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THE UMDET ÜL-AHBAR AND THE TURKIC NARRATIVE SOURCES FOR THE GOLDEN HORDE AND THE LATER GOLDEN HORDE

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in memory of Tibor Halasi-Kun (1914-1991)

A series of Turkic narrative sources have come down to us from the Later Golden Horde, the period of the successor states to the Golden Horde including the xanates of the Crimea, Kasimov, Kazan, and other political units in the 15th-18th centuries.¹ These narrative sources, mostly chronicles, are of fundamental importance for the study of the history of western Eurasia in the 13th-18th centuries. As most of these works are still available only in the original Turkic, they remain inaccessible and sometimes even unknown to the mainstream of modern scholarship.² It seems appropriate, therefore, to briefly survey these historical writings together with a closer examination of one particular work, the Umdet ül-ahbar. It is hoped that such a survey will encourage the integration of Turkic sources into the study of the history of the states of western Eurasia.

If we consider the various factors which might be seen as contributing towards the development of a major tradition of court historiography in this period, the Golden Horde did, in fact, incorporate some of these. One may argue—contrary to the view of Schurmann³—that a strong centralized state

¹For Islamic Turkic narrative historical works written in these states see the references in A. Bennigsen et al., Le khanat de Crimée dans les Archives du Musée du Palais de Topkapi (Paris, 1978), pp. 410-414; A. Temir, "Die alten Quellen der kasan- und nord-türkischen Literatur (bis zum XIX. Jahrhundert)", Studies in General and Oriental Linguistics. Presented to Shirô Hattori on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday, ed. R. Jakobson and S. Kawamoto (Tokyo, 1970), pp. 12-26, especially pp. 617-621; and M.A. Usmanov, Tatarskie istorièeskie istorièniki XVII-XVIII vv. (Kazan, 1972). I have chosen to focus on sources for the Golden Horde from the successor xanates within the same territories, since the sources for this area are not known as well as the rich corpus of sources from Xwarezan and the other regions of Central Asia.


power did develop. Numerous urban centers, including over time several capitals, also existed. Finally, we know from the famous traveler Ibn Batūta and other sources that these urban centers served as home to religious institutions and the learned groups usually associated with them. At the same time, certain factors worked against the florescence of a literary culture and its preservation. The Black Death, which struck the territories of the Golden Horde late in the 1340s, must have included a very high proportion of the learned groups in its heavy human toll. The attacks on urban centers in the second half of the 14th century, the final Russian conquest of many cities, and the later history of fires in cities such as Kazan were also devastating in terms of the survival of a literary heritage. This may help explain why much of what survives of the literary culture of the cities of the Golden Horde has come down to us from outside the territories of the Golden Horde.

When enumerating the products of the Turkic literary culture in western Eurasia in this period, the best-known examples are the edicts and diplomatic correspondence collectively known as yarlıqs. These are not strictly speaking narrative sources and survive in original Turkic versions only from the end of the 14th century. This does not mean however, that there were no internal documents written before the end of the 14th century. Yarlıqs issued as early as the 13th century are preserved in translations into Russian and other languages.

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4 A catalog of the urban centers of the Golden Horde may be found in V.L. Egorov, Istoričeskaya geografiya Zolotoy Ordı v XIII-XIV vv. (Moscow, 1985), pp. 75-150.


7 Usmanov, Tatarskie istoriceskie istochniki, pp. 9-12.

from the original "Mongolian" (which could also mean Turkic in the Mongolian script which the Mongols borrowed from the Uyğurs). These translated documents offer the best evidence of an earlier literary culture which has not survived in the original.

A small number of bellettristic and religious work are also connected by various scholars with Old Saray or New Saray (the successive capitals of the Golden Horde) or with some of its other cities. These include Qub's reworked Turkic translation of the romantic poem Xusrev u Şirin (dedicated to the Golden Horde xan Timbeg, r. 1341-2); Xwarezmi's romantic poem Mahabbetname; and the religious treatise Nehc ıl-feradis (generally considered to have been written in 1358 or 1360 by one Mahmud b. Ali). Seyf-i Seray'i Gâlistân bi-türki (a reworking of the Persian work by Sa'di) falls into a somewhat different category as a work written in Mamlûk Egypt in 1391 by a native of Saray. There is also the oral literary work (destan) Cümçüme sultan (also known as the Cümçümenâme) whose relationship to the Kesikbaş kitâbi deserves further study.

