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Review Article

The Tatar Tafsir in Recent Polish Kitabistic Research

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Abstract

The present paper concerns kitabistics, a young subdiscipline of linguistics. The primary focus of analysis is the *Alytus Tafsir*, the oldest known, fully preserved handwritten Polish translation of the Quran from 1723, written in Arabic script by the Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It discusses the three-volume critical edition of this manuscript, by Czesław Łapicz and Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, which is the result of interdisciplinary linguistic and cultural research. It also highlights the significance of Kulwicka-Kamińska's monograph, which analyzes non-Slavic borrowings in the *Alytus Tafsir*, demonstrating the multilingual and multicultural nature of the Polish language used by the Tatar nobility, as well as their openness to both Eastern and Western influences. The edition and scholarly study of the *Alytus Tafsir* make a substantial contribution to our understanding of the culture of the Lithuanian Tatars and the history of the Polish language, particularly its North-Eastern Borderland variety.

Keywords: Kitabistics, the *Alytus Tafsir*, Polish Quran translation, Arabic script in Slavic languages, North-Eastern Borderland Polish, Interreligious translation, Oriental and Occidental influences, Tatar ethnolect.

Kitabistics is a relatively young subdiscipline within linguistics. Its focus is the study of the language of Muslim religious texts, approached through a multidisciplinary lens that combines Slavic linguistics (particularly Polish and Belarusian) and Oriental studies (notably Arabic and Turkic) with cultural and religious studies—encompassing both Quranic and Biblical scholarship. The pioneer of this research orientation within Polish humanities is Professor

Czesław Łapicz[1] of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland. His cognitive framework for kitabistic studies has been successfully expanded by a scholar of the younger generation, Professor Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, also of Nicolaus Copernicus University and director of the university's Centre for Kitab Studies. Her contribution to the development of this linguistic subdiscipline—both in its theoretical and methodological dimensions—is of considerable significance.

At the heart of their research lies the *Alytus Tafsir*, the earliest fully preserved manuscript (dated 1723) of a Polish-language translation of the Quran, produced by Tatars residing in the territories of the historical Grand Duchy of Lithuania. A distinctive feature of this Tatar religious manuscript is that the Polish translation is rendered in the Arabic script.

A comprehensive, large-scale research initiative aimed at a multifaceted linguistic, cultural, theological, and historical examination of the Tatar translation of the Quran into Polish was launched in 2013 by an international research team led by C. Łapicz and J. Kulwicka-Kamińska, under the auspices of a grant from the *Narodowy Program Rozwoju Humanistyki* [Polish National Programme for the Development of the Humanities].[2] The outcome of this project is a critical three-volume edition of the earliest known Polish translation of the Quran, which includes a facsimile of the manuscript, a full transliteration of the Slavic-language *Tafsir*, and an ISO-standard transliteration of selected segments of its Oriental linguistic layer.

The edition is titled *Tefsir Tatarów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. XVI-wieczny przekład Koranu na język polski. Wydanie krytyczne zabytku polskiej kultury narodowej*, and includes the following volumes: vol. 1: *Komentarz filologiczno-historyczny*, ed. Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, Czesław Łapicz, 614 pp.; vol. 2: Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, Czesław Łapicz, *Faksymile*, 1000 pp.; vol. 3: Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, Czesław Łapicz, *Transliteracja*, 1037 pp.; Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń, 2022.

The results of this original interdisciplinary research, as presented in the monograph, are multifaceted. They situate the *Alytus Tafsir* within the broader context of other *Tafsir* manuscripts dating from the 17th to the 19th centuries,

1 Cf: Czesław Łapicz, "Kitabistyka: źródła, metodologia i perspektywy badawcze," *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Językoznawcza* 24, no. 2 (2017), pp. 111–123; Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, Maria Krajewska and Anna Szulc, "Czesław Łapicz. Artificem commendat opus," in Maria Krajewska et al., eds., *Święte księgi judaizmu, chrześcijaństwa i islamu w słowiańskim kręgu kulturowym. Księgi wyznawców islamu. Kitabistyka* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2016), pp. 11–25; Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, "Badania kitabistyczne w Polsce i na świecie," *Życie Tatarskie* 39, no. 10 (2014), pp. 37–49; Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, "Tendencje rozwojowe kitabistyki," in Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska et al., eds., *Tatarskie dziedzictwo kulturowe. Rękopiśmienne księgi religijne. 50 lat kitabistyki* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2018), pp. 61–80.

