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KARAIM LETTERS OF JEHOZAFAT KAPŁANOWSKI. II. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

In the first part of this study (Németh 2013a) a critical edition of two Karaim letters is presented. They were sent in 1868 from Odessa to addressees living Lutsk by a citizen born in Trakai. This paper (the second part of the study) contains a detailed linguistic analysis of the letters. Special attention is paid to the dialectal affiliation of the manuscripts' linguistic material, to interdialectal contacts and to the irregularities recorded.

1. Introduction

In Németh (2013a) we prepared a critical edition of two letters written by *Jehoszafat Kapłanowski*, a Trakai-born Odessian citizen, sent in 1868 to Lutsk (for the details concerning our transcribing system see there). Since these documents, along with a third written in the same year by the same author and critically edited in Németh (2012), may serve as a source of information for historians dealing with Karaim matters who would not necessarily be interested in a detailed linguistic analysis, we decided to present the linguistic aspects separately in the second part of the present study. Our observations are as follows:

2. Remarks on orthography

The manuscripts contain relatively consistent spelling, which allows us to reconstruct the text's linguistic features with precision. The main features of the spelling

mentioned in Németh (2012: 149), namely the consequent notation of a final *a* with *aleph*, not representing a word-medial *-a-* with a separate *mater lectionis*, and the regular distinction between *š* and *s* (see below), are valid here, too, and allow us to postulate a north-western *'a* and *š* in every position in which there would be *-e-* or *s* in south-western Karaim, respectively. This, in turn, allows us to postulate a north-western Karaim reading in every seemingly ambiguous case – especially as we know that *Jehoszafat Kaplanowski* was born and grew up in the community of Trakai.

As the main spelling rules applied by *J. Kaplanowski* do not differ much from those known from handwritten Lutsk Karaim texts (we noted the same in Németh 2012: 148), we decided only to outline here the most significant features of the orthography as used in these manuscripts. We also take into consideration the orthographic data presented in Németh (2012) – but only if it supplements the data being currently analysed. Notwithstanding the fact that there are some irregularities which should be taken into consideration when reading the document, they are irrelevant as far as a reconstruction of the phonetics of the text is concerned. Nevertheless, we do comment on them briefly below.

2.1. Vowels

Word initially, vowels are always introduced by *aleph* (א), which, if not vocalised, may only stand for *a*. The vowel *a* is the only sound which, in a medial position, may also remain unnoted. There are some exceptions in which the vowel *-e-* is not represented graphically, either, as in *meńdań* ‘from me’ written as מנדן (55:7) – as opposed to מינדן (55:9) – or in the surname בזיקוויץ *Bezikowicz* (44:20), but such cases are rare and might even be interpreted as a slip of the pen. If noted word-medially, *a* is represented by *aleph* or the vocalisation signs *pattāḥ* (⊙) and *qāmātz* (⊙), the use of which is irregular; we found no rule which would explain without exception their distribution (our only observation is that *qāmātz* appears more often in accented positions, but this is simply a tendency). It seems then that they were used interchangeably, good examples being *kara čekrmań* ‘black broadcloth’, which is noted in the same line as קרא ציקמן and קרא ציקמן (55:22) or *berma* ‘to give’ written as ברמא and ברמא (55:6, and 9, respectively). Word-finally, *a* is rendered by *aleph* or *aleph* reinforced with *pattāḥ* (א־⊙) or *qāmātz* (א־⊙). The only exceptions are the conjunction *a* noted once as אָ (44:6), the postposition *ašyra* ‘via, through’ written as אשירה (55:20) and some words of Hebrew origin, e.g. כנסה גא *kenesaga* ‘to the *kenesa*’ (44:24).

Initial *e-* usually requires *yodh* after *aleph* (א־י) or, sometimes, only *tzere* (⊙) as is the case in אדים *edim* ‘I was’ (44:8). *Seghol* and *shewa* are never used to express *e* in any position. Initial *i-* and *y-* are rendered by *aleph* and *yodh* (א־י), too, often combined with *hiriq* (א־י). Word-finally, *e*, *i* and *y* are written with the letter *yodh* or *yodh* reinforced with *tzere* (י־⊙) or *hiriq* (י־⊙), respectively.

Labial vowels *o*, *ö*, *u*, and *ü* are written using the same set of letters in an initial position, namely with *aleph* and *waw* (א־ו), or, if vocalised, with א־ו (o and ö) and א־ו (u and ü). When describing the notation of *o* (and *'o* < **ö*) and *u* (and *'u* < **ü*) in a word-medial position, a distinction must be made between first and non-first

syllables: in non-first syllables they are reflected either by the letter *waw* (ו), or, when vocalised, by *waw* with *hōlām* (י), in the case of *o* (and 'o), and *shūrūq* (י), in the case of *u* (and 'u). In the first syllable, however, this notation is often changed in the case of 'o and 'u, i.e. *o* and *u* which palatalise the preceding consonant. We also find them noted with an additional *yodh*, see בִּירוֹן *buřun* 'whole' (44:27), כִּוְרָא *kořa* 'according to' (44:14), מָא כִּוְרָגֻז *kořguźma* 'to show' (44:26) or כִּוְרָא *kuř* 'day' (55:12). The letter *yodh* is redundant in this case, cf. such examples as כּוֹפ *kop* 'much, a lot' written in the same line as כּוֹפֵא and כּוֹפֵי (55:9), אוֹבְדֵלֵר *öbadlar* 'they kiss' (55:28), סוֹזְלָרִי *soźlari* 'his words' (44:21) or טוֹגֵלְמָא *tuğallama* 'to finish' (44:19). Cf. also the verb *ūlaš-* written as אוֹלְשֵׁי *ūlaškej* 'may it be divided' (44:18) and אוֹלְשֵׁינִינְלֵר *ūlašišinlar* 'may they share' (55:25). The verb *kor-* 'to see' is also noted once with *hōlām* above *kaph*, which is rather an unusual notation, see כּוֹרְגֵי *kořgej* 'may he see' (55:8) and כּוֹרְמַדִּים *kořmadim* 'I did not see' (44:5). In a word-final position, *o* (and 'o) and *u* (and 'u) are noted with the letter *waw* (ו). If vocalised, a final *o* (and 'o) is written with *waw* and *hōlām* (י) while *u* (and 'u) is written with *shūrūq* (י), see e.g. כּלוֹצוֹ *kławcu* 'the one who wishes' (44:21), אוֹלְלוֹ *ullu* 'great, huge' (55:17).

The vocalisation signs, in general, are applied irregularly. We even find words that are written both vocalised and not vocalised in the same line, e.g. *tabu etarini* 'thank you' טבו איטמין ~ טבו איטמין (line 44:23) or *uzun* 'long' אוֹזוֹן ~ אוֹזוֹן (line 55:14).

2.2. Consonants

When reading the letters *daleth* (ד | *d, d'*), *he* (ה | *h*), *zayin* (ז | *z, ž, ź*), *cheth* (ח | *χ*), *teth* (ט | *t, t', t'*), *lamedh* (ל | *l, l'*), *mem* (מ and ׀ | *m, m'*), *nun* (נ and ׀ | *n, n'*), *samekh* (ס | *s, s'*), *pe* (פ | *p, p'*), *tzade* (צ | *c, č, ź, ć*), *resh* (ר | *r, ř*), and *shin*¹ (ש | *š, ś*) no problems are encountered. *Ayin* (ע | *e, a*) and *taw* (ת | *t*) appear only in words and personal names of Hebrew origin. The only diacritic mark found in the manuscripts under discussion is *rafe* which is used above *gimel* (ג | *h*), *kaph* (כ | *χ*) and *pe* (פ | *f*).

