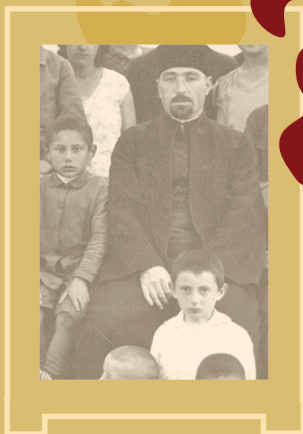
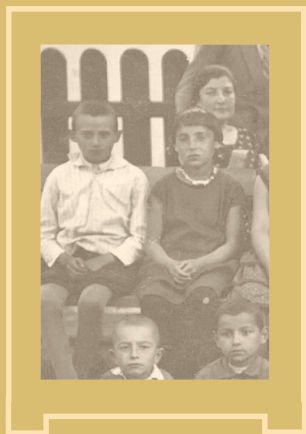




# Karaim Language in Use



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A Collection of Scholarly Articles







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EDITED BY

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## **INTRODUCTION.**

### **THE KARAIM LANGUAGE IN USE: ATTENTION TO THE LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY ONLY 30 PEOPLE IN THE WORLD**

**Dr. Karina Firkavičiūtė**  
**Natela Statkienė**  
**Dr. Šarūnas Rinkevičius**

#### **Karaim and 2022**

Karaim is a Turkic language that reached Lithuania together with the Karaim community in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and has been preserved ever since; it has been used by Karaims and is still spoken today exclusively in Lithuania by approximately 30 people.

Historically, the Karaim community is a descendant of the Kipchak Turkic tribes that resided on the shores of the Black Sea around the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Crimea and the former territories of the Khazar Khaganate, when the Grand Duke Vytautas of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania relocated a few hundred families to Lithuania in 1397, most of whom settled in Trakai, with several other smaller settlements in Lithuania being established afterward. However, throughout time Trakai remained the cultural, intellectual, and spiritual centre of the Lithuanian Karaims.

The Karaim language belongs to the West Kipchak group of the Turkic language family with the closest languages being Kumyk, Karachay and Balkar, Crimean Tatar, and now extinct Kuman languages. It existed in several varieties, namely Northwest Karaim (or Trakai Karaim spoken in Lithuania), Southwest Karaim (or Luck-Halych Karaim spoken in Galicia and Volhynia), and East Karaim (or Crimean Karaim spoken in Crimea) differing just in phonetic and vocabulary aspects. Yet over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Crimean and Luck-Halych varieties lost their native speakers, and, currently, only the Trakai Karaim can still be considered, although heavily endangered, yet a living language supported and used by its native speakers. As broadly presented in the contributions of this volume, Karaims in Lithuania have always been very conscious about their native language and its challenges, and have greatly contributed to preserving the language for future generations. Today the written Karaim in Lithuania is based on the Lithuanian alphabet with minor additions, although in the past

various other orthographies were used to write it down, like Hebrew, Cyrillic, Polish, or several systems of scholarly turcological transliterations.

The year 2022 marked the 625<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Karaim community in Lithuania. To commemorate this anniversary, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania declared 2022 the Year of the Karaims of Lithuania.

The anniversary was celebrated with diverse events and artistic manifestations. One of the important happenings that year was an **international scientific conference titled ‘Karaim language in use’** organised by Lithuanian Karaim Association of Culture and The Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies of Vilnius University (Lithuania) in partnership with the Jagiellonian University in Kraków (Poland) and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland. The conference took place in Vilnius University on 19 May 2022. It was dedicated to the memory of Simon Firkovič (1897–1982, a senior priest, a poet, an outstanding Karaim personality that contributed extensively to his native language) and Aleksander Dubiński (1924–2002, a professor of turcology at Warsaw University, an orientalist, a devoted Karaim who dedicated a large part of his life to Karaim studies).

At the opening of the conference, Mr. Valdas Jaskūnas, Vice Rector of Vilnius University, expressed his conviction that if Lithuania enjoys a tolerant society, much credit goes to the Karaims and other minorities living with us. He also remembered the contribution of such scholars as Prof. Tadeusz Kowalski and Hadji Seraya Chan Shapshal to the oriental studies domain in Vilnius University more than a hundred years ago, as well as the activities of The Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies of Vilnius University of several previous decades to the Karaim language teaching and activities during summer schools in Trakai initiated by Prof. Éva Á. Csató.

As Ms. Urszula Doroszevska, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Lithuania stated in her welcoming speech, “Karaims were an inseparable part of our history and culture – and when I say “our” I mean Lithuanians, Poles, Ukrainians as well as many other nations that have lived here for centuries, creating a lively organism, full of linguistic and religious diversity. It is our common and unique heritage in Europe, the legacy we want to support and protect. It is therefore important to try to re-establish the Karaim language as a testament to the vitality of our region’s culture”.

These welcoming messages gave a very warm and hopeful frame to the conference. It might become a certain milestone in the domain of the Karaim

language building up a substantial source of scholarly knowledge on Karaim. And the publication takes over this mission.

## The conference turning into the publication

The objective of the conference ‘Karaim language in use’ was to overview the state-of-the-art of Karaim, its research, and to reflect on it from its usage perspectives. Therefore, the conference was arranged in three sessions: first, ‘General introduction to Karaim language’, second ‘Living resources of Karaim’, and third ‘Karaim language in Bible translations: as language source and the tool of its preservation’. Next to the presentations of the research on this language in the past, present and future, activities for the language retention by dedicated Karaim people were also discussed and a short discussion in spoken Karaim by native speakers took place.

In this volume, which appears some time after the actual conference, the editors are presenting its outcomes while providing a somewhat summarised view. Certain presentations, such as those by Dorota Cegiołka and Dr. Anna Sulimowicz-Keruth, could not be included for publication. Additionally, Prof. Dr. Habil Michał Németh is presenting one merged text instead of two contributions that were delivered orally.

The discussion among native speakers during the conference deserves special mention. Moderated by Dr. Karina Firkavičiūtė, eight people spoke to each other in Karaim (some also joining remotely). This was a discussion about the past when speaking Karaim was much more natural – families were using only Karaim for communicating with each other at home and outside their homes with relatives. Today this scientific conference was needed as a special occasion for people to speak their native language... These days many things change their ways of being usual. And a very interesting suggestion for the language usage was introduced to the universe. It links to *kybyn*, a national Karaim dish, a very popular one. It is being prepared and sold not only in restaurants representing traditional Karaim cuisine, but also quite widely in various chains of bakeries. Therefore, each piece of *kybyn* could have a Karaim word inserted in the middle, so that while eating people would pick up on and learn at least some Karaim words and not let the language die out...

The idea to arrange this sort of discussion of native speakers came from Prof. Dr. Habil. Michał Németh from Jagiellonian University in Kraków who is also the European Research Council grantee currently implementing his

project on Karaim language in Bible translation. It was eventually also his research that inspired Dr. Karina Firkavičiūtė, Chair of Lithuanian Karaim Association of Culture to organise this conference. His research is enormously important, relevant, and timely. But what is also fascinating – potentially last speakers of the Karaim language are being given very deep scholarly attention by the highest possible scholarly excellence institution in Europe, such as the European Research Council. With this project, with his previous and hopefully numerous future investigations Michał Németh is creating a new milestone in Turcology of the 21st century dedicated to the Karaim language.

### ***'Karaim language in use' in more detail***

The Karaim language has merited great philological attention throughout centuries. In this volume, this path is being presented by Henryk Jankowski, and also by Michał Németh.

**Prof. Dr. Habil. Henryk Jankowski** presents an exhaustive overview of Karaim language documentation from the very beginning. He also reviews the history of research on Karaim, existing handbooks, general studies, bibliographies, catalogues and guides to manuscripts. Some studies in Karaim Bible translation, religious literature and text editions, studies in secular Karaim literature and text editions, fieldwork and documenting the language, grammars, grammatical studies, dictionaries, work on lexicology and etymology, textbooks and practical dictionaries, comparative studies are also presented. The article is a very original and unique annotated compendium on Karaim language studies, including the bibliography. There are three important features of this text: 1) each book or study mentioned has also a descriptive sentence or two featuring its main content, 2) Jankowski presents also his classification of Karaim within Turkic languages and of their varieties, 3) he outlines potential tasks for the future linguistic activities on Karaim.

**Prof. Dr. Habil. Michał Németh** offers an overview of the oldest West Karaim written sources presenting the phonetic adaptation processes the loanwords underwent and answering the question from which Slavic languages they were borrowed (a glossary of described loanwords is also included). The author presents here a text merging his two contributions brought orally to the conference. He focuses on manuscripts created in the first 100 years of the (known so far) written history of West Karaim, i.e. in the period between 1671 and 1772, and on subtleties of the translations. The presentation outlines how difficult a task it is to etymologise the earliest

Slavic loanwords in West Karaim (some inaccuracies of etymological qualifiers in the Karaim–Russian–Polish dictionary are noted). Most probably both Ruthenian and Polish may have acted as the main donor languages for Karaim, as far as the 17th- and early–18th-century lexical borrowings are concerned. In addition, the author hypothesises that Slavic loanwords (from almost every part of speech) were most probably pronounced by West Karaims in the same way they sounded in the respective donor languages.

Several outstanding Karaim personalities from Lithuania and Poland were given special attention by presenters during the conference reviewing their role and contributions to keep the native Karaim alive and to register and promote its resources in various ways.

**Dr. Halina Kobeckaitė** gives tribute to Simon Firkovič (1897–1982), one of the greatest Karaim figures in 20th century, to the memory of whom the conference was also dedicated. She evokes his activities in two strands: the work for the community in his religious and teaching duties as a senior priest, him being a poet and a writer, and in more individual vein following his vocation to cultivate, safeguard, facilitate, and nurture the Karaim identity. Teaching the language, creating poetry and theatre sketches for pedagogical purposes, contributing to the compilation of the Karaim-Russian-Polish dictionary, collecting and publishing folklore, and translating other creations into Karaim would be to mention only very few of his deeds. With his position, authority and capacities he played a unique and irreplaceable role in the preservation of the Karaim community, its vitality, religious traditions and language in Lithuania through the 20th century.

**Adam Dubiński** presents his father Aleksander Dubiński (1924–2002), also a memorable man, for the conference. He was a long-time researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw and a student tutor. In his scholarly endeavors, he devoted a large part of his life to Karaim studies and made a considerable contribution to preserving the Karaim linguistic, cultural and religious heritage, also to Polish-Lithuanian Tatar heritage. The article discusses his work and activities, as well as his Oriental book collection and periodicals. For many decades he was also the Secretary of the Karaim Religious Union in Poland. Fluent in the Karaim liturgy, he actively participated in and led celebrations and religious ceremonies, and was considered an unquestionable authority in the Karaim language, religion, and customs.

**Dr. Karina Firkavičiūtė** presents linguistic activities of her father Mykolas Firkovičius (1924–2000) in three parts: through his dedication to religion,



poetry, and the language itself. He was a professional engineer, but for his entire life he was deeply engaged in the Karaim religious and language activities, legal and underground. In 1992, he was elected as a senior priest. Instrumental for passing over his active and deep traditional knowledge, for the revival and continuation of the Karaim language and religion, he ensured a smooth transition of the language and its resources from before to after 1988. At that time, he was the first one daring and knowing what to say. He compiled and published nine books with Karaim religious texts and poetry that provided a solid and unique ground for everything happening in Karaim life, including activities of other people in the community. His publications are presented in the article outlining their specifics, linguistic features, also importance for religious and linguistic purposes, which are adding increasingly more value every day. Several questions for future reflections on Karaim are also formulated.

**Diana Lavrinovič** introduces her father Markas Lavrinovičius (1938–2011). A professional engineer, he was interested in his native language. He also compiled a Russian-Karaim dictionary. In 2009, he was elected to the Highest Priest position of the Lithuanian Karaim community. A big part of the article deals with the most recent publication titled ‘100 Karaim language lessons. Trakai dialect’ (635p.), the authors of which are both Markas Lavrinovičius (post mortem) and Diana Lavrinovič. The book covers morphology and phonetics of the Karaim language, and represents both a practice book and a grammar reference.

Another two conference contributions by Anna Sulimowicz-Keruth and Éva Á. Csató discuss the situation and peculiarities of the Karaim language that was used in Luck-Halych region (in today’s Ukraine), which is already extinct today. Only one paper was available to include in this volume – a text of **Prof. Éva Á. Csató**. By the examples of Janina Eszwowicz and Amelia Abrahamowicz, the last two full-fledged speakers of Southwest Karaim, she illustrates their efforts to make use of the available possibilities to document their language. A general context of the Halych Karaim community and their cultural activities and heritage is also outlined; both native speakers are extensively presented, and quotes of their talking or writing examples with translations are included.

In his turn, **Prof. Timur Kocaoğlu** provides information on the purpose and the contents of the Karay (Karaim) Language *Online Conversational Courses for Foreigners* initiated by him. Interesting to note that during the conference in May 2022, Prof. Timur Kocaoğlu only mentioned about

his intention to launch such a course. And one year later we see it already successfully implemented. The courses were held between September and December 2022, attended by around 45 voluntary participants from various countries in Europe, Asia and the USA, speakers of various Turkic languages. Two native speakers of Karaim also helped the participants by providing them with the correct pronunciation of the language. The paper outlines the further prospects of this kind of project suggesting to establish a Facebook Group with the title ‘Karajče Siozliejbiž’. At the end of the paper, Mrs. Fatma Duman Aydın is introduced, one of the participants of the course, and her new poem in Karaim as well as some examples of teaching material that was used during the classes are included.

An original presentation of **Dr. Šarūnas Rinkevičius** reviews the new generation of dictionaries of the Karaim language prepared and published by Karaim speakers over the last two decades. These are four publications, namely two Polish-Karaim, one Russian-Karaim and one Lithuanian-Karaim dictionary. The paper also provides a brief overview of the already existing documentation of the Karaim language. The dictionaries are being analysed through the information provided in them about the Karaim language, namely the quantity of words, outline of their sources, origins, dialects, and the purpose of the edition. It can be concluded that these dictionaries mark great efforts by their authors to the preservation of the Karaim language.

The other part of the conference was dedicated to the Karaim language in Bible (Old Testament) translations. It started with the presentation of **Dr. Gina Kavaliūnaitė** giving a general context on how the Old Testament was translated in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. She reviewed Christian vernacular translations of the Old Testament that were read in the Grand Duchy in the 15th–18th centuries, – it was the time when the oldest Karaim translations were discovered. Her paper briefly discusses the circumstances of the translation of the Old Testament into Ruthenian (the Skaryna Bible), Old Church Slavonic (the Ostrog Bible), Polish (the Brest, Nesvizh and Gdansk Bibles) and Lithuanian (the Bretkūnas, Chylinski and Quandt Bibles) as well as their characteristic features. The paper concludes by outlining two motivations for Bible translation projects in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Getting deeper into their conceptual meaning, one can say they apply also to the Karaim community.

Together with Prof. Dr. Habil. Michał Németh there were three other papers (by Dorota Cegiółka, Anita András, and Murat Işık; it is a pity but a certain force majeure prevented Zsuzsanna Olach from participating in the

conference), which read on linguistic aspects of various Bible translations to Karaim. Two of them make part of this publication. **Anita András** offers a brief analysis of the Modern South-Western Karaim traits displayed in the language of the Latter Prophets manuscript copied in the second half of the 19th century in Halych. She presents the copyings and the modern South-Western Karaim features registered in the manuscript. **Dr. Murat Işık** presents an analysis of the language used in the Eupatorian print (Gözleve) translation of the Old Testament into the Karaim language published in 1841. Through an examination of phonological, morphological, and lexical features he identifies the specific Crimean Karaim variety employed in the translation. His analysis reveals features of both Crimean Kipchak Karaim and Crimean Turkish Karaim, and the fact that the characteristics vary depending on the specific books and chapters of the edition.

## Acknowledgements

The 2022 international scientific conference ‘Karaim language in use’, to which this volume is dedicated, produced a remarkable result – as from October 2022, an online Karaim language learning course was introduced at Vilnius University (School of Asian Languages of the Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies) representing a great opportunity for learning the Karaim language to anyone interested across the world.

The editors of this volume firmly believe that this publication will lead to numerous fruitful impacts for the Karaim community, potentially encompassing both scholarly advancements and practical applications.

The editors are grateful to all the contributors and referees of this volume for their willingness and cooperation while preparing the publication. Many special thanks also go to the partners – Vilnius University colleagues and administration for supporting the volume, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, and also the European Research Council for its insightful selection to fund the project ‘KaraimBible’ by Prof. Dr. Habil. Michał Németh.

We are confident there is still hope for Karaim to survive and continue to be used in its various, written and oral forms. It has been namely this important motivation that kept the editors engaged, and it is now being passed on to you, the readers and users of the wisdom presented here. As the Karaim proverb says – *‘Az ajtma, kieriakli kylma’* (Talking is not enough, action is needed).



On the occasion of the Karaim Year 2022,  
as proclaimed by the Seimas of Republic of Lithuania

International scientific conference

# The Karaim Language In Use

*Dedicated to the memory of Simon Firkovič (1897-1982) and  
Aleksander Dubiński (1924-2002)*

May 19, 2022, Vilnius University



Organised by The Cultural Association of the Lithuanian Karaims and  
The Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies of Vilnius University (Lithuania)  
in partnership with the Jagiellonian University in Kraków (Poland)  
and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland



Embassy  
of the Republic of Poland  
in Vilnius

In a hybrid mode (both remotely and in person)

201 auditorium, Faculty of Philosophy,  
Vilnius University, Universiteto St. 9, LT-01513 Vilnius, Lithuania

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/AbGrY6enzxU9Us2D9>

## PROGRAMME

### 1st session

#### 9.00–10.40 *General introduction to Karaim language*

Opening

**Dr. Habil. Michał Németh** (Jagiellonian University in Kraków).  
*The Western Karaim dialects and their relation to Slavic*

**Prof. Dr. Habil. Henryk Jankowski** (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań). *Research on Karaim language – historical overview*

**Dr. Halina Kobeckaitė** (The Cultural Association of the Lithuanian Karaims). *Simon Firkovič and his role in preserving the Karaim language*

**Adam Dubiński, M.A.** (Jagiellonian University in Kraków).  
*Aleksander Dubiński (1924-2002), on the scientist's 20th death anniversary*

#### 10.40–11.00 Coffee break

### 2nd session

#### 11.00–13.15 *Living resources of Karaim*

Greetings and discussion in Karaim

**Prof. Em. Éva Á. Csató** (Uppsala University). *Spoken Karaim in the past, present and future*

**Prof. Dr. Timur Kocaoğlu** (National University of Uzbekistan). *On the Project of Karay (Karaim) Online Courses for Foreigners*

5 min break

**Dr. doc. Karina Firkavičiūtė** (The Cultural Association of the Lithuanian Karaims). *Mykolas Firkovičius and his work as a basis for the Karaim language revival*

**Diana Lavrinovič** (The Cultural Association of the Lithuanian Karaims). *Hachan Markas Lavrinovičius's commitment to the Karaim language Trakai dialect preservation and revitalisation*

**Šarūnas Rinkevičius** (Vilnius University). *The new generation of dictionaries by Karaim speakers*

13.15–15.00 Lunch break

### **3rd session**

15.00–17.40 ***Karaim language in Bible translations: as language source and the tool of its preservation***

**Dr. Gina Holvoet** (Vilnius University). *Old Testament translations in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and their contexts*

**Dr. Habil. Michał Németh** (Jagiellonian University in Kraków). *An overview of the oldest Western Karaim written sources*

**Dr. Anna Sulimowicz-Keruth** (Warsaw University). *Was the vocabulary of Bible translations included into Aleksander Mardkowicz's Karaj Sez-bitigi?*

**Anita András, M.A.** (Uppsala University). *A South-Western Karaim translation of the Latter Prophets*

16.20–16.40 Coffee break

**Dorota Cegiółka** (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań). *Slavonic loanwords in a South-Western Karaim Bible translation based on the Book of Daniel*

**Murat Işık, M.A.** (University of Szeged / Jagiellonian University in Kraków). *The language of the Eupatorian (Gözleve) printed edition of the Old Testament from 1841*

**Dr. Zsuzsanna Olach** (Jagiellonian University in Kraków). *Differences in Karaim translations of the Song of Moses*

17.40–18.30 ***Discussion***

Conference closure



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I.

# Karaim language studies and its preservation







## KARAIM LANGUAGE STUDIES – A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

**Henryk Jankowski**

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**Abstract.** The aim of this paper is to put forth a short overview of the study in the Karaim language. Firstly, the position and importance of Karaim is stressed. Secondly, trends in research are demonstrated. Thirdly, general descriptions, grammars, and dictionaries are presented. The article highlights the most significant studies in the basic domains of Karaim linguistics such as phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicology, and semantics. At the same time, the article formulates several postulates for tasks to be done. A selected bibliography of most relevant studies has also been included.

**Keywords:** Karaim language, history of research, tasks to be done, selective bibliography

### 1. Introduction

Karaim is one of the best-documented languages in the Northwestern group of Turkic languages to which it belongs. Among the Northwestern Turkic languages, Karaim is classified in the western branch. Karaim was spoken in three varieties, the Northwestern or Troki (NW Karaim or NWK), the Southwestern or Łuck-Halicz (SW Karaim or SWK), both relatively similar and called West or Western Karaim (WK), as well as Crimean Karaim or East or Eastern Karaim. The Crimean Karaim (CK) was used in several varieties: (1) Kipchak or Kuman Karaim, (2) Turkish Karaim (TK) in two variants, one in Turkey, the other in Crimea, and (3) Tatar Karaim (Jankowski 2008: 162 and Németh 2011a: 11).<sup>1</sup> Of these three groups only the Northwestern is

1 The question of the status and even the existence of some Karaim varieties is subject to debate. Firstly, the relation of SWK to NWK is differently presented by some researchers. Secondly, Shapira (2003: 662) who has denied the existence of CK, provoked a discussion in which various participants showed counter arguments (e.g. Jankowski 2008: 162 and Aqtay 2009: 17). Another question is the relationship of Karaim to Hebrew in the context of language, culture, ethnicity and religion as well as the feasibility

spoken by not more than thirty speakers and is severely endangered. The earliest written documentation of NWK comes from the 17th century, but this is a copy of 16th-century poems. The first written documentation of Crimean TK also goes back to the 17th century (El'jaševič 2016: 46), while the first SWK text is dated mid-18th century (Németh 2020a: 11). TK in its variant of Turkey is first known from the 16th century. Therefore, Karaim may be studied in its historical development of two well-documented periods: Middle Karaim and Modern Karaim. Although there are several historical Turkic languages without direct continuation such as East Old Turkic (8th–14th), Karakhanid (11th–12th), Khwarezmian Turkic (13th–14th), and Mamluk Kipchak (14th–16th), the number of historical Turkic languages, which are still used nowadays, is low. These are Old Turkish and Middle Turkish or Ottoman (13th–15th and 15th–20th, respectively), continued to be used as Modern Turkish; Chaghatay (15th–20th), continued as Modern Uzbek; Ajemi Turkic (15th–18th), continued as Modern Azerbaijani; and Crimean Tatar (15th–20th), continued as Modern Crimean Tatar. One of these languages is WK.

WK is at the same time the westernmost Turkic language. As such, it displays characteristics of peripheral languages which typically combine conservative and innovative features in all components of the language structure.

It is frequently stressed that WK is similar to Kuman as documented in *Codex Cumanicus* of the 13th–14th centuries and Armeno-Kipchak of the 16th and 17th centuries (e.g. Kowalski 1929a: lix–lxv, lxvi, see also Jankowski 2003b). However, unlike Armeno-Kipchak who died out in the 17th century, Karaim is still alive. What is important to stress, Karaims always kept a tradition of copying and transferring their written heritage to new generations. For example, a poem by Isaac ben Abraham Troki (1533–1594) was edited in Latin script by Mardkowicz (1930: 1) in 1930.

The fact that Karaim is a well-documented language and has preserved many Middle Turkic words characteristic of *Codex Cumanicus* and other Middle Kipchak languages resulted in the interest on the part of Turkologists. Its relation to Hebrew has attracted the interest of Hebraists associated with universities and Protestant circles in Western Europe already in pre-modern times, although this interest was limited to the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Karaim. The idea that the debates the Protestants had

of the terms Judeo- or Karaeo-Turkic, see Wexler (1983), and Moskovich and Tukan (1985: 94–98). The Turkologists did not accept the former and the latter did not gain any popularity.

with the Catholics can be compared to the debates between Karaims and rabbinic Jews.<sup>2</sup>

The basic trends in the study in Karaim are the following:

- History of research;
- Handbooks, general studies
- Compiling bibliographies, exploring and describing manuscripts;
- Studies in Karaim Bible translation and religious literature;
- Edition of texts;
- Studies in secular Karaim literature; field work and documenting the language;
- Grammars;
- Grammatical studies;
- Compiling dictionaries;
- Lexicology and etymology;
- Textbooks and practical dictionaries;
- Comparative studies.

In the further part of this overview an attempt will be made to present most important studies according to these trends. Naturally, this overview may not be complete.

## 2. A selective overview of the study of Karaim

### 2.1. History of research

There are notes on the beginning of interest in Karaims (*Qara'im*) and the study of various aspects of Karaim religion, ethnicity, language, and literature in many general works on Karaims and Karaism, e.g. Zajączkowski (1961: 43–47, 78–88). Remarks and descriptions of travellers were discussed in Kizilov (2003), but the majority of accounts he provides is from the 19th century. The first articles devoted to the history of research were published by Zajączkowski (1939a) and Dubiński (1959, 1960, and 1975). Zajączkowski (1939a: 93) has shown that the first European mention of the Karaims in Crimea who spoke a Turkic language was made by Johann Buxtorf, for more on him, see Németh (2021a: 2) who provides the year 1640 as the date of his

2 It is a pity that the Protestants in Poland-Lithuania could not study the Karaim language and religion before the decline of their religious existence. They could have had first-hand informants and many manuscripts available.

posthumous mention. Zajączkowski (1939a: 95 and 1961: 43) also discussed Henderson's outstanding study of 1826 in which Henderson provided the first five verses of the Bible in the Crimean Karaim translation. However, Zajączkowski's (1939a: 91–93, 98–99) basic aim was to cite Peringer's famous account of the Karaims from 1691 and provide his documentation of the Northwestern Karaim in a transcription, i.e. the first three lines of the Bible. There is also information on the beginning of the interest in Karaims in Europe in Sulimowicz (2012), who mainly outlines the contribution of Karaim scholars to Karaim studies. After Peringer and Henderson, research in the Karaim language was resumed at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century due to the study by Radloff (1888), Foy (1898), Grzegorzewski (1903 and 1918), and Munkácsi (1909), see Zajączkowski (1961: 44).

Dubiński has also outlined the contribution to Karaim studies by Ananiasz Zajączkowski, one of the leading Karaim specialists (Dubiński 1971).

## 2.2. Handbooks, general studies

The first general work is Kowalski's (1929a) publication, which is mainly a selection of various texts, but accompanied with an introduction with notes on history, language, literature, manuscripts, publications, and a glossary. It was preceded by Kowalski's (1926) short paper on the Karaim language dedicated to the Karaims. There is also much information on Karaim, its varieties and a bibliography with most important studies in Pritsak (1959), which is basically a language description.

Shapira's article on the language and literature of Crimean Karaims (2003) contains many new details and another view on several questions as presented by a scholar who has a broad perspective of Jewish languages. A handbook of Northwestern (Trakai/Troki) Karaim was published by Kocaoglu in collaboration with Firkovičius (2006) with an introduction, grammatical description, texts, and a glossary; and two papers on NWK were published by Csató (2001b and 2016b). A new description of Northwestern and Southwestern Karaim is Csató (2023) and a similar one of Crimean Karaim, but without a grammatical description is Jankowski (2023b).

There is a general monograph by Altinkaynak (2006) on Crimean Karaims with many examples of CK literature and some NWK. However, most of the texts in this book are undocumented and many forms are erroneous or inadequately transcribed.

### 2.3. Bibliographies, catalogues, and guides to manuscripts

The first bibliography of Karaim manuscripts was published by Steinschneider (1871: 9–16, 37–39), but most manuscripts listed in this bibliography are in Hebrew, some in Arabic, and only one is in Karaim. This manuscript (Steinschneider 1871: 38) is a four-volume Bible translation of which the author provided two first verses of Genesis in the original Hebrew script. As Jankowski (2018: 44), who rewrote those lines and added a transcription, has established, only the first volume of that manuscript is known nowadays. This volume was used for the critical edition of the Crimean Karaim Bible (Jankowski et al. 2019: xviii).<sup>3</sup> The next step was the publication of the catalogue of Hebrew manuscripts in the Imperial Public Library of St. Petersburg by Harkavy and Strack in which the authors described five manuscripts in a “Tatar translation” (1875: 167–170), i.e. in Turkic Karaim. Bibliographic and biographic work was continued by Poznanski/Poznański. He is the author of the bibliography of Karaim literature published between 1878–1908 (Poznanski 1909 and 1910), a list of Karaim copyists and owners of manuscripts (1916), and the most comprehensive bibliography of Karaim publications (1918 and 1920) encompassing 36 items printed between 1528/1529 and 1841. Since these bibliographies contain manuscripts and publications in both Hebrew and Karaim, the most important for the Karaim language is his bibliography, which contains only 19 publications in Karaim (Poznański 1913a) and several publications and manuscripts in the addenda to this article (Poznański 1913b, 1914, and 1919). Poznanski’s 1918–1920 bibliography was republished by Walfish (2003) in English in a more reader-friendly way, and a new guide to Karaim manuscripts was prepared by Sklare (2003). The Crimean Karaim manuscripts in the holdings of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg may be searched in Gintsburg’s (2003) catalogue, and some are provided in KRPS (28–29).

A bibliography of Karaim literary works based on Poznański with some additions was published by Zajączkowski (1926) and a bibliography of known twenty-eight Crimean Karaim texts was published by Jankowski (2012). A bibliography of SWK texts and studies was compiled by Zajączkowski (1931: 33–34). A bibliography of both Karaim studies and Karaim texts is Dubiński (1974: 14–28).

3 Poznanski (1919: 150) mentioned another four-volume translation of the whole Bible without the Chronicles copied in 1814, which was formerly in possession of a book dealer.

There are many Karaim manuscripts in private collections in Lithuania and Poland. As for Poland, a catalogue is in preparation (Sulimowicz 2015b and Németh 2016a), but so far only a catalogue of Crimean Karaim manuscripts in the Józef Sulimowicz collection was compiled by Sulimowicz (2015a). However, lists of manuscripts are provided in Németh's monographs, i.e. 2020a: 467–476 and 2021a: 1106–1113. Németh (2021a: ix, 4–13) says that there are thirty-one biblical texts in private collections in Poland and gives details of those he used for his critical edition of the Western Karaim Bible.

General Karaim bibliographies are Dextjar'ova et al. (2001) and Walfish and Kizilov (2011). There is also a bibliography of recent Karaim studies, not restricted to language and literature, by Csató (2010), as well as her paper on the Karaim studies in Uppsala (Csató 2008).

## **2.4. Studies in Karaim Bible translation, religious literature, and text editions**

Since the Bible is the most important source and canonical scripture of the Karaim religion, the translations of the Bible and, therefore, the studies on them prevail. The most comprehensive critical editions of the Bible are Jankowski et al. (2019), which contains approximately half of the CK Bible with the Pentateuch, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, and Németh's (2021a) edition of the whole NWK Pentateuch, preceded by a few articles.

Other critical editions comprise individual biblical books or their fragments. They are preceded by several pre-Turkological works such as Peringer's (1691) quotation of NWK Genesis 1:1–3 (Zajączkowski 1939a: 98, Dubiński [1991] 1994: 43, Jankowski et al. 2019: xii, Németh 2020a: 298–305 and Csató 2020: 97–99), Henderson's (1826: 331–339) citation of CK Genesis 1:1–5 and his comments, Steinschneider's (1871: 38) citation of CK Genesis 1:1–2, Harkavy and Strack's (1875: 168) citations of CK Leviticus 1:1–3 and Poznański's (1913a: 40) CK citation of Daniel 9:9–10 (Jankowski 2018: 42–47).

