

TATARS' ASSIMILATION/
INTEGRATION
IN THE SOCIAL
FABRIC OF THE
GRAND DUCHY
OF LITHUANIA* © *Milda Jakulytė-Vasil*

* The article is based on Milda Jakulytė-Vasil's Master's degree work "Tatars in the Society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 15th to 18th Centuries (A Model of Adaptation in the Host Society)" successfully defended at the History Faculty of Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania, in 2003.

Tatars are one of Lithuania's non-Christian ethnic groups. They arrived in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania for political reasons. Internal political conflicts and power struggles within the Golden Horde and the political make-up of the large state often compelled the search for allies, and sometimes also permanent asylum in the nearest neighbouring lands.

The Lithuanian Tatar community essentially developed at the close of the 14th century and early in the 15th century. Migration of different groups in the 17th and 18th centuries did not change the character or ways of life of the community. The Turkic peoples settled in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL). They confessed Islam and received land for which they performed military service. Thus they were integrated within the GDL system of feudal relations, but the degree of their general integration has not been investigated so far.

The theme of this article is Tatars' assimilation/integration in Lithuanian society. Investigators of Lithuanian ethnic minorities often adhere to the view that the Tatars are an assimilated community because they lost their own language¹. Even so, the loss of language does not imply total assimilation, especially considering that the Tatars have compensated for the loss of their mother language with an individual cultural expression: the use of Arabic language and script in religious rituals and writing. The difference between integration and assimilation is essentially connected with the group's appearance and life in a new cultural context. In this article, I'll attempt to show that the term 'integration' is more correct in describing the Tatars of Lithuania.

The article attempts to determine, based on sociological theory, the nature and character of the assimilation and integration of the Lithuanian Tatar community

¹ *Borawski P.* Asymilacja kulturowa Tatarów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim // *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce*. 1991. T. 36; *Borawski P., Sienkiewicz W.* Chrystianizacja Tatarów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim // *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce*. 1989. T. 34; *Borawski P.* Tatarzy polsko-litewscy grupą etniczną czy etnograficzną? // *Acta Baltico-Slavica*. 1987. T. 18; *Zakrzewski A.* O asymilacji Tatarów w Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII w. // *Tryumfy i porażki*. Warszawa, 1989; *Dubiński A.* Charakterystyka języka Tatarów polsko-litewskich // *Acta Baltico-Slavica*. 1982. T. 14.

in the social fabric of the GDL. The theories of authoritative investigators Milton Gordon² and Jose Alberto Diaz³ are used in creating a model of assimilation/integration. While the criteria of these two researchers were used in this work to create the foundation for the model of Tatar assimilation/integration in the GDL, it must be noted that the theories of these two authors are based on modern times and were applied retrospectively to the period in question.

Factors of assimilation and integration may be partial or total. Certain factors may be of a decisive significance for the incorporation of immigrants in the host society (e. g., Gordon's structural assimilation), while others may not (e. g., Diaz's communicational integration).

The main problem in the work was to answer, based on the factors of the integration/assimilation process in play, the fundamental question: how did the ethno-confessional community of the Tatars in Lithuania adapt to and mingle with the society of the GDL – did they assimilate or were they integrated? The work is based on the sources cited and historiography elucidating the situation of the Tatars in GDL society in the 15th to 18th centuries.

This work holds to J. Berry's opinion that assimilation happens when individuals from the non-dominant group do not want or cannot preserve their cultural identity and seek to maintain daily relations with other cultures. Berry maintains the integration occurs when there is an interest (or possibility) to maintain both cultures during daily contacts and when such a choice is made.⁴ The concept of integration is used in this work in the latter sense.

THEORETICAL SECTION

Migration researchers agree that the concepts of assimilation and integration are connected with the process of adaptation by immigrants wherein immigrants become similar to members of the dominant culture of the land in certain spheres of social life. The main question posed in this part of the work is: Do integration and assimilation represent a single process along the same axis or are they fundamentally different? Sociologists tend toward the latter answer and define several kinds of integration and assimilation. Theoretically, it is possible to consider multi-directional assimilation and integration as a complex (i. e. manifesting itself at various levels of society) but clear process. This work poses the thought that the concept of

² *Gordon M.* Assimilation in American Life. New York, 1964.