The graphemes *beth* (ב | *b, b', w*), *gimel* (ג | *g, g', h*), *waw* (ו | *w-*), double *waw* (וו | *w, w'*), *yodh* (י | *j*), double *yodh* (יי | *j*), *kaph* (כ | *k, k'*) and *koph* (ק | *k, k'*) require further explanation.

Kaph and *pe* lack their so-called *sofit* forms (ף and ף, respectively), see e.g. כּוֹפ *kop* 'much, a lot' (55:9) and בִּיטִיכ *bitik* 'letter' (44:4), which is in general a characteristic feature of the semi-cursive Hebrew script (and printing) used by Karaims (see Németh 2012: 134).

Beth (ב) is used to render first and foremost *b* and *b'*. Additionally, after *-u-* it may stand for *w*, see טוֹבְדוֹקְלָרְגָא *tuwduqlarha* 'to the sisters' (55:29) and אוֹבְלוֹמַדָן *uwłumdan* 'from my son' (55:27). Obviously, in this position it is used instead of *waw* or double *waw* (see below) to disambiguate the reading (cf. the obscure spelling of לוֹטְוֹל *luwul* 'not' in line 55:12) or to avoid writing three *waws* in a row – for a detailed description of this orthographic rule see Németh (2012: 119–122).

¹ The Karaim semi-cursive script used by western Karaims does not use the dots above *shin* to distinguish between *s* and *š*.

Gimel (ג) may stand for *g*, *ǵ*, and *h*, cf. e.g. פּוֹגוֹרֵי לֵיִךְ לֶרַג גּוֹ pogořelečlarǵa ‘to the victims of fire’ (44:18), בּוֹלוֹשְׁלוּגוּיִזּוּגָא botušluhujuzga ‘to your help’ (44:27). In only one word do we find the diacritic mark *rafe* above *gimel* (ǵ), used to indicate *h*: אַיִרִילָגַן *ajrylhan* ‘divided’ (44:10). In a number of words *gimel* may be read in two different ways due to the well known *g* ~ *h* alternation. Consequently, *h* is noted in three different ways: with *gimel*, *gimel* with *rafe*, and *he*.

Waw (ו) – which may, as previously mentioned, also stand for a labial vowel – and double *waw* (וו) are used to render *w* and *w̄*. The use of the doubled letter is much more frequent: the only two examples of a single *waw* (in this role) are the forms וְחָטִים *waxtym* ‘my time’ (55:16) and וְחָטָא *waxtta* ‘at time’ (55:25). In other words, a single *waw* appears only in a word-initial position.

Yodh, besides its vocalic value, may also stand for *j* and is often doubled. An initial *j*- is written both with *yodh* and double *yodh*, see e.g. יִזְמָא ~ יִזְמָא *jazma* ‘to write’ (55:13 and 44:14, respectively) or יִיטִי ~ יִיטִי *jefti* ‘reached’ (44:5 and 55:3, respectively). This graphic alternation may also affect vocalised words, but the only example is *jyl* ‘year’ written as יִיל and יִיל (44:8 and 55:17, respectively) and יִלְנִי ‘year (acc.)’ (55:19). Otherwise, when used with a vocalisation sign, an initial *j*- is represented by a single *yodh*. In a word-medial and a word-final position *j* is, in the vast majority of cases, written with a double *yodh*.

The opposition between *k* and *k̄* is rendered by the use of *kaph* (כ) and *koph* (ק), respectively. This orthographic opposition is blurred by the following phenomena:

Since there can be no opposition between *k* and *k̄* in a word final position (as *-k̄* is depalatalized, while *-k* undergoes a *-k > -χ* change), *koph* and *kaph* alternate in this position in words with palatal consonants, as e.g. in בִּיטִיק ~ בִּיטִיכ *biřik* ‘letter’ (44:4 and 44:5, respectively). Sometimes, this rule is also transposed to suffixed word forms, see the accusative form of *biřik*: בִּיטִיקְנִי ~ בִּיטִיכְנִי *biřikni* (44:16 and 26, respectively).

In loanwords the opposition of *kaph* and *koph* may be disregarded, too. This applies not only to words of Hebrew origin (where the original writing is decisive; see the writing of the word *kawod* using *kaph*), but also to words of Slavonic origin, as in the case of כֶּסְטוֹר *kastor* (55:22), פִּירְכוּוִיץ נִין *Firkowiczyn* (44:4). In rare instances, this may also apply to native words, a good example being the verb *kol-* ‘to ask’ written in two 1.sg. present-tense forms as קוֹלְמִין (44:26) and כּוֹלְמִין (55:7).

In words with non-palatal consonants *kaph* in a word-final position stands for *χ* (< **-k*), see e.g. אֻפְרָק *upraχ* ‘clothing’ (55:22). This articulation probably remained unchanged in suffixed forms, too, as e.g. in דוֹסְטְלוֹקְטָא *dostluxta* ‘friendship (loc.)’ (44:27).

Finally, in the surname טְוִירְדוֹחְלֵבּוֹלְר *Twierdochlebow* (written in the plural; 51:22) we find the letter *kaph* with *rafe* (כ̄) rendering *χ*, which is a rather unusual notation.

2.3. Writing of suffixes

We know that case suffixes and the plural suffix, if followed by a case suffix, were often written separately in south-western Karaim (Németh 2011a: 125) and eastern Karaim texts (Jankowski 1997: 5 and 2009: 23). This phenomenon also applies to

north-western Karaim. Interestingly, in manuscript 44 we find the *-ma* derivative suffix (it builds word forms functionally similar to an IE infinitive) written separately, see **מא כיורגוז** *korǵuzma* (44:26).

2.4. Writing of Hebraisms

Words of Hebrew origin are always written according to their original orthography. For this reason we excluded them from the presented analysis.

3. Linguistic features

A number of south-western and eastern Karaim forms, among the clearly dominant north-western forms, forces us to treat the manuscripts' language somewhat cautiously. Even if the conclusions we drew in Németh (2012) are still valid, namely that the language of these documents cannot serve as an example of a mixed dialect between the northern and southern variants of western Karaim, there is a certain group of interesting morphological and lexical features that deserve special attention. Importantly, these include not only lexemes of a clearly non-north-western type, but also conspicuously irregular morphological phenomena. We present here, therefore, a detailed analysis of the linguistic material.