9 For translations into Russian see M.D. Priselkov, Xanske yarlıki rustkim mitropolitam (Petrograd, 1916); and "Yarlıki tarâxkî bir xanov moskovskim mitropolitam (kratko sobranie)" ed. A.A. Zimin, Pamyatniki rustkogo prava, iii. (Moscow, 1955), pp. 463-491.  
11 The text of the only extant manuscript (copied in Egypt) has been published by A. Zajaczkowski, Najstara wersje turecka Huvrev u Şirin Qubba, i, Prace orientalistyce 6 (Warsaw, 1958); and M.N. Hanemenolgu, Kut'bnun Huvrev u Şirin'i ve dili hususatileri (Istanbul, 1968). See Eckmann, "Die kiptschakische Literatur", pp. 230-285; and the article by G.T. Tahircanov in Tatar adîbiyati tarixi, i (Kazan, 1984), pp. 170-196.  
13 See Eckmann, "Die kiptschakische Literatur", pp. 287-291; and the article by Ş.S. Abilov in Tatar adîbiyati tarixi, i, pp. 208-231.  
14 The text of this work has been published by A. Bodrogligeti, A Fourteenth Century Turkic Translation of Sa'di's Gulistán. (Sa'y-i Sarayî'în Gulistân biį-turki) (Budapest, 1969). See Bodrogligeti's "Introduction", pp. 8-9; and Tatar adîbiyati tarixi, i, pp. 246-273. On historical data in the Gulistan bi-türki see the "Introduction", pp. 19-20.  
16 On Cümçüme sultan see Eckmann, "Die kiptschakische Literatur", pp. 292-293; and the article by Ş.S. Abilov in Tatar adîbiyati tarixi, i, pp. 231-246.  
17 Temir ("Die alten Quellen", p. 615) and Bombaci (Histoire, p. 95) seem to follow M.F. Köprüülü (Türk edebiyati tarihi, i, Istanbul, 1926, pp. 362-364; and Türk edebiyatinda ık
Yet, there is no extant work written in the 13th-14th centuries which can be called a history of the Golden Horde. As just described, a literary culture clearly existed. There was even a pre-13th century historiographical tradition in one or more of the regions of the Golden Horde which could have contributed to the further development of a historiographical tradition in the 13th-14th centuries. In the north, Volga Bulgaria had been a center of literacy, literary traditions, and even historical traditions dating back to the first millennium. The literary culture of this sedentary area continued through the time of the xanate of Kazan (15th-16th centuries) as known from original works produced in the xanate itself. For the southern area, Omeljan Pritsak reminds us that the Crimea had been a center of unbroken literary activity since classical times. Finally, Xwarezm and its rich literary culture also formed an integral part of the territory of the Golden Horde until the second half of the 14th century. An important question, then, is what happened to historiography in the Golden Horde?

The absence of an independent work devoted solely to the 13th-14th centuries should not be understood to mean that no historical works or historical traditions existed in this period. Instead, I would like to argue that one should look to the historical traditions of the Later Golden Horde (15th-18th centuries). In many instances, the data for the 13th-14th centuries contained in these later works can be considered the direct continuation of historical traditions from the earlier period of the Golden Horde (even though not all the states of the Later Golden Horde were directly descended from the western half of the Golden Horde).

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18 For a survey of the literature of this period see the contributions of Ş.Ş. Abilov, G.M. Dülüştin, and N.Ş. Xisamov in Tatar dâdîbîyata tarixi, i (Kazan, 1984), pp. 84-157. For the inscriptions see D.G. Muxamezîn and F.S. Xakimzayanov, Yastik epişafy Volşkîx Bulgâr (Moscow, 1978); and Epigrâfiçeskie pamyatniki Volşkîx Bulgâr i ix yastik (Moscow, 1987).

19 See Bombaci, Histoire, pp. 170-171; Temir, "Die alten Quellen"; Usmanov, Tatarskie istoriçeskije istoriçniko, pp. 134-16; and the contributions of Ş.Ş. Abilov and F.V. Âxmatova in Tatar dâdîbîyata tarixi, i, pp. 283-321.