2 Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, "Projekt Tefsir—wydanie krytyczne XVI-wiecznego przekładu Koranu na język polski," *NURT SVD* 51, no. 2 (2017), pp. 208–223.

examined through historical, political, linguistic, and literary perspectives, encompassing both Slavic (Polish and Belarusian) and Oriental dimensions.

This three-volume monographic study represents a major milestone in the field of kitabistics, distinguished by its considerable methodological rigor and cognitive contributions. It constitutes a pioneering investigation into a uniquely defined research problem, introducing into both academic discourse and public awareness a manuscript of the *Tafsir* type—the earliest known translation of the Quran not only into Polish but into any Slavic language. Likely produced in the late 16th or early 17th century, this text serves as compelling evidence of the cultural heterogeneity of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and more broadly, the historical Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Furthermore, it offers an original and previously unexplored philological source for the study of the origins of the North-Eastern Borderland variety of Polish, highlighting the civilizational and cultural significance of two Slavic languages—Polish and Belarusian.

An inherent characteristic of Tatar manuscript relics from the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, such as the *Alytus Tafsir*, is their genetically multilayered, multi-sourced, and multilingual nature. The methodological approach adopted in the discussed monograph is inherently interdisciplinary, integrating research paradigms from Polish and Belarusian diachronic linguistics, Arabic and Turkic studies, as well as Biblical and Quranic studies.

J. Kulwicka-Kamińska and C. Łapicz developed an original, standardized system for the transliteration of Slavic texts written in the Arabic script into the Latin alphabet specifically for the purposes of this edition.[3] This system eliminates inconsistencies in the reading of Tatar manuscripts while preserving their essential linguistic features crucial for scholarly analysis. Its originality lies in the philological critique of the Slavic text rendered in Arabic script, culminating in a reconstruction of the pronunciation of Polish (Slavic) sounds concealed beneath the Arabic graphemes. This reconstruction is grounded in knowledge of the phonological (phonetic) system of the historical North-Eastern Borderland variety of Polish.

The analysis of the phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels of the *Alytus Tafsir* text presented in the monograph unequivocally demonstrates that the original Polish prototext—with its characteristic North-Eastern Borderland linguistic features—underwent a process of linguistic Ruthenization over time.

3 Czesław Łapicz, *Kitab Tatarów litewsko-polskich. Paleografia. Grafia. Język* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 1986), pp. 90–100; Czesław Łapicz, "Transkrypcja czy transliteracja tekstów muzułmanów litewsko-polskich pisanych alfabetem arabskim? Jaka transkrypcja? Jaka transliteracja? Wprowadzenie do dyskusji," in Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska and Czesław Łapicz, eds., *Tefsir Tatarów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego: XVI-wieczny przekład Koranu na język polski. Wydanie krytyczne zabytku polskiej kultury narodowej* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2022), pp. 169–184. This issue has been the subject of scholar reflection by other researchers—see: Galina Miškinienė, *Seniausi lietuvos Totoriu rankraščiai (Grafika. Transliteracja. Vertimas. Tekstu struktura ir turinys)* (Vilnius: VU l-klos sp., 2001).

Studies by J. Kulwicka-Kamińska and C. Łapicz on the *Alytus Tafsir*, conducted from a linguacultural perspective, demonstrate that the Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, despite their confessional particularism, remained receptive to broader cultural processes occurring within early modern Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth society. Notably, they engaged with currents of Protestant Christian reform, which emphasized the importance of making the Holy Scriptures accessible to the faithful through vernacular translations, especially into Polish.[4] At the linguistic and translational levels, Tatar translators of the Quran drew upon principles established in the translation of Christian sacred texts, most prominently the Bible, adopting biblical stylistic models in their rendering of Islamic scripture. A key intertextual source was

