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## THE MONUMENTS OF THE OTTOMAN EPIGRAPHY OF THE XVIII-th CENTURY FROM BUDJAK

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*Graffiti of the «Small» Mosque of Ismail*

In the modern Ismail (on the lower flow of the Danube) is located the only surviving mosque of the Ottoman period in the North and North-Western Black Sea Region (excluding the Crimea) (fig. 1). The time of foundation of this capital construction is unknown. According to the documents, about the foundation of the settlement here it can be speak only from the turn of the 1580-s-1590-s. [8, p.135]. The first known cartographic images of the city with several mosques, are date of 1770-th [3, p. 107-108].

The Ismail mosque is often referred in the scientific literature as «Khan Mosque» or «Small Mosque» [9, p.81]. I.Sapozhnikov tried to introduce another, wrong name: «Mosque of the Prophet Muhhamad» (in the author's orthography), with reference to the message of the chronicle of M.Costin in the retelling of the Romanian historian Rosetti. Allegedly in 1622-th it noted that «part of the revenues of the Orthodox district of Reni and several surrounding villages was given to the Ismail mosque "dedicated to the Prophet Mohammed"» [12, p. 244].

But in fact, the chronicler says differently: the revenues from Reni, Galati, Ismail and the surrounding villages in the 1672-th went «in favor of the grave of Mohammed, which is located in the country of the Arabs almost on the Red Sea» [22, p. 63]. So, it was in favor of the Mosque Prophet Muhammad, which is in the Holy Medina. In the other places of the world the mosques with a similar name cannot exist. Thus, M.Costin mentioned the wakif, which was founded in 1621-th on the Lower Danube by Sultan Osman II [24, p. 5]. Ismail, as the wakif of Mecca and Medina, is also characterized by Evliya Chelebi. And he informed that in his years the city was ruled by the protege of the Harem's chief of eunuchs [14, p. 31].

The main entrance is located on the north side

and is decorated by a gallery with four entire marble columns. The upper parts of the bases of the columns and the transition from fust to the capitals are bronze, with a profile in the form of a shaft and a fillet. Plinths are from stone. On the concave surface of the metal part of the base of the ultra eastern column, there is an inscription in the old ottoman language (fig. 2). There was only one publication of the transcribed version of the inscription and translation into Russian, with reference to the consultation of some experts of the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies [9, p. 83]:

«The revolt of the Tatars arose because of a full-fed life  
... arose in the date of the wealth»

Olga Pankova dated the inscription in 1702-th by indirect grounds – associating the fact of its appearance with the well-known rebellion of Tatars in Budjak [9 p. 81].

This is not the only one insurrection of Tatars that touched Ismail – the unrest took place in 1603, 1624-1625 and 1637-th, but the most extensive and lasting was in the 1702 and 1703-th years. During its beginning arrived Yusuf Pasha (the ruler of Silistria), to suppress the uprising, he held several weeks the defense of Ismail, and in the January of 1703-th he was forced to recede to the right bank of the Danube [25, p. 3].

The inscription on the column of the mosque is really carved exactly in this period. Master worked with a sure hand (the intermittent lines – traces of the cutter are clearly visible).

Text:

تاتاریک طوغیانی  
جقدی تاریخ غنی دن

Transcription:

- [1] Tatarın tuğyânı  
[2] çıkdı târîh-i ganîden

## Translation:

- [1] The date of the revolt of the Tatar  
 [2] Is derived (comes) from the word (Gani) superfluous

## Comments:

The phrase is distinguished by the laconism and elegance of calligraphy. It has a direct date. It is made in the form of abjad (the letter designation of numerals in the old ottoman language) of the last word: ي ن غ ن د. Where the letters are equal to the signification: غ-1000+ن-50+ي-10+د-4+ن-50 which are sum up to 1114-th year in Hidjra which corresponds to May 28, 1702 – May 16, 1703 of the Christian calendar.

This insurrection was caused by the conditions of the Karlovitz treaty of January 1699-th. In accordance with this treaty, the Crimean Tatars were forced to retreat from the Budjak, which deprived them of the opportunity to made a plunder and collect a tribute from the territories that went to the Poland from this time [25, p. 2]. The raids and attacks to the borderlands in this region were forbidden. The Crimean khan Devlet II Giray (1699-1702) showed his discontent. His brother Gazi III Giray in 1701-th, arrived in the Budjak to the Nogay Tatars, where he organized an uprising against the Ottoman authorities. The Tatars attacked the Ottoman garrisons in the Ismail and other cities. As a result, Gazi Giray was arrested and sent to the Rhodes. Devlet Giray temporarily lost his throne, although he obeyed the authority of the Sultan. As a result of these events, Selim I Giray became in 1702-th the new Crimean khan.