Turkological study on the Bible starts with Grzegorzewski's (1918: 270–272) publication of SWK Psalm 142 and 143 in Hebrew characters without transcription, but with comments; Kowalski's NWK Genesis 1–4 (1929a: 46–51), Job (1929a: 1–38) and Song of Songs (1929a: 39–45) in phonetic tran-

scription, SWK Job 30: 1–5 and Song of Songs 1: 1–3 in both Hebrew script and phonetic transcription (1929a: 286–287, 288) compared with CK Job 30: 1–5 and Song of Songs 1:1–3 (1929a: 287–288), in Hebrew characters only. The next step was done by Zajączkowski (1932a and 1934) who critically edited the NWK Lamentations. Jankowski (1997) published a CK translation of Genesis 1:1–18, 6:9–8:3, 17:8–19, Deuteronomy 32:1–51 and Lamentations 4:11–5:21. Olach (2013) edited SWK Genesis 1–5:27, Exodus 1–2: 25, 16–17:16 Leviticus 5–7:26 17–18:30, Numbers 11–14:29, and Deuteronomy 1–3:22. Shapira published CK Nehemiah (Shapira 2013), Obadiah, and the first chapter of Ruth in Turkish Karaim in comparison with other versions (Shapira 2014: 150–158 and 167–170). Németh (2015c) edited NWK Ruth, then CK Ruth (Németh 2016b). Cegiołka (2019) published fragments of SWK Genesis. The author of two general articles on the Karaim translations of the Bible is Jankowski (2009 and 2023a).

The authors of these critical editions examined various aspects of their manuscripts, but there are also extensive studies such as Gordlevskij (1928), who examined the vocabulary of a CK Bible translation, and Olach (2013) on the SWK Bible. Danon's (1921: 97–110) publication of TK Proverbs 1:25–6:33 and his notes are also important.

Apart from critical editions published by the specialists, there are also several Karaim printed editions for the Karaim communities: (1) Turkish Karaim translation of the Pentateuch with a parallel Hebrew text, Istanbul-Ortaköy 1832–1835 (Poznański 1913a: 45); (2) Kipchak Karaim translation of the whole Tanakh except for the Chronicles, partly adapted to Turkish, Gözleve/Gözlöv (Eupatoria) 1841 (Poznański 1913a: 45); (3) Jeremiah, Odesa 1873 (Poznański 1919: 150); (4) NWK Genesis, Wilna (Vilnius, Wilno) 1889 (Kowalski 1929a: lxxvii); (5) SWK Jeremiah, Halicz 1927 (Zajączkowski 1931: 34); (6) a mixed edition, NWK (1–40:17) and SWK (40:18–42:17) Job, from 1888 (Kowalski 1929a: lxxvii, 283–284) or 1890 (Zajączkowski 1931: 33), see a fragment (Job 30: 1–5) in Kowalski (1929a: 285). Shapshal's (Şapşaloğlu 1928: 601–602) short CK fragments of Genesis (1:1–5), Isaiah (1:1–5), and Psalms (1:1–6) in Arabic script are unreliable, since the author Turkicized the vocabulary and the word order.

The modern editions in Latin script are: (1) the NWK Psalms (Firkovičius 1994); (2) the NWK Proverbs (Firkovičius 2000); and (3) NWK Job (Kobeckaitė 2019), the latter republished from Kowalski (1929a: 1–38) with the change of some Slavic and Hebrew words into Karaim, shown in a list at the end of the book.

There are also editions of various songs, hymns, and liturgical texts, e.g. three SWK religious hymns by Munkácsi (1909), NWK ritual texts by Kowalski (1927), a CK prayer of forgiveness, *Targum seli'ot*, by Sulimowicz (1972–1973), two SWK prayers by Jankowski (2011), two NWK hymns of Isaac ben Abraham Troki by Kizilov (2007a) and Jankowski (2014a), a SWK and a NWK morning prayer by Olach (2016a and 2016b), NWK hymn of Joseph Ha-Mashbir from the 17th century by Németh (2018), NWK and CK Haggadah by Jankowski (2019 and 2020) and Middle WK *piyyutim* by Németh (2020a).

Publications of prayers and liturgical texts for the Karaim community include NWK translations of twenty-five hymns by various authors published by Malecki (1890) and the Smaller Haggadah, also published by Malecki (1900), the latter reprinted by Jankowski (2019: 128–140); fifteen penitential prayers in Hebrew and Karaim translation, published in Wilna (Vilnius, Wilno) in 1895 by Simcha Dubinski (Poznanski 1909: 146), according to Németh (2020a: 8), in NWK, and liturgical hymns, one of which is in Karaim, published by Jehuda Bizikovich and Isaac Firkovich in Berdichev in 1909 (Poznanski 1910: 60). Later texts are in Latin script, e.g. those published in the 1920s in the journal *Mysł Karaimska*, and later by Mardkowicz, as Mardkowicz's (1930) verses, hymns and songs called *Zemerler*, Firkowicz's (1935) prayers called *Koltchalar* 'Prayers', Firkovičius's (1993) *Karaj koltchalary* and Firkovičius's prayer books (1998 and 1999). For printed prayers in both Hebrew and Latin characters, see Németh (2020a: 476–477), but some prayer books in this bibliography are only in Hebrew.

Csató (2022) has examined the Karaim version of the Lord's Prayer.

## 2.5. Studies in secular Karaim literature and text editions

It is impossible to provide all literary works composed and published by the Karaims around 1920s–1930s, especially those which appeared in the Karaim newspapers, basically *Mysł Karaimska* (1924–1939), *Karay Awazy* (1931–1938), *Onarmach* (1934–1939) etc., and books published by Mardkowicz (all titles can be looked up in Dubiński 1974 and Kizilov and Walfish 2011), but also in currently published *Awazymyz* (from 1989 onwards; 77 issues published by 2023) and *Almanach Karaimski* (from 2007 onwards; 12 volumes published by 2023). For an overview from the standpoint of language maintenance and revitalization, see Németh (2012: 61–66). Therefore, only larger published works and edited volumes will be listed in the



following in addition to scholarly publications. After 1945, the first publications started appearing in Lithuania before the dissolution of the Soviet Union (e.g. Firkovič (1989)), but especially after Lithuania regained its independence, e.g. Firkavičiūtė (1997), see also secular, ritual, and para-liturgical songs edited by the same author (Firkavičiūtė 2016), preceded by an article on music that also includes songs (Firkavičiūtė 2012). There is a short overview of WK literature by Zajączkowski (1964), but due to the great progress in the study many new facts were established and the former data must be updated.

The Northwestern Karaim secular literature is quite rich, but the number of old critical editions is low. Firkovič (1989) published poems of seven poets from the 19th–20th centuries, such as Šemaya/Szymon Firkowicz, Sima/Szymon Kobecki, Moses Pilecki, Šelumiel Lopatto and Michailas Tinfovičius, as well as a selection of thirteen poems of old poets to start with Isaac b. Abraham Troki (1533–1594) and Zarach ben Natan (1595–1663), see Jankowski (2014a) and Németh (2018: 86). In addition to the publications of secular literature of Northwestern Karaims which start with Kobeckij's (1904) songs in Cyrillic script, and Kowalski's (1929a) texts in phonetic transcription, there are some new texts edited from the manuscripts, e.g. the proverbs and a moralistic text published by Sulimowicz-Keruth (2019). W. Zajączkowski (1949) published 180 dreams from a NWK manuscript, but has not provided any details of this manuscript. In a very limited way, NWK books appeared recently in print similar to SWK books, which were published by Mardkowicz in the 1930s, e.g. Lavrinovič (2002a, 2002b, and 2003), but the books occasionally also appear elsewhere, as the case of the NWK translation of the *Little Prince* by Kobeckaitė and Firkavičiūtė, shows, see Csató (2021). It seems that between 1939 and 1989 no NWK books were published, but some literary works can be found in the archives, for a poem see Kizilov (2007b: 154–155).

As far as the Southwestern Karaim secular literature is concerned, the first known poems are dated the 17th century, although they are known from later manuscripts and publications, e.g. Joseph ben Yesu'a (d. 1678), see his poem *Karanhy Buhut* 'Black Cloud' (Grzegorzewski 1918: 268–270 and Mardkowicz 1930: 20–21) and Joseph ben Samuel Ha-Mashbir (ca 1650–1700),<sup>4</sup> for other songs and religious hymns see Mardkowicz (1930), and

4 As Németh (2018: 83, 88–90) has demonstrated on the basis of the autograph of one text of this author, he originated from Lithuania and wrote in NWK. He later moved to Halicz.

for modern poetry see Jankowski (2017: 457). There were several later and modern talented poets such as Zacharjasz/Zacharja Abrahamowicz, Abraham Leonowicz, Joseph Mordkowicz, Jacob Joseph Leonowicz, Aleksander Mardkowicz (A-Mar), Sergiusz Rudkowski (Ha-Roddi), and Zarach Zarachowicz.

There are also WK translations from various Polish literary works. For more information, see Sulimowicz (2015c).

The case of the CK language and literature is more complicated, for short outlines see Shapshal (Šapšal 1918) and Jankowski (2012); for discussion, see Jankowski (2003a and 2015). While the western Karaims were isolated, the Crimean Karaims were in intensive contact with other languages (Musaev 1966: 96) and their literary contacts comprised both the northwestern and southwestern Turkic languages. The literature of Crimean Karaims was strongly affected by two dominant Turkic peoples of Crimea, Crimean Tatars and Crimean Turks, for the so-called Tatar-Karaim songs, see Zajączkowski (1939b) and W. Zajączkowski (1961); for the manuscripts called *mejuma*, see Radloff (1896, republished by Çulha, see Radloff 2010) and critical editions by Aqtay (2009 and 2021) and Çulha (2010a); for the genre of *mejuma*, see also Kokenaj (1933); for proverbs, which can be found in both separate publications and *mejumas*, see W. Zajączkowski (1959a) and Jankowski (2014b); for modern publications of the Crimean Karaims, see Polkanov (1995). However, in CK manuscripts there are also songs of Crimean Noghays, see Aqtay (2018), and a debatable question of the Edige epic (Aqtay and Çulha 2022).

As Polish literature was translated by western Karaims into Karaim, so Russian literature was translated into Crimean Turkish Karaim, for some titles of Eraq, see Radloff (1896: 425–521), see also Eraq's works listed in KRPS (16–17). The Crimean Karaims also translated Hebrew works by *maskilim* into Karaim, e.g. the theatre play *Melukhat Sha'ul* 'Saul's Kingdom' of Joseph Ha-Efrati Tropplowitz, edited by Smętek (2015a: 10).

The oldest short Turkish Karaim text, a refrain to a hymn translated from Hebrew into Greek, is found in volume iv of a prayer book printed in 1528/1529 in Venice, as identified by Shapira (2003: 691–692).<sup>5</sup> It was published by Aqtay (2009: 19). The oldest Crimean Turkish-Karaim poem from 1657–1663 was published by El'jašević (2016: 46). Another Crimean

5 Poznański (1914: 224), who has not seen that publication, wrote that the translation of the original Hebrew hymn is Greek, and only its refrain is "tatarisch".

Turkish-Karaim fragment from 1741/1742 was published by Jankowski (2012: 54) after Poznański's (1913a: 40) quotation in Hebrew script. Šelomo Qazaz's hymn *Adam oylu* 'Man's son' was published by Aqtay (2020). A Crimean Turkish Karaim song from 1793 was published by Shapira (2001). Jankowski (2005) published a war song from an undated manuscript. Some aspects and motifs in CK songs were discussed by Smętek (2015b) and Sulimowicz (2017). Two financial documents from the 18th century published by Jankowski (2010) are an interesting example of Crimean Turkish Karaim as used for practical purposes.

A very interesting genre is private correspondence, e.g. Lutsk letters published by Németh (2011b), letters of Jehoszafat Kapłonowski published by Németh (2013b), letters of Sergiusz Rudkowski to Prof. Kowalski published by Németh (2020b), letters of the Karaims of Panėvežys to Mardkowicz published by Sulimowicz-Keruth (2021), and letters by Zarach Zarachowicz of Halicz published by Sulimowicz-Keruth (2022).

## 2.6. Fieldwork and documenting the language

The first documentation of colloquial SWK in Halich was published in a phonetic transcription and commented by Foy (1898). Although Foy did not examine Halicz SWK in situ and get language material recorded from Karaim schoolchildren indirectly, the material published by him, despite numerous mistakes, shows SWK language features pretty well, e.g. *egiz-ler* 'oxen', *maci-ler* 'cats' or *bar-ym szkoła-ga* 'I shall go to school' (Foy 1898: 172–173). The next scholar who investigated SWK and took records directly from the Karaims, and whose published material is reliable, is Grzegorzewski (1903: 68–69, 273–274). The first NWK colloquial material, not spoken, but recounted by two informants in Troki, written down and examined, was published by Kowalski (1929b: 202–204, 212–214, and 219). After Grzegorzewski and Kowalski, fieldwork was continued only in 1990s by Csató (1998b) and Csató, Nathan, and Firkavičiutė (2002). There is no spoken material recorded in the Crimea, but there are various songs and folklore texts, e.g. Prik (1976: 175, 178–184). Musaev (1966: 96) has noted that he met only remembering speakers in Crimea in 1963, but nevertheless, some of his notices are interesting, e.g. that the men and women used different names for some days of the week (Musaev 1966: 100), the former usual Turkic names typical of Crimea, the latter old Karaim ones.

Németh (2013a) has examined colloquial forms in Sergiusz Rudkowski's drama *Dostlar* written in the Łuck dialect of SWK.

## 2.7. Grammars

The first short Southwestern Karaim grammar was published by Zajączkowski (1931). The next description is by Pritsak (1959) who included all varieties of Karaim. A very detailed grammar of Western Karaim is by Musaev (1964), who also published it in a sketchy form (1977) and yet in another form in an edited volume (1997). Musaev (2003) also published a West Karaim syntax. A recent grammar of West Karaim is Németh (2011a). A Crimean Karaim grammar was published by Prik (1976).<sup>6</sup> A very short, but useful grammar in English was prepared by Csató (2011b) for Karaim summer school. A short description of 46 common Turkic features based on NWK was presented by Csató (2001b: 11–21).

Grammatical sketches are also available in some text editions and general studies, e.g. Jankowski (1997), Kocaoğlu (2006), and Aqtay (2009 and 2021).

## 2.8. Grammatical studies

Since old Karaim manuscripts have been edited only recently, studies on the historical Karaim grammar represent a new trend. One of the first important notes on Karaim's historical phonetics is Zajączkowski's (1939a: 94) observation on the basis of the text quoted by Peringer in 1691 that the front round vowels *ü ö* were in the 17th century probably pronounced in all positions of a word. Further studies on historical phonology were made by Németh (2011c, 2014a, 2014b, and 2015a). Historical morphology was also the object of Németh's several articles (2015b, 2019, and 2021b).

With regard to synchronic studies, some questions of phonetics and phonology were discussed in a few papers, e.g. Dubiński's (1978) paper on phonetic features of SWK, mostly contrasted with NWK. However, phonetic and phonological features of SWK were discussed earlier by Grzegorzewski (1903 and 1918). Baskakov (1964), who discussed SWK delabialisation or unrounding, was unaware of the fact that all this was established a long time ago by Grzegorzewski (1903: 7 and 1918: 253–254). There is a controversy

6 In an abbreviated form, it was included in Xafuz (1995: 6–68).

over the nature of NWK synharmonism, whether it is consonant harmony, e.g. Németh (2014b) or syllable harmony, see Csató and Johanson (1996), for the most extensive presentation of various views, see Stachowski (2009). Morphology was the object of Szapszał's (1939) paper, word formation of Csató (2016a), and the aorist of Csató (2017). There are also papers on syntax, e.g. Baskakov (1965), Csató (2001a, 2011f, and 2014), modality by Csató (2012), and on various influences on Karaim induced by language contact, e.g. Csató (2002).

Internal language contact and variation was examined by Jankowski (2003a).

In addition to the studies on abundant written literature, there are also studies on various aspects of spoken Karaim, either NWK, e.g. Csató (1998a, 2000, and 2014) or SWK Csató (1998b), and Csató and Johanson (2016).

## 2.9. Compiling dictionaries

For a long time, the glossary in Kowalski (1929a) was used as a single Karaim lexicographic tool. The basic dictionary that includes all the three dialects glossed in Russian and Polish is Baskakov, Szapszał, and Zajączkowski (1974), henceforth KRPS. The only Crimean Karaim-English dictionary was published by Aqtay and Jankowski (2015) and the glossed index to the Crimean Karaim Bible published by Jankowski (et al. 2019) was compiled by Çulha (2021).

There are also a few dictionaries by non-professionals dedicated to Karaims of various quality. The first to mention is Mardkowicz's (1935) Karaim-Polish-German dictionary for SWK. It is a valuable lexicographic tool and KRPS included almost all of its words. On the basis of KRPS, Juchniewicz published a Polish-Karaim dictionary for NWK. Although the author himself (Juchniewicz 2008: 3) stresses that he did not aspire to write a scholarly dictionary, this is a reliable tool. A reversed Lithuanian version of KRPS was compiled by Špakovska (2020). Špakovska is more comprehensive than Juchniewicz (679 pages as opposed to 271 pages). Lavrinovič's (2007) Russian-Karaim dictionary glosses the Russian headwords according to the dialect in which a word is available. The author included many NWK words absent from KRPS, but did not provide the sources, often relying on his own knowledge. This dictionary must be used with care. Józefowicz's (2008) big Polish-Karaim dictionary (651 pages) glosses Polish headwords in NWK, based on KRPS, but also other sources. This is also a reliable dic-

tionary that provides the sources. Crimean Russian–Karaim dictionaries are Xafuz (1995) and Levi (1997). The latter is more reliable than the former.

Lastly, it should also be mentioned that there are various handwritten glossaries, formerly written in Hebrew script, later in Cyrillic and Latin, as e.g. discussed by Shapira (2015).

Old Hebrew–Karaim dictionaries and glossaries in textbooks for Hebrew are not examined. For an article on this, see W. Zajączkowski (1965).

## 2.10. Lexicology and etymology

There are many articles on the etymology of individual Karaim words, but the number of more general, wider studies is not high. Two articles of the latter type are W. Zajączkowski's (1959b) paper on Mongol words, and another (1962) on Arabic and Persian words in Karaim. An article on Hebrew words and the purification tendency is Altbauer (1980), and many Hebrew words not included in the dictionaries are discussed in Çulha (Çulha (2022a and 2022b), for a more general look on the purification, see Csató (1998c), and for the Hebrew component in Karaim, see Jankowski (2013). There was no purification in Crimea. As Musaev (1966: 100) has observed, there were many Hebrew words in CT. There are also papers on the Slavic influence on WK, e.g. Dubiński (1969) and Csató (2001a), a general evaluation of Hebrew, Slavic and Lithuanian impact by Németh (2012: 58–61), and a more specific article by Németh (2010) on the Polish influence on the Łuck dialect of SWK.

There are also studies on words of specific semantic categories, e.g. Dubiński's (1965) paper on magic-prophetic lexicon, Zajączkowski's (1929) paper on eschewing anthropomorphic expressions.

## 2.11. Textbooks and practical dictionaries

There are a few textbooks for Karaim, mostly written by Karaim authors and dedicated to the Karaim children wishing to learn Northwest (Troki) Karaim, e.g. Bezekavičius (1980), Lavrinovič (1991), Firkovič (1991) and the most recent one by Lavrinovičius and Lavrinovič (2021). The first three textbooks were typewritten, handwritten, and mixed. Bezekavičius is a Lithuanian-medium in Latin script, Lavrinovič a Karaim-medium in Cyrillic script, and Firkovič a Russian-medium textbook in Cyrillic script. Firkovič (1991) was republished as Firkovičius (1996) and the script was changed into Latin. Lavrinovičius and Lavrinovič (2021) is the most comprehensive, it compris-

es 100 units (635 pages), Karaim is written in Latin script, but the medium language is Russian. There is also a primer by Jutkevičius (2009) with Karaim written in Latin script and Lithuanian as a language medium.

Csató has prepared three teaching aids for the Karaim Summer School in Troki, a textbook (2011d), a grammar (2011b), and an anthology of texts (2011e), all written in English, in addition to a primer for children (2011a). For more on this summer school between 2003–2010, see Csató (2011c). With David Nathan, she also compiled an online Karaim–Russian dictionary (Csató and Nathan 2006). For this school, Kobeckaitė (2012) has prepared the scenario of a story. Lastly, Kobeckaitė (2011) has compiled a Polish–Karaim–Lithuanian phrasebook, which is also a useful, practical aid for everybody. The issue of the choice of the alphabet, especially for NWK, is discussed in Csató and Nathan (2007).

The speakers of SWK did not manage to prepare a textbook for this language before it died out.

There was an attempt to revive Crimean Karaim by Jalpačik, who prepared a phrasebook (1993) and a textbook (2001), the second edition in 2004, but language loss could not be reversed.

## 2.12. Comparative studies

Çulha's (2006) short Karaim–Turkish dictionary glosses Karaim words taken from all the three varieties, based on KRPS, gives corresponding forms from other Turkic languages, and frequently shows, mostly non-ultimate, etymologies of those words which are not part of indigenous vocabulary. Çulha (2010b) has also published a Crimean Karaim grammar in which she compared many forms with other Karaim varieties as well as Old Turkic forms based on Clauson and occasionally with Old Turkish forms. There are also comparative and contrastive studies of various linguistic sub-systems and categories, e.g. Zajączkowski's (1932b) monograph on WK word formation in comparison with all Turkic languages; W. Zajączkowski's (1966) Karaim–Chuvash parallels; Csató's paper on Turkish and Karaim syntax (1994), Csató and Menz's (2018) paper on the linguistic distance between Karaim and Gagauz, and Csató and Abish's (2015) paper on a comparative construction in Karaim and Chinese Kazakh.

Comparative studies between CK and Krymchak are very promising, but little work has been done so far, e.g. Shapira's (2016) and Jankowski's (2021) articles on Obadiah.



### 3. Tasks to be done: Text editions

Although much work has been done on Karaim, there is still much to be done. Moreover, among the studies listed above there are some of low quality and unreliable ones. These are especially those written or compiled by amateurs without philological or linguistic knowledge. They published their books to serve their community. Naturally, there are differences between individual publications. For example, Mardkowicz, the eminent Karaim activist in Luck, published many valuable texts as a lawyer after his retirement. As said above, his dictionary (Mardkowicz 1935) is reliable. In contrast, Xafuz included in his dictionary words which are certainly not Karaim. Unfortunately, since he did not indicate the sources, we do not know what kind of material he used. For example, the Russian headword *нация* is glossed as ‘budun, ulus xalk’ (Xafuz 1995: 146) and *budun* is exemplified as *er budunda bar em yaman, em yaxşı kişiler* ‘there are both good and bad people in all nations’. As we know, *budun* is a misreading for Old Turkic *bodun* ‘people’ and may not be a Karaim word because of the middle *-d-* which in Northwestern Turkic normally changes into *-y-*. Moreover, this word is not attested in Karaim. Lavrinovič’s (2007: 133) dictionary also includes strange and erroneous words, e.g. Russian между мной glossed as *aramymynda* ‘between me’ [!], между вами glossed as *aramyjyzda* ‘between you’ [!] and между нами двоими glossed as *ėksimiždia arasyına* ‘between two of us’ [!].<sup>7</sup>

The tasks may be formulated as in the following:

#### **Text editions:**

Editing the remaining half of the CK Bible; editing the remaining part of the NWK Bible; editing the SWK Bible; and editing all old manuscripts.

#### **Compiling dictionaries:**

A dictionary of biblical vocabulary for all the three varieties of Karaim; a new SWK dictionary; a new NWK dictionary; and a comparative dictionary of all Karaim dialects. The authors of recent studies have demonstrated that many words they found in manuscripts are absent from existing dictionaries, e.g. CK *kürägäği* ‘cup-bearer’ and *ötmäkçi* ‘baker’ (Jankowski et al. 2019: xxi–xxii); NWK *öra tur-* ‘to get up’, SWK *irej tur-* (Jankowski 2020: 32). Németh (2021: 993–1104) provides a long list of such words, among

7 Németh (2012: 70) has drawn attention to a great number of mistakes in Luck-Halicz forms in this dictionary.



which there are derived words such as *avuzluqla-* ‘to muzzle’ and words attested in different meanings as *jančqyč* ‘mortar’ (KRPS 228 ‘pestle’) and forms.

There is often the case that a word is in the dictionaries attested only in one or two dialects, but in fact it is known in all, e.g. CK *yasaq*, SWK *jasak* (KRPS 237) ‘tax’, but NWK *jasax* ‘id’ is absent, for the evidence see Jankowski et al. (2019: 45).

Many new words, forms or meanings can be found in the letters edited by Sulimowicz-Keruth (2021), e.g. *b'eg'anč* (123) ‘intention’, *maχlat-* (121) ‘to forgive’, *lešenkodešcy* (110, 111) ‘in Hebrew’, *bošlēj* (124) ‘in vain’.

### **Grammars:**

A more comprehensive grammar of SWK and NWK, and a grammar of biblical Crimean Karaim should be written.

### **Grammatical sub-systems:**

Some categories such as voice (diathesis), actionality, number (nominals and verbs), factive and participant nominals etc. should be examined.

### **Semantics:**

In this domain, very little has been done. Note that Karaim words are sometimes semantically different from common Turkic, e.g. NWK *igit'* : *kart* ‘new : old’ (used also for inanimate objects); CK *oqla-* ‘to shoot arrows; to strike with an arrow’; NWK *χožalyχ*, SWK *χozalyk*, CK *χoğaliq* ‘wealth’; NWK *baytyrlyχ*, CK *bayatirliq* ‘power’; NWK *gilav* ~ *gilaf*, SWK *gilef* ‘rose’; NWK *t'ok-* ‘to water’.

### **Spoken Karaim:**

In general, more attention should be paid to texts recorded during fieldwork.

Publication of NWK and SWK recorded texts are welcomed.

Abbreviations

CK – Crimean Karaim

NW, NWK – Northwestern Karaim

SW, SWK – Southwestern Karaim

TK – Turkish Karaim

WK – West Karaim

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## SIMON FIRKOVIČ AND HIS ROLE IN PRESERVING THE KARAIM LANGUAGE

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**Abstract.** Lithuania is a unique place in the world where the Karaim language is still alive. Living in Lithuania for 625 years, Karaims have spoken their mother tongue at home and in their families, also used their language in religious service, and learned it at school. The Senior priest of Trakai community Simon Firkovič (1897–1982) played an important role in fostering and preserving his native Karaim. He was elected to that position in 1922 and served there for 60 years. The article looks into his activities in two strands: him working for the community in his religious and teaching duties as well as being a poet and writer, in a more individual vein following his vocation to cultivate, safeguard, facilitate, and nurture Karaim identity.

**Keywords:** Trakai, Simon Firkovič, Senior priest, Karaim community, Karaim language, Karaim identity.

The Senior Priest Simon Firkovič (1897-1982) was one of the most prominent figures of Karaim culture in the 20th century. He was elected to that position in 1922 and served there for 60 years until the end of his life. He spent all his life in Trakai, in the same house on Karaimų str. 42. During his long spiritual ministry, the Senior Priest Simon Firkovič not only held all the religious services, but also was a public figure in many areas: a teacher of religion and language, initiator and playwright of the amateur Karaim theatre, a poet, translator, and an earnest defender and guardian of the Karaim identity, especially the Karaim language. How could one person accomplish this?

Taking into account all his efforts to preserve the native language we can delineate two fields of his activities – one with the community, and another – his individual field. First, let us consider the religious services held for the community. Simon Firkovič never abandoned his role as a senior priest. When it became unsafe to attend services in the kenesa, the Karaim temple, he held services at his home. Here, at his home, religious services were held, all Karaim couples were secretly married, and new-borns were





The senior priest Simon Firkovič with pupils in 1932



Simon Firkovič



Simon Firkovič in Trakai in 1965

blessed. Firkovič accompanied all the deceased Karaims with a prayer to their place of eternal rest in the cemeteries of Trakai, Vilnius or Naujamiestis near Panevėžys. He took great risks, secretly performing his priestly duties while conducting ceremonies and Holy services even when the conditions were extremely unfavourable. All prayers were spoken in the Karaim language. Fortunately, the liturgical heritage of Simon Firkovič is preserved in audio records made by his nephew Mykolas Firkovičius (1924–2000). Recorded by Mykolas Firkovičius himself, these records and liturgies in a pure form of the Karaim language are the main sources for contemporary services in *kenasas*.

Second, the importance of Simon Firkovič's pedagogical work cannot be underestimated. After returning in 1920 from Crimea where the Trakai community spent some years in forced exile, he initiated the reopening of the state primary school for Karaim children (established first in 1576) and the establishment of a Karaim kindergarten in Trakai. Here all subjects were taught in the Karaim language. The primary school fully functioned until 1923 when it was closed down by state authorities, because of the lack of children. Simon Firkovič wrote letters to the authorities petitioning to reopen the school. The school was not reopened, but it was allowed to conduct religion and language lessons. Simon Firkovič fought for the number of lessons in the state primary school and later extended teaching of religion and language in the parish school, which functioned in Trakai until the Soviet occupation in 1940.

We cannot restore the picture of how the school functioned, because none of us actually attended it. We can only imagine how it worked by relying on the stories told by our parents and relatives. Unfortunately, I have not found any drafts of Simon Firkovič's lessons, but indirectly we have evidence that, as a teacher, he was very exacting. It is obvious that people, who attended the lessons at that time, spoke Karaim at home. They were fluent in their native language and did not need to start every year only by learning how to say "*kiuń jachšy*" (Hello) and or "*nie bolas?*" (How are you?) They could learn more complicated subjects such as translations of the Bible, prayers and so on. The lessons of religion and prayers have always been conducted in the Karaim language. The language skills of the students were well developed and they could take part in the third endeavour undertaken by Simon Firkovič: the theatre.

He was the founder and the playwright of the amateur Karaim theatre, which became very popular in the community. Being an excellent psycho-

logist and having a brilliant sense of humor, Firkovič succeeded in writing several pieces for amateur theatre which reflected everyday activities as well as revealing human character. While writing these theatre pieces, Simon Firkovič wanted, moreover, to educate his community, to show how to preserve moral values and the good name earned by Karaims in previous centuries. The stories of those plays were typically simple comedies, constructed from episodes of everyday life. The audience could easily recognize who was who. Sometimes the person watching the play could eventually understand his vices such as hypocrisy, laziness, gossip, or other weaknesses. These were excellent lessons and they sometimes brought some shame to neighbors, but generally, they provided just a rich source of enjoyment. The sketches by Simon Firkovič were written in the ordinary spoken Karaim language. Today they have special historical value – they contain many nice words, proverbs, and examples of folk wisdom that have disappeared from our spoken language.

The performances of these pieces were quite popular and even today they are still reproduced on the stage during various occasions in Trakai. For example, the sketch “Dostu üvniūn” [The friend of home] was performed at the celebration of the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Karaim settlement in Trakai. The performers who could speak their mother tongue were as enthusiastic as their parents and grandfathers in Trakai before the Second World War.

Another field of Simon Firkovič’s activities to be highlighted relates to the private time he spent in the silence of his study throughout his life. Relying on his excellent knowledge of the native language, Simon Firkovič prepared a card file of Karaim lexicography, which was extremely useful when publishing the Karaim-Russian-Polish dictionary (*Караимско-русско-польский словарь*, Moscow, 1974). Regretfully, the name of Firkovič was not mentioned among the compilers of the dictionary. Perhaps future scholars will investigate these cards and use them for new dictionaries.

The majority of the cards that are in Simon Firkovič’s archive reflect his deep love for Karaim folklore. He collected proverbs and sayings throughout his life. In the first place, they had been written on small pieces of different-sized paper. The collection contained 304 proverbs and sayings which, in 1974, were presented by the collector to the nephew of his wife, turcologist Alexander Dubiński (1924–2002), a prominent scholar at the University of Warsaw. Dubiński published them in 1976 in Poland, in the magazine *Rocznik orientalistyczny* (Dubiński 1976). They were reprinted later with the Russian translation in the book *Caraimica* (Dubiński 1994, p. 235–248),

together with the collection of other articles of Prof. Dubiński. The Karaim proverbs have traditional national values encoded in them, as proverbs do in the folklore of all nations. In both proverbs and sayings, human virtues are emphasized and vices are condemned. Almost all the Karaim proverbs consist of two semantically arranged and often rhymed parts, for example: *Toj ašty – siož artty* (The wedding is over, the gossip increased), *Jat katyn - učuz altyn* (Stranger's wife is cheap gold), *Az ašym – tynč bašym* (Little food/property – a peaceful mind), *Bart jeri – bart jemi* (If you have land, there will be food as well).