22 The negative judgement of Spuler, Die Goldene Horde, pp. 1-2, is based on great learning and familiarity with a wide range of sources, including those in Turkic languages. The Turkic sources for Mongol history are routinely ignored, however, by many other recent scholars, as for example in D. Morgan, The Mongols (Oxford, 1986), pp. 5-27. A more alarming recent trend has been the complete neglect of almost all Islamic sources, as evidenced by the works of C. Halperin, including Russia and the Golden Horde, The Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History (Bloomington, 1985); and The Tata Yoke, (Columbus, 1986).
Horde). Only when these different extant traditions are fully studied and compared can we have a better notion of the full extent of historical writing and historical traditions in the earlier Golden Horde.

Turning to the narrative sources from the 15th-18th centuries, one of the outstanding historical works from the Later Golden Horde is the Cami öt-tevarix, written in the xanate of Kasimov by Qadır Ali Calayır. According to the received interpretation, this unusual political unit in the service of the Russian grand duke was founded in 1452 when Vasilii II granted Qasım b. Uluğ Muhammed the town of Gorodets (or Meşçerskiy gorodok) as an appanage. The work itself, produced in 1602, begins with a condensed Tatar translation of portions of Raşid ad-Din's Cami' at-tavârîx. Familiarity with Raşid ad-Din's universal history is evidence that even a state in the service of Russia could maintain a historical consciousness linking it with the earlier Çağışid states as well as the greater Turkic and Islamic cultural world. Appended to the translation of the earlier source is a series of destans or accounts of personalities and events from the end of the earlier Golden Horde leading up to the time of the xanate of Kasimov. It includes separate sections on the following figures, many of whom date from the 14th century (no doubt based on sources or traditions dating back to the 14th century): Urus Xan, Toqtanuş Xan, Temür Qutlu Xan and his descendants, Haci Giray Xan, Edige, Haci Muhammed Xan, Abu 1-Xayr Xan, Yadigar Xan, and Uraz Muhammed Xan. This final section, a unique indigenous source for the xanate of Kasimov, provides valuable information on the organization and tribal composition of the xanate of Kasimov. Qadır Ali Calayır was himself garaçi bey of the Calayır "ruling tribe" in that xanate, and one can therefore be sure that some of the information in the source is cast from the perspective of the tribal

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23 Even though it has already been stated that this essay does not focus on Xwarezm, it is worth citing an example of relevant later source traditions from Xwarezm concerning the Golden Horde: Y. Bregel, "Tribal Tradition and Dynastic History: The Early Rulers of the Qongrats According to Munis", Asian and African Studies. 16 (1982), pp. 357-398; and Münis and Ağahl, ed. Y. Bregel, Firdaws al-iqbal : History of Khoresm (Leiden, 1988).

24 V.V. Vel'yaminov-Zernov, Izseleovanie o kasimovskix tsaryax i tsarevičax, i, Trudi Vostočnago otdeleniya Imperatorskago Russkago arxeologičeskago obšestva 9 (St. Petersburg, 1864). See also I. Vassary, "The Hungarians or Možars and the Meşçers/Mihers of the Middle Volga Region", Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi 1 (1975), pp. 137-275, especially pp. 264.

25 The text of this work was published by N.I. Berezín, Biblioteka vostočnix istorikov, ii/1: Sbornik letopisey. Tatarshki tekst (Kazan, 1854). Extracts accompanied by a translation were also published by Vel'yaminov-Zernov, Izseleovanie o kasimovskix tsaryax i tsarevičax, ii, Trudi Vostočnago otdeleniya Imperatorskago Russkago arxeologičeskago obšestva 10 (St. Petersburg, 1864), p. 121 ff. For more detailed recent evaluations of this work see Usmanov, Tatarskije istoričeskie istoričniki, pp. 33-96; and the article by Ş.Ş. Abilov in Tatar adăbiyati tarihi, i, pp. 333-343. Kappeler considers this source to be the unique historical work of the Turkic peoples of the Middle Volga region (Russlands erste Nationalität, p. 219).