So, a person who left his inscription on the bronze column of the Ismail mosque, was a witness of these events or just their contemporary. And they made a deep impression on him. The date, which he gave, now allows to us to determine confidently the upper chronological border of the appearance of this building.

**The epitaph of the unknown from Ismail**

Fragment (bottom part) of a marble tombstone with an inscription in 4 lines. The date at the bottom is placed in the cartouche. Part of the text with the name of the buried was not preserved. It is stored in the funds of the Ismail History Museum of A.V. Suvorov (fig. 3).

## Text:

برچیزیک اول واقته حانقر قیوسنده  
 تسبیح ایدر ایکن پنجره طشر امیندن  
 فورسونیلر قتل ایلمیشلر دیر روخنه  
 الفاتحه ۱۱۷۰ سنه

## Transcript:

- [1] Bir çeyrek evvel vaktine, hazır kahvesinde  
 [2] Tesbih(?) ider iken pencere taşrasından  
 [3] Kurşunile katl eylemişlerdir ruhuna  
 [4] El-fatiha sene 1170 (1756-1757)  
 Cemaziyelahir

## Translation:

- [1] He was on the Coffee house (or he was drinking his coffee on a quarter before time...)  
 [2] He was doing his tesbih<sup>1</sup> (rosary) (mentioning the name of Allah) while outside from the window  
 [3] killed by a (shot) gun. Pray a fatiha<sup>2</sup> for his soul  
 [4] year H 1170 (1756-1757).

## Comments:

The epitaph captures the attention by details of the incident. Among them is the fashion for coffee consumption in this provincial and still not very large in those years city. And murderer (if he planned his action) did not intimidate the risk of attracting the attention to him by the sound of a shot.

**Epitaph of the Ömer Pasha**

The inscription is fragmented. The last two lines in the lower part of the marble stele have been preserved on the wall of the sarcophagus, which is decorated with a large round rosette and floral ornament (fig. 4). The upper part of the stele with the head in the form of turban is missing. Calligraphy of the naskh. Dimensions of the plate: height – 92 cm, width – 63 cm. Stored in the funds of the Kherson regional museum of local history (XKM-a-9694). In to the collection of the museum, it came from I. Stemkovsky in the period from 1911 to 1914-th [1, c. 565]. The museum's passport of the monument informs that stone was brought «from the outskirts of the Tiraspol». The old Turkish city – Bender falls under the category of outskirts, because is located in the 10 km to the west from the Tiraspol (which was founded by the Russian authorities in the 1792-th).

The first translation of the text into Russian, with an incorrect dating, was published by

<sup>1</sup> Textually: «care of the rose garden» - the metaphor of prayer. Tesbih – means both prayer beads and rosary, as one of the symbols of the purity of faith in Islam.

<sup>2</sup> Fatiha is the first opening chapter of the Quran. It is very important in Islamic worship, being an obligatory part of the daily prayer, repeated several times during the day, therefore in mostly all tombstones the visitor is asked to do a prayer in the form of reading the Fatiha for the soul of the buried person. The translation of the Fatiha is as follows: In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy! Praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy, Master of the Day of Judgement. It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path: the path of those You have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray. Amen. Translation by A.H. Saleem [28, p. 3].

N. Veselovsky in 1914-th. It was republished in the correct version and with a general description of the monument by A. Kostenko [1, p. 561-562].

Text:

عمر پاشا روحیچون الفاتیحه  
سنة ۱۱۸۹

Transcription:

[1] Ömer Paşa ruhiyçün el-fatiha

[2] sene 1189 (1775–1776)

Translation:

[1] Pray Fatiha for the soul of Ömer Pasha

[2] Year 1189 (1775–1776)

Comments:

It corresponds to the first post-war year, after the Russian-Turkish War of 1768-1774-th. The status of the Pasha in the Ottoman Empire is one of the highest titles of the state or military employees. Subdivided into the 3 ranks, it corresponded to an emblematic in the form of a number of (horse-tail) bunchuk.

The high status of the buried is indicated not only by the title of the pasha noted in the inscription, but also the high degree of decoration of the expensive marble sarcophagus.

Date of death of the owner of the gravestone and the area where the monument was discovered, indicates that he had to reside on the territory, which was occupied by the Russian troops (from September of the 1770-th to January 1775-th<sup>1</sup>), that for a large rank of the Ottoman army is possible only if he is a prisoner of the war.