3.1. Dialectal affiliation

The high degree of ambiguity when reading Karaim texts written in Hebrew script means that a considerable part of the linguistic material can potentially be read in three different ways, namely as though it had been written in the north-western, south-western, or eastern dialect of Karaim.² If based on spelling alone, after applying the phonetic, morphologic and semantic sifting criteria that are at our disposal (for details see below), the dialectal affiliation of the text's material, expressed in approximate numbers, would be as follows:

	KarTC.	KarT.	Kar.	KarTL.	KarL.	KarLC.	KarC.
% of total word forms	6.7%	18.4%	53.6%	15.5%	3.3%	0.7%	1.8%

Table 1. Dialectal affiliation of the lexical material based on the number of potential readings

² We should mention that this equivocality of the writing system – as far as the phonetics it reflects is concerned – is, on the one hand, a drawback for linguists, but at the same time it must have certainly been an advantageous feature for contemporary authors, as it allowed the sender to write, and the addressee to read, the content of handwritten texts according to their native dialectal features. The same phenomenon is true for the dialects of Yiddish.

What is clear from the table above is, first of all, that more than 75% of the word forms cannot be assigned exclusively to one particular dialect, if the categorization, let us emphasize this once again, is solely based on the reading suggested by the orthography. This is because not even one sentence exists which contains words that belong to a single dialect. In other words, the dialectal affiliation of the linguistic material, based purely on a reading suggested by the spelling, creates groups in which the linguistic material is sorted randomly.

The largest group of words (= Kar.) shows no distinctive linguistic features that would be reflected and confirmed by their spelling. There is no need, thus, to enumerate unnecessary examples, and let us refer here only to **לר אדם** *adamtar* ‘men’ (44:9), **אחצא** that could be read both as KarTC. *aχča* and KarL. *aχca* ‘money’ (44:11, 15, 16, 19; 55:8), **ימן** *jaman* ‘badly’ (44:28), **ידי** *jazdy* ‘wrote’ (44:12), **מנא** *mana* ‘I (dat.)’ (44:9; 55:19), **מין** that could be read as KarT. *mén* or KarLC. *men* ‘I’ (44:7, 8, 15; 55:12), etc.

Let us continue by analyzing those parts of the material that are distinctive in certain ways.

Firstly, verbal and nominal morphology, syntax, and the lexicon offer the following examples of word forms that are shared by the western Karaim dialects, yet have not been observed thus far in eastern Karaim texts:

1. the abbreviated personal endings in the future tense forms **אייטיים** *ajtym* ‘I will say’ (44:7), and **קילרס** *kylars* ‘you will do’ (55:6), cf. *ajtym* < KarL. *ajtyrmen* ~ KarT. *ajtyrmyn*, *kylars* < KarL. *kylarsen* ~ KarT. *kylarsyn*; in Crimean Karaim the personal endings do not tend to be abbreviated (see Prik 1976: 138); see also the next example;
2. the abbreviated alternant *-d̄lar* of the *-dyrlar* 3rd pl. present tense personal ending³ in **יזדלר** *jazadlar* ‘they wrote’ (55:32), and **אולטורדלר** *otturadlar* ‘they sit’ (55:18); Crimean Karaim lacks this suffix (see Prik 1976: 128–129);
3. the abbreviated allomorph *-t* of the *-tyr* 3rd sg. personal ending in **בולמסט** *bolmast* ‘it will be’ (44:25); the eastern dialect lacks this suffix (see Prik 1976: 128–129);
4. the *-t* 3rd sg. copula suffix (an abbreviated alternant of *-tyr*) in **יוחט** *joχt* ‘there is no’ (55:16); in the Crimean dialect this suffix is not used (see Prik 1976: 63);
5. the 1st plural personal ending written as **ביז**- (it may stand for KarT. *-bíz* and KarL. *-biz* (in **איירביז** *ijařbíz* ‘we will send’ (44:19, 21) future tense form; its eastern Karaim equivalent is *-miz* (see Prik 1976: 138);
6. the converb marker written as **גינצא**- (it may stand for KarT. *-hynča* and KarL. *-hynca*) in **יזגינצא** *jazhynča* ‘until it is written’ (55:31); in Crimean Karaim the expected form is *-yanča* (see Prik 1976: 123);
7. the accusative suffix *-ny* used in the temporal expression **בו ילני** *bu jylny* ‘this year’ (55:19). Its use in this role is only characteristic of western Karaim and Armeno-Kiptchak, and should be explained by Slavonic structural influence;⁴

³ For all the possible allomorphs of the suffixes enumerated below refer e.g. to Németh (2011b).

⁴ For Armeno-Kipchak comparative data see ArmKipch. *har 3 k'unnu* ‘every three days’, *avalgi kunnu* ‘on the first day’, *bugungi k'unnu* ‘today’ (Tryjarski 2005: 30, 47; Tryjarski 2010: 35, respectively). The existence of such forms somewhat modifies what we have said in Németh (2010: 207–208 and 2011a: 63–65), namely that the use of the accusative in such Lutsk Karaim

8. the instrumental case suffix *-ba* used in **בריבא** *baryba* (< *bary* + *-ba*) ‘at all’ (44:5), **דוגרולוקבא** *duhruluxba* ‘justly’ (44:18), **פודפיסלריבא** *podpistaryba* ‘with their signatures’ (44:4), and **פוטפיסבא** *potpisba* ‘with a signature’ (44:17); the eastern dialect lacks this suffix – for the respective postposition and suffix (or clitic) used in Eastern Karaim see Prik (1976: 151–151) and Aqtay (2009: I 40);
9. the **אנר** *anar* ‘(to) her’ (55:6) dative case form of the 3rd sg. personal pronoun *oŕ*; its eastern Karaim equivalent is *ana* ~ *aŋa*, see e.g. Prik (1976: 96) and Aqtay (2009: I 658, s.v. *ol*);
10. words characteristic of western Karaim, e.g. **בו** *bo* ‘because’ (55:9, 18), **ביטיכ** *biŋik* ‘letter’ (44:4, etc.), **קאמיזלעקא** *kamizelka* ‘waistcoat’ in: **קאמיזלעקאר** *kamizelkatar* ‘waistcoats’ (55:24), **אוללו** *ullu* ‘great, huge’ (55:17), **ואַחַט** *waxt* ‘time’ in: **ואַחַטִּים** *waxtym* ‘my time’ (55:16), etc.

Much smaller is the group of word forms that bear features shared by north-western and eastern Karaim. Unlike, however, the former group, the similarity between these forms is merely phonetic and is based on coincidental conformity between orthographic standards. For instance, while in both north- and south-western Karaim the letter *aleph* (without vowel points) stands for *a* word-medially and word-finally, in eastern Karaim text it may also stand for *e* – therefore such words as **ביזדא** (55:17), **איכי גא** (44:10), **כימגא** (44:11, 17), **ניצא** (44:19), **סוזלרי** (44:21) are to be deciphered both as KarT. *bižda* ‘to us’, *ekiğa* ‘into two’, *kiŋğa* ‘to whom’, *neča* ‘several’, and *sozlaŋi* ‘his words’, on the one hand, and as KarC. *bizde*, *ekige*, *kimge*, and *sözleri* on the other. The vowel *e* may also remain unrepresented in eastern Karaim, as opposed to western Karaim⁵, hence **סיכסן** *šeksaŋ* ‘eighty’ (44:24) could have been read as KarC. *seksen*, too. For further examples that fit in with this group see **אשירה** *ašyra* ‘via, through’ (55:20), **בולושלוק** *boluštux* ‘help’ (44:15), **בוש** *boš* ‘idle’ (55:13, 14, 18), **יולדשי** *joldəšy* ‘from my wife’ (55:27), **יאחשי** *jaχšy* ‘good’ (44:27), **יז** *juž* ‘hundred’