26 Usmanov, Tatarskije istoričeskie istoričniki, pp. 74-91.
establishment of the state (the "land"), rather than from the opposing perspective of the ruling Çingisid line.\textsuperscript{27}

In sharp contrast to Kasimov, the only Turkic narrative source to be connected with the xanate of Kazan is a brief account relating to its conquest discovered by Zeki Velidi Togan.\textsuperscript{28} Given the active relations between the various xanates of the Later Golden Horde (one only need recall the many figures that served as ruler in more than one xanate), it is likely they shared many of the same traditions regarding the period up to the foundation of the individual xanates. Written works could also have been shared. Usmanov speculates, for example, that the work of Raşîd ad-Dîn might have found its way to Kasimov through the xanate of Kazan.\textsuperscript{29} It has also been suggested that Çümcüme sultan, which the Crimean xan Sahib Giray ordered translated into Turkish, may have found its way to the Crimea from Kazan.\textsuperscript{30}

Given the limited number of narrative sources available for the xanates of Kasimov and Kazan, historians interested in these states should pay special attention to the Crimean xanate. The most dramatic reason for this is the rather large number of Turkic narrative sources which survive from this xanate. In addition to the \textit{Umdat ül-ahbar}, which will be described in greater detail below, there is a series of other important works which have also been published:

\begin{quote}
— The \textit{Es-seb üs-seyyar} was written by Seyyid Muhammed Riza (a member of the Crimean aristocracy, d. 1756). It was edited by Mirza Kazembek in the first half of the 19th century\textsuperscript{31} and used by V. D. Smirnov in his history of the Crimean xanate.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{27}On the \textit{garaçi} beys see U. Schamiloglu, "The \textit{Garaçi} Beys of the Later Golden Horde : Notes on the Organization of the Mongol World Empire", \textit{Archivum Eurasia Medii Aevi} 4 (1984), pp. 283-297 ; and "Tribal Politics and Social Organization in the Golden Horde" (Columbia University, 1986), Chapter II.
\textsuperscript{28}"Kazan hanlığında İslam Türk Kültürü", \textit{İslâm Tektikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi} 3 (1959-60 [1966]), pp. 179-204 (the text is on pp. 183-194). This source is yet to be incorporated into studies of the xanate.
\textsuperscript{29}Usmanov, \textit{Tatarskie istoričeskie istočniki}, pp. 54-55.
\textsuperscript{32}\textit{Krivskoe xanstvo pod verzovestvom Otmanskoj Porti do naçała XVIII veka} (St. Petersburg, 1887). See pp. IX-XVI for additional details on this source. See also A.W. Fisher, "Crimean Separatism in the Ottoman Empire", \textit{Nationalism in a Non-National State. The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire}, ed. W.W. Haddad and W. Otschenwald (Columbus, 1977), pp. 57-76, especially p. 69.
\end{footnotes}
— The Gülbün-i hanan was composed in 1811 by Halim Giray Sultan (d. 1823), a Çingisid descended from Mengli Giray.33

— The Tarih-i İslam Giray Han was written by Haci Mehmed Senai, who flourished in the 1640s. This work was edited and translated into Polish by Z. Abrahamowicz as the History of Islam Giray Han III.34

— The Tarih-i Sahib Giray Han was written by Remmal Hoca, a physician to Sahib Giray who later entered the service of Sultan Selim II. This work, which has been made available by Ö. Gökölgin in a transcription accompanied by a French translation, pays particular attention to the upheaval in the system of "ruling tribes" in the early Crimean xanate.35

— The Tarih-i Said Giray Han, a work from the 17th century which has been studied by B. Kellner-Heinkele.36

— The Tevarih-i Deşt-i Kıpçak, composed ca. 1638, includes a brief survey of the earlier Golden Horde as well as the later period until the early 17th century. It has been made available by A. Zajaczkowski together with its 18th-century French translation.37

Other sources include the Telhis ʿal-beyan fi kavanin al-i Osman, which was utilized by Smirnov in his history of the Crimean xanate,38 and the Tarih-i Muhammed Giray Han, which covers the period 1684-1703.39 Although this listing is not exhaustive, it is clear that the Crimean xanate offers a wealth of narrative historical sources to a degree simply not available for the other states of the Later Golden Horde.40

