



**A Student of Jewish Languages Reads
Michał Németh's *Unknown Lutsk Karaim
Letters in Hebrew Script (19th–20th Centuries).*
A Critical Edition**

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(New York)

Summary: The Karaite language has justifiably attracted the attention of Turkologists though it should also be of interest to students of Jewish languages (= the languages of Rabbanite and Karaite Jews); and what students of Jewish languages have to say about it should interest Turkologists, just as what the latter have to say should interest the former:

By looking at Karaite (as exemplified in Michał Németh's *Unknown Lutsk Karaim Letters in Hebrew Script (19th–20th Centuries): A Critical Edition*) from the viewpoint of other Jewish languages, researchers can:

1. Add new questions to the agenda of Karaite research. For example, the existence of an idiosyncratic type of periphrastic verb in at least Karaite, Judezmo, Yidish, and Ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazic English prompts the question of what the genetic relationships between the tokens of that type are.
2. Reopen old questions. *synagog'*, with phonological variants, comes from Arabic. The author proposes a different etymology (possibly not original with him), involving only Jewish languages (a more appropriate derivation for a Karaite word having that meaning), which takes the Karaite word back to Hebrew and/or to Jewish Aramaic.

Keywords: Hebrew-Aramaic, Jewish intralinguistics, Karaite, Slavic languages, Yidish

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I. Introduction

An enormous amount of work has gone into the composition of the impressive 416-page book under review here. Michał Németh (henceforth M. N.) presents (1) photographic reproductions of sixteen letters in Lutsk Karaite, (2) a transcription of the portions of the texts when he is sure or at least fairly sure of the pronunciation and (3) a transliteration when he is not sure (Lutsk Karaite now being dormant, fieldwork with native speakers is no longer possible and existing phonological descriptions do not provide all the desired information, they contain mistakes, and in certain respects they contradict one another), (4) an English translation, (5) an especially detailed introduction, about 135 pages, (6) copious notes both to the (romanized) texts and to the translations, and (7) a generous supplement, about 100 pages, consisting of a glossary, lists of four kinds of lexical items appearing in the letters (morphemes, geographical names, personal names, and abbreviations), and three maps.¹

The material varies according to (1) time (the sixteen letters were written between 1841 ~ 1842 ~ 1843 and 1923), (2) the intended addressees (eleven are private letters and six are public ones), (3) the writers' competence in Karaite and in Hebrew-Aramaic,² (4) the degree to which Polish, Russian,

¹ My thanks go to Sacha Casseus (of the Windsor Park Library) and Michael J. Flory (of the New York State Institute for Basic Research in Developmental Disabilities), both of whom spared no effort to rescue the manuscript of this review-essay from irretrievable loss in the bowels of my computer ("Men have become the tools of their tools" – Henry David Thoreau); to Regina Frackowiak (of the European Division of the Library of Congress), who with her characteristic devotion to scholarship and efficiency in ferreting out exactly what I was looking for, took the time and made the effort to check many Ukrainian dictionaries until she found two that suited my purpose; to Fadi Khodr for help with Arabic; to Rabbi Yamin Levy (of the Iranian Jewish Center / Beth Hadassah Synagogue) for help with Gidi; to Marilyn Robinson, for bringing a Russian reference to my attention; to Roy Rosenstein for leading me to Fadi Khodr; and to Chandani Gunasekera (of the Windsor Park Library) for making my visits there as pleasant as they were numerous.

² *Hebrew-Aramaic* is a cover term for a continuum at one end of which is Hebrew without a single element of Jewish Aramaic origin and at the other end of which is Jewish Aramaic without a single element of Hebrew origin and between the two extremes is a theoretically endless number of varieties of Hebrew and of Jewish Aramaic containing varying amounts of Jewish Aramaic and of Hebrew respectively.

and Ukrainian influenced their written Karaite, and (4) the degree to which each letter is uniform in spelling.

Since all sixteen letters were written by men, comparisons between men's and women's written Karaite is impossible (see sections VII.A and VIII.A for two ways in which written Karaite may differ according to the gender of the writer), though maybe other letters in Karaite could be used for that purpose, though M. N. tells me that he has never seen anything written by women in Karaite-alphabet Karaite.

The corpus of sixteen letters being relatively small, determining where certain usages lie along the idiolectal – universal continuum may not be feasible either (section VII.D suggests that two spellings in the corpus, each of which occurs just once, are probably slips of the pen, whether due to momentary inadvertence or insufficient knowledge of the conventional spelling of certain words belonging to Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite, hence not just idiolectalisms but also possibly momentary ones).³

In the six public letters, we expect the writing not only to be more carefully written but also to lie more toward the universal than toward the idiolectal end of the continuum (M. N. tells me that the public letters meet both those expectations).