expressions like *do kiŋni* ‘till the day’ (Pritsak 1959: 333), *podluk har biriŋin borcun* ‘by each one’s debt’, *bu ajny dejin* ‘till this month’ (Németh 2011a: 147, 153, respectively) is a result of eastern Polish dialectal influence: in the south-eastern Kresy dialect of Polish the genitive case was often replaced by the accusative in prepositional expressions. As a result of this structural influence, we argued, the use of the accusative (which is the closest to the Slavonic genitive case morphosyntactically) also expanded to temporal expressions that lacked prepositions, as is the case in *bu jyŋny*, however, in the case of the latter, we also found calquing Slavonic expressions using the genitive case possible (the genitive would automatically be replaced by the accusative case in any Turkic language). The Armeno-Kipchak and the present north-western Karaim data show, however, that the process may not have necessarily been triggered by prepositional expressions, but that all these forms could have been calqued independently, and that its range was greater (although, it probably only operated within these two languages). It is also the fact worth mentioning that the Armeno-Kipchak materials Tryjarski (2010) worked on date back to the 16th century.

We have outlined this phenomenon in more detail in Németh (2013b: 256–257). We could not include, however, the present north-western Karaim data.

⁵ In western Karaim texts it is rather a rare phenomenon not to represent *-e-* in writing (see e.g. Németh 2011a: 108); we may, however, occasionally find *-e-* not noted *plene*, as is the case of **מנדן** *mendaŋ* (55:7) described above. Our observations concerning the spelling employed among Karaims are also based on the evidence from manuscripts not edited yet.

(44:19, 24), כּוֹפּ *kop* ‘much, a lot’ (55:9)⁶, אױצױן *üčun* ‘about’ (44:10; 55:32), cf. KarC. *ašyra, bolušluq, boš, joldašymdan, jaχšy, jüz, köp, učun* id., respectively.

Since, as we argued above, it is valid to postulate a north-western reading in every seemingly ambiguous instance, we consider all the linguistic material found in the above-mentioned groups (Kar., KarTL., and KarTC.) as north-western Karaim. Thus, the numeric data we showed in Table 1. may be reinterpreted as follows:

	KarTC.	KarT.	Kar.	KarTL.	KarL.	KarLC.	KarC.
% of total word forms as an argument in favour of one particular dialect		KarT. = 94.2%			3.3%	0.7% ⁷	1.8%

Table 2. The percentage of total word forms as an argument in favour of one particular dialect

Thirdly, there are only three words that could perhaps be assigned to both south-western and eastern Karaim, namely, אַדָּהּ *daha* ‘as well, additionally’ (55:23), טנרײ *tanry* ‘God’ (55:29), and קוללרײניזי *kollarynyzy* (55:28; cf. our comments below on etymological doublets). However, even though we found the first two words attested in Lutsk Karaim texts (each in one manuscript), it may well be that in those two sources they should be treated as a trace of Crimean Karaim or even Oghuzic (Ottoman) influence on Lutsk Karaim, see Németh (2011a: 86, 87–88). Seen in this light, *daha* and *tanry*⁸ may possibly point towards Crimean Karaim influence, alone.

3.2. North-western Karaim linguistic features

It is safe to say that from among those features which unquestionably point to one, and only one, reading, the number of north-western elements clearly prevails. This is obviously one of the main arguments in favour of the language of the document being north-western Karaim with non-western insertions, and not a mixed dialect⁹. We shall list here evidence of this supposition:

⁶ The orthographic variant כּוֹפּ (55:9) can, however, be read only as KarT. *kop*.

⁷ In Németh (2012: 154) we treated the linguistic material shared by south-western and eastern Karaim somewhat differently, namely as speaking in favour of south-western reading. Our reason for such an interpretation was that in the manuscript edited there we found no traits of purely eastern Karaim influence. Here, however, as will be argued below, there are some features that seem to be rather of eastern Karaim origin. Moreover, the two words that belong to the KarLC. group may very plausibly be of eastern origin, too; see below.

⁸ The typically Ottoman velar vocalism of *tanry* in Crimean Karaim was recently mentioned by Schönig (2010: 110).

⁹ It should be mentioned that the issue of a mingling of the Karaim dialects has been raised hitherto several times (e.g. Kowalski 1929; Dubiński 1968: 215), yet it has not been exhaustively described. During our visits to archives we have encountered texts (among them, importantly, also prayers in handwritten prayer books) which exhibit heterogeneous dialectal features.

1. the **η* > *j* change: in possessive suffixes, e.g. in ביטיגיי *bitiǰij* ‘your (sg.) letter’ (55:3), ביטיגייזדא *bitiǰijizda* ‘in your (pl.) letter’ (44:14), and in personal endings, e.g. in אללטטי *allatyj* ‘you (sg.) have informed’ (44:23), קולדוויז *koldujuz* ‘you (pl.) have asked’ (44:14);
2. the **e* > *a* change: in the present tense marker, e.g. in בילדלר *biladlar* ‘they know’ (55:25), כירביז *kořabiř* ‘we see’ (44:10), in the conditional mood marker, e.g. in בקרסם *beřsam* ‘if I give’ (55:9), in the negative suffixes, e.g. in אימסכא *ijmařka* ‘not to send’ (44:6), כירמדים *kořmadim* ‘I did not see’ (44:5), in the plural suffixes, e.g. in ביטיכלרדן *bitiklarđan* ‘from the letters’ (44:9), אובדלר *obadlar* ‘they kiss’ (55:28), in case suffixes, e.g. in דיביטלרדא *kibitlarđa* ‘in the shops’ (55:18), ביטיכלרדן *bitiklarđan* ‘from the letters’ (44:9), in the deverbal nominal suffix *-ma*, e.g. in אימא *ijma* ‘to send’ (44:11), טוגלמא *tuǰallama* ‘to finish’ (44:19), in the past participle suffix, e.g. in איילגן *ijilǰan* ‘sent’ (55:22), כײלגן *kijilǰan* ‘worn’ (55:24);
3. the **ü* > *u* change: in the stem, e.g. in בױטון *buřun* ‘whole’ (44:27), טוגלמא *tuǰallama* ‘to finish’ (44:19), in suffixes, e.g. in כלױצו *klawcu* ‘the one who wishes’ (44:21), כירדזמיט *kořduřmit* ‘does not show’ (44:28);
4. the **aj* > *ej* change, which is clearly visible in the fully vocalised optative form כירױגיי *kořej* ‘may he see’ (55:8) and the word אױי *alej* ‘in a such way’ (55:28) – based on these forms we reconstruct an *aj* > *ej* change in all the other cases where the vowel points are not there, e.g. בולסייט *bolsejt* ‘if there is’ (55:13), יזגיידים *jazhejdydym* ‘I would write’ (55:13), יזסייז *jazsejyz* ‘if you write’ (44:21), אולשכי *ulařkej* ‘may it be divided’ (44:18);
5. the converbial use of the *-adohon* present participle suffix in קולדוגון *koladohon* ‘asking’ (44:15) – eastern Karaim lacks this suffix (see Prik 1976: 121–124); in south-western Karaim its equivalent (*-adohan*) can be used only as a present participle (see Zajączkowski 1931: 29; Németh 2011b: 113, 125);
6. verbal forms abbreviated in a typically north-western manner, see 4. below.