Ottoman chronicles and Russian sources in the synchronous period know only one Ömer Paşa, and also a three-bunchuk one. His name is mentioned in connection with the theater of military operations on the Lower Danube, in Dobruja. The Turkish chronicler writes about these events: on October of the 17, 1773-th, «the infidels took power in a small fortress of Girsova (modern Romanian Hârşova), which was located on the banks of the Danube, and during this incident the governor of Kutahya, the vizier Ömer Pasha and Chaushbashi (tr: Çavuşbaşı) Ispir Ağa, were captured. Ömer Pasha died on the enemy's land. Ispir Ağa, however, returned to the Constantinople after the [conclusion] of the peace treaty, where he was rewarded by the Emperor» [16, p. 220].

Ömer Pasha Kutahya was indeed taken as a prisoner on October 17-th after the battle near the Karasu, not far from Girsov. And released to freedom by the Kyuchyuk-Kainardzhy treaty, but

died soon after that somewhere «in the area, probably, of Akkerman or Bender» [17, p. 93; 23, p. 123].

The same said about are the Russian sources. During the military campaign of 1773-th the town of Girsova (modern Romanian Hârşova) turns into a strategic point of the control one of the ferry through the Danube.

This year's campaign began in the spring with the crossing of the Russian army to the right bank of the Danube. Near to the Karasu, the first battles of this year begin [10, p. 20-23]. Fixed in the fortress of the Girsova, the Russians are trying to use it as a place for the offensive success development, and the Turks are trying to squeeze them out of the Danube. As a result, in mid-September of the 1773-th after an unsuccessful attempt of the Sultan's troops on 14 September to storm of the Girsova, whose defense was directed by A. Suvorov, the Russians go on the counterattack.

The commander of the army, P. Rumyantsev, orders to the lieutenant-general K. Ungern and A. Suvorov not to hesitate with the movement to Karasu, where the Turks managed to concentrate an army from the 25 thousand soldiers under the command of the three-bunchuk Dagistanli Ali Pasha [18, p. 234]. Ömer Pasha was the second three-bunchuk pasha in this composition. Together with them was Cherkas Pasha, and turkish chiefs of the other ranks.

Because of the mass desertion, in the September 16-th, the number of Ottoman troops was reduced to 15 thousand. However, Dagistanli Ali Pasha still occupied the Karasu, and prepared for battle. In the morning of September 17, before the battle, in the Turks remained some 6 thousand people.

During the battle, the Turks lost at least about the 1,500 killed and more than 60 people became prisoners. Among of them were Ömer Pasha and Chaushbashi «with their officials and other notable dignitaries» [10, p. 108-109]. The prisoners were probably transported to the Bender, which is located on distance about the 300 km to the north-west. This city with a powerful fortress was the closest in the theater of military operations, and the largest and most protected base of the Russian army. The Ömer Pasha's gravestone, found by I. Stemkovsky in these places 130 years later, allows us to associate the name of this person with this commander who «died as a captive in the land of the infidels».

But, since the beginning of 1187-th in Hijra, Bender has not been Russian for a month and a half. Maybe because of the health or in view of the

<sup>1</sup> Until ratification by the Sultan of the Kyuchyuk-Kainardzhy treaty.

cold season, Ömer Pasha could not immediately leave the Lower Dniester, where he was died.

And also with these places was connected the another military commander and participant of the battle near Karasu of the 1773-th – Dagistanli Ali Pasha. The mosque with his name was built in the Akkerman before 1770 or after 1774-th. Maybe he was a donator. This mosque was situated outside the fortress, but in the nearest line, in the town. Today this place is under crossing of Kalinin and Ushakov-streets in the modern Belgorod-Dnestrovsky. On the city plan of 1793-th it is already notates like a «ruins» [4, p. 44, 64-65].

### **Memorable building inscription from Kiliya**

In Odessa archaeological Museum there is a memorable building inscription on a marble plate of rectangular shape with size 1,5×1 m. According to the text and distinctive shape of the plate, it was located on the facade of some building (fig. 5). The text is arranged in the 5 rows and in the middle is divided by a vertical line. The plate is partially damaged. There is no entire left edge and partly a right edge. Date is not save. Calligraphy is a monumental thuluth (sülüs). Published for the first time. The date of admission to the museum and the origin are unknown. Plate is not included in the article about the oriental inscriptions from the Odessa archaeological museum collection, which was published in 1915-th by I. Spafarsis [13]. Therefore, in the collection it came after this time.

Text:

... اصل باتيبي حاجي عبيدي اغا \* اولوب بعدده بالكلييه محرابه  
 ... محروسه اسمعيلده اوردو \* فاصحاب باشاغلي ايله كلوب شهادت  
 ... ايدن دولت عليه ده روز نامه \* اول جئمكنان مرحوم و مغفور  
 ... الحاج حسن رائف اقتديك روحچون \* مجددا بنار احيا اولمغا...  
 ... و ساني روحلرچون الله تعاليك رضاي \* شريفچون فاتحه دعا...