The proverbs are called *Ata siožliari* (Father's words) in Karaim. Symbolically this title expresses their meaning, –the ability to express a concentrated wisdom that has been accumulated by one's forefathers. For Karaims, these proverbs represent a rich source of their mother tongue. Some years ago they were used by Prof. Mehmet Aca from Turkey, who discovered similarities between the Karaim proverbs and those of Turks from Anatolia. I personally used them as examples in the book by Prof. Elizabeth Piirainen (1943-2017) from Germany. She collected sayings and proverbs, which had been used in 180 European languages as well as in other continents. She tried to compare the sayings and their meanings and underlined the fact that, on many occasions, the sayings are equivalent despite the difference in languages and their location. Fifty-seven (57) sayings in the Karaim language, found mostly thanks to Simon Firkovič's collection, are included in Piirainen's book *Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond. Toward a Lexicon of Common Figurative Units* (Karaim idioms, 2012).

Finally, we should also consider the poetry. Simon Firkovič was the most famous and the most productive of the Karaim poets. He began writing poems in his youth and continued to compose them even while he was a senior priest. He wrote an impressively enormous number of poems. Many of them demonstrate simplicity both in versification and themes. His poetry revolves around his broad interests and the totality of life: the nature of Trakai, its beauty, the castle, islands, waterways, species of fish, and his longings for Trakai. The romantic past of the former capital city of Lithuania is, of course, actively presented here. Other topics in the poetry include social gatherings, specialties of Karaim cuisine, didactic lessons for the young, love ballads, and the beauty of the stars. All images reflect his attitude toward the grandeur of life. Writing about life with a deep love Simon Firkovič preserved and used diminutive forms, which have not remained in the other Turkic languages, for example, *Kujaščech jadady da jyrach astrandy* (Little

sun got tired and sheltered itself far away); *Tiursiuniuñdia kybynčėchnyn čyhadyr aj mijychlary* (In the face of a little kybyn the moon's mustache is getting shape). His poems for children are full of such kind diminutives: *chyjarčėch, jamhurčėch, balyčėch, ašlyčėch, üvčėok* (little cucumber, little rain, little fish, little grains, little house).

Even a love poem typically begins with some warm words for Trakai castle, its islands, or lakes. In his rhymes, Firkovič passes on fundamental Karaim traditions to future generations by nurturing respect for the traditions and advocating the preservation of Karaim national identity.

The bulk of Firkovič's poetry belongs to the lyrical genre, but there are also satire, irony, and didactic pieces. Many of his poems have become songs. Firkovič also rhymed two historic ballads – *Warrior (Alankasar)* and *Grand Duke's Wonderful Horse (Batyр bijniñ tamaša aty)*, referring to the name of Vytautas, the Grand Duke of Lithuania (1392–1430), that is closely connected to the history of Karaims.

Prof. Tadeusz Kowalski (1889-1948), a professor at Jagiellonian University in Kraków (Poland), who examined Karaim language in 1925–1935 and published a book *Karaimische texte im Dialekt von Troki* (1929), underlined the peculiarities of the Karaim versification where there is no need to look for rhyme, – the problem is how to avoid it, since similar grammar forms are often used for rhyme. The other singularity is the accent – usually all words have a stress on the last syllable. This kind of versification creates some problems for translators of Karaim poetry into other languages while trying to keep the same rhyming structure. For example,

*Bijikriak baštan borčlar*

*Üvčėokniu-die tarttylar...*

*Da kačan bulej boldu*

*Katynym-de kutuldu*

(As the debt has grown so big/The house needed to be mortgaged.../And when it happened/ Also my wife left me).

In Simon Firkovič's poems, we find multiple examples of such kind of rhyme as in the poetry of other Karaim poets. But despite all peculiarities, poems of Simon Firkovič have been translated into Lithuanian by many poets in creative ways. Thanks to their efforts almost all pieces written by Simon Firkovič have become a significant part of Lithuanian culture and have been published in the bilingual (Karaim and Lithuanian) anthologies



of Karaim poetry: in 1997, *Čypčychlej učma Trochka /ĭ Trakus paukščiu plasnosiu...*), edited by Karina Firkavičiūtė, and in 2015, *Bir kiuń èdi.../Buvo tokia diena...*, edited by Halina Kobeckaitė and Karina Firkavičiūtė. These publications make that part of Karaim cultural heritage more accessible, both for readers and interested scholars. Thanks to bilingual publications the presence of the Karaims in Lithuania is more manifest and has become the subject of works of other writers and scholars, thus demonstrating that Lithuania is proud of having in its history and culture such an exotic strain.

There has always been unity among diverse cultures living in Lithuania. It is, therefore, not surprising that Karaim poets translated the literature of other nations into their mother tongue. Many such translations were done by Simon Firkovič. He translated poems of Russian poets Aleksander Pushkin, Michail Lermontov, Semion Nadson, Nikolaj Nekrasov; Polish – Adam Mickiewicz; Lithuanian – Judita Vaičiūnaitė and Maironis; Ukrainian – Taras Shevchenko, to name a few. Most of them were first published in the above-mentioned anthology of his works *Bir kiuń èdi.../Buvo tokia diena* in 2015. The value of the translations into the Karaim language is tremendous because it shows the deep potential for poetic translations and proves how well poetry served the preservation of the native language. In a way, the poetry also confirmed and established the fact that the Karaim language is a living language and takes its place among other world languages.

An exceptional type of Karaim poetry is the *Lament* [*Syjyt jyrj*], which is usually composed for a particular deceased person and recited at the side of the coffin before moving it to the cemetery. Laments have very strict rules of versification and use the same melody. Every verse consists of 11 syllables. These laments narrate the life and achievements of the deceased. Their last verses express sympathy for relatives and family left behind. The same type of laments (*Syjyt jyrjar*) are composed and used by other Turkic nations such as Karatchays, Turks, and Azeris. Simon Firkovič created 33 laments for different persons. Despite strict rules, in every lament the author shows the individuality of the deceased and his activity in the community. All laments written by Simon Firkovič were collected from manuscripts by his nephew Mykolas Firkovičius and distributed between the members of the community as a self-printed [savilaida] book in 1970.

As the vice-chairman of the Karaim Religious Board and the senior priest Simon Firkovič was a patron of various Karaim youth organisations stimulating young generations to learn their customs and history, to speak their native language, and to participate in the performances. He used to

participate in the activities of the Society of Karaim History and Literature Lovers, delivered lectures about Karaim culture and history, and maintained relations with Karaim communities in other European cities.

Simon Firkovič was also interested in linguistics, especially in Turkology, and his private library contained dictionaries of many Turkic languages. He was happy to greet his guests in Karaim, in particular those of other Turkic nations, and be understood as well as be able to understand those other languages. Moreover, he took great care to preserve the purity and clarity of the Karaim language. From this point of view, it is interesting to take a closer look at his speech at the meeting of the Society of Karaim History and Literature Lovers in 1935. He analysed the letter written in 1877 by the highest priest Boguslav Kaplanovski to the community. Simon Firkovič counted the loanwords used by the author, such as *duchovienstvo*, *moget'*, *dbatie'mia*, *staracciet'mia*, *wynagrodiet'kiań*, *pracasy* stating that he used 27 loanwords because he wanted to be understood by the members of the community who used these words in their spoken language. Simon Firkovič understood that sometimes it is impossible to avoid loanwords because words for technical matters do not exist in Karaim. However, he didn't want to accept people using such Polish loanwords as *ozera*, *słowik*, *pluh*, *borona*, *pola*, *wyspa*, when there are native Karaim words with the same meaning: *giol'*, *sanduhač*, *saban*, *tyrnauč*, *tiuž*, *otrač*.

In the thirties, the Turkish Language Institute (Türk Dil Kurumu) was in the process of reforming the Turkish language. Likewise, Simon Firkovič put forward an idea of creating similar institution for the Karaim language with the goal of preserving its purity.

Because of all his work and activities on behalf of the Karaim community and their mother tongue mentioned above, the senior priest Simon Firkovič is considered to be the pride of the Karaims. He played a unique and irreplaceable role in the preservation of the Karaim community, its vitality, religious traditions, and the language in Lithuania, especially after World War II, when he was the singular highest official and legal Karaim priest and representative of the Karaims in Europe.

## Conclusions

It is essentially impossible to overestimate the impact of Simon Firkovič to the culture and history of the Karaim people. Everything we say might be inadequately too little. One can only boldly agree with the famous Lithuanian

linguist Prof. Zigmas Zinkevičius (2025–2018) who had many personal associations with Simon Firkovič and called him the patriarch of the Karaims. He can be proudly placed next to the highest priest of the community Prof. Hadži Seraja Chan Šapšal (1873-1961). Both of them are the key persons thanks to whom the Karaim community and Karaim language is still alive in Lithuania.

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## ALEKSANDER DUBIŃSKI (1924–2002), ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

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**Abstract:** The aim of the article is to present the profile and professional path of Aleksander Dubiński (1924–2002) on the twentieth anniversary of his death. A long-time researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw and a student tutor, he was interested in many aspects of turcological knowledge, with a particular emphasis on research on the culture of the Karaim minority and Lithuanian-Polish Tatars. The article also discusses the Oriental book collection and periodicals left by Aleksander Dubiński.

**Keywords:** Aleksander Dubiński, Karaims, Karaites, Karaim language, Karaim studies, Tatar studies

It is 20 years already since Aleksander Dubiński, my father, is no longer among us. He ended his scholarly activity more than a quarter of a century ago, in the mid-90s of the previous century, so a whole generation of researchers has grown up who did not have a chance to get to know him personally. Therefore, I would like to recall some of his activities and achievements in the scholarly field. Aleksander Dubiński's research interests, as a turcologist, focused on both Karaim and Tatar topics. The former was a natural choice due to his origin and place of upbringing and is better known than the latter.

Aleksander Dubiński was born on May 22, 1924, in Troki (Trakai). His father, Józef Dubiński (1872–1943), was a farmer and horticulturalist like most of the Troki Karaims at that time. His mother, Zofia née Łobanos (1884–1948), came from a long line of Karaim mayors, who had exercised administrative and judicial power in the Karaim community for many decades. It is worth mentioning here that the family tree of the Łobanos, developed by Dr. Anna Sulimowicz-Keruth, includes as many as 21 generations, known at least by the names of subsequent ancestors.

Young Aleksander attended the Polish Primary School in Troki in 1930–1937 in the mornings, and just like his peers, – the Karaim school in the afternoons. The principal teacher at that time, who conducted classes for Karaim youth, was Szymon Firkowicz (1897–1982). During the lessons, students learned not only the Karaim language, which for most of them was the first or the second language used at home next to Polish but, above all, the original language of the Holy Scriptures. The youth tried to become fluent in the complex art of reciting the Holy Scriptures, which consisted of reading in Karaim the text written in the Holy Language of the original. Aleksander's friends recalled that in this period, he had already distinguished himself as a diligent student who made rapid linguistic progress. Undoubtedly, this was influenced by family traditions: a religious father and a learned uncle – a poet and writer, the Vilnius hazzan (clergyman) Józef Łobanos (1880–1947). The meetings with Professor Tadeusz Kowalski (1889–1948), an orientalist and researcher of the Karaim language, also made quite an impression on young Aleksander.

In 1938, Aleksander entered the Adam Mickiewicz State Gymnasium in Vilnius, and during the war, he attended schools with Lithuanian as the language of instruction. Then, in March 1945, Aleksander volunteered to join the Polish Army and arrived in the vicinity of Warsaw.

After the war, in 1948, Aleksander Dubiński became a student at the Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Warsaw. Here he studied Middle East philology under Prof. Ananiasz Zajączkowski (1903–1970) and Old Turkic linguistics under Prof. Marian Lewicki (1908–1955). After completing his studies and presenting his master's thesis on Old Turkic writing, he was employed in the Turkology Department of the Oriental Institute at the University of Warsaw in 1953, where he worked until his retirement forty years later.

Alongside with his employment at the University Turkology Department, Aleksander Dubiński was also involved in research at the then Department of Oriental Studies within the Polish Academy of Sciences. Initially, he participated in the work on the Kipchak Dictionary. Then, in 1953, he was assigned to work in a team on the Karaim–Russian–Polish Dictionary<sup>1</sup>.

In 1963–1964, he completed research internships in Paris and Hamburg, where he prepared his doctoral dissertation on the infinitive in Turkic lan-

1 *Karaimsko-russko-poł'skij slovar'*, N. A. Baskakow, A. Zajączkowski, S. M. Szapszał (red.), Moskva 1974.



Aleksander Dubiński (on the left) with Stanisława Płaskowicka-Rymkiewicz (1914-1989) and Prof. Ananiasz Zajączkowski (1903-1970), Warszawa 1955.



Aleksander Dubiński at the Orientalist Congress, 1975. In the background, Prof. Tadeusz Lewicki (1906-1992).



Aleksander Dubiński, 1993.

guages, which he defended in 1965, obtaining a doctoral degree. At the University of Warsaw, Aleksander Dubiński was a student group tutor for many years. He conducted lectures, exercises, and seminars in Turkish, Uzbek, and Karaim philology. In addition, he supervised the preparation of several master's theses, which reflected the main areas of his scholarly interest. They dealt mainly with linguistic matters, including morphology, syntax, and above all, the vocabulary of the Turkish language.

Nevertheless, there were also topics related to the Turkic peoples' rituals and Karaim biographies. As a scholar, Aleksander Dubiński focused on several branches of turkological knowledge. His initial involvement in the Turkic languages lexicography – as mentioned above in the Kipchak Dictionary and the Karaim–Russian–Polish Dictionary – was crowned with being the co-author, together with Lucyna Antonowicz-Bauer, of the Turkish–Polish and Polish–Turkish Dictionary<sup>2</sup> published in 1983 and repeatedly re-edited in the subsequent twenty years.

In 1994, on his 70th birthday, colleagues from the University of Warsaw presented Aleksander with a Memorial Book as a sign of friendship and recognition of his scholarly achievements. This jubilee volume was entitled *Caraimica*<sup>3</sup> and it contains Aleksander Dubiński's selected works from 1958–1993 on Karaim matters. These works were grouped according to the topics related to the following matters: Karaims – an ethnic and religious minority; history of Karaim studies; Karaim language; Karaim vocabulary; Karaim literature; social and cultural life of the Karaims; Varia, etc.

In addition to his primary interest in Karaim studies, Aleksander Dubiński also researched the Tatars, which went hand in hand with the long years of cordial relations he maintained with the Polish Muslim community. The publication list includes works on Polish-Lithuanian Tatars, focusing on their writings, language, legends, settlement, social life, and ethical standards, as well as translations from the Crimean Tatars language.

A less-known episode in his academic life is his late professional interest in Tatar manuscripts written in Arabic script. Unfortunately, he was not able to devote himself to this issue due to his progressive illness.

Aleksander Dubiński participated in many international conferences and turcological congresses. At one of them, he met the turcologist, Ms. Éva Ágnes Csató, which resulted in scholarly cooperation and friendship. That

2 A. Dubiński, L. Antonowicz-Bauer, *Słownik turecko-polski, polsko-turecki*, last edition Warszawa 2003.

3 A. Dubiński, *Caraimica. Prace karaimoznawcze*, T. Majda (red.), Warszawa 1994.

led to the Karaim language summer schools being organized later in Trakai for many years, which played a significant role in the attempts to improve the language competencies of the participants. The summer schools were initially organized by members of the Karaim community in Lithuania, in cooperation with prof. Csató. The summer school initiative, launched over 20 years ago, is continued by Karaim organizations and social activists to this day (subject to the latest pandemic conditions). It gathers many members of the Karaim community coming to Trakai from all over the world. Moreover, numerous accompanying events help to broaden the knowledge of national heritage, customs, and rituals, not to mention improving the knowledge of the Karaim language.

In this context, it is impossible not to mention those who would have appreciated this wonderful initiative, as their primary concern was to preserve the Karaim language and culture, including: the above mentioned Szymon Firkowicz, Seraja Szapszał (1873–1961), Michał Firkowicz (1924–2000), Marek Ławrynowicz (1938–2011), and many other members of the Karaim community. In addition, Aleksander Dubiński was always close with his teachers and friends living in Vilnius and Trakai. He visited them often, alone and with his family, and took an active part in the preservation of the Karaim heritage.

In recent decades, efforts have also been made to preserve the sound of the language, which is listed on the *UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*<sup>4</sup>. The audio documentation started almost 50 years ago when Aleksander Dubiński made field recordings of Karaim native speakers from Łuck and Halych who lived in the 1970s in Poland. Today, as we all know, the southwestern dialect they spoke should be considered extinct.

Aleksander Dubiński belonged to many scholarly societies and organizations. He was a member of Societas Uralo-Altaica and Société Asiatique and belonged to the Executive Committee of the World Conference for Religion and Peace. For many years he acted as the vice president of the Polish Oriental Society and member of the Central Board of the Poland-Turkey Society.

In parallel with his research and teaching, the protagonist of this text actively participated in the Karaim community life, which may be a separate topic. However, it should be mentioned that for many decades he was the

4 *UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*, <http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/index.php> [15.01.2022]

secretary of the Karaim Religious Union in Poland. Fluent in the Karaim liturgy, he actively participated in and led celebrations and religious ceremonies. As a result of this, he was considered an unquestionable authority in the Karaim language, religion, and customs.

Allow me a personal reflection – Aleksander Dubiński was a witty person who loved telling jokes and bringing people together. His wife supported him, making delicious traditional Karaim food, and serving it while scholars discussed the latest topics in the Dubiński family little living room. Their house was a center of activity, always full of people from East and West, Karaims and non-Karaims.

Aleksander Dubiński passed away on September 23, 2002, and was interred at the Karaim Cemetery in Warsaw. Eleven years later, in 2013, on the 60th anniversary of Aleksander Dubiński taking up employment, his oriental book collection was donated free of charge to the Oriental Faculty at the University of Warsaw. The list of books donated and stored at the Turkology and Iranian Studies library includes over 11 hundred volumes cataloged digitally and marked with reference numbers beginning with the owner's initials – A.D. This resource was included in the general catalogue at the Library of the University of Warsaw. At the same time, Orientalist periodicals were also donated free of charge to the turcological collections within the Faculty of Modern Languages at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.

## Conclusions

In his research, Aleksander Dubiński paid much attention to the history of Oriental studies in Poland and abroad as well as to Turkic linguistics, focusing mainly on Karaim and Tatar topics, devoting many publications to the Karaim language, including the culture and religion of his own community. He left behind many works on biographies, literature, and writings of the Turkic peoples.

Aleksander Dubiński was, in the best sense, an orientalist of the old school who devoted a large part of his life to Karaim studies and made a considerable contribution to preserving the Karaim linguistic, cultural and religious heritage, not forgetting the Polish-Lithuanian Tatars. His work and his initiatives facilitated novel valuable activities and new scholarly research that is still alive and ongoing now.





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II.

# Living resources of Karaim





## HOMAGE TO THE LAST SPEAKERS OF HALICH KARAIM

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**Abstract.** The article pays homage to the last fluent speakers of Halich Karaim. Two of them lived in the traditional settlement, the Karaim Street in Halich. A further speaker moved to Trakai and stayed there for the rest of her life with her sister. Thanks to favorable circumstances all of them could communicate in their daily life in Halich Karaim and maintain their full competence in their community language. Common to them all was their concern about the future of the language and their strong determination to transmit their linguistic competence to others, and especially to the younger Karaim generation.

**Keywords:** Turkic languages, Halich Karaim, language maintenance, language death, language documentation

Every lost word means yet another lost world  
*Far unutulyan sez bard yanuz bir unutulyan dunya*  
(Peter Austin, Hans Rausing Endangered  
Languages Project, SOAS London)

### The aim of the paper

The last speakers of Halich Karaim could actively use their vernacular in daily communication with at least one competent speaker. This fortunate circumstance guaranteed a functional prerequisite for the long-term sustainability of their linguistic competence throughout their lifetime. Common to them all was their concern about the future of Karaim and their strong determination to transmit the language to others, especially to the younger generation.

As these speakers were relatively isolated, they did not have any direct contact with potential learners. They had to avail themselves of documentary means, i.e. documenting the language in one way or another. Their documentary efforts could be realized by working with a linguist, who carried out field research and produced audio and video recordings, linguistic analyses,



Sabina Zajączkowska (1912-2003) and  
Severina Špakovska



Janina Eszwowicz (1931-2003)

and vocabularies. If a native speaker had the necessary skills to produce his or her own teaching material, (s)he could self-compile vocabularies, grammars or phrasebooks. This will be illustrated by the examples of Janina Eszwowicz and Amelia Abrahamowicz, two of the last full-fledged speakers of Halich Karaim, who made use of the available possibilities to document their community language.

Halich is a town in Galicia, in western Ukraine, about 150 km south of L'viv (Lwów, Lemberg). The largest town in the vicinity is Ivano-Frankivs'k, formerly Stanislaw, in Karaim *Tasli sayar* 'Town [built] of Bricks'. At the turn of the last century, Halich belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, then it belonged to Poland, and later it was annexed by the Soviet state. For more about the history and status of the Halich community in the 20th century, see, for example, articles in the volume Novočaško et al. (eds.) *Halych Karaims: History and Culture* (2002).

Radical political shifts shaped the Karaim community's communication habits and their multilingualism. In addition to the heritage language Karaim, Slavic languages such as Russian, Ukrainian and Polish were also used. The elder generation also learned German and the holy language Hebrew at the *midraš*. In Halich, the Hebrew script was used in religious, administrative and private contexts; see, for instance, Németh (2011), Sulimowicz (2016). For more about the spoken Halich Karaim language, see, for ex-



Ada Zarachowicz (1929–2015)



Amelia Abrahamowicz (1929–2015)

ample, Grzegorzewski (1903), Csató (1998, 2002), Csató (2023), Csató & Johanson (2016), and the references there.

The Halich Karaims once had an impressive prayer house, a *kenesa*, on the Karaim Street, but it was pulled down in the 1980s to make way for a new apartment building.

A handful of community members managed to hide the most important objects such as the Torah and the *yexal*, ‘Ark’, also called *mizbaḥ*, and furtively send them to the Crimean Karaim community (Eszwowicz 1999). Thereafter, they could only pray in their private homes. On rare occasions, a learned Karaim visitor could read the *ḫummas* ‘Hebrew Bible’, written in Hebrew characters, to them. For more about the Halich community see Kizilov’s comprehensive study with its abundance of references (2009).

## The last Karaim speakers in Halich

In the 1990s, when I used to visit the small Karaim community in Halich, there were still three Karaim women who were competent in Karaim: Janina Eszwowicz (1931–2003), Ada Zarachowicz (1929–2015), and Sabina Za-  
jączkowska (1912–2003). Their last names are written here in Polish orthography, as they themselves preferred (see Sulimowicz 2004).

The most fluent speaker, Janina Eszwowicz, described the situation in Halich at that time in the following way:

Text 1. Janina about the Karaim in Halich

*Yalüstä katesanes eđi kibiři dunya.*

‘In the old days there were many Karaims in Halich.’

*Eđi kibiři er kiřilär, katın kiřilär eđi kibiři, ulanlar, ıgıt elän.*

‘Many men, many women, children and young people.’

*A tserivdän son Yalüsti karaylar keđlär Esavlarya, Troška, Kırımıya.*

‘After the war, the Halich Karaims emigrated to Poland, to Trakai, and to Crimea.’

*I kaldı antsak on adam Yalüstä, ekki adam Stanislavda.*

‘And only ten people remained in Halich, and two in Stanislav [Ivano-Frankivs’k].’

*Karayısa aytır eđlär Taslı sayarda.*

‘The Karaims used to say *Taslı sayar* ‘Town [built] in Bricks’.

*[Yalüstä] olturadı on adam, bir er kiři i toyuz katın kiři.*

‘Ten people live in Halich, one man and nine women.’

*Far bir uže kartrak.*

‘They are now all old.’

*Biđdä bard kartrak kart katın kiři kaysılar uže seksen yıl artık bolur. Zayantskovska Sabina.*

‘We have an old woman here who is more than eighty years old. Sabina Zajanczkowska.’

*Anın eri eđi karındasi professor Zayantskovski.*

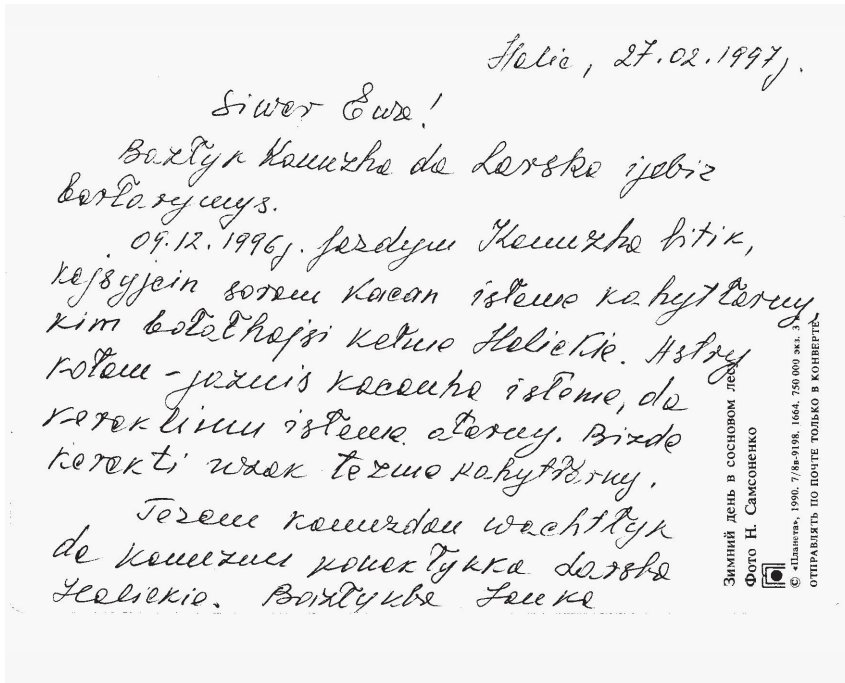
‘Her husband was Professor Zajanczkowski’s brother.’

Eva: *I niđdı fırlık Yalüstä?*

‘How is life in Halich?’

*Usondı yaz bicin Ukraina. Sondı usol eži Galüstä. Avur.*

‘The same as in the whole of Ukraine. It is also so in Halich. Difficult.’



The postcard from Janina Ešvovič to Éva Á. Csató

After Sabina Zajączkowska died in 2003, Janina could speak Karaim only with her friend Ada Zarachowicz, who lived nearby on the Karaim Street. The other Karaims living there and in Ivano-Frankivs'k, did not possess active language proficiency.

Janina Eszwowicz could write Karaim in the Polish-based Latin orthography, which was introduced at the beginning of the 20th century. See, for example, Janina's letter, which she wrote to me in 1997.

#### Text 2. Halich Karaim letter in Polish-based Latin script (1997)

Siwer Ewa!

Bazlyk Kanuzha da Larska ijebiz barlarymys. 09.12.1996j. jazdym Kanuzha bitik, kajsycin soram kacan isleme kahytlarny, kim bolal'hajsi kelme Halickie. Astry kolam – jaznis kacanha isleme, da kereklimu isleme alarny. Bizde kerekti uzak tezme kahytlarny. Tezem kanuzdan wachtlyk de kanuznu konaklykka Larsba Halickie.

*Bazlykba Janka*

*'Dear Eva! Many greetings to you and Lars from all of us. On 9. 12. 1996, I wrote a letter to you, in which I asked when I should prepare the papers so that you would be able to come to Halich. Please write which date I should prepare them for and if it is necessary to prepare them. Here one has to wait a long time to get the papers. I am waiting for news from you and for your and Lars' visit to Halich. Greetings, Janka.'*

Janina made great efforts to revitalize Karaim life in the town or at least to preserve some reminders of the old community. She began raising money for the renewal of the fence around the old Karaim cemetery in Halich. For more about this cemetery with its richly ornamented tombstones see Yurchenko et al. 2000. She was also involved in saving the Karaim houses on the Karaim Street. Read her story below.

Text 3. Halich Karaim text in Turcological transcription: Janina Eszwo-wicz. Recorded by Éva Á. Csató.

*Bileši, Paŋi Eva, bizde, karaylarda, bard yali astrı ıllu kayyimiz.*

'You know, Eva, we, Karaims, have a great problem now.'

*Bu oramnı kleydler ka<sup>w</sup>satma.*

'They want to destroy this street [the Karaim Street in Halich].'

*Axtardlar kenesanı, kleydler axtarma bar karay yiwlerni i kondarma bunda ıllu yi<sup>w</sup>ler.*

'They have demolished the *kenesa* and now they want to tear down all the Karaim houses and build new high apartment buildings here.'

*Nu, uspu vereŋl'iyi itsiŋ karay oramnın men yazdım Krimya, anda bardı deputat Verxovniy Radada, Koŋen, i ol yazdı biik Verxovniy Radaya.*

'I had written to Crimea about this misfortune happening to the Karaim Street. There lives Kohen, a delegate to the *Verkhovna Rada* 'Supreme Council', who wrote a letter to the Supreme Council.'

*Yazdlar biik Esavlardan karaylar, keldi andan karu<sup>w</sup> administraciyaya Ivano-Frankovskka.*

'The Polish Karaims wrote a letter. A reply came to the administration in Ivano-Frankivsk.'





Kenesa in Halič

*Biyge Volkoveckiyye, kim buyurmayaylar kondarma bunda ullu yi<sup>w</sup>ler i kim usol plannī kondarmakka işleyeydler..., kim usol plannī kondarmakka skorektovatkiyler.*

‘[They wrote] to Mr. Volkovetskiy that no high apartment buildings should be built here and that they should make construction plans [...], that they should revise the construction plans.’

*Neñdi berdler karı<sup>w</sup> Biyye Koşenye, men bilim.*

‘I do not know what they answered to Mr. Kohen.’

*Ale bilem bu yalitskiy ayaraşlardan, kim bunda koyallar ullu yi<sup>w</sup>ler.*

‘But I have learned from the local leaders that they intended to build high apartment buildings here.’

*Karaylar itsin uspu astrī şor.*

‘This is a disaster for the Karaims.’

*Usunun itsijn kim sondayī sayıntsi... sondayī sayıntsi karaylar itsin tasbolur.*

‘Because the last reminder ... the last reminder of the Karaims will be wiped out.’

*Kenesanı kavsatlar, axtardlar, axtarıllar yanuz yiwlerjü.*

‘They tore down, demolished the kenesa, and will even demolish the houses.’

*Nemede kalmast.*

‘Nothing will remain.’

*Men aytam alarya, bu yalitskiy biylerye ne kendedler Galicbe, kim bunda kibişi vekler úirıldler karaylar kim uspu bolalmıyd bolma.*

‘I tell the leader in Halich, who governs the town, that Karaims have lived here for many centuries and that this cannot happen.’

*A alar aytadlar kim Kiyiwde aylar kim uspu bar yiwler kondaryan dıvil yırak dzamanda.*

‘But they answered that they learn from Kiev that these houses were built not a long time ago.’

*Nu, baslayında oramnın bardı yiw ekiñtsi yiw to ol kondaryan astrı yırak dzamanda.*

‘Well, at the beginning of the street, there is a house, the second house, it was built a long time ago.’

*Men kerdim yazıs işçin Karaimskaya Žizñ fotografiya karaimskiy ulitsanın i usol ikki yiw bard.*

‘I have seen in the journal *Karaimskaya Žizñ* ‘Karaim Life’ a photo of the Karaim Street which shows this second house.’

*Usol bir... usol ekiñtsi yiw bard yazyan fotografiya işsin.*

‘That house appears on this photo.’

*Men isanam kim uspu bar yiwler — katesnes yomaklaredler meñim anam — kim uspu bar yiwler turdlar yanuz do usunu netsik kiwđi karay oramı.*

‘I think that all these houses ... my mother used to say that all those houses stood there before the Karaim Street burned down.’

*A karay oramı kiwđi min toğuz yiz onitsiñtsi yıldı.*

‘The Karaim Street burned down in 1913.’

*Bunda eđi ullu serefa i kibişi karay yiwler kiwđler ale usol eži orunda, usol eži yiwler kondardlar karaylar ekiñtsi for.*





Karaims and their families living in the Karaim Street with the author of this article.

‘It was a great fire and many Karaim houses burned down, but at the same place, the Karaims built up the same houses again.’

*Alay kim barıba ki<sup>w</sup>medler usol yi<sup>w</sup>ler, kaydas ki<sup>w</sup>đi iđtsi yiw<sup>n</sup>in, kaydas kaysis yi<sup>w</sup> bulay ino teredzeler ki<sup>w</sup>dler a kaldıyi kaldı.*

‘It was so that the houses did not burn down completely. In some places the roofs burned down, in some other houses only the windows, but the rest survived.’

*Biđin oram kim ki<sup>w</sup>ğey i nemedede kalmayay to yođtu.*

‘It is not true that the whole street burned down and nothing remained.’