3.3. South-western Karaim linguistic features

The most reliable south-western features we find in the text are the lack of the **η* > **j* and the **ü* > *u* change in several word forms. Instead, we have words with *n* and *i*, respectively, see: יזמסאניז *jazmasanyz* ‘lit. if you do not write’ (44:13), קבול איטטיניז *kabuľ ettiņiz* ‘you (pl.) have received’ (44:23–24), כבודונא *kawoduna* ‘to you’ (55:4, 28), כבודונזגא ~ כבודונזגא ~ כבודונזגא *kawodunuzga* ‘to you (sir)’ (44:7; 55:10; 44:12, correspondingly), איצין *ićin* ‘for’ (55:3), and טיױל *tiwul* ‘not’ (55:24) pro *jazmasejyz*, *kabuľ effliǰiz*, *kawoduja*, *kawodujuzga*, *kollaryjyzny*, *üćuň*, and *tuwul*.

For further, possibly south-western, abbreviated verbal forms see 4. below.

This kind of dialectal heterogeneity may, however, be the result of many factors (e.g. unusual use of vowel points, stylistic reasons, copying texts written in another dialect, idiolectal features, interdialectal loans, etc.), thus further investigation and a representative corpus of texts are needed to describe this phenomenon meticulously.

3.4. Eastern Karaim linguistic features

Besides *daha* and *tanry* mentioned above, there are a few words that might be classified as eastern Karaim:

1. The most frequently used is *tota* (a word used for addressing older women; ‘aunt’), attested five times, in four different forms, as טוֹטאַ נִי *totany* (acc.) (55:7), טוֹטאַ גַּאֵ טוֹטאַ גַּאֵ ~ (dat.) (55:6, 15, respectively), טוֹטאַרְהַא *totalarha* (pl., dat.) (55:28), and טוֹטאַמאַ *totama* (1st sg. poss., dat.) (55:30). It is most probably a loanword from Crimean Karaim, see KarC. *tota* id. see KRPS (539). This is the only word that may be classified as eastern Karaim in manuscript no. 55^{II}.
2. The case of הֶפּ *hep* (44:9) used in the collocation *hep bir* ‘doesn’t matter; makes no difference’ (44:9) is interesting.

The word, and the collocation it is used in, were seen previously only in the eastern dialect: see KarC. *χep* ‘1. all; 2. always’ (KRPS 165, s.v. *xəən^I*, Aqtay 2009: I 624) and *χep bir* ~ *χeppir* ~ *χepisi bir* id. (KRPS 165, s.v. *xəən^I*, *xəənucu*, *xəənnup*). Another word form in which the word *χep* is very frequently used is KarC. *χepisi* ~ *χepsi* ‘all, everything’ (KRPS 165). The Crimean Karaim word is apparently an Ottoman loanword, cf. Ott. *χep* ‘1. all; 2. always’ and *χepsi*, the latter being a derivative from *χep* with a 3rd sg. possessive suffix doubly used (see VEWT 158), i.e. *χep* → *χep-i-si* > (due to the so called *Mittelsilbenschwund*) *χep-si*.

Even though we cannot find the word *hep* in western Karaim dictionaries, its limited use is documented in KarT. *hepsi* but with the meaning ‘many’, see Kowalski (1929: 189, s.v. *yepsi*)¹⁰. It is attested also in document no 44^{II} as הֶפְסִי *hepsi* – and means ‘all of them’ (44:9) – along with KarT. הֶפּ בִּיר *hep bir* (44:9).

The meaning reconstructed for הֶפְסִי *hepsi* is clearly prompted by the context (see lines 44:7–9) and well-founded in the light of the Ottoman and Crimean Karaim data. Its use, in the sense of ‘many’, recorded by Kowalski (1929) could have evolved under the influence of KarT. *kopśu* ‘many’ which has the same morphologic structure: *kopśu* ← **kopuśu* ← *kop* ‘much, a lot’ (Kowalski 1929: 222). This seems all the more justified, as Kowalski (1929: 189) instructs the reader to refer to *kopśu* when explaining the meaning of *hepsi*.

However, the question remains why the *χ* > *h* change has taken place.

Aqtay (2009: I 624) notes the word both as *hep* and *hep* (in Aqtay’s transcription), which indicates that the word could have been written in eastern Karaim with *cheth* (ח) and *he* (ה), respectively. This, in turn, would suggest different kinds of articulation. But when we checked the 19 occurrences of the word in the facsimile (Aqtay 2009: II), it was found that it was always written with *cheth* (as הֶיפּ, הֶיפּ, and הֶפּ). We cannot be, however, sure in respect of one illegible attestation (see folio 160, line 7) since the quality of the copy Aqtay had to work on was, unfortunately, rather poor.

For the time being we may only speculate whether the *χ* ~ *h* alternation already existed in eastern Karaim. Such word pairs as KarC. *heč* ‘nothing’ (KRPS 166,

¹⁰ The attestation from the latter source is repeated in KRPS (165, s.v. *xəəncu*).

s.v. *zəzəy*) ~ KarC. *χeč* (KRPS 608, s.v. *xəzəy* and KRPS 610, s.v. *xəy*) would indirectly support such an interpretation.

3. According to the available dictionaries the word טוזטמא *tuzatma* ‘to carry out’ (44:19) was hitherto recorded only in Crimean Karaim (see KRPS 545); we shall, for the time being, treat it as an eastern Karaim loanword.
4. Even though the word *artyχ* ~ *artyk* is known in western Karaim, the meanings ‘1. the best; 2. more; 3. yet; 4. again; 5. (with negative verb) any more, no longer’ (Kowalski 1929: 158; Mardkowicz 1935: 10; KRPS 75, 76; Németh 2011a: 267) do not fit in with the context in line 44:24. There the meaning of the word seems to be affected by KarC. *artyq* ‘1. additional, superfluous; 2. surfeit; 3. more’ (KRPS 76). Based on the latter we reconstructed אַרְטִיְהִינְ *artyhyn* ‘surfeit, something extra (poss. 3rd sg., acc.)’ (44:24).

It is important to note that we cannot find traces of eastern Karaim morphologic or structural influences.

Moreover, the Crimean influence should be interpreted as the result of the many years *Jehoszafat Kapłanowski* lived with Karaims who had their roots in the Crimean Karaim communities.¹¹

3.5. Etymological doublets

Interestingly, we find some word pairs that are constituted from words that belong to different dialects, yet have the same etymological root, see KarT. טיוול *tuwul* ‘not’ (55:12) and KarL. טיוול *tiwil* id. (55:24), KarT. טינרי *teńri* ‘God’ (44:27; 55:8) and KarC. (or KarL.?, see above) טנרי *tanry* id. (55:29) or KarT. אונצון ~ אונצון *üčün* ‘about’ (44:10, 55:32, 55:20, respectively) and KarL. איצין *icin* ‘for’ (55:3).

3.6 Blends

Interestingly enough, we found one word that shows features of two different dialects: איזימדין *ežimdań* ‘from myself’ (55:5) is a blend between KarT. *öžurmdań* and KarL. *ežimden* id.