Transcription:

- [1] [Bu Cami'in] asıl banisi Hacı Abdi Ağa Olub, ba'de Bil-kiliyye mahruse ve  
 [2] mahruse-i İsmail'de ordu Kassab-başılığı ile gelüb şehâdet  
 [3] ...iden Devlet-i Aliyye'de Ruznamçe-i Evvel cennetmekan merhum ve mağfur  
 [4] El-hac Hasan Raif Efendi'nin ruhiçün Müceddiden ebnâ ve ihya olmağa...  
 [5] Ve sani ruhlarıçün Allahü Teâlânın rıza-yı Şerifiçün fâtiha...

Translation:

- [1] [This mosque or building was first (originally)] constructed by Hadji Abdi Ağa after he came to

Kiliya<sup>1</sup> the guarded,

[2] ...[and] Ismail the protected as cassab-bashi of the Ottoman army he was martyred and after that  
 [3] The Ottoman States (Devleti Aliy ye's) auditor (Ruznamçeci-Evvel),

[4] Haji Hassan Raif Efendis the building was renovated (his place will be in paradise) the merciful the one who has deceased...

[5] Read a Fatiha and commemorate both souls, about the favor of Allah, read the pious prayer...

Comments:

Because of the missing parts of the inscription, the translation is conditional. It is for instance not very clear who was martyred in line 2. It is probable Abdi Ağa. In the row 4 it is stated that the mosque was renovated by Hassan Raif Efendi. But from the earlier rows we understand that Hasan Raif Efendi in his life renovated the Mosque that was built by Haji Abdi Ağa who was martyred. So the translation is only interpretation of what we reconstruct from the remaining parts of the inscription.

The type of building, as well as the year is not indicated in the inscription, but there are the reasons to think that it was a mosque in Kiliya. Its founder was Hadji Abdi Ağa, who was the head of the cassab in the protected cities of Kiliya and Ismail. Kassabbashi Ağa was an officer of Ottoman army, the chief of supplies of meat products. After his death, the building, what he donates, was repaired in memory of him by Haji Hassan Raif Efendi.

In the row above mentioned Ruznamçeci-Evvel (first auditor or financial bookkeeper) of the Ottoman Empire. This was the main financial controller of the Sultan's treasury. Perhaps this title is associated with Haji Hassan. Hence, the controller of the expenses of the imperial court was connected by some relations with the garrison officer of the two largest Ottoman fortresses of the Lower Danube region.

If the capital official initiates the repair of the local mosque in memory of the deceased friend, he died short hereafter because the last row calls to read the prayer for both souls, so then this inscription was written by a third unknown person.

According to the common stylistic features of carving, the monument can be attributed to the XVIII-th century. Assuming that Haji Hassan Raif is Ruznamçeci, so, to the beginning of the 1790-s, the plate does not belong. Because during the signing of the Iasi treaty, the present Ruznamçeci-Evvel was another – Mohammed Durrie Efendi [15,

<sup>1</sup> Kili, Chilia ect.

p. 42].

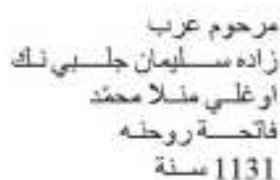
The text of this noteworthy and very notable monument of the Ottoman epigraphy is absent in the collection of the «Inscriptions and images, located in the Ismail fortress», which was made by the Russian military painter Litov in the 1819-th [11]. Similar assembly of Eastern epigraphy were made by painters in the fortresses of Akkerman [4, p. 67] and Bender [27, c. 280] in the 1819-th. But in the Kiliya, Russians did not manage to make such a work, because the old stone fortress of 1479-th, was destroyed by the ottomans in the 1796-97-th. In its place, according to the project of engineer Kauffer, was appeared a modern bastion fort [6, p. 331].

All this gives to us the grounds to looking for the mosque of Haji Abdi rather in Kiliya than in Ismail, dating it in the second half of the XVIII-th. From the mosques, surviving in the Kiliya till 1793-1794-th, there are known only the Arab Mosque, Kura Efendi Jami, Haji Ahmet Mosque, Ismail Ağa Jami (all in the city), and also Büyük Sultan Jami. Moreover, the «Great Sultan's Mosque», probably, is the second name of the central fortress mosque – Sultan Beyazit Jami (عماج ناطلس ديزايي) [27, p. 106, 253-254. fig. 85, 86b]. According to the Ottoman Archives documents in the Kiliya we know its third name: Sultan Bayezid Han Jami. There were also Haji Mahmud Ağa Jami in the Çarşı Mahallesi [20], and the Sultan Orhan Mosque [19].