4 The following studies are devoted to the lexicon of Polish Renaissance translations of the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament, which were prepared in the Evangelical Protestant circle: Magdalena Hawrysz, "Problemy tłumaczenia Nowego Testamentu w świetle metajęzykowych uwag Marcina Czechowica," in Aneta Ceglińska-Gajda, ed., *Naród. Religia. Język* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo UŁ, 2011), pp. 99–116; Magdalena Hawrysz, "Ideologia braci polskich a ich język. Zasada sola Scriptura w twórczości Marcina Czechowica," *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Językoznawcza* 18, no. 2 (2011), pp.49–75; Irena Kwilecka, "Die Brester Bibel. Kulturgeschichtliche und sprachliche Fragen der Übersetzung," in Hans Rothe and Fridrich Scholz, eds., *Brester Bibel* 1563, vol. 2, *Księgi Nowego Testamentu. Kommentare* (Padeborn–München–Wien–Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001), pp. 1485–1660; Irena Kwilecka, "Biblia Leopolity i Biblia brzeska. Tradycja a nowoczesność przekładu," in Irena Kwilecka, ed., *Biblie staropolskie* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2003), pp. 31–48; Tomasz Lisowski, *Sola Scriptura. Leksyka Nowego Testamentu Biblii gdańskiej* (*1632*) *na tle porównawczym. Ujęcie kwantytatywno-dystrybucyjne* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Rys, 2010); Tomasz Lisowski, *Przekłady Jakuba Wujka w odnowie leksyki Nowego Testamentu gdańskiego (1606). Ujęcie dystrybucyjno-kontekstowe* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Rys, 2018); Arleta Łuczak, "Najstarszy polski drukowany przekład Nowego Testamentu pióra Stanisława Murzynowskiego (1551–1553)," in Tomasz Jaworski and Wiesław Pyżewicz, eds., *Nowy Testament w dziejach i kulturze Europy. 450 rocznica przekładu Nowego Testamentu przez Mikołaja Jakubicę na język dolnołużycki* (Zielona Góra: Oficyna Wydawnicza UZ, 2001), pp. 171–182; Arleta Łuczak, "The Berest Bible in the light of the recent researches," *Studia z Filologii Polskiej i Słowiańskiej* 39 (2004), pp. 53–75; Arleta Łuczak, "Das Neue Testament des Stanisław Murzynowski: Zum Verhältnid von Übersetzungund griechischem original," in Hans Rothe and Fridrich Scholz, eds., *Des Neuen Testamenten Zweiter und letzter Teil: Geschichte und Briefe der Apostel aus dem Griechischen in die polnische Sprache übertragen und mit einer kurzen Auslegung erklärt von Stanisław Murzynowski*; *in Königsberg in Preußen im Monat September 1552* (Padeborn–München–Wien–Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2008), pp. 435–570; Leszek Moszyński, "Zur Sprache der Bibelübersetzung Szymon Budnys von 1572," in Hans Rothe and Fridrich Scholz, eds., *Simon Budny, Biblia, to jest Księgi Starego i Nowego Przymierza*, vol. 2 (Padeborn–München–Wien–Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1994), pp. 351–414; Tadeusz Rubik, *Biblia Wujka, Rabba i Grodzickiego: Historia powstania jezuickiego przekładu (ok. 1579–1599) w kontekście kulturowo-konfesyjnym epoki* (Warszawa: Uniwersytet Warszawski, 2024); Izabela Winiarska-Górska, *Szesnastowieczne przekłady Pisma Świętego na język polski* (*1551–1599*) *jako gatunek nowożytnej książki formacyjnej* (Warszawa: Uniwersytet Warszawski, 2017).

Szymon Budny's 1572 Polish Bible, produced in accordance with the Protestant doctrinal principle of *sola Scriptura*. This Bible, noted for its strict fidelity to the original inspired text, resonated with the Muslim translators' emphasis on preserving the purity and authenticity of divine revelation.[5]

The critical edition of the *Alytus Tafsir* under discussion, accompanied by an interdisciplinary commentary, presents the first translation of the Quran—the Holy Book of Muslims—into the Polish language, framing it as a cultural text produced within the multiethnic and religiously tolerant context of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.[6] Owing to the monographic study by J. Kulwicka-Kamińska and C. Łapicz, this unique source has entered international academic circulation[7] as a valuable document for the history of the Polish language, and to some extent also the Belarusian language. It offers insight into the development of the regional North-Eastern Borderland variety of Polish.