38See Smirnov, Krimske xansıovo, pp. XXIII-XIV.
39See Bennigsen et al., Le Khanat de Crimée, p. 410-411.
40For other works written in the Crimea see Bursalt Mehmed Tahir, İdare-i osmanîye zamanında yetişen Kurum müellifleri (İstanbul, A.H. 1335).
Let us turn now to a closer look at one of these sources, the *Umдет ül-ahbar*, and some examples of the kind of information it can offer. This work, which covers the rise of the Mongol empire and the history of the Crimean xanate, was written in Ottoman Turkish (but with some Crimean Tatar elements) by Abdülgaffar b. el-Hac Hasan b. el-Hac Mahmud b. el-Hac Abdülvéhhab el-Kirmi, a member of the Crimean ultema banished from his home in A.H. 1157/1744-5 A.D. One partial edition of this work, published by Necib Asum earlier this century under the title *Umdet üt-tevarihi* (İstanbul, A.H. 1343/1924-5 A.D.), appeared as a supplement to the *Türk tarih encımeni mecmuası*. This edition was prepared on the basis of the manuscript of about 166 folia preserved in Istanbul in the Süleymaniye Library (Esad Efendi no. 2331). Though the manuscript begins with a substantial section surveying the history of the earlier Islamic states, the printed edition includes only the final portion of the original work covering in detail the rise of the Mongol world empire, the Golden Horde, and the Crimean xanate. The work has not been made available in any other language.

The *umdet ül-ahbar* is based on a wide range of Arabic, Persian, and Turkic sources for the different periods it covers. One of Abdülgaffar Kirmi's most important sources for the 13th-14th centuries was the *Tarih-i Dost Sultan*. This work, supposed to have been written in Xwarezm in the 16th century, survives in the library of Zeki Velidi Togan. (Another copy of this work is the incomplete Tashkent manuscript known as the *Ötemiş Haci tarihi* or as the *Çingizname of Ötemiş Haci b. Mevlana Muhammed Dostu*). For the later periods, Abdülgaffar Kirmi draws on various Crimean and Ottoman sources as well as on his own first-hand knowledge.

The *Umdet ül-ahbar* has been utilized as a historical source by only a handful of scholars. For the earlier period, Berthold Spuler made use of the edition by Necib Asum in his history of the Golden Horde, though he concludes

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41 Abdülgaffar Kirmi/Asum, p. 5-6. See also Babinger, *Geschichtsschreiber*, p. 280.
43 I had originally begun work on a new edition and translation into English of this work, but I postponed further work on this project upon learning that M. Ürekli (İstanbul) is working on a new edition of this work and that I. Vásáry (Budapest) is working on publishing a collection of extracts of Turkic sources on the Golden Horde. Certainly it would be desirable to establish a series of publications aimed at making available in English translation the Turkic sources for the Golden Horde and the Later Golden Horde, with a special emphasis on the narrative sources.
44 Abdülgaffar Kirmi/Asum, p. 7-8.
that many of the accounts in this work pertaining to the 13th-14th centuries are legendary. More recently, Mustafa Kafali has relied on the data contained in the the UmdeT ül-ahbar as the basis of his recent work on the the Golden Horde. (Both Spuler and Mustafa Kafali were also able to consult the Togan manuscript of the Tarih-i Dost Sultan.) Coming to the later period, the foremost modern scholar of the various Turkic chronicles for the history of the Crimean xanate has been Halil Inalcik. He has incorporated the UmdeT ül-ahbar and other Crimean sources in his now-classic articles on the history of the Crimean xanate, which may serve as a model for research based on the Turkic narrative histories and diplomatic correspondence preserved for this period. Otherwise, the UmdeT ül-ahbar has been neglected in most studies of the Golden Horde and the Later Golden Horde.

In its survey of the history of the 13th-14th centuries, the UmdeT ül-ahbar offers accounts of the reign of each of the rulers of the Golden Horde, sometimes in great detail. It includes descriptions of the role of the tribal nobility in the selection and elevation of the various Çingisid xan of the Golden Horde. For example, it refers to negotiations of the Golden Horde emirs with Hüllegi prior to the accession of Berke Xan (r. 1255-1266):

His two princes [the sons of Batu] Sarıtak and Togan were left, but Sarıtak then died. Since Togan was a small child, the consultation of the celebrated emirs decided at this point to inform Hüllegi, one of the sons of Toluy from the party of the xan (zümre-i kaan). They sent him according to the habit of Mongol custom a lock of hair and a sword without a scabbard, and a shirt without a collar as though the ulus of Coçi had no ruler.