³ *Diaz J. A.* Choosing Integration. Uppsala, 1993.

⁴ *Kasatkina N.* Etniniai procesai šiuolaikinės Lietuvos visuomenėje // Tautinės mažumos demokratinėje valstybėje. Vilnius, 2000, p. 55.

integration is used in an attempt to avoid drawing conclusions about the total assumption of the behavior and culture of the host society because this phenomenon is usually considered assimilation.

Because both theories (Gordon's of assimilation and Diaz's of integration) are meant for contemporary studies, they only fit our model partially. Nonetheless, it appears that most of the integration and assimilation factors singled out are universal and applicable to research of various periods. The factors that are clearly inappropriate to the Middle Ages will be dispensed with in this work.

Combining both theories into a single model, it is possible to distinguish seven main factors determining the adaptation of immigrants in society:

- 1) cultural, understood as the conversion of one's own cultural customs to those of the host society;
- 2) communicational, understood as the adoption of the language of the host society;
- 3) structural, understood as entry into the network of social groups and institutions and into the structure of the society;
- 4) social, understood as participation in the economic life of the host society;
- 5) familial and residential, understood according to frequency of formation of mixed families and relations with neighbours of local origin;
- 6) identificational, understood as the identity based completely on the identity of the host society;
- 7) the factor of accepting attitudes and behavior, understood as the lack of prejudiced attitudes and discrimination against the immigrants.

EMPIRICAL SECTION

Cultural factor. Questions concerning Tatar culture and language have been widely addressed in historiography. In adapting to the living conditions provided in Lithuania, a specific Tatar way of life evolved, directed at the preservation of religion and individual traditions, a topical issue because some Tatars, especially from the nobility, converted to Christianity rather early on and joined the ranks of the magnates and boyars of the GDL⁵.

Incidences of conversion to Christianity in the 15–17th centuries demonstrate the desire among some Tatars to identify with local residents and their traditions. Individual apostates were expelled by the community and this kind of behavior caused dissatisfaction among members of the community⁶.

⁵ Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos kultūra. Tyrinėjimai ir vaizdai. Vilnius, 2001, p. 732.

⁶ "In 1669 the land court of Trakai considered the case of Uriash Kulbitski and the Tatars of

Because there was a religious organization providing coherence for the community, Tatars identified themselves doubly as an ethnic as well as religious community. Tatars who underwent baptism lost both of their proofs of identity as Tatars, i.e. religion and community. Having lost these, Tatars had nothing left to do but merge with the host society. And this is where their tracks as people of a different culture or heritage ended in history.

Investigators working on Tatar assimilation issues have never in any article explained what they mean by assimilation. A. Zakrzewski alone notes that although the term 'assimilation' does not have a strict definition in sociology, sociological methods are necessary in his article, but he ends without having said how he understands assimilation⁷.

In Gordon's theory of assimilation, he suggests distinguishing those important cultural features or traditions which are vitally important elements of the cultural heritage of the group and whose loss demonstrates cultural assimilation: religion and ritual, ethical values, musical tastes, ethnic traditions of relaxation, literature, historical language and the sense of a shared past. Gordon claims that the adoption of the language of the majority is a phase in assimilation, but certainly not a total assimilation. He states that this shows the tendency of the new group towards assimilation, but many other factors determine whether the newcomers fully participate in the life of the country. This full participation could serve as a provisional definition of assimilation or integration. The Tatars of Lithuania desired to live together and integrate, but were not always considered normal members of society.