Interdisciplinary analyses of the *Alytus Tafsir* contribute to a deeper understanding of Renaissance-rooted translations of sacred texts within the territories of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.[8] In light of the research conducted by C. Łapicz and J. Kulwicka-Kamińska, the *Alytus Tafsir* of 1723 may be regarded as the most significant text documenting the cultural and religious significance of Polish Tatar writings. Its importance underscores the need for continued linguistic investigation of this unique manuscript.

Remaining within the field of kitabistics, J. Kulwicka-Kamińska devoted her most recent monograph—*Leksyka północnokresowa w tefsirze Tatarów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego. Zapożyczenia niesłowiańskie*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, Toruń 2024, pp. 352—to an in-depth analysis of the lexical resources characteristic of the North-Eastern Polish dialects. She interprets this lexicon as a valuable source for reconstructing the ethnolect of the *ummah*, that is, the Tatar community, within the broader context of the linguistic and cultural landscape of the communicative community of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

J. Kulwicka-Kamińska's monograph, guided by a cognitively oriented linguocultural perspective, seeks to examine the lexicon of the *Tafsir* by juxtaposing it, on the one hand, with the lexicon of North-Eastern Polish dialects

5 Cf. Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, *Przekład terminologii religijnej islamu w polskich tłumaczeniach Koranu na tle biblijnej tradycji translatorycznej* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2013).

6 Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, "Fenomen Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego—koegzystencja kultur. Przekłady Koranu na język polski," *Litteraria Copernicana* 18, no. 2 (2016), pp. 39–53.

7 Currently, J. Kulwicka-Kamińska is working on the transcription of the Tatar Alytus Tafsir and on its critical edition in English. It is to be published by Brill. The publisher considers the edition as a significant contribution to the research on the culture of Europe and the Muslim East. The project, led by J. Kulwicka-Kamińska, is being created thanks to the cooperation of the Centre for Kitab Studies of Nicolaus Copernicus University and the Institute of Lithuanian Language of Vilnius University.

8 Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, "Piśmiennictwo religijne Tatarów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego jako oryginalne źródło do badań polszczyzny północnokresowej," *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Językoznawcza* 24, no. 2 (2017), pp. 85–110.

and, on the other, with that of standard Polish as used in ethnic Poland. This methodologically differential and comparative approach of parallels[9] enables the author to address the question of whether the chronologically multilayered lexicon of the *Tafsir*—which reflects language use from the 16th to the 19th century—serves to enhance our understanding of the North-Eastern Borderland lexical repertoire.

The empirical section of the monograph is devoted to the lexicon borrowed from non-Slavic languages, reflecting J. Kulwicka-Kamińska's additional cognitive objective: the identification of lexical interference and convergence processes within the context of a linguistic borderland. Consequently, the study engages with the field of language contact understood as a historical phenomenon, with the *Alytus Tafsir* serving as the foundational historical text, situated within the cultural, historical, and religious milieu of its creation and its role within the Tatar community. In her analysis, the author carefully considers this intricate web of extralinguistic factors and, demonstrating full methodological awareness, employs a heterogeneous set of linguistic methods. She draws upon research tools from language contact studies, historical dialectology, historical phonetics and morphology, historical lexicology, lexical semantics, cultural linguistics, sociolinguistics, and ethnolinguistics. These meticulously chosen interpretative instruments are integrated into a single polymethodological analytical framework, executed with scholarly virtuosity.

The evidence demonstrates that the translation of the Quran known as the *Alytus Tafsir* was produced by Tatars who, first and foremost, were immersed in the polylingual communicative community of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania—a linguistic space shaped by the intermingling and mutual influence of borderland languages such as Polish, Belarusian, and Lithuanian, alongside prestigious languages including Latin and Old Church Slavonic.[10] Secondly, these Tatars lived within a cultural milieu foreign to them in terms of customs and religion, dominated by a Christian paradigm that, while not homogeneous, was characterized by a plurality of traditions: Western Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, primarily in its Calvinist form.

As J. Kulwicka-Kamińska demonstrates, the *Tafsir* translators possessed knowledge of Turkish and Turkic dialects, as well as Arabic, as evidenced by their familiarity with Arabic and Turkish exegetical literature and their ability to render appropriate Polish equivalents of Quranic Islamisms. Their

9 Cf. Kwiryna Handke, "Perspektywa paraleli, czyli sposób badania zjawisk językowych," in Hanna Popowska-Taborska, ed., *Paralele w rozwoju słownictwa języków słowiańskich* (Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1989), pp. 7–17.