*Uspu yi<sup>w</sup>ler arasın bard astrı kart yi<sup>w</sup>ler, karay yi<sup>w</sup>ler.*

‘There are very old houses among these houses, Karaim houses.’

*Alay kim bolayd yaksı kim uspunu netsikes kutkarma ğor kollardan.*

‘It would be desirable to save them somehow from evil hands.’

*Kerek kim kimes, kimde bardı ađdı ğalı kim Verğovniy Radada uspu seđni iđirıyey.*

‘Somebody is needed who has the power to bring up this issue in *Verkhovna Rada* ‘Supreme Council.’

*A ežge ĭirl’i ne?*

‘And what otherwise?’

*Kim bolalat bolusma? Ino Verhovniy Rada.*

‘Who can help? Only *Verkhovna Rada* ‘Supreme Council’.’

This tiny community was strong enough to support the documentation and research on the Halich Karaim community. In 2002, Janina Eszwowicz organized an international conference *Караїми Галича: Історія та культура*. She contributed a paper to the proceedings *Halych Karaims: History and Culture* published in the same year (Eszwovicz 2002). Janina supplied rich information about the community, which could not have been accessed without her help. She assisted both the Polish Karaims and researchers such as Mikhail Kizilov (2009) and myself. She organized and prepared the establishment of a Karaim museum *Muzey Karaims’koyi Istoriyi Ta Kul’tury*, which was opened in 2003 with the assistance of Ivan Yurchenko. For more detail about the museum, see Kizilov (2009: 320).

Today the voice of the Karaims cannot be heard any more in Halich. The last speakers, Janina Eszwowicz and her friend Ada Zarachowicz, have passed away. In other parts of the world, there are still some Halich Karaims who can remember at least some words in the language.

## The Last Halich Karaim Speakers in Trakai

A highly respected Halich Karaim, Amelia Abrahamowicz (1929–2015), lived in Trakai together with her sister Sabina. The two sisters spoke Halich Karaim with each other. As far as I know, this was the last home in which Halich Karaim was spoken in daily life. When Sabina died, Amelia remained alone and did not have anyone to talk to in Karaim. The few Karaims in Trakai who could still use their vernacular spoke a different variety of Karaim. Because of these linguistic differences, Amelia communicated with them in another common language, either in Polish, Russian, or Lithuanian. For more about her see Abrahamowicz-Pilecka (2015).

In the last years of her life, Amelia Abrahamowicz wrote an over a hundred pages long and still unpublished phrasebook with the title *Разговорник*

галичского диалекта караимского языка ‘The Halich Dialect of the Karaim Language’. The Halich Karaim expressions are written in Cyrillic, Hebrew and Polish-based Latin scripts with Ukrainian, Russian, English, and Polish translations. For example:

Halich Karaim: *Мэн клэйм иврэнмэ сэзлэмэ, йазма, ухума карайца.*

*Men klejm iwrenme sezleme, jazma, uchuma karajca.*

מֶן כְּלַיִם אִינְרֶנְמֶ אֶזְלֶמֶ אָזְמָא, וּחֻמָּא קַרַיְצָא

Translations:

Ukrainian: ‘Я хочу научиться говорить, писать, читать по-караимски.’

Russian: ‘Я хочу научиться говорить, писати, читати по-караїмськи.’

English: ‘I want to learn how to speak, write, read in the Karaim language.’

Polish: ‘Chcę nauczyć się mówić, pisać, czytać w języku karaimskim.’

Sabina’s son and her granddaughter Nataliya Abramovič live in Russia, far away from Trakai. As they both know Halich Karaim they could help Amelia to compile this phrasebook. Nataliya has an excellent competence in the language and has co-authored a Halich Karaim grammar and dictionary. This represents a highly respectable achievement. Her books were published by the International Institute of Crimean Karaims in 2008 (Mireev & Abramovič 2008).

## Conclusion and acknowledgement

We all owe great thanks to the last speakers of Halich Karaim who made great efforts to preserve their language for the future. They loved their heritage and let Alexander Mardkowicz’s words (1930) define the meaning of their old days:

*Tut ez dijinyi ta šiv ez šezinyi. Tānri sana bolusur!*

‘Hold to your own religion and love your own language. God will help you!’

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## KARAY (KARAIM) LANGUAGE ONLINE CONVERSATIONAL COURSES FOR FOREIGNERS

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**Abstract:** This paper gives information on the purpose and the contents of the *Karay (Karaim) Language Online Conversational Courses for Foreigners*, held between September and December in 2022. This course was joined by around 45 voluntary participants from various countries in Europe, Asia, and the USA. Two native speakers of Karay also helped this course participants by providing them with the correct pronunciation of the Karay literary language.

**Keywords:** Karay (Karaim), online, conversations, literature, culture

When I attended the International Scientific Conference on the Karaim Language in Use dedicated to the memory of Simon Firkovič (1897–1982) and Aleksander Dubiński (1924–2002) on May 19, 2022, I made a presentation on the subject of this article. At the meeting, I announced my plans for launching a free online Karay (Karaim) conversational course for foreign volunteers. After making announcements on Facebook and other social media between June and August, ca. 76 volunteers from various countries, mainly Turkey, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakistan, Kyrgyzia, Russian Federation (mainly Tataristan and Bashkiria), England, Japan, and the USA signed up for this course entitled “**Karajče Siožliejbiz**” [Qarayçe Sözüleybiz / We Speak Karay / Karayca Konuşuyoruz]. This course started on Saturday, September 17, 2022, with its First Lesson “**Birinçi Üriatiuv**” [Birinçi Ürätüv / Birinci Ders]. Between September 17 and December 3, 2022, seven lessons were conducted and each was attended by between 30 and 45 people.

The two native Karay speakers and scholars Dr. Karina Firkavičiūtė and Dr. Halina Kobeckaitė have kindly contributed to editing these 7 Karay lessons and they have also attended the live online Karay courses by voicing the correct pronunciation of Karay words and phrases. Their voluntary help was appreciated greatly by the course participants.

## What was the purpose of starting these courses?

Karaim is one of the endangered Turkic languages as the number of its speakers is decreasing. My aim was to arouse interest in the Karaim language among speakers of different Turkic languages. These courses could help increase the number of volunteers who want to learn the Karaim language. I thought it would be easy to participate in these online and free courses from different countries. While 60 people attended the first live online lesson on Zoom, this number decreased to 25–30 people in the following lessons. However, 75–80 people watched the live broadcasts of this lesson on Youtube, and the number of viewers in the following weeks and months varied between 104 and 249 on the Youtube videos.

The basic requirement for these Karay online courses was that the participants should be fluent in one of the Turkic languages, at least Turkish, Azerbaijani, Uzbek, Tatar or Kazakh. The main instruction language on these online courses was Turkish with some English. Initially the course was planned as weekly for the total of 16 lessons. I was able to hold only 7 lessons between September 17 and December 3 2022. Due to my intense travels and various projects, I had to take a break from these Karaim courses for a few months. Starting from June, I plan to continue and conduct the remaining 9 lessons once a week on Saturdays. After these 16 online lessons the participants would be able to continue studying Karay by themselves.

## The contents of the lessons

The lessons aimed to introduce conversational phrases of the Karay language along with examples of poems written by the Karay poets (see the Appendix at the end of this article). The grammatical explanations were minimized and more time was given to the pronunciation of the conversational phrases. After the reading of the phrases by one or two native Karay instructors, the participants were asked to repeat them. The Karay instructors also made corrections when the pronunciation of the participants was not correct. Written homework was given to the participants after several lessons. The participants had two quizzes.

## Concluding remarks. *What is the next stage?*

The next stage is to establish a Facebook Group with the title “**Karajče Siožliejbiž**” [Qarayçe Sözleybiž / We Speak Karay] where members can post and share a picture, a poem, a shorth message, and comments in Karay only (bilingual texts in Karay and in Turkish, English, or in any other Turkic language would be allowed too). Since there is rich Karay literature between 1920 and 1940, the best examples of Karay poetry and prose, examples from the Karay literary heritage would also be posted on this Facebook Karay Group. I believe this Facebook activity will also increase the number of volunteers wishing to improve their knowledge of Karay. Initially there would be some mistakes on these posts, but other members would be able to correct them. Later a small group of Editorial Board might be formed for this particular Karay Facebook Group.

I would like to introduce Mrs. Fatma Duman Aydın who is one of the participants of these online Karay courses. Before she had no knowledge about the Karay language. After several lessons she started to write poems in Karay. I would like to give one example from her Karay poems:



Kujaşly bir kiuńdia kiel'giań  
Siuviar dostčamny izliejmiń  
Kačty džachtlej kuşlar kibik  
Da anyn jolnu tioziamiń.

Kiok altyjda jalhyz kalam  
Mieni sień-die izliars balam  
Kujaş tuvmasť, kiorksiuž bolam  
Kujaşymny tuvduř kolam.

Jamhur mienim kiožliarimdia  
Miń ataş bart üriagimdia  
Kiok kiokliardiań čypčych byla  
Uč sień javrunlaryma.



Kioźliarniń kiok kiokliardia  
Čypčychlar učadyrlar maja  
Sieni kioriaľmim dostčam  
Bulej mieńdiań sień jyrach.  
*By Fatma Duman Aydın (Sözden Saza)*

In English translation:



Coming on a sunny day  
I miss my lover  
flew fast like a bird  
I wait for his way

Let me be alone under the sky  
You miss me too my child  
If sun doesn't rise, I won't be pretty  
I want you to rise my sun, please

The rain is in my eyes  
There is a thousand fires in my heart  
With birds from the blue sky  
Come fly into my arms

From the sky of your eyes  
birds fly toward me  
I can't see you darling  
Because you are far from me  
*(English translation by Timur Kocaoglu)*

Fatma Duman Aydın was born in Ordu, Turkey. She received her undergraduate education in Sociology and Turkish Language and Literature. She studied teaching Turkish to foreigners. After her teaching carrier, she retired in 2019. She has been writing poetry and songs for the last 15 years. Her songs and lyrics are performed by various artists. She lives in Antalya, Turkey.

I am indebted to the two great Karay Hazzans and scholars Mykolas Firkovičius (1924–2000) and Markas Lavrinovičius (1938–2011), who have helped me a lot in my study of the Karays and the Karay language as well as for the continued help by Dr. Halina Kobeckaitė, Dr. Karina Firkavičiūtė, and Diana Lavrinovič. I would like to end my article with remembering the souls of my two dear friends in Karay:

*Mykolas Firkovičius da Markas Lavrinovičius*

*Džanlary Bah-Bostanda jaryhejlar,*

*Sahynčlary karaj ulusunda tiril'giejliar da syjly adlary sahnynlthejlar!*

## Appendix

**Karajče Siožliejbiz** // Qarayçe Sözleybiz // We Speak Karay

**3. Üriatiuv** // 3. Üyrätiv // 3rd Lesson

(8 October 2022 Saturday, 19:00 İstanbul)

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83792890833>

Live on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/kU-pAtLdSjc>

Phrases are from the book: *The Trakay Dialect* (München 2006)

Instructor: Dr. Timur Kocaoğlu

Editors: Dr. Karina Firkavičiūtė, Dr. Halina Kobeckaitė

The phrases were given in three lines: a) In Lithuanian Karay alphabet, b) Bold in Turkic transcription c) Italic in Turkish translation:

### Bazarda (Shopping)

037a: Bazarha barajych.

**037b: Bazarğa barayix.**

037c: *Alışverişe (pazara) gidelim.*

038a: Satuvču juvaš kiši édi.

**038b: Satuvçu yuvaş kişi édi.**

038c: *Satıcı nazik kişi idi.*

039a: Satynaluvčunun katy sioziunia bachmajyz!

**039b: Satın aluvçunun qatı sözünä baxmayız!**

039c: *Müşterinin bakmayınız! (aldırmayınız!).*

040a: Bunu niečiari satasyz?

**040b: Bunu néčäri satasyz?**

040c: *Bunu kaçä satıyorsunuz?*

041a: Bahasyn jiebiersiejiž, mień bunu satyn alym.

**041b: Bahasın yéberséyız, mén bunu satınalım.**

041c: *Fiatını indirseniz, ben bunu satın alırım.*

042a: Ajahymnyn öłčiaviń alysyz-me?

**042b: Ayağımın ölçävin alısyz-me?**

042c: *Ayağımın ölçüsünü alır mısınız?*

043a: Bu étikliardiań ulannyn ajahyna bart-me?

**043b: Bu étiklärđän ulannın ayağına bart-me?**

043c: *Bu ayakkabılardan çocuk ayağına göre var mı?*

044a: Bu bitrach kysych. Bir numerlych ullurach (unlurach) kieriakli.

**044b: Bu bitrax qısyx. Bir numerlıx ullurax (unlurax) kéréakli.**

044c: *Bu biraz dar. . Bir numara büyükçe gerek.*

045a: Bu étikliar ulla (unlu). Bir numerlych kiçiriak kolam.

**045b: Bu étiklär ulla (unlu). Bir numerlıx kiçiräk qolam.**

045c: *Bu ayakkabılar büyük. Bir numara küçüğünü rica ederim.*

046a: Bundan başcha nińdi rieńgliari bart?

**046b: Bundan başxa nińdi réngläri bart?**

046c: *Bundan başka hangi renkleri var?*

363a: Érkek kijitliari kajsy tarafynda?

**363b: Érkek kiyitläri qaysı tarafında?**

363c: *Erkek giyimleri hangi tarafta?*

364a: Bu kiebitıtia ojunčochar rejonu (ojun niersialiari) bart-me?

**364b Bu kébitte oyunçochar reyonu (oyun nérsäläri) bart-me?**

364c: *Bu mağazada oyuncaklar bölümü var mı?*

365a: Kancelarijanyn niersialiari niečińçi katta?

**365b: Kantseläriyanın nérsäleri néçinçi qatta?**

365c: *Kirtasiye kaçınıcı katta?*

366a: Bu kiebit' niečiagia dieria ačychdyr?

**366b: Bu kébit néčägä dérä açıxdır?**

366c: *Bu mağaza ne zamana kadar açıktır?*

367a: Bu maldan başcha özgia tiurliuliari bart-me?

**367b: Bu maldan başxa özgä türlüläri bart-me?**

367c: *Bu maldan başka, deęişik türler var mı?*

368a: Mien bunu alyštyrma kliejm.

**368b: Mën bunu alıštırma kléym.**

368c: *Ben bunu deęištirmek istiyorum.*

Azych Kiebit' // **Azıx Kébit** // Bakkal, Market, mağaza

166a: Juvuchta azych kiebit' bart-me?

**166b: Yuvuxta azıx kébit bart-me?**

166c: *Yakında bakkal (market) var mı?*

167a: Maja kiebit'tian ét'miak kiel'tirialis-mie (kiel'tirmias-mie)?

**167a: Maya kébitten étmäk kéltirälis-mé (kéltirmäs-mé)?**

167a: *Bakkaldan ekmek getirir misin?*

168a: Bir kilo šiekier kliejm (kliejmin).

**168a: Bir kilo šékér kléym( kléymin).**

168a: *Bir kilo šeker istiyorum .*

169a: Jarym kilo saryjav kolam (kolamyn), bierijiz.

**169a: Yarım kilo sarıyav qolam (qolamın), bériyiz.**

169a: *Yarım kilo tereyaę istiyorum, veriniz.*

170a: Kilo un nietiek tıjıat'?

**170a: Kilo un néték tıyet?**

170a: *Bir kilo un kaçā (ne kadar oluyor)?*

## Étçi // Étçi // Kasap

315a: Maja bir kilo kuzu ét' bierijiz.

**315b: Maya bir kilo quzu ét bériyiz.**

315c: *Bana bir kilo kuzu eti veriniz.*

316a: Ét' buzulmahan-me?

**316b: Ét buzulmağan-me?**

316c: *Et bozulmamış mı (taze mi)?*

317a: Ögiüz étiniñ kilosu nietiek tijiat'?

**317b: Ögüz étinin kilosu néték tiyet?**

317c: *Dana etinin kilosu ne kadar (kaçı)?*

318a: Étniñ jarymyn uvach tuvrama kolam.

**318b: Étnin yarımın uvax tuvrama qolam.**

318c: *Etin yarısını kıyma olarak rica ederim.*

319a: Buzov étı sizdia bart-me?

**319b: Buzov étı sizdä bart-me?**

319c: *Sizde sütdanası var mı?*

320a: Ét' siemiz tiuviu' bolsun, siuviakliariñ-die ajryryjyz!

**320b: Ét séميز tüvül bolsun, süväklerin-dé ayırırız!**

320c: *Et yağlı olmasın, kemiklerini de ayırın!*

## Čiečiakliar Kiebiti // Čečäklär Kébiti // Çiçekçi

095a: Énk juvuchrach čiečiakliar kiebiti kajda?

**095b: Énk yuvuxrax çeçekler kébiti qayda?**

095c: *En yakın çiçekçi nerede?*

096a: Bir giliaf bukietyñ hadirliamia kolam.

**096b: Bir gilef bukétın hadirlämä qolam.**

096c: *Bir buket gül hazırlamanızı rica ederim.*

097a: Bu čiečiakniń ady nedir? (Bu čiečiak niečik indialiat?)

**097b: Bu čečäknin adı nedir? (Bu čečäk nečik indälät?)**

097c: *Bu çiçeğin adı nedir (Bu çiçeğe ne denir?)*

098a: Bu kiorkliu čiečiakliar bizdia jochtur. Alarnyn adlary nedir?

**098b: Bu körklü čečäklär bizdä yoxtur. Alarnın adları nedir?**

098c: *Bu güzel çiçekler bizde yoktur. Onların adları nedir?*

099a: Tiuľpan sizdia bart-me?

**099b: Tülpan sizdä bart-me?**

099c: *Sizde lale var mı?*

## A poem



Simonas Kobeckas: 1911–1985

TIUŠ (1940)

Baz tiušiumdia kiordium sieni,  
Čiebiar bachtjy kiožliarimia.  
Kliagiejdim mień ojanmajyn,  
Giorgia diejiń bunu kiormia.

DREAM (1940)

*I saw you in my calm dream,  
You looked kindly to my eyes.  
I wanted without waking up,  
To see this until the grave.*

TÜŞ(1940)

**Baz tüšümdä kördüm séni,  
Çebär baxty közlärimä.  
Klägéydım mén oyanmayın,  
Görgä déyin bunu körmä.**

DÜŞ (RÜYA) / 1940

*Yine düşümde gördüm seni  
Güzel (hoş) baktın gözlerime.  
Dilemiştim ben uyanmayayım,  
Mezara dek bunu göreyim.*

• • • • •

Javrunlarda tuttum sieni,  
Ach, niñdi mieñ kutlu édim.  
“Siuviam sieni” – maja ajttyj,  
“Siuviam, siuviam” – karuv bierdim.

I kept you in my arms  
Alas, how happy I was.  
“I love you” – you told me,  
“I love you, I love you” – I replied.

**Yavrunlarda tuttum séni**  
**Ax, niñdi mén qutlu édim**  
**“Süväm séni” – maya ayttyj**  
**“Süväm, süväm” – qaruv bérdim,**

Kollarımda tuttum seni  
Ah, nice ben kutl edim  
“Severim seni” bana söyledin  
“Severim, severim” diye yanıt verdim,

• • • • •

Kaçty džachtlej, kaçty bary.  
Bu vacht édi kyscha astrı.  
Maja bundan ančech kaldy  
Tolu kiožliar jaşlar açy.

*Gone away hastily, run away everything.*  
*This moment was very short.*  
*From this only these left at me*  
*Eyes with tears, tears with pain.*

**Qaçtı caxtlej, qaçtı barı.**  
**Bu vaxt édi qısxı astrı.**  
**Maya bundan ançex qaldı**  
**Tolu közlär yaşlar açı.**

*Kaçtı hızla, kaçtı hepsi*  
*Bu zaman çok kısa idi*  
*Bana bundan ancak kalan*  
*Dolu gözler acı yaşlar.*

• • • • •

Tiek sahyşym mienim tolu,  
Ki sieñ mieñdiañ hanuz kaçmas  
Da inanam, bolum kutlu,  
Balkyr bižgia jarych kujaş.

*My single thought is enduring,*  
*That you haven't gone away yet*  
*Thus I believe, I will be happy,*  
*The bright sun shines to us.*

**Ték sağışım ménim tolu,**  
**Ki sén méndän hanuz qaçmas**  
**Da inanam, bolum qutlu,**  
**Balqır bizgä yarıx qujaş.**

*Benim tek düşüncem dolu*  
*Ki sen venden henüz gitmedin*  
*İşte inanırım, olurum mutlu,*  
*Parlar bize aydın güneş.*

Simonas Kobeckas 1911–1985: The poem taken from the book: *Čypčychlej učma Trochka* (Vilnius, 1997). The translations in English and Turkish by Timur Kocaoglu.

## MYKOLAS FIRKOVIČIUS (1924–2000) AND HIS WORK AS A UNIQUE BASIS FOR THE KARAIM LANGUAGE REVIVAL

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**Abstract.** This article presents the contribution of Mykolas Firkovičius (1924–2000) to the revival and continuation of the Karaim language through three strands of his activities: religion, poetry and the language itself. Mykolas Firkovičius was a native speaker of Karaim, Karaim community leader in Lithuania for many years and officially served a senior priest in 1993–2000. Among other works, he published texts in Karaim, sources, poetry compilations, prayerbooks, textbooks, and wrote himself in Karaim. He was a man that profoundly helped his nation to continue its cultural and linguistic life after disastrous times that interrupted Karaim legacy, changed and transformed it. He provided plenty of material to be used by those who want to survive as Karaims, to still speak the language, and to stay strong rooted in the traditions.

**Keywords:** Mykolas Firkovičius, Karaim, Karaim language, Karaim religion, Karaim poetry

The objective of this article is to present my father Mykolas Firkovičius and his activities related to the Karaim language. I take this challenge in a rather neutral and objective way. I believe that those who knew him personally would confirm that this is a possible approach regarding him, – he was a humble and modest person, entirely devoted to the Karaim way of life and its traditions. Besides, he was a very conscious person able to understand every detail in those traditional procedures and religious life, also the language, each and every word. He was also always curious about those genuine Karaim attributes, looking for a deeper knowledge of what that word or tradition was, what it meant, and how to go about it.

Mykolas Firkovičius was born in Trakai, in 1924, as a second child in the family of four children. The years of the war was a difficult time, moreover, in 1939 he lost his father. To help the family survive, he and his sister needed to interrupt their studies at school and start working, – he was employed at the railway station in Lentvaris. In 1948, he was able to enter and



graduate from Vilnius polytechnical school and later, in 1963, – from Vilnius branch of Kaunas Polytechnic Institute and become a professional engineer. After the graduation, he spent almost his entire professional life working at Vilnius Institute of Urban Planning designing houses and new architectural districts in Vilnius city, paying a special attention to the development of technological innovations of that time.

He was a very talented and successful engineer, was leading a team within that institution and got a status of a senior engineer. Nevertheless, he was prevented from any bigger career path because he did not belong to the communist party, the single one that existed at that time. Therefore, the professional career of Mykolas Firkovičius can be presented only in a very brief way.

Yet his work for Karaim culture was much more elaborated and had many more sides to it. In this text only the work dedicated to the Karaim language will be presented concentrating on the three most prominent strands of his work for the language: religion, poetry and the language itself. Mykolas Firkovičius' activities within the community as its leader and as from 1992 – officially the senior priest – will not be discussed here. They merit becoming a relevant subject to further separate investigation.

Let's first analyze his language-devoted work that is related to Karaim religion. And this is an absolutely impressive milestone not only in his personal life, but also in the general history of Karaim culture in Lithuania. Mykolas Firkovičius has published 4 outstanding items on religious topics – a prayerbook for special occasions to be used at home called *Karaj koltchalary* (1993), a two-volume prayerbook for the Karaim liturgy (*Karaj diñliliar-niñ jalbarmach jergialiari*, 1998–1999), and two publications that are Bible parts translated into Karaim – the Book of Psalms (*David' Bijniiñ machtav čozmachlary*, 1994) and the Book of Proverbs (*Šelomonun mašallary*, 2000).

All of them, though serving a religious purpose, are also very important linguistic publications. In order to prepare them, a huge amount of work was done in two directions. Firstly, Mykolas Firkovičius developed a reliable system of how to register the Karaim language in Latin alphabet based on the Lithuanian language rules (phonetics). He analysed the grammar and specific features of the Karaim language construction so that those symbols and letters would properly reflect the language without damaging it, and would be useful for all potential users, both to native Karaim people and also to scientists and foreign nationals. He conducted this work in consultation with linguists, turcologists and professionals of the Lithuanian language.



M. Firkovičius with his sister in the garden of their parents house



Mykolas Firkovičius and his daughter Karina, 1993





Senior priest Mykolas Firkovičius with Pope Jan Pawel II in Vilnius 1993



Senior priest M. Firkovičius in Trakai Kenesa

The second important working direction on religious publications is related to the texts themselves. Again twofold. Until these publications of the nineties came out, there had been only few Biblical texts published in Karaim, since they traditionally circulated in manuscripts mainly. Therefore, Mykolas Firkovičius' huge endeavor consisted of looking for proper texts among the manuscripts, transcribing them and compiling them together to a prayer book.

As he says in the introduction to the second volume of the prayer book: *“Obgialiarimiž ušpu jerliardia tochtejdohon da karaj dininiñ kadahasyn resimliari byla kip saklejdohon, bar vachtlarda Tieřriniñ kyblalary alnyna aziž kieniesa üvliariñdia jalbaryr ěd'liar. Biugiun'liej biž alarnyn kaldyrhan üliušiuñ mieriesliejbiž, jachšy adlary byla ullulanabyz, karaj diniñ adiet'liaribia kiučiumiužgia kioria bahabyz“*. [Our forfathers staying in these lands and caring for religious traditions always were praying to God in kenasas. Today we take over from them, happily using their good names, we follow Karaim traditions as much as we can.]

Next to the compiled texts, Mykolas Firkovičius produced also comments in Karaim about the proper usage of texts for both community liturgy and private home practice. *“Har bir jergianiñ bašlyhynda anyn ady bil'dirt'kiañ dahy jazhan niečik bu jergia ochulat: nie diñ jesisi čozat, kačan da nie barlaryna džuvat biermia, kačan čiokmia kieriakli, kačan tyjlytyn koltchasy ochulat.”* [A title is given in the beginning of each prayer and it is written how to read that prayer: what the priest is singing, when and what is read as the community response, when people need to kneel or which prayer is read in silence.] The comments read as follows, i.e. – *“Diñ jesisi synhan üriak byla čozhun”* [The priest to read as if with a broken heart]; or – *“Turup – diñ jesisi ěksi-die janyna Džymatcha ajtsyn”* [The priest is standing up to say to the community leaning to both sides].

The texts were published and so made available to the modern Karaim community in a comprehensive and explanatory way. Since people of today in principle are not familiar with the manuscripts and also not all of them would remember how the proper liturgy needs to be performed, the books were of huge help and could be immediately used for religious services. Those brief or sometimes more elaborated comments on how and when the texts were to be used contributed substantially to the preservation of the Karaim religious terminology and to its bridging, from the undefined traditional past that was still in the heart and the memory of Mykolas

Firkovičius – up to these days. They were recorded for survival and for those keen on learning.

The second volume of that prayer book consists of procedure descriptions for various family occasions and celebrations: birth, wedding, funeral, and some others. It is more valuable information for those who want to properly follow the traditions and know what to read or say in proper Karaim. There were some attempts to translate those descriptions of festivities, into Russian and Lithuanian, however, no full edition has been published yet.

Very often a question arises these days about how the Karaim language has survived and is still alive in Lithuania today. And the first reply to this phenomenon is related to people. Thanks to people, to their courage, deep knowledge and various productive activities, the language has survived up until now. Mykolas Firkovičius is one of those remarkable persons who contributed enormously in this regard. The second reply is tightly linked to the religion – religious service has always been and is until now still being held in the Karaim language. The work and publications of Mykolas Firkovičius facilitated this prolonged use of Karaim in religious service, even though the active knowledge of Karaim is fading away. Another important achievement of these books relates actually to the history of Bible translations into Karaim.

If we move to the second strand of Mykolas Firkovičius's work on Karaim language, namely to poetry, first we have to note a collection of Simon Firkovič (1897–1982) poetry that Mykolas Firkovičius compiled in the 70-ies. Simon Firkovič, this outstanding personality of Karaim community in Lithuania of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was his uncle, but at the same time a very charismatic and influential, well-educated person and a favourite authority representative as well as teacher of Mykolas Firkovičius. For this first collection Mykolas Firkovičius did what was possible for that time, – he copied some typewritten papers with poems and stucked them together manually producing several files. It became very useful material for teaching of the language that was done secretly during the Soviet times in the homes of several community members. Mykolas Firkovičius was one of those teachers at that time.

Later on, in 1989, after Lithuania started regaining its independence, the first real publication of a poetry book prepared by Mykolas Firkovičius with a title *Karaj jyrlary* appeared. It included the heritage of several Karaim poets from the 16th to the 20th century, but also some old anonymous poetry

and religious hymns. Mykolas Firkovičius was always very pleased when he happened to find a manuscript, a poem or a religious text that represented very beautifully simple and “pure, nice” Karaim language, – he was happy to bring that text into the light, as he did while putting together the above compilation. This way it served an additional purpose – not only a poem as such was published and registered, but linguistic treasures of Karaim ancestors were showcased. An example to that can be a part of the poem that is not very often quoted, but that is written in a wonderful language (anonymous author):

*Jukudan turup tieržiagia bahamyn,  
Tan saruvunda jolha tielmiariamiń.*

*Mień tielmiariamiń, jašba juvunamyn,  
Har kieziuvčiudiań dostumnu  
soramyn.*

*Kiozium kioriadir, jolha kieziadir,  
Ajachlarym šaharha kieliadir.*

*Čychtym karšyha, džanym bijaniadir,*

*Kiozium jadady, ajahym artchary  
kajtadyr.*

*Nie sień turasyn, kimni tioziasin?*

*Bir dahy any kiormiassin tirini.  
Mień kiordium any, tirligi alyndy.  
Kijiz bajlanyp, zieriatkia eltińdi.*

*Da nie kylajym, suvha tiušiajim?  
Ol ajtty kajtmas, otcha tiušiajim.*

*Niegia tiriliam, kimni tioziarmiń?  
Bolmasa jaryhym, mień-die öliarmiń.*

*Woken up, i look through the window,  
From the very morning i am longing  
for the road,*

*I hope, wash myself with tears,  
Every passing person i ask for my  
friend.*

*My eyes are looking to the road,  
And my legs come to the city.*

*I went to the other side, my sole is  
happy,*

*But my eyes got tired, my legs return  
back.*

*Why you are here, who are you waiting  
for?*

*You will not see him alive anyway.*

*I saw him, i started living,  
Wrapped in a fabric, he was taken to  
the graveyard.*

*What shall i do? Descend to waters?  
He said he would not come back, shall  
i go to flames?*

*Why do i live? Whom do i wait for?  
If he will not be here, i'll also die.*

The compilations of poetry were possible to publish only because during his entire life Mykolas Firkovičius was consciously collecting these

precious pieces of the past and dealing with them: analyzing the language, following its history or retracting from texts any available information on Karaim life in the past (as is the example of his favourite “Father’s moral guidance to his son”):

*„...Da har adam bolsun ullurach sieńdiań kioźliarijdia. Da ěgier uslu ěriań ěsia ol jemesia chodža, borčtur saja syjlama any. Da ěgier jarly ěsia ol da sień chodža jemiesia ushurach andan, sahyš ětkiń kioľniujdia ki sień jazychlyrachsyn andan da ol rastrach sieńdiań....”* (Let every person be bigger/more important than you in your eyes. And if it is a clever person or very rich, you need to cherish him. And if he is poor and you are richer or more clever than him, think that you are more sinful than him and he is much more honest than you are...).

Soon poetry became a solid foundation not only for the follow-up publications (such as translations into other languages) or stage performances (such as festive poetry reading or singing the songs), but also for further language learning both privately and in the various available classes, which were quite numerous and open since 1988.

Turning to the third strand of Mykolas Firkovičius’ activity, which is the language itself, a Karaim grammar self-teaching book ‘Mień karajče ũrianiam’ of 1996 has to be mentioned. This was also a result of his continuous effort, especially during the Soviet times, to have a certain compendium of Karaim grammar and a book that would allow people to learn the language by themselves, having the rules explained and several exercises to practice provided. He was preparing the material in the course of long decades, also using the experience of the underground classes conducted in Soviet times. And when the possibilities finally opened, the main material was in place. Only the final finetuning and preparations for printing had to step in.