Borawski thought that the Islam of Tatars was mixed with shamanism and was a distorted form of Islam.⁸ Examples of cultural syncretism in Lithuanian Tatar manuscripts show wonderfully that they formed a distinct culture during their existence in the GDL. Cut off from Islamic roots but attempting to maintain their faith, they created an exotic form of Islam, whose transformation of dogma could be laid to a verbatim translation of the Koran alone, which distorted fundamental theological concepts. They tried to express the concept of their own place in the new cultural and religious environment in their manuscripts. Tatars blended with the spectrum of cultures of the GDL and became one of them. Further, being

Raizhei. Kazimier Kulbitski and his wife had adopted Roman Catholicism. His co-religionists didn't like this and they, inviting Uriash Kulbitski to a wedding, began to denounce Christ and the Virgin Mary. Kulbitski on leaving his home was attacked and wounded." Акты, издаваемые Виленскою комиссією для разбора древних актов. (АВАК). Вильна, 1906. Т. XXXI, с. 407. *Zakrzewski A.* O asymilacji Tatarów..., s. 76.

⁷ Ibid., p. 76.

⁸ *Borawski P.* Folklor ludności tatarskiej na ziemiach polsko-litewskich // *Przegląd Orientalistyczny*. 1981. T. 2 (118), s. 116.

Muslims but living apart from fellow believers, Tatars created a different kind of Muslim culture, which enriched the entirety of Muslim cultures.

The GDL was an example of a peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians. At the same time when the moors were being expelled from Spain, and Austria was battling the Turk, the GDL, late to adopt the Christianity of Europe, found a place for accepting refugees from the Golden Horde. This is something extraordinary: while battling with the Tatar hordes, the GDL also settled Tatars on its territory in order to guard the borders of the GDL from the Teutonic orders. For their part, the Tatars, having also adopted Islam late, did not have time to adopt special attitudes concerning the necessity to live among Muslims and to avoid others.

Borawski considers the transformation of tribal symbols (*tamgas*⁹) to noble coats of arms a sign of the assimilation by Tatars¹⁰. The society of the GDL only began to use coats of arms after the Agreement of Horodlo (1413). This was an adoption of and adaptation to Western matters. Exactly at this time the first Tatars appeared in the GDL. In any event, it is still not proved that Tatars used coats of arms in the 15th to 18th centuries; the right to do so belonged exclusively to boyars, and the question concerning Tatar nobility still has not been definitively answered. It is believed that Tatars during this period used heraldic stamps which were impressed in wax on documents¹¹. Tatar coats of arms began to appear only late in the 18th century and the system of Tatar heraldry developed in the 19th century. Lithuanian Tatars had their seals which were familial symbols – *tamgas*.

Borawski similarly described the last wills and testaments of Tatars: "The form of Tatar testaments is similar to that of Christians. If not for the names, it would be impossible to distinguish then. This is one more proof of cultural assimilation."¹² Zakrzewski believed likewise: "The last wills and testaments of Tatars, differing not at all from those of Christians, show the process of assimilation."¹³ The writing of last wills and testaments only started in the GDL after the adoption of Christianity (1387 and 1413) and the Christianization of society¹⁴. This process is similar to the problem of coats of arms just discussed above – the first Tatar testament in the proceedings of the Vilnius Archeological Commission is dated to 1598¹⁵. This

⁹ The *tamga* is a symbol of Turkic tribes, having a magical significance. Nomads used this sign to assert their property. In the formation of state entities the *tamga* became a symbol of power and government. The tamgas of the Khans were minted on coins.

¹⁰ Borawski P. Asymilacja kulturowa ..., s. 182.

¹¹ Dumin S. Herbarz rodzin tatarskich Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. Gdańsk, 1999, s. 11.

¹² Borawski P. Asymilacja kulturowa ..., s. 184.

¹³ Zakrzewski A. O asymilacji Tatarów ..., s. 90.

¹⁴ Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos kultūra..., p. 715.

¹⁵ AVAK. T. XXXI, p. 282

shows the ability of the Tatars to adapt to and assume certain things without losing their identity.

It needs to be noted that Tatars in the GDL used titles from the Golden Horde, which were not actually ever officially recognized. Even so, Tatars maintained these titles until the 19th and in some cases until the 20th century.

The theory of assimilation states that assimilation occurs when one's own cultural traditions, religion and community are renounced. In this sense, Tatars cannot be considered assimilated because it is exactly religion and community which maintain their identity until the 21st century. Members of the community who renounced the norms and values of their community were eliminated from the community. Only they could be considered to have lost their identity and totally assimilated, but the same cannot be said about other members of the community. Based on the model of assimilation and integration, the cultural factor shows the integration rather than the assimilation of Tatars in the social fabric of the GDL.