46 Die Goldene Horde, pp. 156 n. 12, 158 n. 25, and 162 n. 51.
47 M. Kafali, Altın orda hanlığınn judulugu ve yüksefiq devirleri (Istanbul, 1976), Index under "Özemî Haci tarhi".
50 Abdülgaffar Kirmi/Asım, pp. 20-21. See now also Vásáry, "'History and Legend' in Berke Khan's Conversion to Islam", pp. 243-244 and n. 38.
At the beginning of the reign of Tüde Mengü (r. 1280-1287), it is described that the emirs of the Deşti Qipçaq had to swear an oath of fealty to him, after which they participated in the installation ceremony of ritual elevation.\textsuperscript{51} Similar statements are made for other rulers as well, including the accession to the throne of Özbek Xan (r. 1313-1341):\textsuperscript{52}

Then two notable emirs seated the xan on a (rug of) white felt according to Čingisid custom and, raising him, installed him on the throne. All the tribes came and gave the oath of fealty in groups one after the other.

The \textit{Umdat ḩul-ahbar} relates other information on the rulers as well, including major source traditions on the piety of Berke\textsuperscript{53} and the conversions to Islam of Özbek Xan and Cambek.\textsuperscript{54}

The \textit{Umdat ḩul-ahbar} is notable for offering information on individuals connected with the major socio-political units ("ruling tribes") of the Golden Horde on which the traditional sources for the earlier period are usually silent. One account relating to the first half of the 13th century describes how Batu sent Şiban with 30,000 soldiers and Bor Altay of the Taraqlı Qiyat as his atalıq against Mankup in the Crimea.\textsuperscript{55}

In the province of the Crimea there were all sorts of different peoples, but most of them were Genoese infidels, and from among the Tatars there were also some people called the As. These soldiers attacked the fortress called Mankup, but the aforementioned fortress was very strong. Since it was (situated) on very steep mountains and its conquest was not an easy matter, they entered it by ruse. He ordered that each of the soldiers should take two stirrups in his hands apiece and begin beating them together. Such a frightful clamor issued forth that those who heard it were amazed. They did not cease this tumult for a whole month and they refrained from fighting. The infidels of the fortress heard this melodic noise and they were ready to neglect the defense and protection of the ramparts of the fortress. Following this manner of deception, with the rest of his troops not stopping their clamor, he selected four-five thousand brave and courageous young men and appointed Bor Altay bey as commander-in-chief. In the middle of the night they advanced well

\textsuperscript{51} Abdülgağfar Kırımı/Aşım, pp. 26-27.
\textsuperscript{52} Abdülgağfar Kırımı/Aşım, pp. 34-35.
\textsuperscript{53} Abdülgağfar Kırımı/Aşım, pp. 21-24. See now also Vásáry, "History and Legend" in Berke Khan's Conversion to Islam.\textsuperscript{53}
\textsuperscript{54} Abdülgağfar Kırımı/Aşım, p. 35-38.
\textsuperscript{55} Abdülgağfar Kırımı/Aşım, pp. 19-20.
concealed. The As infidels were surprised and did not find a place of refuge, and the fortress was captured, they say.  

This is just one example in which an individual is described as having a specific tribal affiliation, and there are other references to individuals connected with the Qanglı, the Sicivut, and especially the Qiyat. In another example, the 14th-century figure Mamay is called the nephew of Qiyat Astay bey of the right flank.

The most important of the socio-political units functioning as a "ruling tribe" in the various xanates of the Later Golden Horde was the Şirin. The Şirin remained throughout the history of the Crimea the dominant among the four (later five) "ruling tribes" of the xanate up until the Russian annexation of the Crimea at the end of the 18th century. Even when Şahin Giray intended to streamline and centralize his administration in the 1770s by downgrading the role of the qaraçı beys (whose role in electing the Çingisid xan is identical with that of the qurultays in the earlier period) by usurping for himself the power of designating his successor, he could not fully ignore the importance of the Şirin and the Mansurs (earlier known as the Manguts). Abdülgaffar Kırmı, who was a strong partisan of the Şirin "ruling tribe", depicts the Şirin "ruling tribe" defending the interests of the "land" against the interests of the Çingisid Giray dynasty throughout the history of the Crimean xanate. As such, the Umdet ül-ahbar is the history of the Şirin in the Crimea, offering information which is particularly valuable for the origins and later history of the leadership of the Şirin "ruling tribe". It states, for example, that the Şirin are descended from a particular branch of the As with a çömüç brand or tamğa. This is a unique statement in the sources regarding the origin of this most important socio-political unit in the states of the Later Golden Horde. By the expression As kabilesi it is not clear, however, whether it is meant that they are therefore descended from the Iranian Alans of the medieval Pontic steppe (there is certainly no other "ruling tribe" with a similar origin) or that the name has a geographical connotation.