4. Unusual linguistic peculiarities

Some comments are required at this point on certain unusual or irregular linguistic features. We have collected linguistic data, which is reliably attested and is difficult to explain as simply clerical errors.

¹¹ We know that most of the Karaims living in Odessa were of Crimean origin. If we turn to Sinani (1888: 112), we find a list of book subscribers living there, the majority of which have surnames characteristic of Crimean Karaims.

4.1. Abbreviated verbal forms

The two manuscripts contain a certain group of shortened verbal forms: these are mostly abbreviated present tense forms, but we also found similar three future tense forms, one past conditional and one past optative form. Nevertheless, their number is not large enough to formulate general and complex conclusions (this will be the subject of a future study), but for now let us present some observations:

In western Karaim, abbreviated verbal forms occur when personal endings, the auxiliary verb, or verbal time markers become shortened or syncopated. These two processes may co-occur in the present and future tense forms (since from among the existing tense markers only the present tense *-j-* and the future tense *-r-* marker tend to be dropped) with the sole restriction that in south-western Karaim *-j-* seems not to be syncopated (see also our comment below).

For shortened personal endings see *בולמסט* *bolmast* ‘it will not be’ (44:25) ← *bolmastyr*, *בילדלר* *bilad’lar* ‘they know’ (55:25) ← *biladi’lar*, *צַיַּט* *čyhat* ‘goes out’ (55:9), *איימא* *ijam* ‘I send’ (44:11, 13, 18, 21) ← *ijamiñ* (as attested in line 55:20), *יַזְדִּי* *jazady* ‘writes’ (44:10) ← *jazadyr*, *יַזְדִּילר* *jazad’lar* (55:32) ← *jazadyrlar*, *יזם* *jazam* ‘I write’ (55:12) ← *jazamyn*, *יזט* *jazat* ‘writes’ (55:14) ← *jazadyr*, *אולטורדלר* *olturad’lar* ‘they sit’ (55:18) ← *olturadyrlar*, *קילרס* *kylars* ‘you will do’ (55:6) ← *kylarsyn*, *אובדלר* *obad’lar* ‘they kiss’ (55:28) ← *obadi’lar*, *טורט* ~ *טורט* *turat* ‘stands’ (44:16, 55:32, respectively) ← *turadyr*. Further examples, in which both personal endings and tense markers are syncopated, are listed below.

Interestingly enough, in *יַזְדִּי* *jazady* ‘writes’ (44:10) ← *jazadyr* and *קילד* *kylad* ‘he does’ (44:28) ← *kyladyr* we see the *-dyr* > *-dy* ~ *-d* shortening process which is, according to some of the available grammatical descriptions, characteristic rather of south-western Karaim.¹² Based on some of these descriptions, in north-western Karaim we would expect *jazat* and *kylat*, forms which, in turn, do not appear in south-western texts. The question remains whether they are to be treated as south-western elements used deliberately by the author to make his letter sound somewhat more Lutsk Karaim, or whether this type of shortening was also characteristic of Trakai Karaim. In the light of the unedited manuscripts we have access to, the latter is more plausible – at least as far as the very rarely used KarT. *-dy* is concerned. Thus far we have not encountered *-d* in north-western Karaim (except in the analysed form).

The auxiliary verb *el-* is syncopated in the past conditional and past optative forms *בולסייט* *bolsejt* ‘if there was’ (55:13) ← *bolsa edi*, and *יזגידיים* *jazhejdym* ‘I would have written’ (55:13) ← *jazhej edim*. These processes are well documented.

In the analysed material the *-a-* ~ *-’a-* present tense marker is never syncopated, which is in general also true for western Karaim. It was probably retained because otherwise the personal endings would have been added directly to the stem (a structure which is a distinctive feature of the imperative mood; otherwise personal ending always follow the tense markers). Dropping the *-a-* ~ *-’a-* tense

¹² For the respective 3rd sg. personal endings in present tense forms see: Pritsak (1959: 337): KarT. *-t* vs. KarL. *-dy* ~ *-d*; Musaev (1964: 278): KarT. *-dy* ~ *-t* vs. KarL. *-dy* ~ *-t*; Prik (1976: 128): KarT. *-d* ~ *-t* vs. KarL. *-dy* ~ *-d* ~ *-t*; Musaev (1977: 49): KarT. and KarL. *-dy* ~ *-d* ~ *-t*; Németh (2011b: 32): KarT. *-t* vs. KarL. *-dy* ~ *-d*. There is no trace of KarL. *-t* in the sources we have seen so far.

marker would also cause consonant clusters (often in a word-final position) that would be inconvenient to articulate. Moreover, the syncope of the present tense marker after a stem ending in a consonant would make the shortening of personal endings alien to Karaim for phonotactic reasons or would result in homonymic word pairs, cf. such hypothetic abbreviated word forms as KarT. *ket-* ‘to travel; to go’: (1st sg.) *ketarim* → ***ketrim* ~ ***ketm*, (2nd sg.) *ketasim* → ***ketšim* ~ ***ketš*, (3rd sg.) *ketadir* → ***ketfir* ~ ***ketf*, KarL. *kał-* ‘to stay’: (3rd sg.) *kaładyr* → ***kałdyr* [= *kałdyr* ‘leave (imperat. 2nd sg.)’] ~ ***kałdy* [= *kałdy* ‘he stayed (praet. 3rd sg.)’] ~ ***kałd*.

The syncope of *-j-* is attested only in negative verb forms. In fact, there is only one full negative present tense form, namely יזמימין *jazmyjmyjn* ‘I will not write’ (55:16), but the same verb is twice found as abbreviated form, see below. Even though the attested verbs are not representative enough (there are only five verbs ending in a vowel in the two manuscripts and none of them appear in non-negated present tense form, see *alla-*, *e-*¹³, *jamanla-*, *oXu-*, *tany-* in the dictionary in Németh 2013a), it is valid to say that the syncope of the *-j-* tense marker tended to occur in present tense negative verb forms. This is because the present tense is the only category in which the **-ma-* ~ **-me-* negative suffix underwent a **-ma-* > *-my-* and **-me-* > *-mi-* change influenced by the *-j-* tense marker following it. As a result of the **-ma-j-* > *-my-j-* and **-me-j-* > *-mi-j-* change, the *-my-* ~ *-mi-* negative suffixes appeared to be sufficient for speakers of north-western Karaim to indicate the tense.¹⁴ Seen in this light, the negated present tense forms אַלְלָמִים *attamym* ‘I do not understand’ (55:33) ← *attamyjmyjn*, בִּילְמִים *bil̄mim*¹⁵ ‘I don’t know’ (55:13) ~ בִּילְמִימִין *bil̄mimim* ‘I don’t know’ (44:6)¹⁶ ← *bil̄mijmim*, בִּילְמִיבִיז *bil̄mibiž* ‘we do not know’ (44:11) ← *bil̄mijbiž*, בּוֹלְלָמִים *bołamym* ‘I cannot’ (55:25) ← *bołatmyjmyjn*, קִילְמִידְלַר *kyłmydłar* ‘they do not act’ (44:25) ← *kyłmyjdyrlar*, כּוֹףְגּוֹזְמִיט *kořǫžmıit* ‘does not show’ (44:28; the word is erroneously spelled) ← *kořǫžmijđir*, יזְמִים *jazmym* ‘I do not write’ (55:11, 32) ← *jazmyjmyjn*, סִיּוֹמִים *šiw̄mim* ‘I do not like’ (55:14) ← *šiw̄mijmim*, and טַנְיִמִים *tanyymym* ‘I don’t know’ (44:8) ← *tanymyjmyjn* reflect inflecting rather than agglutinative word structures.