In the grammar book, the Russian language is used for explanations – at that time he obviously still wanted to reach the Karaim communities in Ukraine or Russia as the target audience of that self-learning book. Whatever the reasoning, the essence of the language and its scheme was explained in the book and well recorded. In this book the grammar is explained very thoroughly, rather in a scholarly way, following the examples of earlier publications of Kowalski, Musajev, and the Karaim-Russian-Polish dictionary. It is a very rich compendium of the language knowledge and a good source for any further versions, if needed. For long years this was the first and the only modern practical publication on the Karaim language. The various other editions started to come later. To mention just one – a book on Karaim



titled *Karay: the Trakai dialect* (2006) by prof. Timur Kocaoglu inspired by „Mieñ karajče ūrianiam“.

Scholars nowadays state that *“It is becoming a matter of an individual choice – to nurture your traditional culture or not, to understand your roots or to not care. This individualistic attitude towards everything in someone’s life is prevailing, and this is a new normal in this globalised modern world, wherever you are”* (Language, Identity and Migration, 2016).

Just to confirm – this conclusion is fully valid and applicable to the situation of Karaim people and the Karaim language in Lithuania. Everything now is very much individualistic. It is in this context that all the work done by Mykolas Firkovičius, all the books and sources published are getting an additional value: they become a perfect basis for all further potential individual use and re-use, interpretation, studying, translations, etc. What’s more – the basis is a very solid one, also in its spirit, so no interpretation can do any harm to it. It contains the real and sound tradition continuing for ages before us in that different, still community way.

## Concluding remarks

The revival of the Karaim language first time started in 1988. The second stage of the revival is taking place at this very moment. However, it is different now. 34 years ago, there was still something to be continued via the revival. Mykolas Firkovičius was instrumental at that time in passing over his active and deep traditional knowledge, including the Karaim language. At that time he was the first one daring and knowing what to say.

Today, to keep Karaim traditions and the language alive, a new, true revival, a renaissance is needed. And it can mainly happen on an individual basis, meaning that every individual needs to revive him/herself, if he or she wishes to still remember or know their own roots. A lot is happening now – various projects are underway, the still existing memory is being recorded as much as possible, and also new approaches are getting some attention reinforcing the positive trends for Karaims’ cultural survival.

I am proud to be a daughter of a man who helped his nation so profoundly to continue its cultural and linguistic life after those disastrous times (Soviet including) that interrupted Karaim legacy, changed and transformed it. New times produced immense and acute challenges for Karaim people to face – how to survive as a Karaim? How to perceive that special cultural heritage? How to still speak the language? How to stay strong within the



tradition? Many answers to these questions can be found in that traditional knowledge accumulated and published by Mykolas Firkovičius.

I am also happy and thankful to both my parents for being courageous and speaking to me in Karaim from the moment I was born, for teaching me Karaim songs and poems, so that I could inherit the language in a very natural way and that I can still enjoy it openly today.

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## HACHAN MARKAS LAVRINOVIČIUS' COMMITMENT TO THE KARAIM LANGUAGE TRAKAI DIALECT PRESERVATION AND REVITALISATION

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**Abstract.** The paper introduces Markas Lavrinovičius' most significant jobs in the Karaim cultural heritage preservation and revitalisation. Markas Lavrinovičius (1938–2011) was a Doctor of Science, Lithuanian Karaims' Hachan, and the Chairman of the Lithuanian Karaims' Religious Community. He was an active Karaim community member who made an important contribution to the language research and its revival. He described Karaim customs and traditions, compiled Karaim literary heritage, and prepared it for publication; he also described the Biblical stories in the Karaim language, translated relative Turkic-speaking nations' folk fairy tales into Karaim, and compiled and computerised the Russian-Karaim dictionary. In addition, the article contains a review of the Karaim language coursebook titled *100 karaj tiliniñ ūriatiuviu. Troch karaj sioziu* ([100 Karaim language lessons. Trakai dialect]) – one of his most significant works, containing a thorough research on the Karaim grammar, conducted by Markas Lavrinovičius and Diana Lavrinovič. Despite being surrounded by non-Turkic languages for 625 years, the Karaim language Trakai dialect has managed to preserve its purity and remain untouched throughout the centuries. Unfortunately, it currently faces the threat of extinction. Therefore, teaching the mother tongue was Markas Lavrinovičius' ultimate goal.

**Keywords:** Karaims, Karaim language, Karaj, Trakai dialect, Turkic languages, Markas Lavrinovičius, Hachan, Cuman, Kipchak

Markas Lavrinovičius (1938–2011) was one of the distinct personalities in the Karaim community, a fluent indigenous speaker with a profound knowledge of the Karaim language. He made an important contribution to Karaim culture, identity, preservation and revitalisation of the Karaim language. Maintaining the language was his ultimate goal and desire.

Markas Lavrinovičius was born on 26 December 1938 in Trakai (Lithuania) into a Karaim family of Michail and Aliza Lavrinovič. He finished school in his hometown, then he studied at Kaunas Polytechnic Institute, Faculty of Electrical Technologies. After graduation, he worked at the Lith-



Hachan Markas  
Lavrinovičius

uanian Academy of Sciences and later at the State Research Institute. He was employed as a senior engineer and subsequently became the head of the laboratory. The area of his research and development was microelectronics. In 1968, he was awarded the Candidate of Science degree.

Throughout his entire life, Markas Lavrinovičius was an active Karaim community member. Being enthusiastic and caring about the well-being of the nation, he was willingly engaged in Karaim community life. He sincerely applied his organisational skills while arranging grand national events. In 1989, he was appointed the Chairman of the Karaim Organisation Committee for the International Karaim Congress held in Trakai. About 500 Karaims from all over the world participated in this huge event. Today, in 2022, we are marking the 625th anniversary of the Karaim settlement in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and 25 years ago, back in 1997, we celebrated its 600th anniversary. Back then, while marking the occasion and organising the festive events, Markas Lavrinovičius was the Chairman of the Karaim Organisation Committee. Both events were thoroughly organised, lasted several days, and made an enduring impact on the participants. In the same year, Lavrinovičius was awarded the 2nd Class Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas for his outstanding performance in civil and public offices. Markas Lavrinovičius was a widely respected personality among commu-

nity members and far beyond it. In 2009, Lithuanian Karaim Community elected Markas Lavrinovičius to the Lithuanian Karaims' Highest Priest – Hachan's – position, and he was also appointed Chairman of the Lithuanian Karaims' Religious Community.

While outlining Markas Lavrinovičius' commitment to the Karaim language Trakai dialect preservation and revitalisation, it is important to start from his last book titled *Avaldan Kieliasigia* ([From the distant past to the future]) published in December 2011. The book describes Karaim customs and traditions, religious festivals, the origin of Karaim ornament, and the base of the Karaim religion.

Back to the 2000s – the period after his retirement was especially productive for Markas Lavrinovičius. In 2002, he published several books, all of them in the Karaim language Trakai dialect. The book *Bir Bar Ėdi* ([Once upon a time]) (379 p.) is a collection of Karaim writers' and poets' literary works: stories, fairy tales, and Karaim folk legends. The stories are retold in everyday language, and the atmosphere puts the reader into Karaim home life in foretime. This set of Karaim literary heritage portrays Karaims' life as well as their national mentality. Markas Lavrinovičius compiled the book from various printed Karaim sources or manuscripts found in the Karaims' home archives. If the texts had been written in Crimean or Halich-Lutsk dialects or other languages, he translated them into the Trakai dialect.

“Az biždiañ, Lietuvanyn karajlardan – bar baryndan niečia juž,” – Hachan Markas Lavrinovičius used to say – “tiek öñgiariak sanej, bar tiurk uluslarynyn sany – hiepsi tiumiañliar. Barlarymyz – bir kanly karyndašlarymyz” ‘There are a few of us, Lithuanian Karaims – all together making a few hundred,’ – Hachan Markas Lavrinovičius used to say – ‘however, otherwise, there is a great multitude of Turkic peoples. We are all one blood brothers’. With this in mind, he selected and translated into the Karaim language 94 Turkic folk fairy tales of the relative 25 Turkic-speaking nations' including: Altai, Azerbaijani, Balkar, Bashkir, Khakas, Chuvash, Dolgan, Gagauz, Yakut, Kalmyk, Karachay, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Ket, Kyrgyz, Krymtatar, Kumyk, Nogay, Tofalar, Tatar, Turk, Turkmen, Tuvan, Uyghur, and Uzbek. The title of the book is *Karyndašlarymyznyn Chaznasy* ([Our brothers' treasures]), (268 p.). In the foreword, Markas Lavrinovičius writes that the nation's folklore always transits its entity, adding that the Turkic relative nations' life perception is relative and understandable for Karaims' mentality. All the fairy tales are retold the way Karaim grandmas would tell the stories to their grandchildren in the old days.

In the same year, Markas Lavrinovičius published *Aziž Jazyšnyn Jomachlary* ([The Holy scripture stories]), (117 p.), where he describes the Biblical stories from the Old Testament, narrating them in the Karaim language Trakai dialect.

Since the 1970s, Markas Lavrinovičius eagerly studied and analysed the Karaim lexicographic sources, and thoroughly investigated the well-known Karaim-Russian-Polish dictionary edited by N.A. Baskakov, A. Zajączkowski, S.M. Shapshal<sup>1</sup>. Based on the Karaim literary monuments, he created the Karaim language primary card catalogue, and later on, he also compiled a computer dictionary. The result of this work was *Urus-karaj siožliugiu* ([Russian-Karaim dictionary]). The Crimean and Halich-Lutsk dialects' words complemented the list only in case they could not be found in the Trakai dialect. The dictionary contains as many as 36,597 Russian lexical items and 13,165 Karaim words and collocations. It was the first Russian-Karaim Trakai dialect dictionary ever. In the foreword the author marks that: 'this dictionary does not claim for an academic level,' and emphasises that, 'it is a practical manual for those wishing to enrich their Karaim language Trakai dialect vocabulary'<sup>2</sup>. Before its first official edition in 2012, this dictionary was widely spread and used not only by native speakers, but also by turcologists outside the community who were interested in the language. The electronic version provides both Russian-Karaim and Karaim-Russian translations.

The decades of working on the dictionary considerably enriched Lavrinovičius' lexicon. Maintaining the language, passing it on to future generations and teaching young people was always his heart's desire. For years Markas Lavrinovičius was arranging lessons and relentlessly teaching the community members the heritage language. He never missed a chance to explain some grammar to the people he was talking to, and was always willing to share his knowledge.

In 2010, the Hachan started teaching the Karaim language remotely. The community members, wishing to study their mother tongue, would receive a weekly e-mail from him with one lesson. The project *Karaim language*

1 Баскаков Н., Зайончковский А., Шапшал С. *Караимско-русско-польский словарь*. Москва, 1974.

2 “<...> предлагаемый «Русско-караимский словарь» не претендует на академичность, а является практическим пособием для желающих пополнить свой словарный запас караимского языка тракайского диалекта.” Lavrinovičius M. *Русско-караимский словарь // Русско-караимский словарь = Urus-karaj siožliugiu*. Тракай, 2012, с. 12.

*internet lessons* was a chance for everyone to learn the native language or improve their skills.

Later on, Markas Lavrinovičius transferred all the Karaim language grammar and teaching material compiled by him into a coursebook. When he passed away in 2011, his daughter Diana Lavrinovič, a language teacher by profession, took over the work on the coursebook. She was working on this project, researching the language for 10 years, and finally, in 2021, she published the Karaim language coursebook *100 karaj tiliniñ üriatiuviu. Troch karaj sioziu (100 уроков караймского языка. Тракайский диалект)* ([100 Karaim language lessons. Trakai dialect], (635p.). Thus, consequently, the authors of the book are Markas Lavrinovičius and Diana Lavrinovič.

The book entirely covers the Karaim language morphology and phonetics aspects and is both a practice book and a grammar reference. The coursebook consists of 100 lessons, each of them introducing a grammatical category or a word-building rule. A wide range of vocabulary is also provided there. Karaim proverbs and words of wisdom are frequent usage examples to complement the rules, which make language acquisition more efficient. Numerous examples from literature allow a much more contextualised way for the exploration of both grammar and lexicon. This is the way learners are encouraged to explore the Karaim culture and the nation's way of thinking. A good number of lessons are supported by topic-based vocabulary, including topics like: family, house, atmospheric phenomena, parts of the body, feelings, names of plants, names of animals, days of the week, months, etc. The book provides over 500 practical exercises, which is a phenomenon never seen before. A variety of stimulating exercises created for language acquisition are intended for different language proficiency levels and cover a variety of topics, such as: declination, conjugation, matching synonyms and antonyms, collocation, word formation, arranging sentences, proverbs matching, translation, *izafet* constructions, etc. The book has the 'key' section, and, therefore, it can be used as a self-study manual. Moreover, it includes a detailed Grammar reference as a supplement that gives a wider and more precise insight into the Karaim language morphology and phonetics.

The authors of the book have conducted significant innovative research. The book contains a unique morphological analysis of the Karaim language corpus. Its components are: the range model of a wordform (including a set of ranges with a series of morphophonological forms of inflectional affixes for each range) and the set of compatibility rules for affixes that constrain

the choice of components of a wordform. It has a model for nouns and verbal nouns, adjectives, numerals, verbs, verb impersonal, and for location names. The mentioned research for the Karaim language wordform has never been done before.

Like all other Turkic languages, Karaim is an agglutinative language, and its distinctive characteristic is vowel and consonant harmony. In the PHONETICS section the authors describe all harmony laws, characteristics of vowel and consonant phonemes, vowel and consonant affix choice and rules of matching them to the stem, and various other phonetics nuances. All parts of speech are precisely described in the MORPHOLOGY section. The supplement IT IS INTERESTING demonstrates the lexis, which gives the reader a glimpse into the national mentality. The nation's particular way of thinking is hidden in its language. For instance: *bit'niñ bierniasi* stands for 'insignificant/minor gift', which literally means 'gift of a louse'; *džan bušurmahy* stands for 'stress', which literally means 'confusion of a soul'. Nothing expresses the nation's character better than its language.

The purpose of the coursebook is undoubtedly for the community members to learn their heritage language or improve their language skills and become more self-aware about the language. In addition, the book must be of high linguistic value for the turcologists' scholarly research, for the comparative-historical analysis of the Karaim vs. the closest relative Kipchak-Polovcian sub-group languages, and the Turkic languages in general.

It goes without saying that one of our most valuable assets is our language. Dr. Markas Lavrinovičius believed the nation would live as long as the language remained conversed. Therefore, he continuously made his best effort that the Karaim language would be used in day-to-day conversations in his own family. Dr. Markas Lavrinovičius was one of the eminent personalities of his time in the Karaim community, highly enthusiastic about Karaim cultural heritage and identity preservation. He spread the knowledge of the Karaim language and history. Always passionate about the idea of revitalising the language, he never gave up his dream.

Even though the Karaim language Trakai dialect has been isolated from other Turkic languages for centuries, it has maintained its purity and survived untouched in its ancient condition. It is interesting to mention that in the 1930s, at the initiative of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, President of Turkey, while implementing his reform, the Turkish Language Commission arrived in Trakai to the Karaims intending to clear the Turkish language of loan-

words. As a result, the Turkish language dictionary was enriched with 330 Karaim words.<sup>3</sup> The Karaims of Trakai are *like a fly embedded in amber* – this is how Polish turcologist Prof. Tadeusz Jan Kowalski (1889–1948) once described the Karaims in Trakai<sup>4</sup>, meaning that they, being isolated from other Turkic peoples for centuries, had preserved their culture, identity and language. Lithuanian Karaims managed to maintain their identity and heritage language up until now and we hope they will continue to cherish it for the forthcoming generations.

**List of Markas Lavrinovičius' works on the Karaim heritage preservation:**

- *Karaj Tili Otuz Siegiž Sahat Ašyra*. 1991. 294 p. (manuscript)
- *Avaldan Kieliasigia (Из далёкого прошлого в будущее)*. Тракай, 2011. 80 p.
- *Русско-караимский словарь / Urus-karaj siožliugiu*. Тракай, 2012. 460 p. Electronic and paper versions.
- *100 karaj tiliniñ üriatiuviu*. Electronic version.
- *100 karaj tiliniñ üriatiuviu. Troch karaj sioziu. I bitik. (100 уроков караимского языка. Тракайский диалект. I книга)*. (with Diana Lavrinovič) Trakai, 2021. 380 p.
- *100 karaj tiliniñ üriatiuviu. Troch karaj sioziu (100 уроков караимского языка. Тракайский диалект)*. (with Diana Lavrinovič) Trakai, 2021. 635 p.

**Markas Lavrinovičius' books that are still in manuscripts, not yet published:**

- *Aziž Jazyšnyn Jomachlary*.
- *Bir Bar Ėdi*.
- *Karyndašlarymyznyn Chaznasy*.
- *Karaj-urus siožliugiu*.

3 Szapszal S. Sprawozdania i bibliografja // *Myśl Karaimska*. Wilno, 1936. Zesz. II, s. 105–107.

4 Kowalski T. *Język karaimski* // *Myśl Karaimska*. Wilno, 1926. T. I, zesz. III, s. 3–7.



## Conclusion

It is obvious that maintaining the Karaim language, the nation's identity, culture and values was Markas Lavrinovičius' overwhelming desire throughout his life. He always made a sincere effort to preserve the cultural heritage and revitalise the Karaim language Trakai dialect. He may not be with us now any longer, but his legacy: collecting Karaim literary works, compiling a dictionary, and creating a coursebook with 100 lessons for the Karaim language studies, will live on for a long time.

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## NEW GENERATION OF DICTIONARIES OF THE KARAIM LANGUAGE BY KARAIM SPEAKERS

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**Abstract.** The paper aims at providing an assessment of the new generation of dictionaries of the Karaim language prepared and published by Karaim speakers over the last two decades. Apart from that, the paper aims at providing a brief analysis of the already existing documentation of the Karaim language. The article is divided into two parts: firstly, the evaluation of the previously published dictionaries of Karaim language is provided; secondly, the new generation of dictionaries published by Karaim speakers, is being analysed, focussing on four works, namely two Polish-Karaim, one Russian-Karaim and one Lithuanian-Karaim dictionary. The dictionaries are being analysed by raising the same question in each case: what information in these dictionaries is provided about the Karaim language?

**Key words:** Karaim, dictionary, Karaim language, Trakai, language.

### Introduction

In the last 15 years, the Karaim language, which has been spoken in Lithuania since the end of the fourteenth century, has been documented in 4 dictionaries prepared by the Karaim speakers originating from Trakai. These works, including two dictionaries published as Polish-Karaim, one as Russian-Karaim and the other one as Lithuanian-Karaim, have not been a subject of a distinct study yet, although they mark great efforts of preservation of the Karaim language and its dialects by the Karaim community. The aim of this article is to assess these new generation Karaim language dictionaries published in the recent decades by raising the same question in each case: what information regarding the Karaim language is provided in the dictionary? In addition to it, I also aim at providing a historical evaluation of the Karaim language dictionaries published before the new generation dictionaries were prepared.

The article is divided into two parts: firstly, an assessment of the dictionaries of Karaim language published in the 20th as well as in the beginning of the 21st century is provided and, secondly, the 4 new generation dictionaries

of Karaim language prepared by the Karaim speakers are analysed. In the text, when referring to the titles of dictionaries, I provide their names in the original language, with the translation to English indicated in parentheses afterwards.

## A historical overview of already existing documentation of the Karaim language

One of the earliest attempts to document the Karaim language in the form of a dictionary was made by Wilhelm Radloff (also known as Vasily Radlov), whose four-volume *Опыт словаря тюркских наречий* [Dictionary of Turkic dialects] provides a panoramic insight on the Turkic languages. Although the main focus in this work was not on the Karaim language itself, the data collected on the Karaim language, based on the author's expedition to Trakai and Luck in 1893-1911, provides much information about the Karaim lexicon.

In 1935, two volumes of Karaim-Polish-German language dictionary under the title *Ślownictwo karaimskie. Karaimsko-polsko-niemiecki słownik* [Karaim vocabulary. Karaim-Polish-German dictionary] comprising as many as 4417 words were prepared by Aleksander Mardkowicz. It is necessary to underline that namely Aleksander Mardkowicz, along with Tadeusz Kowalski and Ananiasz Zajączkowski, started to develop the written tradition of Karaim language in Latin script (Kobeckaitė 2016, 201).

In 1974, the three language Karaim-Russian-Polish academic dictionary (also known in the abbreviated form as KRPS) with 17 400 words written in Cyrillic script was published by Nikolaj Baskakov together with Prof. H. Seraja Shapshal, Prof. Ananiasz Zajączkowski and Aleksandr Dubinski (Kobeckaitė 2016, 202). Until recently, this work had been the most professional dictionary of the Karaim language with etymological explanations of the words and information about the dialects of the language provided.

Another important date for the preservation of the Karaim language was 1996, when the coursebook under the title *Mieñ karajče ūrianiam* [I study Karaim language] was published by Mykolas Firkovičius in Vilnius. Although this work was not actually a dictionary, the coursebook had a great influence for the development of written tradition of the Trakai dialect as the author developed the currently used writing system for the rakai dialect, based on the Latin script with additional letters introduced for representation of specific sounds found in the Karaim language (Kobeckaitė 2016, 203).

Additionally, in 2011, Halina Kobeckaitė prepared two conversation books, one being *Lietuviški-karaimiški-rusiški pasikalbėjimai* [Lithuanian-Karaim-Russian conversations] published in Vilnius, and the other being *Rozmówki polsko-karaimsko-litewskie* [Polish-Karaim-Lithuanian conversations], published in Wrocław (Kobeckaitė 2016, 205).

Apart from the works discussed above, there are several works to list, documenting the Crimean dialect. In 1970, Zacharij Osipovič Sinani prepared *Краткий словарь разговорного языка крымских караимов [рукопись]* [Short dictionary of spoken Crimean Karaim language [typewritten]], which was published in 2007 in Simferopol under the title *Караимско-русский и русско-караимский словарь разговорного языка* [Karaim-Russian and Russian-Karaim dictionary of spoken language] (Németh 2015, 8). In 1995 in Moscow *Русско-караимский словарь. Крымский диалект* [Russian-Karaim language dictionary of Crimean dialect] was published by Mark Chafuz. In 1997 in Odessa *Русско-караимский словарь. Крымский диалект* [Russian-Karaim dictionary of Crimean dialect] was published by Boris Levi (Kobeckaitė 2016, 205).

In addition to these works, two dictionaries were published in the Republic of Türkiye. Timur Kocaoğlu, in collaboration with Mykolas Firkovičius, prepared a Karaim, Turkish and English frazeologic dictionary under the title *Karay. The Trakai Dialect*, which was published in 2006 (Kobeckaitė 2016, 204). The same year in Istanbul, Tülay Çulha published Karaim-Turkish dictionary under the title *Karaycanın Kısa Sözcükleri. Karayca-Türkçe Kısa Sözlük* [Short Karaim vocabulary. Short dictionary of Karaim-Turkish].

Finally, the professional dictionary under the title *A Crimean Karaim-English dictionary*, prepared by Gulayhan Aqtay and Henryk Jankowski with 10 000 words documented in Latin script, was published in 2015 in Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. The work, being a new critical evaluation of the dictionary of 1974, currently is the most professional dictionary of the Karaim language with a comprehensive analysis of it being prepared by Michał Németh (Németh 2015).

## The new generation of dictionaries of the Karaim language by Karaim speakers

When considering the new generation of dictionaries of the Karaim language by Karaim speakers, not professional linguists, we must go back to

the year of 2008. That year, in the printing house of Karaim union *Bitik* in Poland two Polish-Karaim dictionaries were published.

The first dictionary to assess is *Podręczny słownik polsko-karaimski* [The handy Polish-Karaim dictionary] prepared by Szymon Juchniewicz. The author in the foreword indicates that he decided to prepare the dictionary in 1998. The main reason for it was the lack of dictionaries of the Karaim language at the time, causing difficulties in translating texts from Polish to Karaim and vice versa. Besides, the author also emphasized his view that the most professional dictionary at the time, namely KRPS, is not convenient to use. Initially, the author prepared only one copy of the dictionary for his personal use without any ambition to provide a scholarly work, but with the growing number of requests for assistance from others working with Karaim language, eventually he took a decision to publish the dictionary aiming at making translations of the Karaim language more accessible to the Karaim community (Juchniewicz, 2008, 3).

The number of words provided in the dictionary is not indicated; the dictionary consists of 271 page. The Karaim words are supplemented with the capital letters *T, H, K*, providing the information about the origin of the word: it being used either in Trakai, Halich or Crimean dialect. In some cases, different types of pronunciation of a single word within the same dialect are provided, and the author also introduced several Polish letters. The dictionary provides no further information (Juchniewicz 2008).

The second dictionary to analyse is *Słownik polsko-karaimski w dialekcie trockim* [Polish-Karaim dictionary in Trakai dialect] prepared by Gabriel Józefowicz. It contains 654 pages while the number of words provided in the dictionary is not indicated either. In the foreword, the author claims to have had two main tasks by preparing this dictionary: firstly, he wanted to honor Professor Tadeusz Kowalski for his contribution to the documentation of the Trakai dialect, and, secondly, he aimed at publishing a dictionary for Karaims, willing to either improve or deepen their knowledge of the language (Józefowicz 2008, 7).

In the dictionary, a short introduction to the grammar of the Karaim language is provided. The author describes the Karaim language and its main features, also providing a brief information about the structure of the language, the basic information regarding the pronunciation of the words, although this information is not sufficient for a non-speaker of the Karaim language to understand the basics of the Karaim grammar (Józefowicz 2008, 11–14).

In the dictionary, the author provides information about the origin of the words, indicating whether a certain word was introduced into the Karaim language from Arabic, Turkish, Belarussian, Hebrew, Lithuanian, Mongolian, Persian, Polish, or Russian languages. Although the author does not provide any information regarding the dialect of the words, in many cases the references to the sources (there is a list of 36 abbreviations provided by the author, each representing a certain article or a book) used by the author when preparing the dictionary are provided, therefore, in case a researcher needs additional information about the words, it can be found there. On top of that, in the dictionary translations of several proverbs and translations of some sentences used in daily conversations are also provided with some examples serving as explanations revealing the meaning of certain words. Overall, the dictionary is very informative and, it can be concluded, is the most professional dictionary among those four that I analyse in this article (Jozefowicz 2008).

The third dictionary to assess is *Русско караимский словарь* [Russian-Karaim language dictionary] prepared by Markas Lavrinovičius and published in Vilnius in 2012 with as many as 36 597 Russian and 13 165 Karaim words. In the foreword, the author states that his main task was to provide the reverse dictionary to KRPS. The author also provides a short introduction to the system of Turkic languages and their relations to Karaim language. In addition, a short autobiography with the overview of the author's main publications is also provided. On top of that, the list of the literature the author used when preparing the dictionary, including 14 publications, is presented (Лавринович 2012, 5–13).

The author used the transcription of the Karaim language based on the Lithuanian alphabet with the additional letters introduced by Mykolas Firskovičius. In the dictionary, he does not only provide the information about the dialect of every word in the already above-mentioned *t, h, k* scheme, but also introduces additional explanatory letter *m*, which serves for indicating the words of the Trakai dialect in the Karaim language, that were not included into KRPS. The dictionary also includes information about the origin of the word, indicating whether the word was adopted to the Karaim language from Arabic, French, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Chinese, Persian, Polish, Russian, or Turkish (Лавринович 2012).

The last dictionary to assess is *Lietuvių-karaimų kalbų žodynas* [Lithuanian-Karaim dictionary] published in Vilnius in 2020 containing as many as 12484 words. The dictionary was prepared by the school teacher of Maths

Ana Špakovska (1936–2019), who in the foreword acknowledges that it took her ten years to complete the work. It is based on the Karaim-Russian-Polish dictionary of 1974, the Russian-Lithuanian dictionary of 1985 and the knowledge of the Karaim language by the author as well. The author of the dictionary explained that her intention by preparing the dictionary was based on the aspiration to assist those willing to learn the Karaim language, particularly the young generation of Karaim community. Ana Špakovska was not a linguist; the author claimed to have attempted to provide the translation of the words based on her personal knowledge of the language.

In the dictionary we can find the letters *T, H, K*, providing information about the dialect of the word. Also, on several occasions, we find translations of several phrases or proverbs used in the Karaim language. On top of that, some additional phrases are indicated aiming at providing a better explanation of the words and their meaning. The dictionary provides no further information (Špakovska 2020, 3-4). It should also be emphasized that we can find additional information about the dictionary on the Internet resources provided by the relatives of the author<sup>1</sup>.

## Conclusion

To sum up, the four new generation dictionaries, which were assessed in the first part of the article, are a great contribution to the already existing documentation of the Karaim language. The new generation of dictionaries, published in 2008 and afterwards, although prepared by the speakers of the Trakai dialect, who are not professional linguists, provide much information about the Karaim language, its dialects, and the origin of words. Therefore, we can conclude that these dictionaries serve to show great efforts put by their authors to the preservation of the Karaim language.

1 Two examples should be considered. Firstly, the interview with Severina Špakovska – the granddaughter of Ana Špakovska – was made in the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania in 2021 (Lietuvos nacionalinė Martyno Mažvydo biblioteka 2021); secondly, on the occasion of the presentation of the dictionary, there was a text published in the local press (Zakarevičiūtė, Jolanta 2021).

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III.

The Karaim language  
in Bible translations:  
as a source of language and  
a tool for its preservation



## OLD TESTAMENT TRANSLATIONS IN THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA AND THEIR CONTEXTS

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**Abstract.** From the 15th century onwards, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was a multiconfessional and multicultural state. Apart from Lithuanians, its population comprised Ruthenians (the ancestors of Belarusians and Ukrainians), Poles, and smaller Jewish, Tatar, and Karaim communities. After its Christianization, Lithuania officially fell under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Church, but most of its inhabitants were of the Eastern Christian rite. Reformed Protestantism spread among the nobility at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, while Lutheranism flourished in Lithuania Minor. Smaller ethnic groups also had their confessional communities. All confessional groups had their sacred books. This article gives an overview of Christian vernacular translations of the Old Testament that were read in the Grand Duchy between the 15th and the 18th centuries. It briefly discusses the circumstances of the translation of the Old Testament into Ruthenian (the Skaryna Bible), Old Church Slavonic (the Ostrog Bible), Polish (the Brest, Nesvizh and Gdansk Bibles) and Lithuanian (the Bretkūnas, Chylinski and Quandt Bibles) as well as their characteristic features.

**Keywords:** Old Testament, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Bretkūnas Bible, Chylinski Bible, Quandt Bible, Skaryna Bible, Ostrog Bible, Brest Bible, Gdansk Bible

In the 15th century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was the largest state in Europe. It was a multinational, multicultural, and multiconfessional country. Apart from Lithuanians, its population included Slavs – mainly Ruthenians (the ancestors of Belarusians and Ukrainians) and Poles. There were also Jewish, Tartar, and Karaim communities. When in 1387 Lithuania officially embraced Christianity, Roman Catholicism became politically dominant, but the majority of the population continued its allegiance to the Eastern Church. There were also smaller confessional groups – Jews, Muslims, and Karaims. The 16th century saw the rise of the Uniate or Eastern Catholic Church. In its second half, Russian Old Believers started flowing into the Grand Duchy. As the Reformation set in, Calvinism gained popu-

larity among the Lithuanian gentry. Antitrinitarianism flourished briefly in several centres, but its followers were soon expelled. Lutheranism spread in Lithuania Minor, or Prussian Lithuania, but its influence extended to the Grand Duchy as well.

What follows is a brief overview of who translated the Old Testament, in what circumstances, and into which languages translations were done. Only Christian translations will be discussed and I will focus on the period between the early 16th century, when the first Bible was printed in the Grand Duchy, and the 18th century, when the first Lithuanian Bible was completed. This is also the time when the first hitherto known Bible translation to Karaim emerged.

During the period that interests us, several translations of the Old Testament as part of complete Bible translations were made and published for the use of citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. These were: the Skaryna Bible in a variety of Church Slavonic close to spoken Ruthenian; the Ostrog Bible in Church Slavonic; the Brest, Nyasvizh, and Gdańsk Bibles in Polish; and Bretke's, Chyliński's and Quandt's Bibles in Lithuanian.

Fragments of the Old Testament were also translated for the use in religious writings and the liturgy. As for Lithuanian, we could mention psalters or the occasional Old Testament fragments included in collections of Gospels and Epistles for use during religious services. For instance, Baltramiejus Vilentas' *Gospels and Epistles* contain four quotations from the Old Testament, two from Isaiah, and two from the books of Sirach and Malachi, respectively. Lazarus Sengstock's collection contains one quotation from Isaiah and one from Proverbs. Sometimes fragments of the Old Testament were printed in Postils or at the end of New Testament editions. They were not numerous, and mostly they were taken from the Prophets and the sapiential books.