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57 Many of these individuals and "ruling tribes" can be found listed in Kafali, Altın orda hanlığı, pp. 36-47.
58 Abdülgaffar Kırmı/Asum, p. 40.
60 Abdülgaffar Kırmı/Asum, pp. 46 and 194.
The *Umdet /mail-ahbar* describes the leaders of the Şirin, Barn, Arığın and Qıpçaq as joining Tqtaqum as his *has nöker* or "special companions".\(^{62}\) From this period on it is a rich source for following the earliest leaders of the Şirin in the Crimea. The first Şirin leader to cooperate with Tqtaqum was Örek Temür b. Dangi bey, whose son Tegine was just as important in the *Dəstit-ı Qıpçaq* (or Kipchak steppe) as his rival, the Mangut leader Edigül. Beyond the genealogical information contained in the narrative itself, there is a separate genealogical appendix at the end of this work.\(^{63}\) Thus, the *Umdet /mail-ahbar* is indispensable for understanding the greater socio-political and cultural unity beginning with the Golden Horde itself and continuing through the time of the component states constituting the Later Golden Horde.

It is only with the help of the *Umdet /mail-ahbar* that it is possible to understand that these later states continued certain earlier Çingisid traditions, the most outstanding of which was the Çingisid system of state organization. In this pattern of state organization which I have termed the "four-bey system", four socio-political units shared fully in the governing of the state. The leaders of these four "ruling tribes" were collectively known as the four *qaraçi* beys; their direct predecessors in the earlier Golden Horde were known as the *ulus* beys. Another well-known passage in the *Umdet /mail-ahbar* describes the functioning of this system of government.\(^{64}\) I have published a translation of this passage elsewhere and have argued that this description is, in fact, the key which allows us to piece together and reinterpret partial account of state organization found in diverse sources for the 13th-14th centuries as well.\(^{65}\)

There are many questions regarding the history of both the earlier Golden Horde, the Crimean xanate itself, and even the other xanates of the Later Golden Horde to whose discussion the *Umdet /mail-ahbar* makes a contribution beyond these few illustrative examples. Of course, I do not insist that all of the information in this work is to be corroborated by information in other sources. Nevertheless, this work and the other Turkic narrative sources from the later

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\(^{62}\) Abdülgaffar Kırımı/Asım, p. 45-48. Inalcık connects the *ulus* beys and the *qaraçi* beys with the term *nöker* ("The Khan and the Tribal Aristocracy", pp. 451-452).

\(^{63}\) Abdülgaffar Kırımı/Asım, pp. 15 ff. and 200 ff. For a discussion of this information see Inalcık, "The Khan and the Tribal Aristocracy", pp. 454 and n. 24. See also B.F. Manz, "The Clans of the Crimean Khanate, 1466-1532", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 2, (1978), pp. 282-309, which is an attempt to reconstruct the genealogy of the Şirin leaders based exclusively on Moscovite and eastern European sources. Such an approach, however, does not allow one to take the line any further back than Tegine.

\(^{64}\) Abdülgaffar Kırımı/Asım, p. 13 ff. A portion of this passage is also paralleled in the *Gülbiin-i hanan* (Halim Güray Sultan/Cevdi, p. 40).

\(^{65}\) See "The *Qaraçi* Beys", pp. 284-285. For an elaboration of this theme see also my "Tribal Politics and Social Organization in the Golden Horde". In the meantime I would like to acknowledge Prof. Inalcık's suggestion regarding my earlier translation that *emr-i azim* should be translated as a "glorious matter" rather than as a "glorious order".
period represent a contribution to the preservation of historical traditions from the 13th-14th centuries about which sometimes very little else is known. Some of these tradition survive exclusively through works written in Xwarezm, others survive through works written in the xanates of the Later Golden Horde, and some survive as oral traditions, a topic which I have not even considered in this essay. Taken together, however, they represent what survives of the indigenous historical traditions of the Golden Horde. It may be premature to offer a bold new hypothesis on the state of historiography in the Golden Horde. It is not too soon, however, to insist that the study of the Turkic narrative sources mentioned in this essay is essential for any study of the history of western Eurasia in the period of the Golden Horde as well as in the period of the Later Golden Horde.

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