Such vocalized forms as סִיּוֹמִים *šiw̄mim* are all the more important, as they clearly show the chronology of the changes we presented above: **-mej* > *-mij* > *-mim*.

¹³ This verb, however, cannot in general be used in present and future tenses.

¹⁴ This is one of the reasons (besides the context and the lack of comparative data) we have interpreted the south-western word forms בּוֹלְסִמְמִין *bohusmamen* ‘I will not be of help to it’ (41:17) and קַיְטַרְמַשִּׁז *kajtarmašiz* ‘lit. you will not send (it) back’ (52:22) in Németh (2011a: 47) as shortened forms of *bohusmammen* and *kajtarmaššiz* (fut.), respectively, rather than of *bohusmajmen* and *kajtarmajšiz* (praes.). Although we cannot provide other reliable examples of dropping the *-j-* tense marker in south-western Karaim, what we have asserted still seems valid.

¹⁵ Even though this particular form could have been irregularly shortened by means of frequency – cf. KarL. *bim* < *bil̄nejm* < *bil̄nejmen* ‘I don’t know’ (Németh 2011: 212, fn. 463; see also Rudkowski 1931: 35 where *bim* is also attested in a text that resembles a colloquial conversation) – the other examples of shortened negative present tense forms allow us to describe this process as a regular abbreviation rather than an irregular sound change caused by frequent use.

¹⁶ The structure reflected in the word form *bil̄mimim* seems to be rather rare, since the syncope of *-j-* is usually accompanied by the shortening of personal endings, cf. *bil̄mim* ‘I do not know’ (55:13) < KarT. *bil̄mijmim*.

It is important to mention this especially in the light of J. Sulimowicz's catalogue, in which the last four words of letter 44^{II} are transcribed as "ki korduzmeť bitikłarni kahalħa"; he deciphered the word mentioned above (כִּירְדוּזְמֵט) as *korduzmeť* with *-meť*, suggesting a *-mejť > -meť* change. The latter interpretation, however, does not explain the well-documented *e > i* change.

In the case of non-negated forms the situation is somewhat different. Dropping the tense marker would yield forms with personal endings attached to the stem, which is, as we mentioned, against Karaim (and, in general, Turkic) morphotactics.

The syncope of *-j-* is also characteristic of present-day north-western Karaim.

In the case of future tense forms the reduction of the tense marker is only seen in אייטִים *ajtym* (44:7) ← *ajtyrm*. In this word, the personal ending is attached to the tense marker's vowel (*-yr- > -y-*) – which always remains intact in such cases similarly to south-western Karaim (cf. Németh 2011a: 47) – probably in order not to attach the personal ending to the stem. This seems to be supported by the fact that *-r-* is never syncopeated when attached to a stem ending in a vowel, see the examples in Németh (2011a: 47).

It is difficult to answer the question as to what stylistic value the abbreviated word forms had. They could not have sounded too colloquial as letter no. 44^{II} is a letter dealing with official matters. Furthermore, even though letter no. 55^{II} was sent to the author's kinsman (see Németh 2013a) and, consequently, its language is somewhat less formal¹⁷, the number of abbreviated verb forms is not much greater¹⁸. It seems, therefore, that the use of the full or the abbreviated forms was stylistically irrelevant, at least for the author of the letters under analysis.

4.2. Abbreviated copula suffix

There is one example of a 3rd sg. copula suffix being shortened in a manner which in certain grammatical descriptions is ascribed only to south-western Karaim, namely ברדי *bardy* 'there is' (44:11).¹⁹ The usual north-western form is *bart*, which is also attested in this manuscript, see בַּרְט *bart* id. (44:11). Here, too, the question remains whether *bardy* should be treated as a south-western Karaim interpolation or whether it suggests the unusual *-dyr > -dy* change was also taking place in Trakai Karaim.

¹⁷ A good example that demonstrates its less formal character is the use of the word *kawod* 'sir', which appears mostly with the 2nd singular possessive suffix (except in one case in line 10) and not the 2nd plural one as is the case in letter no. 44^{II}.

¹⁸ More precisely: there are more abbreviated forms in letter no. 55^{II}, but this may be because it is almost twice as long as letter no 44^{II} and, additionally, in the latter manuscript the narration is mostly in the past tense which is not abbreviated (cf. 4 past tense forms as opposed to 13, in manuscript no. 44^{II}).

¹⁹ For the respective 3rd p. sg. predicative suffix see: Pritsak (1959: 334): KarL. *-d* vs. KarL. *-d ~ -dy*; Musaev (1964: 129–130, not written clearly): KarL. and KarL. *-dy ~ -d*; Prik (1976: 64, not written clearly): KarL. and KarL. *-dy ~ -d*; Musaev (1977: 25): *-dy ~ -d*; Németh (2011b: 42): KarL. *-t ~ KarL. -dy ~ -d*. We have not encountered KarL. *-dy* and *-d* yet (except the analysed *bardy*); the grammars we mention do not support KarL. *-d* with examples, Musaev (1964) mentions that *-dy* appears in proverbs.

4.3. Unusual form of the dative case suffix

Case suffixes after first names and family names highlights a further peculiarity. Curious as it may seem, the dative case suffix attached to anthroponyms is always written with an initial *g-* (or *h-*, the writing does not make it clear) ~ *ǵ-* (we reconstructed the palatality, yet, this is not reflected in the writing) and never becomes assimilated to *k-* ~ *k-*. We noticed this in Németh (2012: 143), but interpreted the word form **גא בבויץ גא** (43:19) as an error and transcribed it as *Babowiczka* without an explanation. When seen in the light of other, similar data, namely **גא מגס גא** *Magasga* (44:7), **גא ביזוכיוויץ גא** *Bezikowiczga* (44:26), and **גא שלומית גא** *Szelomitga* (55:30), this phenomenon can hardly be interpreted as an error, but rather as a specific feature of the spelling system used by *Jehoszafat Kapłanowski*. The question remains as to what his reasons were for such spelling. We may only speculate that he used the basic form of the dative case suffixes (i.e. those used after vowels, which are therefore not unvoiced) in order to highlight the surname.

It is hard to determine the range of this phenomenon. There are no other appellatives ending in an unvoiced consonant and used in the dative case in the texts under analysis, however, there is one example in letter no. 43, line 27, namely **יחשיי בא ליך בא** *jaxšyłyčka* ‘for good (deeds)’ (Németh 2012: 144). Besides, we find **אדסטא** *Adešta* ‘in Odessa’ (55:17, it is difficult to judge whether the suffix is written as a one word with the stem, or not, see facsimile) but with the initial *-d* in the locative suffix changed into *-t*. It seems, therefore, that the “rule” described only applies to anthroponyms, but this is mere supposition. It should be, however, mentioned that in Eastern Karaim this phenomenon appears also in appellatives, cf. CKar. **אולתדן** *olatdan* ‘from the plague’ (Psalm 91:6; a copy currently edited).

