

KARAIM LANGUAGE STUDIES – A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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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).¹ 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'jašević 2016: 46), while the first SWK text is dated mid-18-th 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; Chaghatai (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.²

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 Koçaoğlu 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).³ 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 Poznański (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, İstanbul-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, Odessa 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 *Myśl 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 *Myśl 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 Firkavičiutė, 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 Yeshu'a (d. 1678), see his poem *Karanhy Bulut* ‘Black Cloud’ (Grzegorzewski 1918: 268–270 and Mardkowicz 1930: 20–21) and Joseph ben Samuel Ha-Mashbir (*ca* 1650–1700),⁴ 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 (Šapsal 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).⁵ It was published by Aqtay (2009: 19). The oldest Crimean Turkish-Karaim poem from 1657–1663 was published by El'jaševič (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. Şelomo 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 Kaplonowski published by Németh (2013b), letters of Sergiusz Rudkowski to Prof. Kowalski published by Németh (2020b), letters of the Karaims of Panèvežys 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. *egizer-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).⁶ 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 *ěksimiždia arasynda* ‘between two of us’ [!].⁷

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 *kürägäji* ‘cup-bearer’ and *ötmäkči* ‘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’, *mazlat-* (121) ‘to forgive’, *lešenkodeščy* (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 *xožalyč*, SWK *xozalyk*, CK *xoğaliq* ‘wealth’; NWK *baytyrlyč*, CK *bayatırlıq* ‘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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8 See also Dorota Smętek.

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