**Epitaph of Arapzade Molla Muhammed**

The marble tombstone. The text has been preserved completely. The Headgear on the tombstone is unpreserved. It is stored in the funds of the Ismail History Museum of A.V.Suvorov (fig. 6). Place of detection is unknown. It's naskh calligraphic, simple and very clear written, with big letters in five lines.

Text:



Transcription:

- [1] Merhum Arab-
- [2] /zade Süleyman Çelebi'nin /
- [3] oğlu Molla Muhammed /
- [4] Ruhuna Fatiha
- [5] sene 1131 (1718-1719)

Translation:

- [1] The deceased Arapzade (family name or

belongs to the Arabs)

[2] Süleyman Çelebi's

[3] son Molla Muhammed

[4] Pray a Fatha for his soul in the

[5] year 1131 (1718-1719)

Comments:

This is a very important monument to study for the social cultural history of Danube and Bujak Region. It tells a very hidden history of the Arabs (or Black people) in the North-West Black Sea Region.

The term «Arab» could mean here both Arabian descent but in the ottoman period also the black African people were designated as Arabs. We know that in Kiliya there was an Arab Mosque according to the plan of Kauffer 1794-th. [27, p. 105] (fig. 7). This means that there certainly was an Arab Quarter (Arab Mahallesi). According to Ismail's plans of the 1770-s-1790-s, we don't know quarters and mosques with such name. So, the tombstone, most likely, was brought to Ismail from the Kiliya.

The Danube delta had a great interest of the Black Eunuchs of the Topkapi Palace. Already during the reign of the Sultan Murad III (1574-1595) Habeshi<sup>1</sup> Mehmed Ağa (the first Chief Harem Eunuch of the Ottoman Empire) founded a major development at what is now Ismail in the frame of vakif. And some later the establishment in Sünné (Sulina) in 1745-th of the vakıf of Chief Harem Eunuch (Kızlar Ağası, in Ottoman Turkish) al-Hajj Beshir Ağa (term 1717-1746) proves this point [24, p. 7].

In the Turkish archives there are documents with data of extensive imperial orders about building activities in Izmail at the end of the XVI century. Habeshi Mehmed Ağa could have a relation to this only until November 1590-th, when he was died. The fact is that vakıfs included mosques, schools, hospitals, public kitchens, storage houses and shops, demonstrates how much they enriched religious, intellectual, social, and economic life in this provincial setting. It also shows how, in an age of decentralization, the Ottoman central authority remained involved in the development of this region.

And maybe the Arapzade Molla Muhammed, which means that he was a religious scholar, could be the founder of this Mosque. Anyhow this tombstone is a witness of a period where the Black Sea Region was a vivid multicultural and cosmopolite region, where Muslims, Christians, White and black people were trading and living nearby.

<sup>1</sup> The laqab Habeshi means «Abyssinian» or «Ethiopian».

In the Ottoman archives there is a register of trade to the port of Kiliya from the year 1769-th [21]. Amazingly the list contains names of traders. So, we have proof of the nationality and cosmopolite of the traders, and among them also is mentioned an Arap Süleyman Ağa. There is no doubt that he is the grandson or son of our Arap Molla Muhammed, whose father was according to the tombstone Suleyman Celebi – mostly the Turks give to their oldest son the name of their father.

So, along the Black Sea coast there was a great influx of Black or Arab people. The Arab Mosque of Kiliya was established for or by these people. We can not deliver the conclusive evidence but the Tombstone in Ismail's Museum is in some way connected with this mosque.

### **The epitaph of Imam Khalil Efendi**

In the funds of the Kherson regional museum of local history, is (КП-3638 И-348) another unique monument of the Ottoman epigraphy from the North-Western Black Sea Region – the tomb of the marble stele of Imam Khalil Efendi (fig. 8). Plate's size: height – 125 cm, width – 31 cm. The inscription consists from 10 rows without damage, and the eleventh is almost destroyed. Unfortunately, the last line with the date is not saved.

The translation of the text into the Russian was firstly published by N. Veselovskiy [7, p. 24]. The photo of the plate and a brief description were introduced into the scientific circulation by A. Kostenko [1, p. 563-564].

The thread is made at a high professional level. Impeccable work of naskh calligraphic. Old Ottoman language.