## The Skaryna Bible

Probably the most versatile among Bible translators in the Grand Duchy, Francysk Skaryna was a physician, a book printer, and even a gardener in the service of Emperor Ferdinand I. He matriculated in Cracow as *Lithuanus* and in Padua as *Ruthenus*. His creed cannot be established. As a disseminator of the Bible, he was sometimes considered to be a Protestant, but, in fact, he cultivated good relations with all Churches. Depending on the circumstances, he introduced himself as a Catholic or an Orthodox believer.

Between 1517 and 1519, he printed two-thirds of the Old Testament in Prague. Though printed abroad, his Bible was intended for the reader in the Grand Duchy, and the printing was partly financed by the mayor of Vilnius. Why the remaining parts of the Old Testament were never printed is not clear. Skaryna printed part of the New Testament in Vilnius in 1625.

Skaryna's Bible was meant to be an encyclopedic work, a manual offering diverse forms of learning. It abounds in comments, marginal notes and illustrations, including even Skaryna's portrait. His language is Church Slavonic, but with a strong admixture of the popular Ruthenian language. According to Francis Thompson, "his aim was not to publish an edition of the Slavonic text as it was to be found in MSS but to adapt it so that it would be comprehensible to, as he put in his preface to the Bible, *every simple common man*." (Thompson 1998: 667).

Copies of Skaryna's Bible can be found in Prague, Moscow, and Belarus. One Book of the Old Testament is held by the Wróblewski Library in Vilnius. As for Lithuania, Skaryna's significance rests not only on his Bible but also on his role as the author and publisher the first book to be printed in the Grand Duchy, the *Small Travel Book*, the 500th anniversary of which has been celebrated recently (for more recent work on Skaryna, see Lemeškinas 2022).

## The Ostrog Bible 1580/81

Unlike the Skaryna Bible, which sprang from the mind of an inspired humanist, the Ostrog Bible must be viewed in the context of interconfessional strife. Prince Constantin Ostrogsky, voivode of Kiev, was a devout Orthodox who sought to counteract the increasing influence of the Catholic Church. He revived earlier attempts to compile an Orthodox Bible translation in reaction to the appearance of the Catholic Leopolita Bible in Poland (1561). His professed aim was to collect as many Slavonic Bible manuscripts as possible and to have them collated as well as checked against the Greek Septuagint. The Ostrog Bible was sumptuously printed by the famous Lviv printer Ivan Fyodorov. This Bible became the authorized version of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Its language was intended to be comprehensible to all Orthodox believers and was therefore purged of vernacular elements to be as close as possible to Old Church Slavonic.

A careful study of the Ostrog Bible text carried out by Francis Thompson reveals, however, that the text is basically taken over from the so-called

Gennadian Bible manuscript, which Ostrogsky obtained from Czar Ivan IV the Terrible. The title page claims that the translation was made from the Septuagint, but in fact the Gennadian Manuscript text, based on the Vulgate, was merely checked against the Septuagint, and even that was not done consistently. No influence of the Skaryna Bible has been detected; correspondences are few and most likely coincidental (Thompson 1998: 671–686). Subsequent researchers, however, claim that before the Gennadian manuscript was brought from Moscow, the old Slavonic manuscripts were redacted taking into account Skaryna's Bible version. Yet the editor did not adopt Skaryna's vernacular constructions, preferring those of Church Slavonic (Kalugin 2021: 80–92). The antitrinitarian Szymon Budny was in the habit of discussing translation problems with the printers Fyodorov and Mstislavets, and Budny's translation was likely among the Slavonic Old Testament translations collected by Prince Ostrogsky (Pietkiewicz 2023: 384).

Even now, the Ostrog Bible is one of the most authoritative Bible texts in the Russian Orthodox Church.

## The Brest Bible

The year 1563 saw the printing, in Brest, of the first Protestant Bible edition in the Grand Duchy and the first Protestant translation of the whole Holy Scripture into Polish. It is also called the Radziwill Bible because it was the Radziwills' financial support that enabled its printing. The title page of the Brest Bible claims that it was translated from Hebrew, Greek and Latin for the first time. Actually, different sources were used, even a French Bible. As in the case of the Ostrog Bible, the claims concerning translation sources on the title page are misleading.

The Brest Bible was intended to be widely read and even used at schools. The translators' concern, like that of Martin Luther, was that the language should be idiomatic and elegant. Preference was given not to accuracy, but to vividness of expression; in the more difficult passages, the translators rendered the meaning rather freely. Many extant copies of the Brest Bible are defective, with the title pages torn out to escape burning during the Counter-Reformation (Frick 1989; Kwilecka 2001).

Even today, Lithuanian and Polish Protestants still take pride in this Bible because of its magnificent typesetting and the grandeur of its language.

## The Nyasvizh Bible

Before the Brest Bible had even come out of the press, the Antitrinitarian, humanist, and Hebrew scholar Szymon Budny criticized it for departing too much from the original text. Budny was aware of St Jerome's dictum in his letter to Pamachius<sup>1</sup> to the effect that while secular writings could be translated freely (rendering thoughts rather than words), the Holy Scripture had to be translated literally. But he also pointed out that in some Biblical passages, it was stated that not a word of the Bible text should be altered. This led him to the view that in Bible translation the texts in the original languages are foremost and should be followed closely. Therefore, he undertook a new translation, which was printed in 1574 in Nyasvizh. For the purposes of his translation, Budny coined many neologisms (such as *offiarnik*, *offiarownik* instead of *kapłan* 'priest', *calopalenie* 'burnt offering', *rozdział* 'chapter'), and he was careful to use forms of Biblical names as close as possible to the Hebrew original. Budny's translation method was to render everything as literally as the Polish language allowed. In modern times, the translation theorist Eugene Nida would describe this as the method of the nearest natural equivalent. According to Rajmund Pietkiewicz, Warsaw University Library holds a copy of the Nyasvizh Bible with Turkish inscriptions in Arabic script and with sundry Quran quotations. The Karaim exegete Isaac of Troki and the Tatars of the Grand Duchy often referred to Budny's Old Testament translation in their polemical writings (Merczyng 1913; Frick 1989: 81–115; Pietkiewicz 2023: 373–385).

## The Danzig Bible

The history of the translating and printing of the Danzig Bible abounds in intriguing details. Called after the Polish city where it was printed, it was intended to meet the needs of Lutherans, Calvinists and Czech Brethren living in the Crown Lands and the Grand Duchy. According to the canons of successive Synods, it was to be a second edition of the Brest Bible, with corrections in those places where they differed from the Hebrew and Greek origi-

1 „Ego enim non solum fateor, sed libera voce profiteor, me in interpretatione Graecorum, absque Scripturis sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo mysterium est, non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu“. In: <http://www.tertullian.org/fathers2/NPNF2-06/Npnf2-06-03.htm> ir <http://www.bible-researcher.com/jerome.pammachus.html>.

nals. In its preface, it is stressed that the Danzig Bible is simply a reprint, not a corrected version of the Brest Bible. Daniel Mikołajewski, the translator and supervisor of the editorial process, managed to get the approval of the Synod to start the printing without having shown them its manuscript.

In fact, what Mikołajewski produced was not a second edition of the Brest Bible but a completely new translation, based on a different translating method. Mikołajewski aimed to adhere to the Hebrew original as closely as possible; this was not a free translation but one based on the philological method. The Lithuanian Protestants were displeased with the fact that the translation diverged from the Brest Bible, and they even called for a new edition. Despite the hostile reception, this translation came to be gradually accepted as an Authorized Version for all Polish Protestants (Frick 1989; Kossowska 1968; Sipańkówna 1934).

## The Chyliński Bible

For Lithuanian Reformed Protestants, a Lithuanian Bible translation was made by Samuel Bogusław Chyliński in London. Most of his Old Testament translation was printed in London in 1660. It was a personal initiative of the translator, who was sent by the Lithuanian Reformed Synod to the Franeker Academy in the Netherlands. Chyliński was prevented from returning home by the outbreak of the wars with the Swedes and the Muscovites in the mid-17th century. The translator managed to find influential supporters for his initiative. They included John Wallis, professor of Oxford University, the scientist Robert Boyle, the polymath Samuel Hartlib, and several Puritan clergy representatives. Finally, he gained the support of Charles the Second, King of England. Adverse circumstances – discord and strife within the Lithuanian Reformed community, shifts in the political situation of England, and finally the Plague that ravaged London between 1662 and 1664 – prevented the printing of the Chylinski Bible from being completed. The printed texts of the Old Testament break off at Job 6.

The principal source for Chyliński's translation into Lithuanian was the Dutch *Statenbijbel* (1637), famous for its accurate philological translation method and its wealth of exegetical and philological comments. Chylinski's translation method was close to that of the Danzig Bible, though he did not use it as a translation source. The Chyliński Bible is the first (partly) printed Bible in the Lithuanian language. The printing was never completed, so the translation did not reach the Lithuanian readership at that time.



Only one copy of the printed part of the Old Testament is extant. It is held by the British Library (Kavaliūnaitė 2008, 2016; Kot 1958).

## The Bretke Bible

We must now go back in history and discuss the first Bible translation into Lithuanian, which was Lutheran. Though not made in the Grand Duchy but rather in Prussian Lithuania, it was known and occasionally used by Calvinists in the Grand Duchy. The translator, Jonas Bretkūnas, was a pastor, trained at the University of Königsberg and also at Wittenberg, where he attended Melancthon's lectures. Bretke's translation source was the Luther Bible.

Although Duke Albert of Prussia encouraged the printing of religious literature in other vernaculars like Polish, German, and Lithuanian, Bretke's Bible translation seems to have sprung from his own initiative. He started on his translation in 1579 and completed it in 1590. The conference of Lutheran pastors recommended it for publication, but as editorial work lingered on, the translation ultimately remained in the manuscript. Only Bretke's Psalter appeared in print, edited by Johannes Rhesa in 1625. It was reprinted many times and was widely used.

The Bretke Bible has not yet been published except in facsimile. Despite this, it has been studied by linguists, and many are those who have praised its rich and expressive language. For philologists, the many editorial notes and variants in the manuscript are of considerable value. The manuscript of the Bretke Bible is now held in the Prussian Heritage Archive in Berlin (Falkenhahn 1941; Range 1992; Scholz 2002).

## The Quandt Bible

Finally, we come to the first complete printed Bible in Lithuanian, known as the Quandt Bible, which was printed in 1735 in Königsberg. The Bible was translated from Luther's version by a team of pastors in East Prussia. The team was headed by Bishop Jacob Quandt. Quandt was not proficient in Lithuanian, but he wrote a valuable introduction with an overview of all previous Lithuanian Bible translations. Bretke's manuscript, which was also Lutheran, was not used.

In successive editions, mistranslations from Luther's German were corrected, the translation was improved after the comparison with Bret-

ke's manuscript, and it was also checked against the Hebrew text (Rhesa 1816/2011).

Reprinted countless times, also in comparatively cheap editions published by the British Bible Society, the Quandt Bible remained, for almost 200 years, the only widely accessible Lithuanian Bible. In some churches, this translation is read even now. Since it was read only by Protestants, the Quandt Bible had no noticeable influence on the formation of the standard Lithuanian Language.

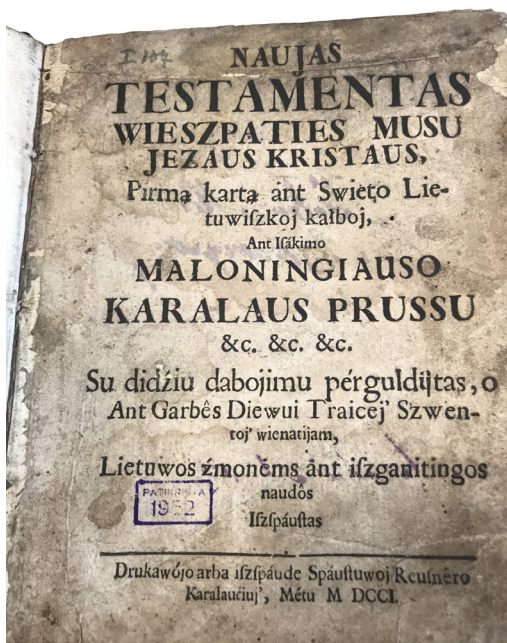
## In conclusion

Bible translation projects in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania seem to have been motivated by two main factors. First, there was the conviction, inspired by the Reformation, that the Holy Scripture should be disseminated among the common people; and secondly, there was the wish, on the part of churchmen of different denominations, to strengthen their religious communities in the face of interconfessional competition and increasing Catholic domination.

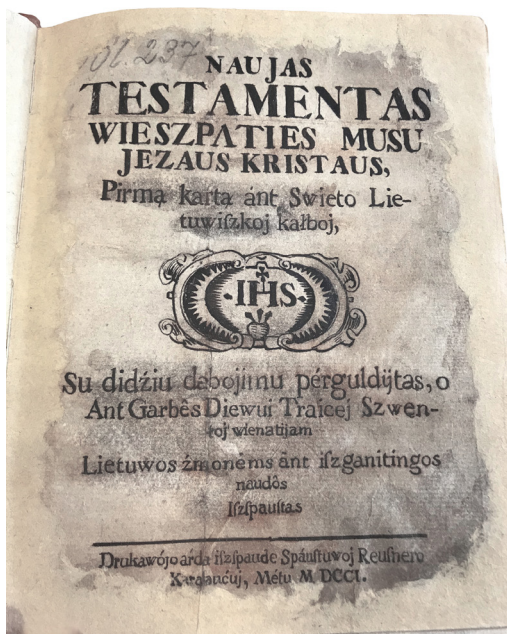
The main achievements in Bible translation in the Grand Duchy belong to Protestants and Orthodox believers. Roman Catholics mainly read the Vulgate: 70 percent of the Bible collections from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries in the National Mažvydas Library in Vilnius consist of various editions of the Vulgate. The collections of Protestant Bibles comprise translations into various languages, including Latin (Misiūnienė 2011, p. 55–81).

The need for a Catholic Bible in Lithuanian was so great that sometimes Protestant Bibles were disguised as Catholic. The National Mažvydas Library holds a copy of the so-called Bythner New Testament, a Calvinist translation printed in Königsberg, from which the title page, the preface and all references to its Protestant origin have been removed, and the Jesuit monogram drawn on the title page instead. [Illustration 1]. Curiosity often seems to have been stronger than doctrinal obedience, as can be seen from the considerable number of Protestant Bibles in the Library of the Vilnius Jesuit Academy. Bible reading could be fraught with risks, as can be seen from the inscription in a copy of the second edition of the Quand Bible held by Vilnius University Library: "Prohibita Biblia. Czytać niewolno" [Illustration 2].

Throughout the existence of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a Christian State, the Bible was an important book for all communities of Christian believers, and all of them, except the Roman Catholics, possessed and



**Illustration 1.** Title page of the Bythner New Testament bearing the statement that it has been printed at the behest of the King of Prussia. Reproduced from a copy held by the Lithuanian National Library, shelfmark LDA1/70



**Illustration 2.** The title page of Bythner's New Testament, with the dedication to the Prussian King erased and overpainted with the monogram of the Jesuit order. Reproduced from a copy held by the Lithuanian National Library, shelfmark GC407

read translations of both the Old and the New Testament in the vernaculars: Slavonic (Ruthenian), Polish, and Lithuanian. The need for a Catholic Lithuanian Bible transpires from inscriptions in Protestant Lithuanian Bibles. Interestingly, some vernacular translations, like Budny's, were read even by non-Christians such as Karaim and Tatars.

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## BETWEEN TURKIC AND SLAVIC. MATERIALS FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF SLAVIC LOANWORDS IN THE EARLIEST WEST KARAIM SOURCES

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**Abstract.** This paper offers an overview of the oldest West Karaim written sources with a special focus on the Slavic lexical elements they contain. The main goal of the article is to present the phonetic adaptation processes these loanwords underwent and to answer the question from which Slavic languages they were borrowed. The Slavic linguistic material presented in this article was collected from manuscripts created in the first 100 years of the written history of West Karaim, i.e. in the period between 1671 and 1772. The year 1772, i.e. the year in which the First Partition of Poland took place, has been chosen as the closing time limit mainly because the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the time when Slavic–West Karaim bilingualism became a widespread phenomenon which, in turn, resulted in markedly different adaptation processes than in the early decades of these contacts.

**Keywords:** West Karaim, Slavic loanwords, Kipchak Turkic, contact linguistics, etymology

### 1. Introduction

Karaim is a Kipchak Turkic language that has existed in several varieties. Today, its only surviving branch is Northwest Karaim, spoken in the cities of Trakai, Vilnius, Panevėžys, and Naujamiestis in Lithuania, with a few other remaining speakers in Poland. Formerly, however, the language was also spoken in communities that existed in the regions of Biržai, Kaunas, Kruonis, Pasvalys, Pumpėnai, Saločiai, Šėta, Šiauliai, and Upytė in Lithuania (to mention only the most important communities), as well as in Kukeziv in Galicia (Ukraine). The closest variety to it is the now extinct Southwest Karaim once spoken in Galicia and Volhynia, mainly in Derazhne, Halych, Kukeziv, Lutsk, Lviv, and Olyka, and in the surrounding rural areas. The last fully competent user of this variety died in Halych in 2003. North- and



Southwest Karaim are together known as West Karaim, as opposed to East Karaim (Crimean Karaim). The latter is an umbrella term for the Turkic varieties that were used in writing and speech by the Crimean Karaims, and the last fully competent native speaker of this dialect died in 1992 (Jankowski 2003: III).<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The oldest known West Karaim written sources

As far as we know, the first texts written in West Karaim emerged in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. However, in the case of works dating from before 1701, only a few short lyrical-religious poems survived until the present day. The oldest known West Karaim text is a *qinah* (dirge), which was authored in 1649 by Zarach ben Natan and copied in 1671 by an unknown individual (B 263: 26 v<sup>o</sup>, 28 r<sup>o</sup>). The main text of the manuscript was created in 1662 in Troki by Abraham ben Yoshiyahu (1636–1667) and contains a copy of a Hebrew treatise entitled *Bet Avraham*. The dirge in question was composed to commemorate the death of an individual by the name of Mikhael ben Saduk, is a later addition (from 1671) to this manuscript. It is stored in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg and was first described by Muchowski (2013b: 86–87, 97–98).

Other texts from this group of early West Karaim works include two religious poems by Icchak ben Abraham Troki (1533–1594) beginning with the words *Jamγur juvsa jüzün jernin jašaryr* ‘If the rain washes the surface of the earth, it turns green’ and *Jyjyny Jisraelnin, jalbaryn jaratuvčumuzya, jappaj jazyqlarymyzny* ‘Congregation of Israel! Beg our Creator, may he cover our sins’. These were copied in 1686 (Evr I 699: 15 v<sup>o</sup> – 16 r<sup>o</sup>) by a person called Mordechai ben Icchak. In the opinion of the present author, this copyist may have been Mordechai ben Icchak ben Mordechai Łokszyński (Németh 2020b: 36), who was born most likely in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century in

1 For the sake of clarity it is important to mention that a distinguishing feature of Karaims is that they are Karaites, i.e. followers of Karaite Judaism (Karaism). *Karaims* are, ergo, *Karaites*, but only in terms of their faith. The term *Karaim* is used by both Karaims and Orientalists as an ethnonym and glottonym, see, e.g., the works of Radlov (1896) or Foy (1898). The Turkic speaking tribes that later formed the Karaim ethnos adopted the Karaite religion most likely in the latter half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Although the formerly existing theory that Karaims have Khazarian origins (see, Zajączkowski 1961) is nowadays seen as obsolete, there are no reasonable grounds for questioning the Turkic roots of the Karaims. A balanced description of the ethnogenesis of Karaims and the relationship between *Karaites* and *Karaims* is provided by Harviainen (2003).

the small Karaim community of Święte Jezioro in Lithuania (Tuori 2013: 82), and died before 1709. He is known to have translated two *zemirot*<sup>2</sup> of Zarach ben Natan of Troki into Karaim as we learn from manuscript RAbk. IV.15 (89 r<sup>o</sup>–90 r<sup>o</sup>; 112 v<sup>o</sup>–113 v<sup>o</sup>). A critical edition and concise analysis of these two texts was prepared by Jankowski (2014).

Recently, three works copied between 1685 and 1700 in Halych by Josef ha-Mashbir (ca. 1650–1700) have been discovered in manuscript JSul.I.01 (115 v<sup>o</sup> – 116 r<sup>o</sup>; 118 v<sup>o</sup> – 119 v<sup>o</sup>; 121 r<sup>o</sup> – 123 r<sup>o</sup>). They are the following: a liturgical poem (*piyyut*) with the incipit *Jazyqlarymyz ulyajdylar bijikka astry* ‘Our sins have increased greatly’, and a *qinah* starting with the words *Men miskin qaldyyy* ‘I, the miserable remnant’, both composed by Josef ha-Mashbir, i.e. by the copyist himself, and, thirdly, the *zemer* with the incipit *Bügün Sinaj tavya* ‘Today, to the Mount of Sinai’ by Aharon ben Jehuda of Troki.

The last 17<sup>th</sup>-century West Karaim text we know of today is the documentation of a portion of the Torah in a letter sent in 1691 by the Swedish Orientalist Gustaf Peringer Lillieblad (1651–1710) to the German Ethiopist Hiob Ludolf (1624–1704). This letter contains the first three verses of the Book of Genesis (Tentzel 1691: 572–575). This fact has been frequently referred to in the scholarly literature and the relevant fragment has been commented upon by many authors, see, e.g., Zajączkowski (1939: 90–99), Szyszman (1952: 228), Dubiński (1991: 219), Jankowski (2019: xii), and Németh (2020a). Shortly after its publication, Peringer’s letter was reprinted several times (and, curiously enough, all its errors were repeated by every publisher), see for instance Schupart (1701: 26) and Schudt (1714: 109–111).<sup>3</sup>

Another West Karaim manuscript from the 17<sup>th</sup> century is mentioned by Medvedeva (1988: 92). According to her, ms. A 144<sub>5</sub>, which is stored in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, was copied in Lutsk in 1690. What is surprising, however, is that it is not listed among the many other sources kept in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts used by the compilers of the Karaim–Russian–Polish dictionary, see the list

- 2 *Zemirot* (singular: *zemer*) were religious poems written for the Sabbath, Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot and other festive occasions. They were often intended to serve a paraliturgical role and were recited or sung both during public services in prayer houses and at home.
- 3 The earliest written records of East Karaim also originate from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest known Karaim written source is probably JSul.III.02, which contains an East Karaim translation of the Former Prophets, the Books of Ruth, Esther, and Proverbs (the latter is preserved in fragments), created between 1648 and 1687 (Németh 2016).



of sources in KarRPS, pp. 28–29 under the category *Молитвы и обрядовые песни (многие с переводом)*. It is likely, therefore, that it was written in Hebrew only and does not contain any Karaim text at all.

A number of other extremely valuable Northwest Karaim sources date from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest hitherto discovered comprehensive translation of the Torah and some books of the Ketuvim into Northwest Karaim date from 1720 and 1722, respectively: mss. ADub.III.73 and TKow.01. According to our current knowledge, manuscript ADub.III.73 contains the oldest datable West Karaim translation of any Biblical text. The main part of this manuscript is written in Middle Northwest Karaim – a historical variety of Karaim. It consists of two parts. The first, larger part contains a translation of the Torah (1 r<sup>o</sup> – 343 r<sup>o</sup>), while the second comprises the Karaim translation of the Book of Ruth (344 r<sup>o</sup> – 349 v<sup>o</sup>), the Book of Lamentations (350 r<sup>o</sup> – 360 r<sup>o</sup>), Ecclesiastes (360 v<sup>o</sup> – 374 v<sup>o</sup>), and the Book of Esther (37 r<sup>o</sup> – 388 v<sup>o</sup>). A critical edition of the Torah from this manuscript was published by Németh (2021b). Ms. TKow.01, in turn, is a partially vocalised Northwest Karaim translation of the Torah. Both manuscripts were copied in Kukizów by Simcha ben Chananel (ca. 1670–1723), a prominent Biblical scholar born most likely in Trakai. He was among the first migrants who founded the Karaim community of Kukizów in 1688, and he served there as hazzan from ca. 1709 presumably until his death (see Németh & Sulimowicz-Keruth 2023: 559–563).

In 1729, a collection of religious texts in Hebrew and West Karaim was copied by an unknown person in Lutsk. The manuscript is stored in the National Library of Israel under accession number Jer NLI 4101-8. The dialectal affiliation of the Karaim texts it contains is difficult to determine, but it was most likely written in Northwest Karaim. Another source that has survived from this period is manuscript ADub.III.78. In actual fact, it comprises several manuscripts bound together to form a prayer book in Hebrew, Southwest and Northwest Karaim. It was copied by several individuals in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (ca. 1750 at the earliest, see folios 118 v<sup>o</sup> and 251 v<sup>o</sup>), probably in Halych, Lutsk, and Kukizów.

The oldest Southwest Karaim texts are somewhat younger and were created in Halych in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest is probably ms. JSul.I.53.13, which is a fragment of a prayer book copied in ca. 1762 by an unknown person. Another important source from Halych is ms. JSul.III.63, a prayer book copied ca. 1778 by Jeshua ben Mordechai Mordkowicz (died 1797). Several fragments of a prayer book marked as JSul.I.01 copied in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as well as ms. JSul.III.65, which contains an

18<sup>th</sup>-century translation of the Book of Esther are, most likely, of a similar age. The number of handwritten sources from Halych grows rapidly after 1800.

Demonstrably the oldest Lutsk Karaim texts date back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. To this group belongs JSul.I.02, a collection of religious songs copied by different individuals, mainly between 1807 and 1832 (the oldest fragments were copied by Mordechai ben Josef of Lutsk in 1807). Its near contemporary is ms. JSul.I.04, created in 1814. It is a translation of the Book of Job copied by Jaakov ben Icchak Gugel. Almost as old is JSul.I.50.06, a manuscript copied ca. 1815, in which we find a Karaim translation of the Book of Esther and a small collection of *piyyutim*. Further sources from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that were potentially written in Lutsk do exist, but establishing the exact place of their creation requires an additional investigation.

### 3. Slavic influence on West Karaim

At the outset we ought to mention the fact that some Slavic loanwords known in Karaim are already attested in the *Codex Comanicus*, a 14<sup>th</sup>-century Kipchak Turkic source written in Latin script by Christian missionaries. This shows that Slavic–Karaim linguistic contacts might predate the arrival of the earliest migratory wave of West Karaims into the territories they inhabit today. Good examples here are the following: Kar. *salam* ‘straw’ (attested in all Karaim varieties) and CC *salan* id. (KarRPS 462; Drimba 2000: 226)<sup>4</sup> or NWKar. *peč*, SWKar. *pec* ‘furnace’ and CC *peč* id. (KarRPS 447, 450; Drimba 2000: 93), which can be traced back to continuants of PSlav. *\*solma* and *\*pektb*, respectively. However, there can be no doubt that West Karaims began to maintain close linguistic contacts with East and West Slavs after their first settlers arrived in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland. Although documents confirming their presence in these territories date from the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the first waves of migration must have occurred somewhat earlier. The first Slavs they had close contacts with were speakers of the respective vernacular forms of Ruthenian (which, roughly from the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, gradually diverged into distinct regional variants of Belarusian, and Ukrainian) and Middle Polish (East Borderlands Polish). By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Polish already enjoyed greater prestige. It was, for instance, the main language used in public life in 18<sup>th</sup>-century

4 According to Drimba, CC *salan* is an erroneous translation of *salam*. On the other hand, it may perhaps have been blended with Tk. *saman* id.

Vilnius. Several religious texts were translated from Polish into Karaim (Sulimowicz 2015: 101–102), and there is also a translation of a prayer from West Karaim into Polish dating from 1807 (Németh 2021a). Urban varieties of Russian became an important contact language in the Baltic after 1795, whereas its rural varieties became a substantial factor after the 1840s (Čekmonas 2001a–b). In the interwar period, Polish was the dominant language spoken by the majority of West Karaim communities, except those living in the territories of the re-established Lithuania. Today, all members of the Karaim communities in Lithuania and Poland are fluent in at least one Slavic language (Adamczuk 2003: 63–74).

Philological and linguistic analyses show that the changes that took place in the West Karaim sound system during the period between, approximately, the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup>, brought West Karaim phonology, phonetics, and phonotactics much closer in terms of their structure to the neighbouring Slavic varieties (Németh 2020b: 56–99). This suggests that the Slavicization of West Karaim gained momentum during this time. However, based on scarce philological evidence, this type of structural influence can be hypothesized to have left its mark even in the oldest texts. For instance, forms such as אִזְלָר אֵדִי *izlar edi* or סוֹזוּנָה *sözüña* in ms. B 263 (26 v<sup>o</sup>) exhibit the use of palatalized consonants (*ḷ, ñ*) the appearance of which in West Karaim is widely attributed to Slavic influence (Németh 2020b: 62–64). What makes the presence of Slavic linguistic influences unambiguous and supports the view that many of the significant West Karaim sound changes that took place in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries were indeed triggered by Slavic linguistic interference, is the use of Slavic loanwords in these texts. Given that religious texts, and especially translations of the Bible, usually tend to be resistant to external linguistic factors (except, of course, for the impact exerted by the language from which the respective work is translated) and exhibit a limited number of features known from the colloquial language, these loanwords indicate a very strong Slavic influence.

## 4. Earliest Slavic loanwords in West Karaim

### 4.1. Introductory remarks

The question of Slavic loanwords in West Karaim has already been addressed by, most importantly, Dubiński (1969, 1987; the latter work discusses the im-

fact of Slavicisms on the Turkic languages in the entire region in question), Wexler (1980), Moskovič & Tukan (1993), Németh (2004), and Németh (2011: 77–79, 91–98; 2023). As Dubiński (1969: 144) has observed already, different chronological layers of Slavic loanwords can be distinguished in West Karaim. The earliest borrowings underwent specific processes of adaptation, a good example being the replacement of *-o* with *-a* as a result of the Turkic phonotactic tendency to avoid low rounded vowels in non-first syllables, such as, e.g., in *belma* ‘cataract’ or *vina* ‘wine’ (see below) borrowed from the respective reflexes of PSlav. *běľmo*, PSlav. *\*vino*. Words that belong to this layer of loanwords often underwent irregular sound changes in order to adapt the Slavic lexemes to the requirements of the native sound system and the restrictions placed on the combinations of vowels and consonants, see, e.g., *kurpa* ‘groats’, *myhla* ‘mist’, *žubra* ‘wisent’ below.

Slavic verbs were usually borrowed in their infinitive forms, perceived as nominal categories in Karaim, and were used as the first component of compound verbs, whereas the second element was, in most cases, the auxiliary MWKar. *et-* ‘to do’ or *bol-* ‘to be’, which took the verbal markers, see *kajaccet-* ‘to repent’, *karatet-* ‘to punish’, *postanovtet-* ‘to decide’, *pus-ta et-* ‘to desolate’, and *vejatet-* ‘to winnow’ below. In fact, Slavic verbs were adopted in the same way in other Turkic languages, including in Armeno-Kipchak, Kazan Tatar, Bashkir, Kумык, Kirghiz, Karakalpak, Altay, Gagauz, Uyghur, and Chuvash (Isengalieva 1966: 45–46; Dubiński 1987: 178–181). In this respect, the verb *žalle-* ‘to regret, to sympathise’ presented below, formed through suffix derivation and not compounding, belongs to a small group of interesting exceptions. Another curious form is *slavalj* ‘renown’ which – similarly to *žalle-* – is also built from a Slavic root by means of a derivative suffix instead of using the actual Slavic adjectival form (in this case, this would have been *\*slavnyj*). The latter process very often took place, as we see in the word *polnyj* ‘(adj.) field’. It is therefore legitimate to speculate whether the adaptation of Slavic loanwords by means of suffix derivation was also a distinctive feature of the oldest layer of Slavicisms.

The oldest West Karaim text, the dirge mentioned above, contains two Slavicisms, namely *puhač* פִּיְהָץ (1671) ‘eagle-owl’, and *sova* סוּבָה (1671) ‘owl’ (B 263: 26 v<sup>o</sup>). Although their Slavic origin cannot be questioned, they are good examples that show how difficult it is, in many instances, to establish the exact donor language of a certain word. This is mainly because of the relatively small linguistic distance between the respective contemporary Slavic varieties. The etymons of the above-mentioned two words may be,

respectively, either MPol. *puhacz* id., *sova* id. (SPolXVI XXXIV: 424; LSJP II/2: 1271, III: 334), or Ruth. *pugačъ* (early 17<sup>th</sup> century) id. and *sova* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXIX: 340, XXXII: 34).

