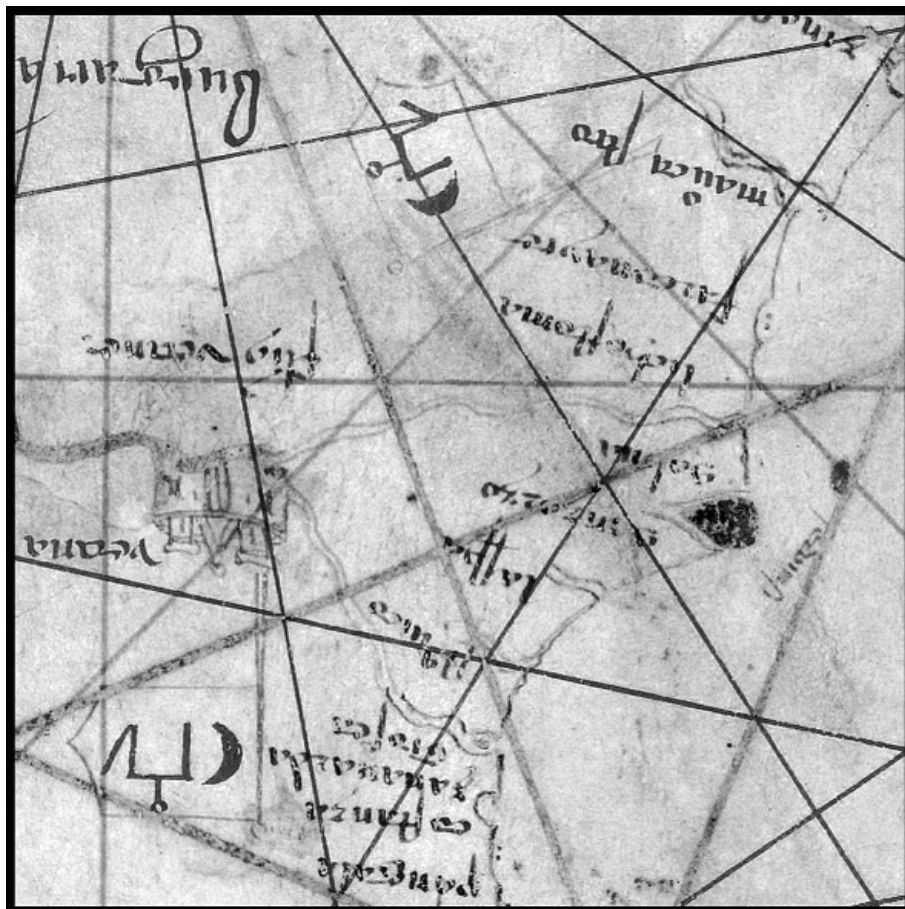
⁴⁴ L. Waddingus, *Annales minorum seu trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, VI, Romae 1783, 549; *Caesaris Baronii Annales ecclesiastici denuo excusi et ad nostra usque tempora perducti*, ed. A. Theiner, XXIV, Romae 1871, 187; Dujčev, *Medioevo Bizantino-slavo*, 404; Spinei, *Moldavia*, 124–125.

Vichina are recorded.⁴⁵ Arabic writer al-Umari enumerates Tuna (Danube) and Torlu (Dnieper) among the rivers that flow through the ‘Khanate of Kipchak’, stating in addition that Akchakerman was one of the Tatar cities.⁴⁶ Further evidence of the restoration of Tatar rule can be found on contemporary maps of Italian and Majorcan cartographical school; it is not accidental that on the map of Pietro Vesconte (1321) and mappamundi of Angelino Dulcert banners with Mongol tamghas stand above Maurocastro. There is no need to delve further into records of direct Tatar rule over Maurocastro and the Danube delta during the later part of the Uzbek’s reign. It will be sufficient to note that from 1321 onwards the Empire of Tarnovo was firmly under the sway of khan Uzbek. Restoration of the central power of the Golden Horde on the fringes of the western steppes signalled the beginning of a new era of the Tatar expansion towards the Balkans.⁴⁷ For the next two decades, Bulgarian-Tatar relations were strengthened and the Golden Horde again assumed the dominant political and military role in Southeastern Europe.

⁴⁵ ‘In Tartaria Aquilonari fratres minores habent monasteria immobilia 18, in civitatibus et villis infra scriptis, videlicet: in vicina iuxta danubiu. In Mauro Castro. In Cersona’, Brătianu, *Recherches*, 57; Spinei, *Moldavia*, 125; А. Б. Мальшев, *Сообщение анонимного минорита о миссионерских пунктах францисканцев в Золотой орде в XIV в.*, *Археология восточно-европейской степи* 4 (2007) 187.

⁴⁶ *Тизенгаузен*, I, 236–237 (al-Umari).

⁴⁷ *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri IV*, I, ed. L. Schopen, Bonnae 1828, 188–189; A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins – The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II 1282-1328*, Cambridge-Massachusetts 1972, 281; Vasary, *Cumans and Tatars*, 123.



MAUROCASTRO (MAUO CASTRO),
map of Angelino Dulcert (1339)

Александар Узелац

**ЛУКА МАВРОКАСТРО, ЦАР ТЕОДОР СВЕТОСЛАВ
И ТАТАРСКА ЕЛИТА ЦРНОМОРСКИХ СТЕПА**

Резиме

Тема овог прилога је питање бугарске власти над црноморском луком Маврокастро почетком XIV века. Према често понављаном мишљењу, бугарски цар Теодор Светослав добио је Маврокастро и околно подручје смештено североисточно од делте Дунава од Токте (1291–1312/3), кана Златне хорде, у знак захвалности због уклањања његовог политичког противника, Ногајевог сина Чаке. Анализа извора, спроведена у овом тексту, показује да је такво мишљење неосновано, али у исто време и да се критика појединих историчара који су у потпуности одбацивали постојање бугарске власти над Маврокастром, не може прихватити. На основу анализе извора, може се закључити да је Маврокастро био под бугарском влашћу између 1314–1316, односно у време након смрти кана Токте када је уследила нова епоха унутрашње нестабилности у земљама Златне хорде.

Теодор Светослав је током боравка у Ногајевим областима крајем XIII века успоставио везе са утицајним представницима локалне татарске елите. Он се тада оженио Татарком Еуфросином, чија је кума била истоимена Ногајева византијска супруга. Чињеница да је потоња бугарска царица била у сродству са Ногајем до сада је углавном била занемарена у историографији. На основу посредних података у изворима, у овом тексту је представљена хипотеза сагласно којој је она била сестра или полусестра татарског заповедника Таза, Ногајевог зета који је у одсудном тренутку прешао на страну Токте, а након његове смрти дигао побуну против његовог наследника Узбека. Уколико се она прихвати, краткотрајна бугарска власт над Маврокастром у турбулентним годинама које су уследиле након Токтиног одласка са историјске позорнице могла би се управо објаснити блиским везама између бугарског владара и утицајних представника татарске елите у црноморским степима.

Кључне речи: Маврокастро, Теодор Светослав, Бугарска, Татари, Златна хорда, Токта, бугарска царица Еуфросина, центар – периферија

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