10 Cf. Leszek Bednarczuk, "Wspólnota komunikatywna Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego," in Elżbieta Feliksiak, ed., *Wilno–Wileńszczyzna jako krajobraz i środowisko wielu kultur*, vol. 4 (Białystok: Towarzystwo Literackie im. Adama Mickiewicza, Oddział Białystok, 1992), pp. 19–30; cf. also Leszek Bednarczuk, "Stosunki etnolingwistyczne na obszarze Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego," *Acta Slavico-Baltica* 22 (1994), pp. 109–124; Leszek Bednarczuk, *Stosunki językowe na ziemiach Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego* (Kraków: Edukacja, 1999).

knowledge of Latin is also attested by linguistic data indicating a thorough acquaintance with biblical realities. These translators were well-versed not only in the canons of Islam but also exhibited a nuanced understanding of Christian theological issues pertinent to their environment, such as the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which was notably rejected by Polish anti-Trinitarians.

By virtue of their noble status and, above all, their education, they constituted the intellectual elite not only of their own Islamic community—the *ummah*—but also of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a whole. Consequently, they were marked by a dual orientation: openness to engagement with the Christian milieu, coupled with a strong commitment to preserving their religious and customary identity.

This monograph by J. Kulwicka-Kamińska, which constitutes the first installment in a planned series of analyses of the *Alytus Tafsir* lexicon, focuses on non-Slavic borrowings—primarily from Oriental languages (368 entries), including Arabicisms, Turkisms,[11] Iranisms, and Hebraisms—and secondarily from Occidental languages (102 entries), such as Latinisms, Grecisms, Germanisms, and Italianisms.

Borrowings from Oriental languages serve as the primary source and transmitter of lexical elements shaping the Muslim—both religious and customary—discourse within the ethnolect of the Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which must be acknowledged as a linguistic manifestation of this community's cultural identity. The observation that a substantial portion of the Orientalisms comprising the lexicon of the *Alytus Tafsir*—absent from the general Polish lexicon—constituted a specialized Polish terminology for the Muslim Tatar community is of considerable cognitive significance. The majority of Muslim terms originate from Oriental languages, with 330 Arabicisms, 18 Turkisms, and 8 Iranisms identified. Notably, Arabic terms were predominantly transmitted into the North-Eastern Borderland Polish dialect via the Turkic linguistic medium.

Within the lexical corpus of Oriental origin, J. Kulwicka-Kamińska identifies not only the sociolinguistic marker of the community's identitarian exclusiveness but also a testament to the education and erudition of the Tatar translator or copyist. Despite religious differences, these individuals belonged to the noble estate of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, which

11 It should be clarified that the term *Turkism*, as defined by Henryk Jankowski, refers not solely to borrowings from the Turkish language, but more broadly to lexical items adopted from the diverse languages that belong to the Turkic language family. These languages have been, and in many cases continue to be, spoken across vast regions of Asia and Eastern Europe. Thus, *Turkism* denotes borrowings from a wide spectrum of related Turkic languages, rather than exclusively from modern Turkish—Henryk Jankowski, *Gramatyka języka krymskotatarskiego* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1992), p. 1; cf. also: Tomasz Majtczak, Bożena Sieradzka-Baziur and Dorota Mika, "O zapożyczeniach turkijskich w języku polskim," *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 61, no. 6 (2013), pp. 93–107.

encompassed the Tatar community of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This observation equally applies to the lexical corpus of Occidental origin, particularly to Latin—the language that served as a conduit for the culture of Western Europe. The Latin and Greek lexemes found in the Tafsir (73 entries of such provenance, documented in historical Polish dictionaries dating from the 16th century onward) and largely preserved in modern Polish, indicate that the ethnolect of the educated Tatars of the Grand Duchy was receptive to the same intellectual currents as standard Polish. These currents were decisively shaped by the contact between Polish and the culture of the Christian West, regarded as a culture of high prestige.