Communicational factor. According to current sociological theories of assimilation, the loss/renunciation/non-usage of the native language is a significant but not the final step towards assimilation. This is especially true in light of the fact that the use of the host society's language encourages integration. Analysing this issue, it is important to establish the reasons behind the loss of the mother tongue, what its level of usage is, its status in the ethnic community (liturgical and daily) and so on. Only by answering these questions and others can we decide the significance of the loss of the mother language for the assimilation or integration of any given group within the historical context.

The issue of the loss of the language of the Tatars has occasioned the most discussions. The majority of researchers on Lithuanian Tatars, based on this factor, have stated that the Tatars comprise an assimilated community¹⁶.

Academics have established that the Tatars lost their language in the 16th century, 100 to 150 years after their arrival in the GDL. Nevertheless, it is known that Tatar migration occurred in several phases (mainly two are defined):

1. Mass migration occurred at the end of the 14th to the middle of the 16th centuries.
2. Certain groups moved in the 16th and 17th centuries.

¹⁶ *Kričinskis S.* Lietuvos totoriai. Vilnius, 1993, p. 196; *Szapszał S.* O zatraceniu języka ojczystego przez Tatarów w Polsce // *Rocznik Tatarski*. 1932. T. I, s. 34; *Дубинский А. И.* Заметки о языке Литовских татар // *Вопросы языкознания*. 1972, № 1, с. 83; *Dubiński A.* Charakterystyka języka Tatarów..., s. 85; *Miškinienė G.* Seniausios Lietuvos totorių rankraščiai. Grafika. Transliteracija. Vertimas. Tekstų struktūra ir turinys. Vilnius, 2001, p. 14; *Канапаўскі І. Б., Сьмолік А.* Гісторыя і культура беларускіх татар. Мінск, 2000, с. 97.

In 1951, Zajaczkowski wrote about the contents of a *khamail*¹⁷ of 1804 and compared it with another *khamail*. This helped to establish two stages in the development of the writing of Lithuanian Tatars:

- 1) the earlier (14th–15th centuries) of the ancient Uighurs;
- 2) the later (16th–17th centuries) of the Ottomans¹⁸.

It is clear that stages in the migration of Tatars coincide with stages in the development of writing. One might think that investigators who claim the Tatars to have lost their language have in mind only the first wave of migration to Lithuania, while the second wave is kept quiet (it is believed that Tatars in the second wave arrived via Turkey and spoke Turkish).

Another factor “laying the groundwork” for the Tatars to stop using their own language is that they belonged to separate tribes and did not have a common language, or spoke different, not always mutually intelligible, dialects. Łapicz claims that because the Tatars in the Golden Horde spoke different languages rather than a common tongue, language was not one of their values. The only thing uniting them was religion, but this was confessed in Arabic rather than in the ethnic language and could not contribute to the conservation of the mother language¹⁹. Because the mother tongue was not held in high esteem, Tatars could easily take on another language whose knowledge and use was much more profitable to them – they could easily communicate with the local inhabitants.

The Reformation, which began in the GDL in the 1530s and 1540s, encouraged the translation of religious literature to the native language. This had an influence on Tatars as well. They began to translate their Islamic texts to languages local in the GDL. This entire process was, in the words of Tamara Bairašauskaitė, “to be considered not just in terms of the loss of the true language of the Tatars, but together with the development of humanist culture and the Reformation.”²⁰

For Tatar researchers, the loss of language equates to the *loss of ethnos*; this is considered synonymous with *assimilation*. In a certain sense, the Tatars who came to the GDL had experienced the influence of many cultures on their way from Asia to Europe. Language probably was not a fundamental value and a factor determining identity for the Tatars. This was all the more true since the use of the official language of the GDL allowed the Tatars to bring certain novelties (wills and testa-

¹⁷ A *khamail* is the text of prayers written in Turkish or Arabic with explanations, in Belarusian or Polish.