Text:

حوالی  
 کمال معرفتله فضلیله باغ ادیباده  
 ابر شمشدی قولنه گلزار معنده  
 بقانی اولماق دهرک وضعیدر حالا  
 کرکدر چشم عبرت کنج و پیر اعلا و ادناه  
 کلوب بر فاتحه قیلدی تسلی مزده هاتیف  
 بحمد الله بی شهبه مقامی جنت و اعلا  
 الغازی سلطان بیازید  
 وثینک جامع شریف امامی مرحوم  
 خلیل افندی ابن الحاج عثمان

Transcription:

- [1] Hüve'l-baki  
 [2] Kemâl-i marifetle fazlıyla bağ-ı edibâda  
 [3] Erişmişdi kuluna gülzâr manada

- [4] Bekası olmamak dehrin va'zıdır hâla  
 [5] Gerekdir çeşm-i ibret genc ve pîr, âlâ ve ednâda  
 [6] Gelüb bir fatiha kıldı teselli müjde hâtif  
 [7] Bihamdillâhî bi-süphe makamı cennet-i âlâda  
 [8] El-gâzî Sultan Beyazid  
 [9] Veli'nin Cami'i imamı merhum  
 [10] Halil Efendi ibn el Hac Osman  
 [11] (ruhuna fatiha)

Translation:

- [1] He [Allah] is eternal.  
 [2] Perfection of the knowledge and its superiority in the garden of the educated  
 [3] He reached (words?) in the flower garden of thoughts.  
 [4] The lack of eternity is the property of the world. Now  
 [5] Looking for the eye of the young and old, the supremes and inferiors.  
 [6] Upon arriving the poet read a prayer (prayed a fatiha) and said the date as a good tiding  
 [7] Glory is to Allah: no doubt, his place in the highest paradise.  
 [8] Imam of the holy mosque of  
 [9] «El-gazi (warrior), Sultan Beyazid-Veli»  
 [10] The late Khalil Efendi, son of Haji Osman.  
 [11] (ruhuna fatiha)

Comments:

The Headgear on the tombstone is preserved. It is called *Katibi* Headgear. Headgears in tombstones are reflects information about education and profession of the dead person [18, p.115-117]. The *Katibi* headgear was worn by educated people (illumine class) who have been involved in dealing with editorial works such as chroniclers, calligraphers, state clerks or officials and clerical officers. The headgear was made of thick cotton in two inches long vertically one by one and the white turban was wrapped around it. Most of the state officials used to wear this headgear so these headgears can be found almost in every graveyards, cemeteries and backyards in Turkey. In the Ukraine only a few complete tombstones with headgears are preserved.

In the North-Western Black Sea Region in the Ottoman period, there were only two mosques with the name of Sultan Bayazid-Veli: in Kiliya and Akkerman [4, p.45; 27, p.106]. The Sultan annexed these cities to his domains in 1484-th and laid the mosques inside the fortress, on the place of former Orthodox churches [5, p. 80; 27, p. 106].

Considering that this stele was transferred to the Kherson museum by I. Stempkovsky from

Tiraspol, because of this the origin of the monument can be associated only with the nearest Akkerman, and not with the Bender, in which large settlement appears only from the end of 1530-s [2, p.250], or with Kiliya, which distanced from the Tiraspol for 150 km.

Evliya Celebi reports that the Bayezid-Veli Mosque in the Akkerman was «a pleasant sight, with one minaret», and was «inside the fortress». The foundations of this building were investigated by archaeologists in the 1970-s. [5, c. 80-89] and in 2017 (fig. 9). It is one of the largest medieval mosques in the Northern Black Sea Region with an area of 400 sq. m. Its only minaret has survived to this day. On the plan of the Akkerman in 1793-th, the building named as *الفتح* – the Sultan's Mosque (*الفتح* – is the title of sultan) [4, c. 41].

This epigraphic monument is an indirect confirmation of the words of Evliya Chelebi about the existence of Bayezid-Veli's Mosque in the Akkerman. The dating of the tombstone can be assumed within the second half of the XVIII-th century, except for those years when Akkerman was in the hands of the Russian army (1770-1774-th and 1789-1791-th).

### Conclusion:

In the article are publishes six monuments of the Ottoman epigraphy of the XVIII-th century from North-Western Black Sea Region<sup>1</sup>. The texts reflect some historical events of the region and episodes of the private life of some citizens of this border region of the Ottoman Empire. The graffiti of the 1702-th, which was known before, was confirmed by the date, and its reading was clarified. The Epitaph of Arapzade Molla Muhammed (1718-1719) reflects the multiculturalism of the Ottoman Budjak, in which one of the elements was the community of the Arabs. The 1756-th epitaph shows one of the tragic episodes of the private life one of an inhabitant of Ismail. The epitaph of the Ömer Pasha (1775/1776-th) allows connecting the grave monument with the name of an important military and political figure of the era of the Russian-Turkish war of 1768-1774-th and to determine the place of his burial. The memorable inscription of the high-ranking Istanbul official Haji Hassan Raif, probably made in the 1770-s-

1790-s and devoted to the repair of a mosque (?), which suffered from military operations, and which was built by the officer Haji Ağa in Kiliya or Ismail. Finally, the epitaph with the name of Imam Khalil Efendi is the first epigraphic source that mentions one of the oldest Ottoman mosques in the region – Bayazid-Veli, which built in the Akkerman fortress in the 1480-s.