Therefore, the text of the *Alytus Tafsir* reflects the sociolect of the polylingual, educated Tatar nobility, for whom Polish functioned as an interdialect within a multilingual and multicultural communicative community. This conclusion is substantiated by detailed analyses of the phonetic and morphological layers of loanwords from Oriental languages, which, through the process of Slavicization, acquired features characteristic of the North-Eastern Polish dialect with a Belarusian substrate, such as the tendency to palatalize consonants in the vicinity of front vowels—*wiezir* 'vizier, minister,' *iślam* 'Islam' (cf. pp. 170, 262) or the morpheme *–ij* or *–ej*, characteristic of the Ruthenian language—Ar. *ḥāǧǧī* > *xažij // xažej* 'he who has made a pilgrimage to Mecca.'

In the analytical section of the monograph, the examined Orientalisms and Occidentalisms are presented in the form of a linguistically annotated dictionary. Each lexical unit comprising an entry underwent etymological analysis—in the case of Orientalisms, this followed the principles of morphosemantic analysis of borrowings, identifying the source form as well as the phonetic and morphological adaptation processes, while also considering, where relevant, transformations occurring in intermediary languages. In contrast, for Occidentalisms, only the language directly transmitting the borrowing was identified as the source, consistent with the methodological approach advocated by Bogdan Walczak.[12] Furthermore, each lexical item was subjected to lexicographical analysis documenting its chronological presence in Polish and its diffusion, alongside semantic analysis that compared its meaning in Polish with that in the *Alytus Tafsir,* highlighting possible semantic shifts in the borrowed lexeme.

Common nouns (*nomina appellativa*) were the primary focus of analysis. Exceptions were made for lexemes referring to the religious and cultural sphere of Islam, in which case proper nouns (*nomina propria*) were also included. Each dictionary entry presented the phonetic and morphological variants of the lemma, its inflectional forms, its occurrences within the historical text along with selected contextual examples illustrating its usage, as well as information from relevant dictionaries tracing the entry's attestations from Old Polish to contemporary usage.

12 Bogdan Walczak, "Z problematyki badań etymologicznych nad zapożyczeniami romańskimi," *Sprawozdania PTPN, Wydział Filologiczno-Filozoficzny* 97–99 (1983), p. 191.

Borrowings, predominantly from Oriental languages, underwent phonetic and morphological Slavization characteristic both of the general Polish language during the Middle Polish period—such as the raising or lowering of front and back vowels before sonorant consonants—and of the North-Eastern Borderland Polish dialect, exemplified by phenomena like the reduplication of *n* in adjective and participle suffixes. Furthermore, due to the contact between North-Eastern Polish and East Slavic languages—principally Belarusian and Old Church Slavonic—adaptive phonetic and morphological forms of Ruthenian origin, or innovative formations influenced by these languages, can also be observed. For instance, the replacement of the Accusative singular ending of feminine vowel nouns from *–ę* / *–ą* to the Ruthenian *–u* is attested.

The analyzed borrowings demonstrate that the ethnolect of the Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, at both the phonetic and morphological levels, is permeated with linguistic forms closely resembling those found in the dialects of southwestern Belarus and northwestern Ukraine. This similarity reflects the ethnolect's sustained spatial proximity to these regions, which facilitated linguistic interference. These findings offer valuable new insights not only for research in the historical dialectology of Polish but also for that of Belarusian and Ukrainian.

It must be emphasized, with due scholarly weight, that J. Kulwicka-Kamińska's monograph constitutes a fully original study, addressing a previously unexamined phenomenon in linguistic research—namely, the lexical dimension of the language used by the educated Tatar nobility of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Both publications discussed here, dedicated to the handwritten *Alytus Tafsir* of 1723—namely, the three-volume critical edition of the first Polish translation of the Quran, edited by C. Łapicz and J. Kulwicka-Kamińska, monumental in its cognitive scope, and the monograph by J. Kulwicka-Kamińska focused on the linguocultural analysis of Oriental and Occidental borrowings in this seminal work of the Tatar literary tradition of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania—constitute a significant contribution to the development of kitabistics, both in cognitive and methodological terms.

Thanks to these works, the *Alytus Tafsir*—the earliest known translation of the Quran into a Slavic language—has been introduced into scholarly circulation in the form of a critical academic edition. This provides a valuable source for continued research into the cultural and historical dimensions of Tatar religious writing. The analyses presented in these studies enrich the field of the humanities with new linguistic data, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the culture of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a heterogeneous phenomenon shaped in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for otherness.