¹⁸ *Miškinienė G.* Seniausi Lietuvos totorių rankraščiai ..., p. 77.

¹⁹ *Łapicz Cz.* Kitab Tatarów litewsko-polskich (Paleografia. Grafia. Język), Toruń, 1986, s. 57.

²⁰ *Bairašauskaitė T.* Lietuvos totorių rankraščiai – LDK raštijos fenomenas // Senosios raštijos ir tautosakos sąveika: kultūrinė Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės patirtis. *Serijs Senoji Lietuvos literatūra*. Kn. 6. Vilnius, 1998, p. 114.

ments, coats of arms) into their community, allowed for the harmonization of Tatar traditions with those of the host society and for their clothing to closely resemble that of the host society, thus opening up the community. According to Gordon, these would be surface factors which do not encourage the community to assimilate. That the Tatars used the local languages of the GDL shows, on the one hand, their integration with the host society, but the non-usage of the mother tongue also partially demonstrates their partial assimilation.

Structural factor. Communities organized by Tatars settled in the GDL under Vytautas (the official date of settlement is 1397). Their method of settlement could have caused differences in society for the Tatars, but these were mostly caused by their internal relationships in which the government of the state little interfered. "It was striven not to uproot their family relationships, since these were also a military organization."²¹

The situation of Tatars in the society of the GDL and the Tatar community depended upon two important factors: the relationship with the land and descent. Tatar military conscripts comprised a special class not just among the community, but among all non-Christians. The manors they governed and the service they performed provided a special status, often compared by historiographers with that of the boyars.

The fact that the Lithuanian Statutes limited the rights of Tatars shows that they were not considered boyars. Tatars faced other restrictions also in civil and family matters. In the Second Lithuanian Statute they were forbidden to perform Christian service²². After 1563, Tatars were not allowed to sell land. "The congress of Brest of 1566 made all lands of boyars private, except for Tatars who performed military service for land."²³

Without getting into the discussion as to whether Tatars were boyars or not, it can be said that there were certain differences between Tatars and boyars, which later increased in number, indicating a certain kind of discrimination.

In Gordon's view, the structural factor is decisive for the amalgamation of immigrants in the host society since other assimilation factors are unavoidable once the structure of the community changes. Even so, the instance of the GDL is different: if the host society attempts not to uproot the structure of the migrant community, the migrants cannot enter into the social groups and social structure of the host country, neither does the structure of their own community change, and that means that there is no assimilation.

²¹ *Gudavičius E.* Lietuvos istorija. Nuo seniausių laikų iki 1569 metų. Vilnius, 1999, p. 364.

²² *Sobczak J.* Czy tatarska ludność Litwy należała do stanu szlacheckiego? // *Przegląd Historyczny*. 1986. T. 77, zesz. 3, s. 476.

²³ *Borawski P.* Sytuacja prawna ludności tatarskiej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (XVI–XVIII w.) // *Acta Baltico-Slavica*. 1983. T. 15, s. 58.

Social factor. The traditional occupations of Tatars were tanning and fur work²⁴. According to statements by Arabs in the 12th and Chinese in the 13th centuries, they had achieved a very high competency. The Tatars of Vilnius faced a stiff competition from Christian craftsmen. They would not allow Tatars into the municipal guilds which were at the same time religious orders. In the statutes on guilds of Vilnius in the 17th and 18th centuries there were various restrictions on the rights of Tatar leather workers²⁵.

According to the model of assimilation/integration, it can be said that assimilation occurs when people enter into the economic and other institutions of the host society and do not experience any discrimination. In that event, the term 'assimilation' does not apply to Tatars: they did experience discrimination.

Familial factor. There are no special studies on the topic of mixed Tatar families. Thus we must rely on brief reports in the works of Tatar researchers. Many authors, based on Risalei, claim that as soon as Tatars moved to the GDL they married Christian women, not having women of their own.