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**Тютюнджю Мехмет, Красножон Андрій Пам'ятки османської епіграфіки XVIII ст. з Буджаку**

*У статті опубліковано п'ять епіграфічних пам'яток османської епіграфіки XVIII ст. Північно-Західного Причорномор'я. Уточнено прочитання графіті 1702 р. з Ізмаїльської мечеті. Епітафія Арапзаде Мулла Мохаммеда співвідноситься з арабської мечеттю Кілії, відображаючи елементи арабської колонізації Нижнього Подунав'я. Епітафія 1756 р. розповідає про загадкове вбивство одного з жителів Ізмаїлу під час його молитви. Епітафія з ім'ям Омер-паші 1775 р. дозволяє зв'язати могильний пам'ятник з важливим військово-політичним діячем епохи першої російсько-турецької війни 1768-1774 рр. та визначити місце його поховання. Пам'ятний напис стамбульського чиновника рузнамеджі-еввел Хаджі Хасан Рауфа, виконана, ймовірно, у 1770-1790-х рр. та присвячена ремонту постраждалої від військових дій мечеті (?), збудованої офіцером Хаджі Агою у Кілії або Ізмаїлі. Епітафія з ім'ям Халіл ефенді вказує, що покійний був імамом однієї з найстаріших і найбільших османських мечетей регіону – Баязида-Велі, відбудованої в Аккермані у 1480-х рр.*

**Ключові слова:** Ізмаїл, Аккерман, Кілія, Бендери, Османська епіграфіка

**Тютюнджю Мехмет, Красножон Андрей Памятники османской эпитафийки XVIII в. из Буджака**

*В статье опубликовано шесть эпитафических памятников османской эпитафийки XVIII в. Северо-Западного Причерноморья. Уточнено прочтение граффити 1702 г. из Измаильской мечети. Эпитафия Арапзаде Мулла Мохаммеда соотносится с Арабской мечетью Килии, отражая элементы арабской колонизации Нижнего Подунавья. Эпитафия 1756 г. рассказывает о загадочном убийстве одного жителя Измаила во время молитвы. Эпитафия с именем Омер-паша 1775 г. позволяет связать могильный памятник с важным военно-политическим деятелем эпохи первой русско-турецкой войны 1768-1774 гг. и определить место его захоронения. Памятная надпись стамбульського чиновника рузнамеджи-еввел Хаджи Хасан Рауфа, выполнена, вероятно, в 1770-1790-х гг. и посвящена ремонту пострадавшей от военных действий мечети (?), выстроенной офицером Хаджи Агой в Килие или Измаиле. Эпитафия с именем Халил эфенди указывает, что покойный был имамом одной из старейших и крупнейших османских мечетей региона – Баязида-Вели, выстроенной в Аккерманской крепости в 1480-х гг.*

**Ключевые слова:** Измаил, Килия, Аккерман, Бендеры, Османская эпитафийка

**Tütüncü Mehmet, Krasnozhon Andrei The monuments of the Ottoman epigraphy of the XVIII-th century from Budjak**

*In the article are published six epigraphic monuments of the Ottoman epigraphy of the 18-th century from the North-Western Black Sea Region. The reading the first of them – graffiti of 1702-th from the Ismail mosque, has been corrected. The Epitaph of Arapzade Molla Muhammed (1718-1719) correlates with the Arabian mosque of Kiliya, reflecting the elements of the influx of some black (arab) people to the Lower Danube. The epitaph of 1756-th tells about mysterious murder of someone Ismail citizen during his prayer. The epitaph with the name Omer Pasha of 1775-th allows us to connect the gravestone with the important military and political figure of the Russian-Turkish war of 1768-1774-th, and discover the place of his burial. The memorable inscription of the Ruznamçeci-Evvel Haji Hassan Raif, an Istanbul official, was probably created in the 1770-1790-s and was dedicated to the repair of a mosque (?), which suffered from military operations, and was built by the officer Haji Abdi Ağa in Kiliya or Ismail. An epitaph of Khalil Efendi indicates that the deceased was imam of one of the oldest and largest Ottoman mosques in the region – Bayazid-Veli, which was built in the Akkerman fortress in the 1480-s.*

**Keywords:** Ismail, Akkerman, Kiliya, Bender, Ottoman epigraphy





*Fig. 1.* The «Small» Mosque of Ismail. View from the north-west.