The similarities between the Slavic languages in question are even more pronounced when we consider that the historical varieties of both Northeast and Southeast Borderlands (Kresy) Polish were heavily influenced by East Slavic languages. For instance, the way PSlav. \**r* is continued in these Slavic subgroups would appear, at first sight at least, a good criterion for distinguishing between East and West Slavic loanwords in West Karaim. In East Slavic, its reflex is /r/, while in Polish it first evolved into a fricative trill /r̄/, to be continued as a biphonemic [r̄ž] and, finally, a fricative /r̄/. However, the articulation of this sound as a fricative trill survived well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century in both Northeast and Southeast Borderlands Polish (Smolińska 1983: 47–48; Kurzowa 1985 [2006]: 66–67; Kurzowa 1993 [2006]: 139–141; Sicińska 2013: 168–169). Moreover, in some areas and idiolects it even evolved into a biphonemic [r̄ž] (see, Kurzowa 1993 [2006]: 140; Kurzowa 1985 [2006]: 67), and, due to East Slavic influences, the functioning of this phoneme in these Polish dialects often shifted towards [r], as was reported by Kurzowa (1993 [2006]: 139–140), Kurzowa (1985 [2006]: 66–67, 349–350), and Sicińska (2013: 169–170). Seen in this light, the fact that this sound was consistently rendered with the letter *resh* (ʀ) in the Slavic loanwords attested in West Karaim texts, does not necessarily mean that they all need to be classified as East Slavic loans.

The case is similar when it comes to the usage of *-(n)yyj* ~ *-(n)ij* as variants of the Polish adjectival derivative suffixes *-ny*, *-ni* characteristic of adjectives loaned into West Karaim (Dubínski 1969: 149; Németh 2011: 95), see, again, *polnyj* '(adj.) field' below. The expansive nature of the ESLav. *-yyj*, *-ij* ending in East Borderlands Polish dialects has been well documented e.g. by Koś (1999: 119).

The two religious poems by Icchak ben Abraham Troki (1533–1594) edited by Jankowski (2014) contain no Slavic loanwords, but we can find some Slavic conjunctions used in the autograph of Josef ha-Mashbir from ms. JSul.I.01, namely *ni* נִי 'neither' (118 v<sup>o</sup>), *ani* אִי 'neither' (118 v<sup>o</sup>), and *a* א 'and, but (*a particle that introduces statements*)' (122 r<sup>o</sup>), which is a harbinger of the increasing influence of Slavic structural forms.

While the number of such loanwords in the relatively short poems dating from the 17<sup>th</sup>-century is very modest a very considerable number of Slavicisms can be found in manuscript ADub.III.73 from 1720. The Biblical

books edited thus far include ca. 80 Slavic words (Németh 2021b: 27–28). The latter is all the more remarkable as it suggests that Slavic translations of the Bible could have been used as subsidiary sources by Karaim translators. From a semantic point of view, these are mainly terms related to the cultivation of cereals, breadmaking, and constructing buildings, as well as the names of family members, animals, plants, precious stones, elements of the natural landscape, and everyday items used in households.

Below, an overview of the Slavic loanwords attested in the oldest West Karaim sources is presented in a phonological transcription along with an etymological commentary. The first 100 years of the written history of West Karaim provide the scope for this glossary (1671–1772). The choice of 1671 as the starting date, i.e., the year when the first West Karaim text was created, is self-explanatory. The second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was, in turn, a time when a number of significant sound changes took place that brought the West Karaim phonological system and phonetics closer to the adstratal Slavic languages. During this period Slavic–West Karaim bilingualism became a widespread phenomenon (see, Németh 2021a), which resulted in markedly different adaptation processes from those observed in the first decades of these contacts. We have, therefore, chosen the year 1772, i.e. the date of the First Partition of Poland, as the final date of our research timeframe. This is also justified by the fact that 1772 marks the end of the period when all West Karaim communities existed within one politically united region – within the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

As a consequence, the material presented here is almost exclusively taken from Middle Northwest Karaim texts. The only exception is ms. JSul.I.53.13 from which we adduce below MSWKar. *postanovtet-* ‘to decide’ and *uže* ‘already’. In the glossary, we have marked the accession numbers of the manuscripts in which the respective Slavicisms have been attested. If the place of attestation is indicated with the number of the Biblical verse in which it appears, this means that the data is taken from ADub.III.73 (many of these words occur more than once in the Bible, but only one place of occurrence is indicated below for each form, not all of them). The Slavicisms from ms. TKow.01 still need to be extracted.

## 4.2. Glossary

**a** ‘and, but (*a particle that introduces statements*)’ (JSul.I.01: 122 r<sup>o</sup>). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *a* id. (SPolXVI I: 1–37); Ruth. *a* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id.

(HSBM I: 50–55). – **Remarks:** KarRPS (37) interprets Mod.NWKar. *a* id. as a Russian loanword, but a Ruthenian or Polish origin is more likely.

**ani** ‘neither’ (JSul.I.01: 118 v<sup>o</sup>; Exo 33:20). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *ani* id. (SPolXVI I: 153–164); Ruth. *ани* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM I: 116–117). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (68), Mod.NWKar. *ani* id. is listed as a Polish loanword, but its Ruthenian origin is equally possible.

**belma** ‘cataract’ (Lev 21:20). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *bielmo* id. (SPolXVI II: 134); Ruth. *белмо, бельмо* (1516–1519) ‘cataract’ (HSBM I: 269). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (112), Mod.NWKar. *beľma* id. is qualified as a Polish loanword, but its Ruthenian origin is equally possible. The *-o > -a* is due to the Turkic phonotactic tendency to avoid low rounded vowels in non-first syllables.

**bleħa** ~ **blāħa** ‘metal sheet’ (Exo 39:3, Num 17:3). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *blach(a)* ~ *plach(a)* ~ *plech* id. (SPolXVI II: 167–168); Ruth. *бляха* (17<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM II: 80). – **Remarks:** See also Ruth. *блехар* (1598) ‘tinsmith’ (HSBM II: 53). From a phonetic point of view, it is somewhat more likely to be of Ruthenian origin.

**blāħa** see **bleħa**

**boħon** ‘loaf’ (Exo 29:23). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *bochen* ~ *bochenek* ~ *bochnek* ~ *bochonek* id. (SPolXVI II: 249–250; LSJP I/I: 131); Ruth. *бохань* ~ *бохень* ~ *бохонь* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM II: 169–170). – **Remarks:** Mod.WKar. *boħon* in KarRPS (133) is featured as a Polish loanword, but in light of the *-o-* in the second syllable, it is just as possible that it is of East Slavic origin. Although KarRPS lists Mod. SWKar. *boħon*, we do not find this word in Mardkowicz (1935), which is surprising given that the word semantically forms a part of the basic vocabulary.

**cynamon** ‘cinnamon’ (Exo 30:23). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *cynamon* id. (SPolXVI III: 719–720); Ruth. *цынамонь* ~ *цинамонь* (17<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXVI: 256). – **Remarks:** According to KarRPS (616), Mod. WKar. *cynamon* id. is of Polish origin.

**čara** ‘cup’ (Gen 44 :2). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *czara* id. (LSJP I/I: 343) ~ *czarka* (a *-ka* diminutive of *\*czara*, SPolXVI IV: 7–8); Ruth. *чара* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XXXVI: 270). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (624), Mod.NWKar. *čara* is not marked as a Slavic loanword.

**čerep** ‘earthen, clay’ (Lev 14:50). – **Collocations:** In the Torah, used only in the collocation *čerep savut* ‘earthen vessel’ (Lev 14:50, Lev 15:12). –



**Possible etymon:** Ruth. *чепень* ‘1. (17<sup>th</sup> century) skull; 2. (1516–1519) a piece of crockery’ (HSBM XXXVI: 348). – **Remarks:** MPol. *czerep* ‘skull’, used from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is of East Slavic origin (BSEJP 95). The argument that the Karaim word is of East Slavic origin is also more likely for chronological and semantic reasons. In KarRPS (619), Mod.SWKar. *cerep* ‘shell, crust’ is claimed to be of Russian origin, although in this case Pol. *czerep* ‘1. skull; 2. piece of a broken earthen pot’ (SGP I: 279) should also be treated as a potential etymon. Mod. NWKar. *čerep* ‘skull’, in turn, is classified as a Slavic loanword in KarRPS (627). – **Derivatives:** NWKar. *čerepli* ‘earthen’ is used only in the collocation *čerepli savut* ‘earthen vessel’ in the Torah (Lev 6:21, Lev 11:33, Lev 14:5, Num 5:17). It is a Karaim adjectival *-li* derivative from a Slavic nominal base. KarRPS (619, 641) lemmatizes Mod.SWKar. *cerepli* ‘1. (*adj.*) pottery; 2. earthen’, and Mod.EKar. *čerepli* ‘earthen’ (KarRPS 619, 641).

**dijament** ‘diamond’ (Exo 28:18). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *dyjament* ~ *dyjamant* id. (SPolXVI VI: 278); Ruth. *дияментъ* (1552) id. (HSBM VIII: 84).

**ďada** ‘uncle’ (Lev 10:4). **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *дядя* ~ *дядко* ~ *дядько* id. (15<sup>th</sup> century) ‘1. uncle; 2. middle-aged man’ (ISUJa I/2: 866). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (185), Mod.NWKar. *ďada* ‘uncle’ is classified as a Russian loanword.

**farst** ‘1. (wood-beamed) ceiling; 2. (wood-beamed) wall, side’ (Exo 30:3). – **Possible etymon:** OPol. *forst* ‘wood-beamed ceiling’ (SSSt. II 366) of Middle High German origin (see, de Vincenz & Hentschel 2010, s.v. *forszt* I). – **Remarks:** The Ruthenian word *фарстъ* ‘decoration on a liturgical vestment’ that we find in HSBM (XXXV: 395) cannot be treated as potential etymon for semantic reasons.

**fartuḥ** ‘apron’ (Gen 3:7). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *fartuch* id. (SPolXVI VII: 36–37); Ruth. *фартухъ* (1540) id. (HSBM XXXV: 395–396).

**fleška** ~ **fleške** ‘bottle’ (Gen 21:14, Gen 21:15). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *flaszka* id. (SPolXVI VII: 78); Ruth. *фляшка* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXV: 415). – **Remarks:** The *a > e* change might be a result of the fronting effect of [ʎa] (cf. **ḥote**, **ḥotej**), which suggests a Ruthenian origin. In KarRPS (594), Mod.NWKar. *fľaška* id. is treated as a Polish loanword.

**fleške** see **fleška**

**galban** ‘galbanum’ (Exo 30:34). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *galban* ~

*galbanum* ‘1. bot. *Ferula schair*; 2. *Ferula schair* resin, galbanum’ (SPolXVI VII: 176–177); Ruth. *кгалбанъ ~ галванъ* (1516–1519) ‘*Ferula schair* resin’ (HSBM XV: 28).

**grunt** ‘floor’ (Num 5:17). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *grunt* ‘1. land, soil; territory; 2. foundations of a building’ (SPolXVI VIII: 169–176); Ruth. *кгрунтъ ~ зрунтъ ~ крунтъ* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XV: 66–69). –

**Remarks:** Given the *g-*, this word is most probably of Polish origin.

**hote ~ hotej** ‘even though’ (Gen 48:14; ADub.III.78: 523 v<sup>o</sup>). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *хоть ~ хотъ ~ хотя ~ хоця ~ хоць ~ хочъ ~ хочь* (17<sup>th</sup> century) ~ *хотяй ~ хоцяй* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXVI: 147–151). –

**Remarks:** In KarRPS (604), Mod.NWKar. *hote ~ hoí ~ hoía* id., Mod. SWKar. *hotej* id., and Mod.EKar. *hota* id. are all marked as Russian loanwords.

**hotej** see **hote**

**šovsem** ‘all the more’ (Gen 3:24). – **Possible etymon:** OPol. *i owszem* ‘1. furthermore, what is more, and even; 2. especially, particularly’ (SStp. III: 7).

**kajaccet-** ‘to repent’ (Deu 30:14). – **Morphology:** A compound verb. – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *kajać się* id. (SPolXVI X: 22); Ruth. *каются ~ каются ~ каются* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XV: 12–13); cf. also Brus. *кающа* id. – **Remarks:** The Slavic root is used with MWKar. *et-* ‘(aux.) to do’.

**kapusta** ‘cabbage’ (Num 11:5). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *kapusta* id. (SPolXVI X: 106); Ruth. *капуста* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XIV: 273–274).

**karanja** ‘punishment’ (Gen 18:29; ADub.III.78: 313 r<sup>o</sup>). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *karanie* id. (SPolXVI X: 123–131); Ruth. *каранье ~ каране ~ карание ~ каранне* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XIV: 279–280). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (292), Mod.WKar. *karanja ~ karańja* id. is marked as a Polish loanword.

**karatet-** ‘to punish’ (Gen 8:21). – **Morphology:** A compound verb. – **Possible etymons:** Ruth. *карату* id. (SSUM I: 471). – **Remarks:** See also MPol. *karać* id. (SPolXVI X: 108–117), but in light of the *-t-* of the Karaim form, its East Slavic provenance is more plausible. The Slavic root is used with MWKar. *et-* ‘(aux.) to do’. In KarRPS (293, s.v. *карат*), Mod.WKar. *karat et-* id. is not qualified as a loanword, which is probably because it is a Karaim derivative.

**kařtan** ‘chesnut’ (Gen 30:37). – **Possible etymon:** MPol. *kasztan* id. (SPolX-

VI X: 164). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (300), Mod.NWKar. *kaštan* id. is not classified as a loanword.

**kolos** ‘ear (of the grain)’ (Gen 41:5). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *колосъ* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XV: 217). – **Remarks:** The pleophonic form makes it likely to be of East Slavic origin, cf. MPol. *kłos* id. (SPolXVI X: 415). In KarRPS (330), Mod.WKar. *kolos* id. is marked as being of Slavic origin without specifying the exact donor language.

**koreń** ‘root’ (Deu 29:18). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *korzeń* id. (SPolXVI X: 664–670); Ruth. *корень* (17<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XV: 307–309). – **Remarks:** Under East Slavic influence, the pronunciation of the reflex of PSlav. \*ř often shifted towards [r] in the historical varieties of Borderlands Polish (e.g., Sicińska 2013: 169–170). Hence, both a Polish and Ruthenian provenance are feasible. In KarRPS (333, 334), Mod.WKar. *koren* id. and Mod.NWKar. *kořen* id. are classified as being of Russian origin.

**koryta** ‘gutter’ (Gen 30:38). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *koryto* id. (SPolXVI X: 660–661); Ruth. *корыто* ~ *корумо* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XVI: 44–45). – **Remarks:** The *-o* > *-a* is probably due to the Turkic phonotactic tendency to avoid low rounded vowels in non-first syllables.

**kölendra** ~ **kölandra** ‘coriander’ (Exo 16:31, Num 11:7). – **Possible etymon:** MPol. *kolendra* id. (SPolXVI X: 467).

**kölandra** see **kölendra**

**krolik** ‘rabbit’ (Lev 11:5). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *krolik* id. (SPolXVI XI: 231–232); Ruth. *кроликъ* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XVI: 167).

**krovat** ‘bed’ (Gen 49:33). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *кровать* (1489) id. (HSBM XVI: 150). – **Remarks:** Mod.WKar. *krovat* id. is marked as a Russian loanword in KarRPS (341).

**kruh** ‘ledge, rim’ (Exo 27:5). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *кругъ* (15<sup>th</sup> century) ‘1. circle; 2. round object; 3. a small round area, scaffolding’ (HSBM XVI: 178–180).

**kubok** ‘cup’ (Exo 27:3). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *кубокъ* (1697) id. (HSBM XVI: 208). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (342), Mod.SWKar. *kubok* id. is marked as a Russian loanword.

**kurpa** ‘groats’ (Lev 2:14). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *krupa* id. (SPolXVI XI: 272); Ruth. *крупы* (1499) id. (HSBM XVI: 183–184). – **Remarks:** The *kru-* > *kur-* metathesis took place most likely to eliminate the word-initial consonant cluster. An interesting parallel is the origin of Hung. *korpa* (1138/1329) ‘finely ground cereal grain husk used mainly

- as fodder’, which is an early Slavic loanword with the same roots as NWKar. *kurpa*, in which we also see a metathesis (TESz II: 581). Mod. NWKar. *kurpa* ‘groats’ in KarRPS (347), is not marked as a loanword.
- lipa** ‘linden’ (Gen 30:37). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *lipa* id. (SPolXVI XII: 275); Ruth. *лiпa* (1501) id. (HSBM XVII: 42). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (399), Mod.NWKar. *lipa* id. is rightly interpreted as being generally of Slavic origin, without specifying the exact donor language.
- lokot** ‘cubit’ (Gen 6:15). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *локоть ~ локоть* (15<sup>th</sup> century) ‘1. elbow; 2. cubit’ (HSBM XVII: 112–113). – **Remarks:** Mod. WKar. *lokot* ‘1. elbow; 2. cubit’ is marked as a Slavic loanword in KarRPS (400). Its East Slavic origin is evident.
- loś** ‘elk’ (Deu 14:5). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *loś ~ los* id. (SPolXVI XII: 573); Ruth. *лосць ~ лосць* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XVII: 120). – **Remarks:** Mod.SWKar. *los* id. is rightly classified as a Slavic loanword in KarRPS (400), without specifying the exact donor language.
- mastik** ‘mastic’ (Gen 37:25). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *mastych ~ mastyk ~ mastyka* ‘1. mastic tree; 2. mastic tree resin’ (SPolXVI XIII: 189–190); Ruth. *маслика* (17<sup>th</sup> century) ‘a resin obtained from certain species of mastic tree’ (HSBM XVII: 275). – **Remarks:** Mod.NWKar. *mastik* id. is classified as a Slavic loanword in KarRPS (404). From a phonetic point of view, it is somewhat more likely to be of Polish origin (*-k* vs. *-ka*).
- moroz** ‘frost’ (Exo 16:14). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *морозь* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XVIII: 163). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (409), Mod.WKar. *moroz* id. is referred to as a Russian loanword.
- myhla** ‘mist’ (Gen 2:6). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *мгла* (1489) id. (HSBM XVII: 294). – **Remarks:** See also MPol. *mgla* id. (SPolXVI XIII: 331–332), but in light of the *-h-*, an East Slavic provenance is more probable. The *-y-* in the first syllable is most likely epenthetic, so as to avoid the *mh-* consonant cluster. In KarRPS (413), Mod.WKar. *myhla ~ mygla* id. is classified, generally, as a Slavic loanword.
- ni** ‘neither’ (JSul.I.01: 118 v<sup>o</sup>). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *ni* id. (SPolXVI XVI: 522–525); Ruth. *ни* (1340) id. (HSBM XX: 385–386).
- od’verja** ‘1. lintel; 2. side posts; 3. upper door post’ (Exo 12:23). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *одверие* (1489) id. (HSBM XXI: 391). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (424), Mod.SWKar. *odverja* ‘door, door frame’ is referred to as a Polish loanword, which, in the light of Pol. *odrzwia* ‘door frame’, and MPol. *odrzwi ~ odrzwie ~ odrzwia* ‘door frame’ (SPolXVI XX:

- 459) is less likely (for phonetic reasons) than assuming an East Slavic provenance – even if we take into consideration the existence of MPol. *odwierny ~ odwierzny ~ odźwierny* ‘porter’ (SPolXVI XX: 572–573).
- osnova** ‘warp’ (Lev 13:48). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *osnowa* id. (SPolXVI XXII: 159); Ruth. *основа* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM 400–401).
- ozera** ‘lake’ (Exo 7:19). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *ozioro* id. (SPolXVI XXII: 438); Ruth. *озеро ~ возеро озэро* (1392) id. (HSBM XXII: 108). – **Remarks:** The word-initial *o-* clearly points to East Slavic influence. MPol. *ozioro* is attested only twice in the literature, while the dominant and widespread form is *jezioro* (SPolXVI IX: 498–500). Mod.NWKar. *ożera* id. is classified as a Russian loanword in KarRPS (424). The *-o > -a* change took place probably due to the Turkic phonotactic tendency to avoid low rounded vowels in non-first syllables.
- panva** ‘(frying) pan’ (Lev 2:7). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *panew ~ panwia ~ panwa* ‘a pan, a shallow cauldron’ (SPolXVI XXIII: 142, 189; LSJP II/2: 623, s.v. *panew*); Ruth. *панва ~ памва ~ паневъ пановъ* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXIII: 420).
- peč** [or: **pec**] ‘oven’ (Lev 2:4). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *piec* id. (SPolXVI XXIV: 30–32); Ruth. *пець ~ печь ~ печь ~ пець ~ пець* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXIV: 277, 291–292, 295). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (447, 450), Mod.NWKar. *peč* id. and Mod.SWKar. *pec* id. are described, in general, as Slavic loanwords.
- pečora** ‘cave’ (Gen 50:13). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *pieczara ~ pieczora* id. (SPolXVI XXIV: 39); Ruth. *печера ~ печора ~ пецера* (1489) id. (HSBM 289, 294–295). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (447, 450), Mod.NWKar. *pečora* id. and Mod.SWKar. *pecora* id. are described, in general, as Slavic loans.
- perepelica** [or: **peřepelića**] ~ **perepelice** [or: **peřepelice**] ‘quail’ (Exo 16:13, Gen 15:9). – **Possible etymons:** Ruth. *перепелица ~ перэпелица ~ перепелиця ~ перэпелиця ~ перэп’ёлка* (ESBM IX: 67–68) ~ *перепелочка* (17<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXIV: 189). – **Remarks:** Mod.SWKar. *perepelice* id. is described as a Slavic loanword in KarRPS (450), without specifying the donor language.
- perepelice** see **perepelica**
- pole** ‘field’ (Deu 14:5). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *pole* id. (SPolXVI XXVI: 420–429); Ruth. *поле* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXVI: 120–124). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (448), Mod.SWKar. *pole* id. is described, in general, as a Slavic loanword.

- polk** ‘company’ (Gen 37:25). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *polk* ‘a military unit with an unspecified number of soldiers’ (SPolXVI XXVII: 21, s.v. *polek*); Ruth. *полк* ‘1. military unit; 2. tribe; 3. many’ (ESUM IX: 272–273). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (448), Mod.WKar. *polk* ‘1. army, regiment; 2. mass’ is qualified as a Russian loanword.
- polnyj** ‘(adj.) field’ (Lev 14:4). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *polny* id. (SPolXVI XVI: 459–464); Ruth. *польный ~ полный ~ польный* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XVI: 233). – **Remarks:** The expansive nature of the ESlav. *-yj, -ij* ending in East Borderlands Polish is well known (Kość 1999: 119), which makes the Polish origin of the word also a possibility. As a rule, Slavic adjectives were predominantly adopted in their masculine forms on Karaim ground, as there is no grammatical gender in Turkic.
- postanovtet-** ‘to decide’ (ADub.III.78: 285 r<sup>o</sup>; JSul.I.53.13: 7 v<sup>o</sup>). – **Morphology:** A compound verb. – **Possible etymons:** Ruth. *постановити ~ постановити ~ постановить* (1547) id. (HSBM XXVII: 188–192). – **Remarks:** The Slavic root is used with MWKar. *et-* ‘(aux.) to do’.
- prauunq** ‘great-grandson’ (Gen 21:23). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *prawnuk* id. (SPolXVI XXX: 143); Ruth. *правнукъ* (17<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXVII: 453–454). – **Remarks:** For phonetic reasons, the word is somewhat more likely to be of East Slavic origin; cf. also Brus. *праўнук* id. In KarRPS (449), we find Mod.NWKar. *prauunuk* id. categorized, generally speaking, as a Slavic loanword.
- pražma** ‘roasted grain’ (Rut 2:14). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *pražmo* id. (SPolXVI XXX: 239); Ruth. *пражмо ~ пряжмо* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XXVII: 475). – **Remarks:** The *-o > -a* is probably due to the Turkic phonotactic tendency to avoid low rounded vowels in non-first syllables.
- pripečka** ‘stove’ (Lev 11:35). – **Possible etymons:** Ruth. *прыпеч ~ прыпечка ~ прыпечокъ* id. (ESUM X: 123; HSBM XXVIII: 397). – **Remarks:** Cf. also MPol. *przypiecek* id. (LSJP II/2: 1222–1223, s.v. *przypiec*), but the East Slavic origin of the word is evident.
- puhač** ‘eagle-owl’ (B 263: 26 v<sup>o</sup>). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *puhacz* id. (SPolXVI XXXIV: 424); Ruth. *пугачь* (17<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXIX: 340). – **Remarks:** KarRPS (449) refers to Mod.NWKar. *puhacz* id. and Mod.SWKar. *puhac* id. as Polish loanwords, but their East Slavic origin is equally possible.
- pusta et-** ‘to desolate’ (Lev 26:29). – **Morphology:** A compound verb. – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *pusty* ‘empty’ (SPolXVI XXXIV: 477–480);



Ruth. *пустый* (1415) id. (HSBM XXIX: 370–371). – **Remarks:** The Slavic root is used with MWKar. *et-* ‘(aux.) to do’.

**pusta jer** ‘desert’ (Lev 16:22). – **Morphology:** A compound noun. – **Possible etymons** (of its first component): MPol. *pusty* ‘empty’ (SPolXVI XXXIV: 477–480); Ruth. *пустый* (1415) id. (HSBM XXIX: 370–371). – **Remarks:** For its semantic development, cf. MPol. *pustynia* ‘desert’ (SPolXVI XXXIV: 480–482) and Ruth. *пустыня* ~ *постыня* ~ *пустыня* id. (HSBM XXIX: 373–374) or MPol. *puszcza* ‘desolate place; desert’ (SPolXVI XXXIV: 482–485), and Ruth. *пуца* ~ *пусча* ~ *пуца* ~ *пушча* id. (HSBM XXIX: 385–386) derived from the same Slavic root. The second component of the compound is Kar. *jer* ‘place’, thus, literally, *pusta jer* means ‘empty place’.

**qasja** ‘cassia’ (Exo 30:24). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *kasyja* id. (SPolXVI X: 161); Ruth. *кассия* ~ *касия* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XIV: 296). – **Remarks:** The word could also be an example of a learned borrowing; cf. Lat. *cassia* id., Gr. *κασσία* id.

**qoř** ‘basket’ (Lev 6:8). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *kosz* id. (SPolXVI XI: 11–12); Ruth. *кошь* (1499) id. (HSBM XVI: 78–79).

**quma** ‘concubine’ (Gen 22:24). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *kuma* ‘female companion’ (LSJP I/2: 1182, s.v. *kum*); Ruth. *кума* (1590) id. (HSBM XVI: 217) – **Remarks:** Cf. also MPol. *kum* ‘male companion’ (SPolXVI XI: 545–546).

**revent** ‘willowherb’ (Exo 30:34). – **Possible etymons:** Of uncertain origin; probably related to Russ. dial. *ревенка* ‘willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*)’ SRNG (XXXIV: 367). – **Remarks:** In the translation of the Book of Exodus, the word is used to render Heb. *שְׁחִילֵץ* *šhilet* ‘onycha’, which is associated with (and perhaps etymologically related to) the Hebrew root *לָחַץ* *š-ḥ-l* ‘to roar’ and *לָהָץ* *šahal* ‘lion’ (Klein 1987: 650). The reason behind the decision to translate it as *revent* might be the fact that Russ. *ревенка* could have been, in turn, associated with Russ. *реветь* ‘to roar’. Cf. SWKar. *revend* ‘willowherb’ used in manuscript JSul.III.01 (Exo 30:34).

**rubin** ‘ruby’ (Exo 28:17). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *rubin* id. (SPolXVI XXXVII: 118–119); Ruth. *рубинъ* (1509) id. (HSBM XXX: 461).

**skala** ‘rock’ (Exo 17:6). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *skala* id. (LSJP III: 246); Ruth. *скала* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXI: 292). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (476), Mod.WKar. *skala* id. is rightly described as a Slavic loanword.



- slavaly** ‘renown’ (Num 16:2). – **Morphology:** A Karaim derivative from a Slavic nominal base. – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *slawa* id. (LSJP III: 280); Ruth. *слава* (1387) id. (HSBM XXXI: 404–406). – **Remarks:** Derived by means of the Karaim adjectival suffix *-ly*; see, Mod.SWKar. *slava* ‘fame’ marked as a Slavic borrowing in KarRPS (476).
- smarak** ~ **šmarak** ‘emerald’ (Exo 28:17, Exo 39:10). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *szmaragd* id. (LSJP III: 554); Ruth. *смаракъдъ* ~ *смаракъдъ* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XXXI: 474). – **Remarks:** The *š*- ~ *s*- alternation shows that a double borrowing (simultaneously from both West and East Slavic) is feasible in this case.
- smola** ‘pitch’ (Gen 6:14). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *smola* id. (LSJP III: 319); Ruth. *смола* (1489) id. (HSBM XXXI: 495–496).
- sova** ‘owl’ (B 263; 26 v°). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *sova* id. (LSJP III: 334); Ruth. *сова* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXII: 34). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (476), Mod.WKar. *sova* is justly described as a Slavic loanword.
- stol** ‘table’ (Exo 25:23). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *stól* id. (LSJP III: 420–421); Ruth. *столь* ~ *столь* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXII: 412–413).
- stolp** ‘pole, pillar’ (Gen 19:26). – **Possible etymons:** Ruth. *столпъ* ~ *стовпъ* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXII: 409–411). – **Remarks:** Cf. also MPol. *stolpowy* ‘(adj.) pillar’ (LSJP III: 424; s.v. *stolpiasta sól*), nevertheless, an East Slavic etymology is more likely.
- stolpec** \*‘tablecloth’ (Exo 25:29). – **Possible etymons:** Russ. *столбецъ* (17<sup>th</sup> century) ‘a roll of fabric’, *столнець* (16<sup>th</sup> century) ‘a unit of measurement of fabric for tablecloth’ (SRJaXI–XVII XXVIII: 79–80, 85–86). – **Remarks:** The meaning of the Karaim word is reconstructed based on the context of its use and the semantics of the Russian equivalents.
- stupeń** ‘step’ (Exo 20:26). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *ступень* (1489) id. (HSBM XXXIII: 22–23). – **Remarks:** Polish origin is less probable, see MPol. *stopień* id. (LSJP III: 425–426).
- sturlap** ‘household idol’ (Gen 31:19). – **Possible etymon:** Russ. *стурлабы* (1512) ‘gods, idols’ (SRJaXI–XVII XXVIII: 222). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (481), Mod.NWKar. *sturlab* ‘god, idol’, and Mod.SWKar. *sturlap* id. are not classified as loanwords.
- styrta** ‘stack; heap of grain’ (Exo 22:5; Rut 3:7). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *styrta* id. (LSJP III: 456); Ruth. *стырта* (1444) id. (HSBM XXXIII: 27–28). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (481), we find Mod.WKar. *styrta* id. rightly described as a Slavic loanword.

- šipšin** ‘prickle’ (Num 33:55). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *szypszyna* ‘a species of rose with stems covered with thorns, wild rose’ (LSJP III: 587); Ruth. *шипшина* ~ *шыпшына* (1582) ‘wild rose’ (HSBM XXXVII: 104).
- šmarak** see **smarak**
- šnur** ‘cord’ (Num 3:37). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *sznur* id. (LSJP III: 556–557); Ruth. *шнуръ* ~ *снуръ* (1443) id. (HSBM XXXVII: 161–163). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (647), Mod.NWKar. *šnur* id. is described as a Polish loanword, although an East Slavic provenance is also feasible.
- tanec** ‘dance’ (Exo 32:19). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *taniec* id. (LSJP III: 599–600); Ruth. *танецъ* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XXXIII: 211–212). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (510, 513), both Mod.NWKar. *tañec* id. and Mod.SWKar. *tanec* id. are generally described as words of Slavic origin.
- töte** ‘aunt’ (Exo 6:20). – **Possible etymon:** Russ. *тема* ~ *темя* (11<sup>th</sup> century) id. (SRJaXI–XVII XXIX: 337). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (524), we find Mod.NWKar. *tóta* id. described as a Russian loanword. Attested in ADub.III.73 (95 r<sup>o</sup>) in a possessive 3rd sg. accusative form; the value of the first-syllabic vowel is uncertain: perhaps טוֹטִיטִי should phonetically be interpreted as [tótésin] or [tótésín].
- unuq** ‘grandson’ (Gen 21:23). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *внукъ* ~ *унукъ* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM IV: 70). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (579), Mod.NWKar. *unuk* id. is classified as a Slavic loanword.
- utok** ‘woof’ (Lev 13:48). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *утокъ* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XXXV: 279). – **Remarks:** For semantic reasons, MPol. *utok* ‘cloth roll (element of a treadle loom)’ (LSJP IV: 105, s.v. *utoczyć*) cannot be treated as a possible etymon in this case.
- uže** ‘already’ (ADub.III.78: 284 v<sup>o</sup>, 312 v<sup>o</sup>; JSul.I.53.13: 7 r<sup>o</sup>). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *уже* ~ *вже* ~ *вжэ* (15<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM XXXIV: 273–274). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (573, 575), both Mod.NWKar. *už*, *uže* id. and Mod.SWKar. *uze* id. are described as words of Russian origin.
- vejatet-** ‘to winnow’ (Rut 3:2). – **Morphology:** A compound verb. – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *веяти* ~ *веети* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM III: 172). – **Remarks:** Cf. also MPol. *wiejacz* ‘winnower’ (LSJP IV: 201), which suggests that a MPol. *\*wiejać* might also have existed. The Slavic root is used with MWKar. *et-* ‘(aux.) to do’.
- vina** ‘wine’ (Num 6:3). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *wino* id. (LSJP IV: 241); Ruth. *вино* (16<sup>th</sup> century) id. (HSBM III: 281–284). – **Remarks:** The *-o* > *-a* is due to the Turkic phonotactic tendency to avoid low rounded

vowels in non-first syllables. KarRPS (157) includes Mod.WKar. *vina* id. classified as a Slavic loanword.