Claims about the frequency of mixed marriages often cite the fact that the Koran allows mixed marriages with non-Muslims, but only if they are *People of the Book*²⁶. Although the Lithuanian Muslims interpreted the allowances and prohibitions of the Koran liberally, as the surrounding community and cultural situation encouraged, mixed marriages were often portrayed negatively in the religious literature of the Tatars²⁷.

Although the newcomers made use of a certain religious and cultural freedom, at that time, alongside state law, there existed also religious law. One can say that

²⁴ *Morkūnienė J.* Odininkai Lietuvoje // Liaudies kultūra. 1999, nr. 1, p. 16; *Idem.* Kailiadirbystė Lietuvoje // Liaudies kultūra. 1997, nr. 2, p. 47.

²⁵ "... if Tatar buyers dare buy or acquire for working the skins of goats and sheep in the suburbs belonging to that guild, these can be robbed together with service boyars, and that which is taken can be given to the Church of the Holy Trinity." *Kričinskis S.* Lietuvos totoriai..., p. 139; in 1633 brothers of the Vilnius chamois and glove guild complained to the king of the Tatars that the latter "having travelled outside the city buy skins," and received from the king a decree ordering the sheriffs of the city and castle of Vilnius to "forbid free men and Tatars to buy skins." Dwa dokumenty do dziejów handlu i rzemiosła tatarskiego w Wilnie w XVII i XVIII w. Podali L.K., i S. K. // *Rocznik Tatarski.* 1935. T. II, s. 449; in 1666, Vilnius leather workers complained that butchers were secretly selling raw hides and demanded a ruling on who were the legitimate buyers of unworked and raw hides, "so that diverse buyers, among them Jews and Tatars, coming from other towns and cities in all and various places could not openly or secretly sell them, except for those brothers and masters of the craft of hides working soft skins." AVAK. T. X, p. 314 (1666 II 3rd act); similar documents containing restrictions on Tatars are found in the same volume on pages 57, 62–63, 78, 120, 176, 225, 448.

²⁶ "People of the Book" include Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians and Sabbæans.

²⁷ "Don't marry others who haven't accepted your faith. A slave faithful to your religion is better than an infidel, even if the latter should really please you. Don't let your daughters marry people of different faiths as long as they haven't accepted your faith. A slave of the true faith is better than an infidel, although the latter may seem more acceptable. Avoid such marriages, for they will drive you to hell." *Łapicz Cz.* Kitab Tatarów..., s. 45.

Catholic bishops did not support mixed marriages. As early as 1558 the Lithuanian Statute and 1616 the parliament laws interdicted Tatars to marry Christians. The punishment for such marriages was the death penalty, but there is no evidence such punishments were ever carried out²⁸. The Orthodox Church did not tolerate and forbade mixed marriages until 1721.

Thus, although there were mixed marriages, they were not very common, and neither side tolerated them. It should be noted that Tatars did not accept children from mixed marriages into the community. Such families can truly be considered assimilated.

Identificational factor. There are no special studies dedicated to the question of the identity of the Tatars of Lithuania. This is usually addressed briefly in writing about their social status. A common origin and religion united the Tatar community²⁹. This allowed them to identify themselves in two ways – ethnically (as Tatars) and religiously (as Muslims). In 18th century texts, the idea of a “Tatar nation” appears. This is how Tatars presented themselves. Such formulations demonstrate the diversity of the understanding of the concept of nation in the following senses: ethnicity, nation, community. In the Third Lithuanian Statute, the term “common nation” appears, and by 1775 the term “noble nation” is employed in the Constitution to describe grand dukes, *murzas*, *ulans* and all Tatars³⁰.

The only study dedicated to Tatar identification seems to be Warmińska's³¹, although it concerns the 20th century. I believe this author's work can be considered reliable and used in this work because it represents this issue reasonably well and Tatars did retain something of their identity in the 20th century. Warmińska divides Tatars into two groups: Tatars to whom the term Tatar and Muslim are one and the same (e. g., “A Muslim in Poland is a Tatar. There is no difference among us. There is only faith in one God.”³²), and those who identify themselves exclusively as Muslims (e.g., “I consider myself a citizen of Poland, but my faith is that of Tatar Muslims.”³³).

