CHAPTER THREE

THE DIPLOMATIC SECTIONS AND A PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CRIMEAN INSTRUMENTS

Invocatio

Medieval and early modern rulers, both Christian and Muslim, typically commenced their documents with religious formulas. The Genghisid rulers, who adopted Islam, also began to employ such formulas, although pre-Islamic Mongolian documents did not contain an invocatio. According to Grigor’ev, after their conversion to Islam, the khans still did not enter religious formulas in their documents issued in other scripts than Arabic as it was believed that only the Arabic script and language were fitting to praise God.237 This usage calls to mind a similar practice known from the Ottoman chancery, which issued documents in Italian, Latin, and other “infidel” languages, but did not provide them with religious formulas that appeared only in the Ottoman documents drawn in Arabic script.238

Although generally correct, Grigor’ev’s hypothesis does not apply to all the extant cases. For instance, Mengli Giray’s document from 1514, preserved in the Italian original, contains an invocatio. Moreover, at least some documents, preserved today in Ruthenian copies, were also originally composed in Ruthenian, and yet they contain invocations to God and Prophet Muhammad. Interestingly, such formulas are regularly missing from the documents addressed to Moscow that are today preserved in Russian translations. Apparently they were consciously omitted by the Muscovian chancery clerks who translated or copied the now lost originals.239 The thesis proposed by Usmanov, according to which the invocatio was consciously ignored by Sahib Giray, cannot be supported by the present study as the two yarlıqs of this khan addressed to King Sigismund contain invocations.240

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238 Cf. Kołodziejczyk, Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations, p. 8.
240 Cf. ibidem, p. 185, and Documents 28 and 31, whose invocations recorded in contemporary Polish translations are quoted below.
The invocations entered in the Crimean instruments sent to Poland-Lithuania were as follows:

1480  
Во имя Божье  
(“In the name of God”)

1507 (yarlıq)  
Починаю, Господи, в Твое имя!  
(“I commence, oh Lord, in Your name!”)

1513 (December)  
Починаем, [Господи], в Твое имя, которые же щасте даєть и жалуеть, (Ψи есть, ино братство наше в правдѣ твердо держати и слово свое в правдѣ мети, безъ всякаго хитрѧнства сполнѧти со всеми чистѣм серцем!  
(“We commence in Your name, [oh God,] He who exists, who gives and grants felicity, and [we promise] to keep our brotherhood firmly and in truth, and treat our word sincerely, and fulfill it without any fraud and with an entirely pure heart!”)\textsuperscript{241}

1514 (June)  
Почал есми в боже имя, што щасте роздае и жалуетъ тых, которые братство верне держатъ и правдѣ и слово свое полнятъ безъ лести и безъ хитрости, с чистого серца!  
(“I have commenced in the name of God, who gives and grants felicity to those who faithfully keep brotherhood, and who fulfill their oath and word without any deceit or fraud and with a pure heart!”)

1514 (October)  
[1] Починаемъ великаго Бога именемъ! Ψи поживене даеь и жалуеть! Нѣть иншего бога нежли вдѣнъ Богъ, а Мухамъметъ посол его!  
(“We commence in the name of the great God! He gives and grants nourishment! There is no god but the only God, and Muhammad is His prophet!”)

\textsuperscript{241} The original tenor of the Tatar document must have been slightly changed by the translator; the document from the following year, preserved in the original in Italian, begins with the invocation: “We commence in the name of God, who gives felicity […] to those who […] keep brotherhood […] and observe [their] word;” cf. Document 16.