*Fig. 2.* Graffiti on the base of the column of the «Small» Mosque of Ismail.



Fig. 3. Tombstone of the 1756-th from the Ismail.



Fig. 4. Tombstone of Ömer Pasha 1775-th.



*Fig. 5. Building memorial plate of the Haji Hassan Raif.*



*Fig. 6. The plate with epitaph of Arapzade Molla Muhammed.*

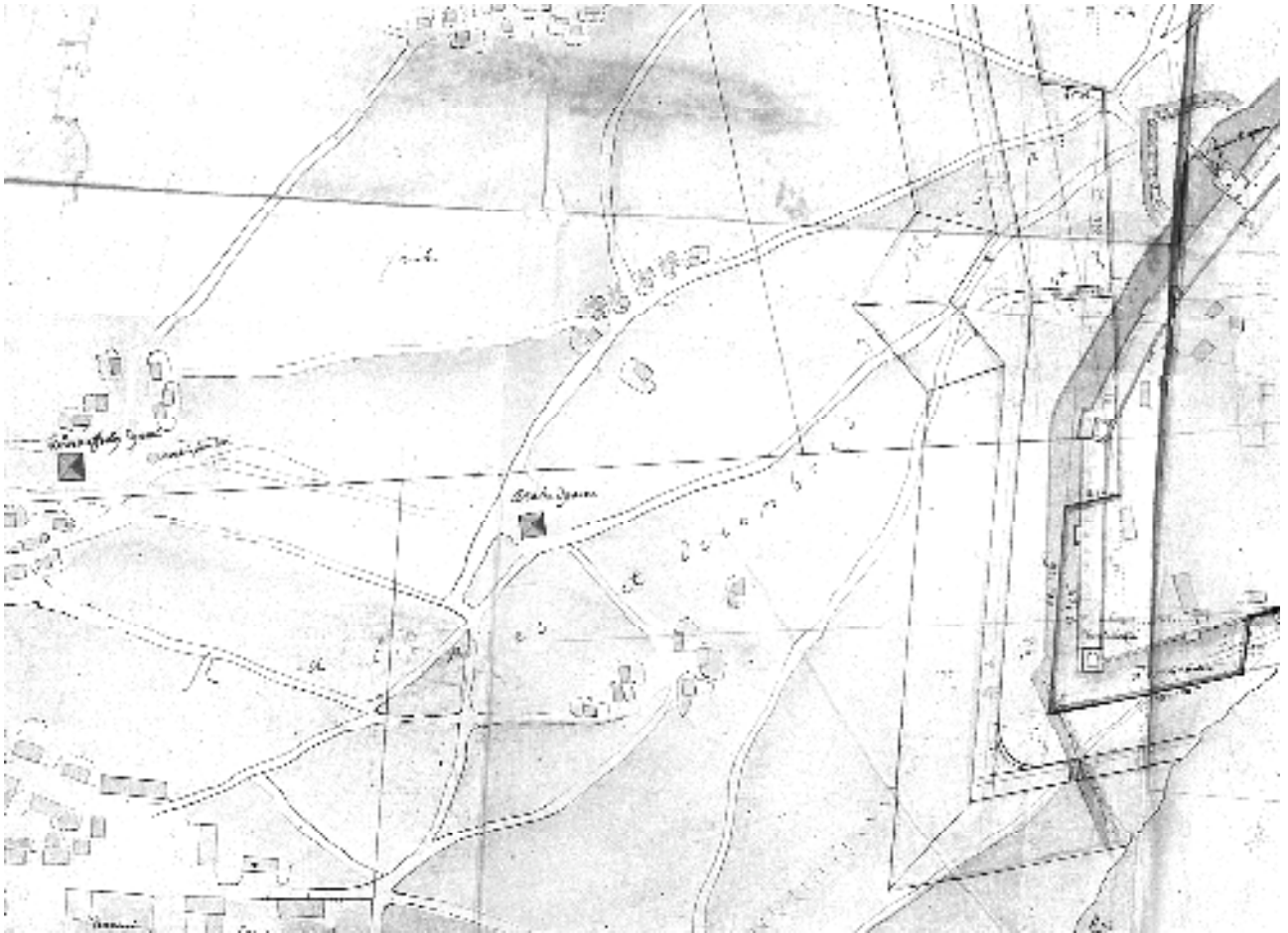


Fig. 7. Plan of the Kiliya (fragment with Arab Mosque). F. Kauffer. 1794.



*Fig. 8.* The tombstone of the Imam Khalil Efendi.



*Fig. 9.* Foundations of the Sultan's Mosque in Akkerman after conservation. 2017-th.