²⁸ Sobczak J. Położenie prawne ludności tatarskiej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim. Poznań, 1984, s. 110; Sobczak J. Stereotyp Mongoła i Tatara w świadomości społeczeństwa polskiego // W kręgu mitów i stereotypów. Toruń, 1993, s. 88; Kričinskis S. Lietuvos totoriai..., p. 109; Tyszkiewicz J. Tatarzy na Litwie i w Polsce. Warszawa, 1989, s. 289; Borawski P. Tolerancja religijna wobec ludności tatarskiej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (XVI–XVIII wiek) // Przegląd Humanistyczny. 1981. T. 3, s. 58.

²⁹ Borawski P. Tatarzy polsko-litewscy..., s. 91.

³⁰ Zakrzewski A. Struktura społeczno-prawna Tatarów litewskich w XV–XVIII wieku. Próba nowego ujęcia // Inter Orientem et Occidentem. Studia z dziejów Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej ofiarowane Profesorowi Janowi Tyszkiewiczowi w czterdziestolecie pracy naukowej. Warszawa, 2002, s. 123.

³¹ Warmińska K. Tatarzy polscy. Tożsamość religijna i etniczna. Kraków, 1999.

³² Ibid, p. 145.

³³ Ibid, p. 148.

Thus, it can be said that Tatars even in the 20th century, like in earlier times, remained tied to the same things: Tatariness (the community) and Islam (religion). In the words of one Tatar woman: "Yes, I am proud. And why should not I be? I am a Tatar, I am proud because I am a Muslim. That is the best that one can be," and also "Tatars are Muslims. Some practice, some do not. All of us feel Tatar."³⁴

Thus, it can be categorically stated that Tatars have always maintained their ethnic identity and cannot be called assimilated in terms of identity.

Accepting attitudes and behaviour factors. Although it was a multi-confessional country, the Republic moved along the axis of Catholic confessional unity. Tolerance for Germans (Lutherans), Jews, Tatars, Karaims and Armenians became a recognition of "them." "We" had to gradually become Catholics.

The most significant matter deciding the view on Tatars was that they were Muslims and confessed an "erroneous" faith (Islam). "The opposite of the *infidel* Tatar, confessing Islam, is the citizen of the Republic, a Christian, usually a boyar, who does not denounce his faith even as a prisoner of the Tatars."³⁵ Thus, the religious view was mostly responsible for the development of the Tatar stereotype. The anti-Islamic Polish literature complained of the Muslim hatred of all nations who did not accept Islam. They were criticized for intolerance, their rituals, sexual behaviour and, even the way they ate was caricatured and they were accused of casting magical spells. By the 18th century, a definite Tatar stereotype had developed. They were considered brutal, ruthless people with a tendency toward plunder and kidnapping. Tatars were also viewed as a violent warring nation, but there were also those who accused them of cowardice³⁶. They were held to be greedy, brutal people who went to war for personal material gain.

On the other hand, Tatar loyalty and affection for the king were also underlined. They were described as ambitious people aspiring to the status of nobility by force; well-versed (better than Christians) in law, especially the Lithuanian Statute; unified in solidarity, and extraordinarily talented gardeners³⁷.

In terms of assimilation/integration, immigrants more easily assimilate when local residents do not have preconceived negative notions. Tatars were viewed with a certain slightly negative prejudice. Thus, to say in this regard that they moved towards assimilation and that assimilation occurred is not possible.

The religion of Lithuanian Tatars was not persecuted *per se*, but there were restrictions on the construction of mosques and inter-marriage with Christians (with

³⁴ Ibid, p. 150.

³⁵ *Sobczak J.* Stereotyp Mongoła i Tatarów..., s. 85.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 91.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 92.

the death penalty as punishment), and the parliaments did pass legislation forbidding Tatars from occupying Christian posts.