4.4. Unusual form of the 2nd p. sg. copula suffix

Another irregularity in suffixation is the use of the 2nd sg. copula suffix *-sun* instead of the expected *-syn* in the word **דוגרוסון** *duhrusun* ‘you are right’ (44:8).²⁰ Even though we cannot be sure about the reasons for this change, there seems to be three possible scenarios leading to such labialization.²¹

Firstly, this could have happened per analogy with the set of suffixes in the 3rd sg. person, cf. KarT. *-tyr* ~ *-fir* ~ *-tur* ~ *-tur* ~ *-dyr* ~ *-dir* ~ *-dur* ~ *-dur*, or with the set of 3rd sg. imperative mood suffixes, namely *-syn* ~ *-šin* ~ *-sun* ~ *-šun*.

Secondly, we must not ignore the possible influence of the Crimean linguistic milieu: in the dialects of Crimean Tatar, suffixes which only have illabial forms in the “standard” language, tend to have labial variants, too, and to this group also belongs the *-syn* 2nd sg. copula suffix (see Jankowski 2010: 106–107). In this case

²⁰ The standard forms, both in Crimean and Trakai Karaim, have only unrounded vowels, see KarC. *-syn* ~ *-sin* in Prik (1976: 63) and KarT. *-syn* ~ *-šin* in Musaev (1964: 128) and Németh (2011b: 42). In south-western Karaim the equivalent is *-sen*, see e.g. Zajączkowski (1931: 25).

²¹ Obviously, the well-known labialization of unrounded high vowels adjacent to labial consonants (characteristic of all three Karaim dialects, see e.g. Aqtay 2009: I 35; Zajączkowski 1931: 8; Musaev 1964: 55) cannot be the case here.

the *-y- > -u-* change would be a trace of the ultimate Oghuzic influence via the Crimea, since we know that the range of labial harmony in (Crimean) Ottoman was much wider than in the Kipchak languages of the Crimea (see e.g. Doerfer 1959a: 273), cf. the variants of the 2nd sg. copula suffix: *-syn* ~ *-siŋ* ~ *-sun* ~ *-süŋ* (Doerfer 1959a: 277; *-ŋ* alternated dialectally with *-n*). The most significant difference between the rules according to which labial harmony operated, on the one hand, in Crimean Tatar, Karaim and Armeno-Kipchak, and, on the other hand, in Ottoman Turkish, is that in the relevant Kipchak languages we only encounter this type of assimilation in most cases as far as the second syllable, see Jankowski (2010: 107; 2012: 257)²², Prik (1976: 37), Grunin (1967: 349), and on occasion not even in the second syllable (for Crimean Tatar, see Jankowski 1992: 65; for Crimean Karaim see Prik 1976: 37).²³ This is also observed in the language of *Codex Comanicus* (von Gabain 1959: 52). The Oghuzic influence is clearly corroborated by the fact that we often find etymological doublets in Crimean Tatar in which the etymologically Oghuzic forms retain labial suffix variants, while Kiptchak forms do not, cf. CTat. *durup* (Oghuz. *d-*) ~ *turyp* (Kipch. *t-*) ‘standing (conv.)’ (Jankowski 1992: 65).

We must, however, note that Crimean Karaim is a much more likely candidate for to have influenced *Jehoszafat Kapłonowski*’s language than Crimean Tatar or Ottoman. Despite this, the phenomenon is not attested in eastern Karaim²⁴ which makes the “Crimean” influence somewhat less plausible and weakens an explanation based on external influences. At the same time, if we agree that all we know about labial harmony in Crimean Karaim strongly resembles what we see in Crimean Tatar, then it becomes very probable that the Oghuzic influence mentioned above was characteristic of Crimean Karaim, too.

In the light of these uncertainties, for the time being we cannot treat the *-sun* variant of *-syn* as a reliable eastern Karaim feature.

Thirdly, a purely phonetically motivated assimilation should also be taken into consideration even though it is difficult to find analogical examples for a *u-u-y > u-u-u* change. Cf, however, KarT. **bulaj > buluj* (~ *butej*) ‘this way, in this manner’ (KRPS 139), where the *u-a > u-u* assimilation cannot but be phonetically motivated.

4.5. Consonant-harmony in Russian loans

Even though attested only in two words, it is worth mentioning that in Russian loan-words in which there is a palatal consonant in the etymon, the consonants in the Karaim

²² Additionally, there are some Crimean Karaim texts in which, according to Jankowski (1997: 10), labial harmony operates as far as the second suffix.

²³ With certain restrictions, this feature is characteristic of the Kipchak languages of the Crimean area in general. For a more detailed description see Doerfer (1959b: 375).

²⁴ Although in the latest linguistic description of the Crimean Karaim and Crimean Turkish material we find in *Elijahu ben Josef Qylžy*’s mejuma delivered by Aqtay (2009: I 36) only 1st sg. and pl. copula suffixes are attested, yet the author of that study reconstructs a system of predicative suffixes and notes “-sln” for 2nd sg. We cannot be sure, however, whether *I* in *-sln* stands for *y ~ i ~ u ~ ü* or only for *y ~ i*; it seems that *I* may stand for both sets of vowels in her transcribing system, cf. Aqtay (2009: I 35, s.v. *Vowel assimilation*) and Aqtay (2009: I 39–40, s.v. *Present-future*).

suffixes also contain palatal consonants, i.e. these Slavonic loanwords are also adopted on Karaim linguistic grounds according to consonant-harmony; see: Russ. *Oðecca* > KarT. *Adeś* ‘Odessa’ – for palatal consonants in the word cf. אדעסא *Adeśta* ‘in Odesa (loc.)’ (55:17), and Russ. *погорелец* ‘victim of fire’ > KarT. *pogořelec* [-é?] פוגוריליץ אגא *pogořelečlarǵa* ‘among the victims of the fire (pl., dat.)’ (44:18).

4.6. Erroneous transposing into south-western Karaim

Generally speaking, the author of the letters correctly transposes north-western forms to south-western ones. The only exception is the accusative form of the 2nd sg. possessive form *kawodun* ‘you (sir)’ (< Hebr. קבוד ‘honour, splendour, glory’) in letter 55^{ll}, namely *kawodunu* instead of *kawodunnu*, see כבודונו ~ כבודונו (55:30; 55:7, 15). The north-western Karaim form is *kawodujnu*.

Abbreviations

acc. = accusative; **ArmKipch.** = Armeno-Kipchak; **dat.** = dative; **conv.** = converb; **CTat.** = Crimean Tatar; **fut.** = future tense; **Hebr.** = Hebrew; **IE** = Indo-European; **imperat.** = imperative mood; **Kar.** = Karaim; **KarC.** = eastern (Crimean) Karaim; **KarL.** = south-western (Lutsk) Karaim; **KarT.** = north-western (Trakai) Karaim; **lit.** = literally; **Oghuz.** = Oghuzic; **p.** = (grammatical) person; **pl.** = plural; **poss.** = possessive; **praes.** = present tense; **praet.** = past tense; **Russ.** = Russian; **sg.** = singular.

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