**vole** ‘(anat.) crop’ (Lev 1:16). – **Possible etymon:** MPol. *wole* (17<sup>th</sup> century) id. (BSEJP 707).

**zasek** ‘barn’ (Deu 28:8). – **Possible etymon:** Ruth. *засек* (1565–1566) ‘barn’ (HSBM XI: 145–146). – **Remarks:** Erroneously translated as ‘abatis’ in Németh (2021: 941).

**žalle-** ‘to regret; to sympathise’ (Deu 13:9). – **Morphology:** A Karaim derivative from a Slavic nominal base. – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *żal* ‘grief, sorrow, pity’ (LSJP IV: 678); Ruth. *жаль* ‘pity; sorrow’ id. (HSBM IX: 264–266). – **Remarks:** The Karaim verb is a *-la* ~ *-le* derivative from MKar. \**žal* ‘pity’, cf. Mod.NWKar. *žal* ‘pity’ described in KarRPS (185) as a Slavic loanword. Cf. also Mod.NWKar. *želle-* ~ *žeyle-* ~ *žejla-* ‘to regret, to sympathize’ (KarRPS 186) also referred to as Slavic borrowings.

**že** ‘intensifying particle’ (ADub.III.78: 314 v<sup>o</sup>). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *że* id. (LSJP IV: 872); Ruth. *же* ~ *жэ* (1457) id. (HSBM IX: 275–276). – **Remarks:** In KarRPS (185), Mod.NWKar. *že* id. is described as a Slavic loanword.

**žubra** ‘wisent’ (Deu 14:5). – **Possible etymons:** MPol. *żubr* ‘European bison, wisent’ (LSJP IV: 1027); Ruth. *зубрь* ~ *жубрь* (1516–1519) id. (HSBM XIII: 222). – **Remarks:** The emergence of the word-final *-a* is most likely a result of a paragoge to avoid the segment *-br*, which is alien to Karaim phonotactics.

### 4.3. Closing remarks

One conclusion that transpires from the above is that both Ruthenian and Polish may have acted as the main donor languages for Karaim as far as 17<sup>th</sup>- and early-18<sup>th</sup>-century lexical borrowings are concerned. Additionally, although the presence of Russian in the Baltic region was not as pronounced during this time period as it would be later on, some of the loanwords can only be explained by juxtaposing them with their Russian equivalents. Now, if we compare the West Karaim data with the historical material of the respective neighbouring Slavic languages, we see how inaccurate the etymological qualifiers in the Karaim–Russian–Polish dictionary (KarRPS) are. This goes to show how difficult a task it is to etymologize the earliest Slavic loanwords in West Karaim. Some of the reasons for this have already been

mentioned in the sections above (e.g., the short linguistic distance between the Slavic varieties, and significant linguistic interactions between West and East Slavic). However, it is also important to emphasize that until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all West Karaim texts were recorded in the Hebrew script, thanks to which a great many phonetic and phonological facts actually remain hidden behind the script and require careful reconstruction.

Bearing in mind the gradual development of Slavic–Karaim bilingualism in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and continuing into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we can hypothesize that Slavic loanwords were most probably pronounced by West Karaims in the same way they sounded in the respective donor languages. In fact, 19<sup>th</sup>- and early-20<sup>th</sup>-century fieldwork reports confirm that Karaims in Trakai, Panevėžys, and Lutsk had a native command of Polish (see Smokowski 1841: 162; Smoliński 1912: 116; Kowalski 1925: 26, Firkowicz 1935–1936). Interestingly, even forms exhibiting both East and West Slavic traits typical of the local transitional Slavic varieties had entered Karaim. A good example is SWKar. *istrymacet-* ‘to withstand, to refrain’ < Ukr. *виступаму* ‘to withstand’ blended with Pol. *wytrzymać* id. (Németh 2011: 287).<sup>5</sup> This is another factor that makes determining the exact Slavic donor language difficult or impossible.

In general, the number of Slavic loanwords and calques documented in the entire West Karaim literary output is immense and includes lexemes representing almost every part of speech, mainly nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, and particles. In contrast, Slavic loanwords in East Karaim are mainly nouns, borrowed only from Russian, e.g., EKar. *qapysta* ‘cabbage’ < Russ. *kapusta* id., *ystol* ‘table’ < Russ. *stol* id. (Aqтай & Jankowski 2015: 192, 289).

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5 The word-medial *-ac-* reflects the Pol. infinitive ending *-ać*, whereas the prefix has a clearly East Slavic shape (Pol. *iz-*, the continuant of PSlav. *\*jbz*, fell out of use in the 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> centuries: the continuants of PSlav. *\*jbz* and *\*sʋ* merged into *s- ~ z-*, see, e.g., BSEJP: 723, s.v. *z*).

## Abbreviations

**adj.** = adjective | **aux.** = auxiliary verb | **Brus.** = Belarusian | **CC** = the Kipchak Turkic language of *Codex Comanicus* | **Deut.** = Book of Deuteronomy | **dial.** = dialectal | **EKar.** = East Karaim | **ESlav.** = East Slavic | **Exo.** = Book of Exodus | **Gen.** = Book of Genesis | **Gr.** = Greek | **Hung.** = Hungarian | **Kar.** = Karaim | **Lat.** = Latin | **Lev.** = Book of Leviticus | **Mod.NWKar.** = Modern Northwest Karaim | **Mod.SWKar.** = Modern Southwest Karaim | **Mod.WKar.** = Modern West Karaim | **MPol.** = Middle Polish | **ms.** = manuscript | **MSWKar.** = Middle Southwest Karaim | **MWKar.** = Middle West Karaim | **Num.** = Book of Numbers | **NWKar.** = Northwest Karaim | **Pol.** = Polish | **PSlav.** = Proto Slavic | **r<sup>o</sup>** = recto | **Russ.** = Russian | **Rut.** = Book of Ruth | **Ruth.** = Ruthenian | **SWKar.** = Southwest Karaim | **Ukr.** = Ukrainian | **v<sup>o</sup>** = verso

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## Manuscripts

A 144<sub>5</sub> see KarRPS (28–29).

ADub.III.73 = A translation of the Torah, the Book of Ruth, the Book of Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and the Book of Esther into Northwest Karaim. The

Torah was created between 25 Mar 1720 and 31 May 1720, the other books were created ca. 1720; more precisely after 31 May 1720, and before 27 Mar 1723. Copied in Kukizów by Simcha ben Chananel (died 27 Mar 1723). Stored in Warsaw in the private archive of the late Aleksander Dubiński (1924–2002).

- ADub.III.78 = A prayer book in Hebrew, Southwest and Northwest Karaim. The work of several copyists created in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (ca. 1750 at the earliest, see folios 118 v<sup>o</sup> and 251 v<sup>o</sup>). Several manuscripts bound together. Copied in Halych and (probably) Lutsk.
- B 263 = A manuscript (*Bet Avraham*) in Hebrew written in 1662 in Troki by Abraham ben Yoshiyahu (1636–1667) with brief Northwest Karaim additions from 1671 (a *qinah* authored by Zarach ben Natan in 1649). Stored in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg.
- Evr I 699 = A commentary on the precepts of the faith written by Icchak ben Abraham Troki (commentary on Eliyahu Bashyachi's *Adderet Eliyyahu*) in Hebrew and Northwest Karaim. Copied by Mordechai ben Icchak (perhaps Mordechai ben Icchak Łokszyński) in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Stored in the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg.
- Jer NLI 4101-8 = A collection of religious texts in Hebrew and Northwest Karaim. Copied in Lutsk by an unknown person. Stored in the National Library of Israel.
- JSul.I.01 = A translation of the Torah and of some fragments of the books of Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Micah, Habakkuk, and Zechariah (i.e., Torah and Haftarah) into Southwest Karaim. Copied by Jeshua Josef Mordkowicz (1802–1884) in Halych in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Stored in Warsaw in the private archive of the late Józef Sulimowicz (1913–1973).
- JSul.I.02 = A collection of *zemirot* written in Hebrew, Karaim, and Polish. Copied in Lutsk in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (sometime between 1807 and 1832 with a few later additions) by Mordechai ben Josef of Lutsk.
- JSul.I.04 = A translation of the Book of Job into Southwest Karaim. Copied in Lutsk in 1814 by Jaakov ben Icchak Gugel.
- JSul.I.50.06 = A translation of the Book of Esther into Southwest Karaim and a collection of *piyyutim* in both Hebrew and Southwest Karaim. Copied ca. 1815 in Lutsk by an unknown copyist.
- JSul.I.53.13 = A fragment of a prayer book in Hebrew and Southwest Karaim. A copy of volume 1 of *Siddur* (1737) bound together with handwritten additions. What remained from this item is page 11 of the printed *siddur* and 10 folios of handwritten text copied in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century (probably ca. 1762) by an unknown person, most probably in Halych.

- JSul.III.01 = A Southwest Karaim translation of the Torah. Copied in Halych in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century by Jeshua Josef Mordkowicz. Its edition, created in 2022 by Anna Sulimowicz-Keruth, Dorota Smętek (Cegiołka), and Zsuzsanna Johan (Olach) is available online at: <https://middleturkic.lingfil.uu.se/manuscripts/middle-karaim/JSul.III.01>.
- JSul.III.63 = A prayer book in Hebrew and Southwest Karaim. A copy of volume 1 of *Siddur* (1737) bound together with handwritten additions copied ca. 1788 (1797 at the latest) in Halych by Jeshua ben Mordechai Mordkowicz.
- JSul.III.65 = 18<sup>th</sup>-century handwritten additions in Hebrew and Southwest Karaim bound together with volume 4 of *Siddur* (1737). The folio  $\aleph$  verso contains an annotation with the date 10 Tevet 5553 A.M., i.e. 25 December 1792. Copied in Halych. It contains various religious works and a Southwest translation of the Book of Esther.
- RABk.IV.15 = A prayer book in Hebrew and Northwest Karaim. The work of many copyists bound together. Copied in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The place of its creation is uncertain.
- TKow.01 = A translation of the Torah into Northwest Karaim. Copied by Simcha ben Chananel. It was finished on 7 December 1722 A.D. Until 2019, kept in Kraków in the private archive of the inheritors of the late Tadeusz Kowalski's (1889–1948) private archive. Now, kept in the private archive of Anna Sulimowicz-Keruth in Warsaw.

## REMARKS ON THE PHONOLOGY OF A SOUTH-WESTERN KARAIM TRANSLATION OF THE LATTER PROPHETS

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**Abstract.** The present paper focuses on the only available South-Western Karaim translation of the Latter Prophets, registered under the accession number ADub.III.83. Alongside a concise overview of the manuscript and its copyist, Jeshua Josef Mordkowicz, the paper offers a brief analysis of the Modern South-Western Karaim traits displayed in the language of the manuscript.

**Keywords:** South-Western Karaim, Latter Prophets, Jeshua Josef Mordkowicz, Modern South-Western Karaim phonology

### 1. Introduction

Recent research led to the discovery of a South-Western Karaim translation of the Latter Prophets<sup>1</sup> in the private archive of the late Polish Turkologist Aleksander Dubiński (1924–2002). The translation was copied by Jeshua Josef Mordkowicz (1802–1884) most likely in the second half of the 19th century in Halych, in present-day Ukraine. The manuscript was given the accession number ADub.III.83. The main text is handwritten and is completely vocalized. It comprises 245 folios. Translations of the Latter Prophets are also available in North-Western Karaim<sup>2</sup> and Eastern (Crimean) Karaim.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 The books of the Latter Prophets (as part of the Old Testament) include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve Minor Prophets, namely Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.
- 2 The North-Western Karaim translation of the Latter Prophets from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is catalogued under accession number F305-90. It is included in the Karaim collection of the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences in Vilnius, Lithuania.
- 3 The Eastern (Crimean) Karaim translation of the Latter Prophets is preserved as part of a manuscript from the 18th century kept in the Cambridge University Library, and as part of the printed edition of the so-called Eupatorian (Gözleve) Bible from 1841 (Jankowski 2018: 50–51).

## 2. The copyist

Jeshua Josef Mordkowicz was born in Halych in 1802. He was only 19 years old when he assumed the position of hazzan in Kukizów. After returning to Halych, Mordkowicz worked as a copyist while also teaching religion at the local Karaim school. In 1866, he became the hazzan of the Karaim community in Halych and served in the position until his death in 1884 (Zarachowicz 1925: 21–23). Mordkowicz is known to be one of the most significant contributors to South-Western Karaim Bible translations that resulted in manuscripts of both individual biblical books and copies of the entire Old Testament (Németh 2021b: 15). Some of his translations from the first half of the 19th century still include archaism, while those of the second half of the century exhibit Modern South-Western Karaim features (Németh 2020: 47).

## 3. Modern South-Western Karaim features of ADub.III.83

The language of ADub.III.83 displays features of Modern South-Western Karaim, suggesting that it was most likely copied in the second half of the 19th century. The following section provides a brief analysis of these Modern South-Western Karaim characteristics of the manuscript.

### 3.1. Delabialization of *ö* and *ü*

The Hebrew letters used for *ö*, *ü* and *e*, *i* are clearly distinguished in Karaim manuscripts. The letter *waw* (ו) with the respective diacritic marks consistently stands for the front rounded *ö* and *ü*, while the front unrounded *e* and *i* are primarily indicated with the letter *aleph* (א) with its own diacritic marks. The orthography of ADub.III.83 reveals that the manuscript contains no trace of *ö* and *ü*.

According to Németh (2020: 72, 74–75), due to the Slavonic linguistic environment, *ö* and *ü* underwent complete delabialization, as in *kekler* ‘heavens’ rather than *\*kökler*, *kin* ‘day’ rather than *\*kün*, *ezine* ‘for yourself’ rather than *\*özüne*, etc. The front rounded vowels are not part of the phonemic inventories of the surrounding Slavonic languages, therefore, they might have easily affected the South-Western Karaim vowel system. The Slavonic influence had an impact on the North-Western Karaim vowel sys-

tem as well, however, it resulted in a different outcome (for more details, see, Németh 2020: 74).

The *ö, ü > e, i* process began in the first half of the 18th century and is considered to have been complete by the early decades of the 19th century. It first occurred in the word-final syllables, particularly in suffixes, and gradually extended to the word-initial syllables (Németh 2020: 72–75). The process is entirely complete in ADub.III.83.

### 3.2. The completion of the *š > s* change

In Karaim manuscripts, the Hebrew letters *shin* (ש)<sup>4</sup> and *samekh* (ס) are typically used to denote *š* and *s*, respectively. In ADub.III.83, however, the words that historically contained *š* occur with <ס> to represent *s*, e.g. South-Western Karaim איסליר *isler* ‘deeds’, Arabic סרבת *serbet* ‘sherbet’, Persian דוסמן *dosman* ‘enemy’, Slavonic (Polish) פלסקא *fleska* ‘bottle’. Despite the fact that <ש> was no longer used to indicate *š*, it was retained in the orthography of Modern South-Western Karaim manuscripts by assuming a new function. The letter <ש> occurs in front of *i* to render [š], e.g. South-Western Karaim ויגזי *sizge* ‘for you’, Arabic רישומ *resim* ‘commandment’, and also in front of palatal(ized) consonants, e.g. South-Western Karaim קילטיריר *eske keltirir* ‘X will remember’,<sup>5</sup> Arabic מישקין *misikin* ‘poor’.

On the other hand, the use of <ש> and <ס> in Slavonic loanwords appears to be more ambiguous. However, it is clear that the number and frequency of Slavonic loanwords are lower than those of Arabic and Persian origin. We must also bear in mind that Mordkowicz (and Karaims in general) had a good command of the surrounding Slavonic languages, and, therefore, certain Slavonic loanwords may have retained their original spelling for longer. An example of Slavonic origin *piščjalka* ~ *piscjalka* ‘pipe, a kind of musical instrument’ (cf. Polish *piszczalka* ‘id.’) occurs twice in ADub.III.83, once with <ש>, i.e. פישצאלקא, and once with <ס>, i.e. פיסצאלקא.

The words that etymologically contained *š* rarely occur with *shin* (ש) and they always alternate with forms written with *samekh* (ס), therefore, the *š > s* change can also be considered complete in the language of ADub.III.83.

4 The diacritic dots distinguishing the two phonemes of *shin* (ש) in Hebrew are not marked in ADub.III.83.

5 Lit. mind-DAT bring-FUT.



### 3.3. The question of $\check{c}, \check{z}, \check{z} > c, z, z$

In Karaim manuscripts, the Hebrew letter *tzade* (צ) and its final form *tzade sofit* (ץ) generally denote both  $\check{c}$  and  $\check{z}$ , and then later on even  $c$  and  $z$ , while the letter *zayin* (ז) is used for both  $z$  and  $\check{z}$ . According to Németh (2020: 57), the dealveolarization of  $\check{c}, \check{z}, \check{z}$  in South-Western Karaim must have occurred around the same time as the  $\check{s} > s$  change. Even though the exact phonetic value of these Hebrew letters cannot be detected from the orthography, it is highly likely that the  $\check{c}, \check{z}, \check{z} > c, z, z$  shifts are also present in ADub.III.83.

The dealveolarization process in South-Western Karaim should not be confused with similar processes found in other Turkic (e.g. Kazakh, Noghay, Azeri dialects spoken in Iran, etc.) and Slavonic languages (e.g. Polish mazuration) as it was a more systematic and historically distinct process in South-Western Karaim. Although the issue needs further investigation, Németh (2021a: 319) suggests that it might have been triggered by the South-Eastern borderland dialects of Polish spoken in the area.

## 4. Conclusion

The delabialization of the front rounded vowels ( $\ddot{o}$  and  $\ddot{u}$ ) and the dealveolarization of the alveolar fricatives ( $\check{s}$  and  $\check{z}$ ) and affricates ( $\check{c}$  and  $\check{z}$ ) are considered complete in the language of ADub.III.83, thus clearly reflecting those of the Modern South-Western Karaim phonological peculiarities. Therefore, the manuscript apparently belongs to Mordkowicz's later translations from the second half of the 19th century.

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## THE LANGUAGE OF THE PENTATEUCH TRANSLATION IN THE EUPATORIAN PRINTED EDITION FROM 1841

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**Abstract.** This paper provides an analysis of the language employed in the Pentateuch section of the Eupatorian print (Gözleve) edition, a comprehensive translation of the Old Testament into the Karaim language published in 1841. The objective of the study is to identify the specific Crimean Karaim variety employed in the translation through an examination of phonological, morphological, and lexical features. The analysis reveals that the translation displays features of both Crimean Kipchak Karaim and Crimean Turkish Karaim, and that the characteristics vary depending on the specific books and chapters of the edition.

**Keywords:** Karaim, Crimean Karaim, Bible translations, Gözleve Bible, Oghuzic, Kipchak

### 1. Preliminary Remarks

The so-called Eupatorian (Gözleve) Bible, is a full translation of the Old Testament (omitting the Chronicles) into Karaim in Hebrew letters. The translation was printed in four volumes in Gözleve/Kezlev (present-day Eupatoria) in 1841.

Recently, the language of this edition was discussed by some scholars, e.g., Shapira 2003, 2013; Németh 2015, 2016; Olach 2016; Işık 2018, 2020, 2021. Based on these studies, it is clear that the language of this edition is not homogenous though it is usually referred to as is written in some Crimean Karaim varieties. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the aforementioned studies were devoted only to certain limited parts of this edition. However, recently a full transcription of the edition's Pentateuch translation has become available online (see Işık 2022). Hereby, the present paper will briefly present the language of the Pentateuch translation of the Eupatorian print to determine its Crimean Karaim variety based on Jankowski's descrip-

tions (2008; 2015a). Considering that the syntax of Karaim Bible translations demonstrates a common characteristic as it mostly follows the syntax of Biblical Hebrew and therefore is not a distinctive feature to categorize Karaim dialects/varieties, the present paper will reveal only the features of the phonology, morphology, and lexicon of the text in brief.

## 2. Crimean Karaim Varieties

Based on the written sources, it is possible to divide Crimean Karaim into four varieties (Jankowski 2015b: 454):

- a. Crimean Kipchak Karaim
- b. Crimean Tatar Karaim
- c. Crimean Turkish Karaim (in the Crimea)
- d. Crimean Turkish Karaim (in the Ottoman Empire)

The demonstration of the exact nature of these dialects is quite difficult. However, based on Jankowski's descriptions (2008: 163–165; 2015a: 202–204), it is possible to list some main differences between the Crimean Karaim varieties. Most of these differences are usually based on the different characteristics of the Kipchak and Oghuz languages. It is worth noting that most of the Oghuzic features are common in both Crimean Tatar Karaim and Crimean Turkish Karaim. The main difference between these varieties appears only for some lexical elements. Therefore, in this paper, Oghuzic phonological and morphological features will be attributed to only Crimean Turkish Karaim for the sake of clarity.

## 3. The Language of the Pentateuch of the Eupatorian Print

### 3.1. Phonology

The voicing of the initial plosive *k-* is attested in the eastern dialect of Crimean Tatar (Kavitskaya 2010: 19) and Crimean Turkish (Doerfer 1959a: 274) and therefore is a Crimean Turkish Karaim feature (Jankowski 2015a: 204). However, the preservation of the initial *k-* is slightly predominant in the text as a Crimean Kipchak Karaim feature (Jankowski 2015a: 203).

Another feature is the voicing of the initial plosive *t-*, which is attested in the eastern dialects of Crimean Tatar (Kavitskaya 2010: 19) and Crimean Turkish (Doerfer 1959a: 275) and is also described as a feature of Crimean Turkish Karaim (Jankowski 2015a: 204). However, once again, the Kipchak counterpart of this Crimean Turkish Karaim feature is slightly predominant.

Table 1: The voicing and the preservation of the initial plosive k-

<b>Biblical Books</b>	<b>k- ~ g- doublets</b>
Genesis	[29:2] <i>gör-</i> ‘to see’ vs [32:31] <i>kör-</i> ‘id.’
Exodus	[10:4] <i>getir-</i> ‘to bring’ vs [18:19] <i>ketir</i> ‘id.’
Leviticus	[9:23] <i>gel-</i> ‘to come’ vs [14:46] <i>kel-</i> ‘id.’
Numbers	[3:48] <i>gümüš</i> ‘silver’ vs [3:51] <i>kümüš</i> ‘id.’
Deuteronomy	[1:46] <i>gün</i> ‘day’ vs [4:10] <i>kün</i> ‘id.’

Table 2: The voicing of the initial plosive t-

<b>Biblical Books</b>	<b>t- ~ d- doublets</b>
Genesis	[2:8] <i>dik-</i> ‘to plant’ vs [3:7] <i>tik-</i> ‘id.’
Exodus	[19:21] <i>düş-</i> ‘to fall’ vs [21:18] <i>tüş-</i> ‘id.’
Leviticus	[6:14] <i>dilim</i> ‘slice’ vs [12:6] <i>tilim</i> ‘id.’
Numbers	[31:15] <i>dışı</i> ‘female’ vs [5:3] <i>tişi</i> ‘id.’
Deuteronomy	[32:47] <i>dırlık</i> ‘life’ vs [4:9] <i>tırlık</i> ‘id.’

The next Crimean Turkish Karaim feature is the deletion of the initial *b-* in some certain lexical items (Jankowski 2015a: 204), which is also present in the eastern dialect of Crimean Tatar (Doerfer 1959b: 379), and Crimean Turkish (Doerfer 1959b: 275). However, the preservation of the initial *b-* is highly predominant in our text. Hereby, once again a Crimean Kipchak Karaim feature (Jankowski 2015a: 203) is predominant against its Crimean Turkish Karaim equivalent.

Table 3: The deletion and the preservation of the initial b-

<b>Biblical Books</b>	<b>ol- vs bol- ‘to be; to become’</b>	<b>ilän vs bilän ‘with’</b>
Genesis	[1:3] vs [31:44]	[12:8] vs [3:16]
Exodus	[21:4] vs [26:11]	[1:14] vs [9:35]
Leviticus	[7:20] vs [17:7]	[11:43] vs [4:2]
Numbers	[15:15] vs [13:33]	[12:13] vs [2:2]
Deuteronomy	[25:13] vs [9:16]	[5:11] vs [5:15]

The final phonological characteristic is the spirantization of the initial *b-* to initial *v-* in some lexical elements, which is present in the eastern dialect of Crimean Tatar (Doerfer 1959b: 379), Crimean Turkish (Doerfer

1959a: 275), and Crimean Karaim Turkish (Jankowski 2015a: 204). Note that, although as a Crimean Kipchak Karaim feature, the preservation of the initial *b-* can also be found, the Crimean Turkish Karaim feature is highly predominant against its Kipchak equivalent in the text.

Table 4: The spirantization of the initial *b-*

Biblical Books	<i>ver-</i> vs <i>ber-</i> 'to give'	<i>var-</i> vs <i>bar-</i> 'to go'	<i>var</i> vs <i>bar</i> 'there is/are'
Genesis	[31:9] vs [31:36]	[31:30] vs [31:30]	[44:26] vs [33:9]
Exodus	[13:9] vs [31:36]	[32:7] vs [31:30]	[15:11] vs [33:9]
Leviticus	[15:14] vs [-]	[-] vs [-]	[25:30] vs [-]
Numbers	[14:1] vs [31:16]	[22:7] vs [-]	[13:20] vs [-]
Deuteronomy	[5:20] vs [9:10]	[10:11] vs [14:25]	[29:14] vs [4:29]

### 3.2. Morphology

The text presents highly predominant Kipchak morphological/morphonological features and thus shows Crimean Kipchak Karaim characteristics. Nevertheless, in some specific parts of the text we exceptionally encounter Crimean Turkish Karaim features as well. For example, although the text demonstrates Kipchak ACC markers as {+nI}, {+nU}, and after 3SG/3PL. POSS markers as {+n}, only in Chapter 11 of Lev, we encounter 10 different lexical items where the Oghuzic ACC marker {+(y)I} is attached to words, e.g., [Lev 11:3] *tirnakli*+*yī* 'unguiculate+ACC'; [Lev 11:45] *siz*+*i* 'you (2PL)+ACC', etc. There exist also only 6 examples in Chapters 6, 11, and 15 of Lev that show the Crimean Turkish Karaim DAT marker {+(y)A} instead of the Crimean Kipchak Karaim DAT marker {+GA}, e.g., [Lev 6:16] *ateš*+*ä* 'fire+DAT'; [Lev 11:24] *aḥšam*+*a* 'evening+DAT'; [Lev 11:39] *ye-me*+*ye* 'eat-VN+DAT'. Among the case markers, there also exists a limited Oghuzic-Kipchak opposition for GEN marker in the text as it appears as Oghuzic {+(n)In} only in four examples in Chapter 11 of Lev, e.g., [Lev 11:2] *Yisra*'*el*+*in* 'Israel+GEN'; [Lev 11:47] *Misir*+*in* 'Egypt+GEN', etc.

Another distinctive feature between Crimean Turkish Karaim and Crimean Kipchak Karaim is the opposition of the Kipchak participle {-GAn} and the Oghuzic {-(y)An}. Similar to the to previous examples, the Crimean Turkish Karaim feature is mostly attested in Chapter 11 of Lev throughout the Pentateuch translation of the Eupatorian print, e.g., [Lev 2:7] *piš-en* cook-PTCP; [Lev 11:25] *taši-yan* 'carry-PTCP'.

Finally, the Pentateuch translation of the edition also presents the optative marker {-QAY}, which is attested in Western Karaim dialects and listed for Crimean Kipchak Karaim (Jankowski 2015a: 203), e.g., [Gen 27:44] *kayt-kay-Ø* ‘return-OPT-3SG’; [Exo 5:21] *bak-kay-Ø* ‘to look-OPT-3SG’; [Lev 23:2] *čakür-ğay-siz* ‘to call-OPT-2PL’; [Num 27:20] *ešit-käy-lär* ‘listen-OPT-3PL2’; [Deu 1:11] *algışla-ğay-Ø* ‘bless-SUBJ-3SG’.

### 3.3. Lexicon

The main vocabulary of the corpus consists of a large number of Turkic lexical items. Some of these Turkic elements present Oghuzic-Kipchak opposition as well. Although the Kipchak lexical elements are highly predominant against the Oghuzic ones throughout the text, the corpus presents examples of Oghuzic lexicon as well, e.g., [Gen 9:23] *ört-* ‘to cover’; [Gen 26:1] *baška* ‘another, other’; [Exo 31:14] *gizli* ‘hidden’; [Exo 34:28] *gečä* ‘night’; [Lev 5:8] *ejšä* ‘back of the neck, nape’; [Lev 27:18] *eksil-* ‘to decrease; to disappear’. [Num 9:19] *çok* ‘many, much, a lot, often’; [Num 10:17] *en-* ‘to descend, to go down’. It should be noted that Chapter 11 of Lev presents many lexical copies from some Ottoman Bible translations and therefore demonstrates Ottoman Turkish characteristics (for more details, see Işık 2020; 2021) that were not used in Crimean Kipchak Karaim, e.g. [Lev 11:5] *ve* ‘and’; [Lev 11:13] *evlad* ‘son’; [Lev 11:13] *deñiz kartali* ‘sea eagle’ [Lev 11:14] *ağ baba* ‘vulture’; [Lev 11:29] *kaplı bağa* ‘turtle’. The rest of the vocabulary consists of many Arabic, and Persian words together with some Hebrew loanwords which are common in all three dialects of Karaim.

### 4. Conclusion

The language of the Pentateuch translation of the Eupatorian print shows many similarities to other Karaim Bible translations. Due to the linguistic trends of the period, the text presents many Crimean Turkish Karaim phonological adaptations together with the expected Crimean Kipchak Karaim equivalents. However, most of the morphological and lexical features are only present in some limited chapters (mostly/solely Chapter 11 of Lev). Thus, as for the language of the Pentateuch translation of the printed edition, it is possible to state that it was written in Crimean Kipchak Karaim consisting of strong Crimean Turkish phonological characteristics.



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## Abbreviations

2PL = second person plural; 3SG = third person singular; 3PL = third person plural  
ABL = ablative case; ACC = accusative case; Deu = Book of Deuteronomy; Exo = Book of Exodus; GEN = genitive case ; Gen = Book of Genesis; Lev = Book of Leviticus; Num = Book of Numbers; PTCP = participle; POSS = possessive marker; OPT = optative mood; VN = verbal noun.

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Karaim is a Turkic West Kipchak group language that reached Lithuania together with the Karaim community in the 14th century and ever since was preserved, used by the Karaims and still is spoken today exclusively in Lithuania by approximately 30 people.

This volume offers an overview of the Karaim language' state-of-the-art, its research, and reflects on it from its usage perspectives. Activities for the language retention by dedicated Karaim people are also presented here, as Karaims in Lithuania have always been very conscious about their native language and its challenges, and have greatly contributed to preserving the language for future generations.

This publication summarises outcomes of the international scientific conference titled 'Karaim language in use' organised in 2022 by Lithuanian Karaim Association of Culture and The Institute of Asian and Transcultural Studies of Vilnius University (Lithuania) in partnership with the Jagiellonian University in Kraków (Poland) and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland.

The conference made part of the programme celebrating 2022, the Year of the Karaims of Lithuania that was dedicated to commemorate the 625th anniversary of the establishment of the Karaim community in Lithuania.

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