One of the few acts of intolerance against Lithuanian Tatars was the publication in 1616 in Vilnius of a pseudonymous anti-Tatar pamphlet signed by one P. Czyżewski, called "The Alfurkan of the Tatars," which went into four printings. The author invited readers to use violence to force Lithuanian Tatars to change faiths, that they had come to the GDL as prisoners of war and thus should be deprived of titles of nobility, and called for their strictest repression³⁸. The author, not sparing criticisms of the Tatars, calling them in their entirety "skin picklers," nonetheless admitted to one of their talents – their masterful ability to grow vegetables: "they ripen cucumbers, turnips, onions and radishes before any other peasants."³⁹

Religious discrimination against the Tatars existed for a short time (1609–1620). At this time, the mosque in Trakai, Lithuania, was razed and the anti-Tatar pamphlet published. Even so, there was a relatively tolerant view of Tatars in society at large. But, alongside religious discrimination, there was also legal discrimination expressed in the Lithuanian Statutes which restricted the political rights of Tatars and also placed certain restrictions in civil and family matters⁴⁰. Never the less, factors of accepting attitudes and behaviour were not of decisive significance for adaptation in the host society.

CONCLUSIONS

This analysis brought certain conclusions into focus regarding the assimilation/integration of Tatars in the social fabric of the GDL.

Assimilation theory posits that cultural assimilation takes place when one's cultural traditions, religion and / or community are renounced. Based on the assimilation/integration model, the cultural factor demonstrates the integration rather than assimilation of Tatars in GDL society.

The use of local GDL languages allowed the Tatars to bring certain innovations into their community and created the pre-conditions for reconciling their tradi-

³⁸ Sobczak J. Stereotyp Mongoła i Tatara..., s. 91.

³⁹ Kričinskis S. Lietuvos totoriai..., p. 83; Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštijos kultūra..., p. 733.

⁴⁰ Zakrzewski A. Położenie prawne Tatarów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (XVI–XVIII w.) // Kipčiakų tiurkų orientas Lietuvoje. Vilnius, 1994, p. 125–126; Мишкинене Г. Правовое положение татар в Великом Княжестве Литовском в XVI–XVIII вв. (по материалам полемической литературы о литовских татарах) // Kalbotyra. 1995, t. 44 (2), p. 86–88.

tions with those of the host country, for individual external appearance to more or less correspond to that of locals, and thus made the community less closed. Nonetheless, these are external factors which do not push the community toward assimilation. On the one hand, the fact that Tatars made use of local GDL languages shows their integration into the host society, but on the other hand, the loss of mother tongue signifies a certain kind of partial assimilation in the community.

The structural factor is determinant for the merging of immigrants with the host society, since once the structure of the minority community changes, other assimilation processes are inevitable. In the case of the GDL, however, the structure of the Tatar community remained unchanged, so that in this sense there was no assimilation, and this factor caused the integration of Tatars.

Assimilation occurs when people enter the economic institutions and so forth of the host society and experience no discrimination. In this regard, it is not impossible to speak of assimilation because Tatars experienced discrimination; the craft guilds tried to restrict the rights of Tatars in every possible way.

Mixed marriages were a rare expression among Tatars; both sides rejected them. Nonetheless, it must be noted that the Tatar community refused to accept the children of mixed families as members. Such families can definitely be considered assimilated.

In the assimilation process, immigrants assimilate more easily when locals do not harbour prejudices against them. Tatars were viewed with a certain slightly negative prejudice. It can be said that they were moving toward assimilation, but no assimilation, in this sense, occurred. There was only a brief period when religious discrimination against Tatars was fashionable (1609–1620). Besides religious discrimination, there was also legal discrimination codified in the Lithuanian Statutes. Although there was a generally tolerant view towards Tatars in society at large, factors of accepting attitudes and behaviour were not of a decisive significance in adaptation to the host society.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE ILLUSTRATES LITHUANIAN TATARS' ASSIMILATION/INTEGRATION:

<i>Cultural factor</i>	<i>Communicational factor</i>	<i>Social factor</i>	<i>Identificational factor</i>	<i>Familial factor</i>	<i>Factor of accepting attitude</i>	<i>Factor of accepting behaviour</i>
Integration	Partial integration	Partial integration	Integration	Partial integration	Partial integration	Partial integration
	Partial assimilation	Partial assimilation		Partial assimilation	Partial assimilation	Partial assimilation