Twelve letters are published here for the time and four were first published in 1933 by Alexander Mardkowicz, a native speaker of Lutsk Karaite, a Karaite writer, and a Karaite activist, but he did not analyze them and his edition does not meet today's standards (Németh 2009). Fortunately, M. N. was able to see the originals of four of the six (two originals could not be located) and thus now offers us a better edition.

II. Jewish intralinguistics

Jewish intralinguistics is the comparative study of the speech and writing of Jews and related groups. The linguistic material to be compared is gathered not according to genetic criteria (as, for example, in Austronesian linguistics and Slavic linguistics) or areal criteria (as, for example, in Balkan, Baltic, Caribbean, and Mediterranean intralinguistics) but according to an ethnic

³ A *component* of a language consists of all elements of that language which derive from the same source, such as the German component of Polish or the French component of English.

criterion, so that Jewish intralinguistics is analogous to such branches of linguistics as Christian intralinguistics (under which falls, for example, the work of Christine Mohrmann, Joseph Schrijnen, and the other members of the *École de Nimègue*), Muslim intralinguistics, and Rom intralinguistics (not to be confused with one of its branches, Romani linguistics, that is, the study of Romani, the chief language of the Roma).

More narrowly focused comparative studies within Jewish intralinguistics can be revealing too, such as:

1. Karaite intralinguistics, the study of the speech and writing of the Karaites: at least Karaite Arabic, Bible Karaite (the variety or varieties of Karaite used to translate the Jewish Bible, sometimes too vaguely and maybe too broadly called “Old Literary Karaite Turkic”), Karaite, Karaite Arabic, Karaite English (Wilensky 2017 describes the largest Karaite community in the English-speaking world), Karaite Greek, Karaite Israeli Hebrew (about four-fifths of the world’s Karaites now live in Israel), Karaite Lithuanian, Karaite Persian, Karaite Polish (see the first two paragraphs of section V.C), Karaite Subbotnik Russian (used by Karaite Subbotnik Jews [Chernin 2011]), Karaite Turkish, Karaite Ukrainian, Karaite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic, and Karaite Yidish (Kizilov 2009: 167 and 263 reports certain Karaites’ use of Yidish as a second language).

Listed above are certain lects (to use a neutral term instead of having to make an arbitrary classification into “languages” and “dialects”) that have been important Karaite vernaculars. Others, such as Karaite Lithuanian, Karaite Polish and Karaite Russian were once second, third, or fourth languages of native, primary, and habitual speakers of Karaite but with the increasing dormancy of Karaite are becoming native languages. All deserve study.

2. Sefaradic intralinguistics, the comparative study of the speech and writing of the Jews of the Iberian Peninsula and their descendents elsewhere.

This review-essay gives several examples of how a comparison of Karaite and other Jewish languages results in a better understanding of Karaite (the number of examples is small because the Karaite corpus considered here is almost always just the sixteen letters in M. N.’s book).

Section IV defines some terms used in Jewish intralinguistics that are useful not only in the study of the speech and writing of Jews but also, with appropriate adjustments, elsewhere in the study of human speech and writing.

III. The tree model of evolution of human language is unsuitable for most Jewish languages

The Germanic language spoken in Pennsylvania and other states of the United States called *Pennsilfaanisch* and *Pennsilfaanisch Deutsch* in the language itself and *Pennsylvanish* and *Pennsylvania German* in English started to take shape in the late seventeenth century when speakers of German in the Palatinate and, to a lesser extent, in other parts of High German speech territory began settling in several British colonies in North America that later became part of the United States.

According to the tree model of the evolution of human speech (also called *the cladistic model*, *the genetic model*, and *the stammbaum model*), first proposed by August Schleicher in 1853, each language evolves from a single parent language, and languages sharing the same parent belong to the same family of languages. Thus, Pennsylvanish derives from a single parent, High German.

If one tries to apply the tree model to the speech of Jews, one finds that it may or may not be suitable for the earliest known Jewish language, Hebrew, it may or may not be suitable for Karaite, and it is not suitable for any other Jewish language.

With respect to Hebrew, if one accepts the current opinion of a majority of researchers that the earliest Jews were the Israelites and that the Israelites were an outgrowth of the Canaanites (Frendo 2004), the model applies, but if one accepts the minority opinion that the Jewish people resulted from a blend of those Israelites and the Hebrews (a group of nomads who settled in Canaan) (Davies 2004), it does not apply because in that case Hebrew would be the result of a blend of (1) one or more varieties of Canaanite and (2) one or more languages other than Canaanite.

The tree model is unsuitable for all later Jewish languages. The outer history of Yidish, for example, is not at all similar to that of Pennsylvanish because it did not begin to take shape when a group or groups of Germanophones emigrated from German speech territory and settled elsewhere. Rather, Jews speaking one or more languages other than German (namely, Jewish French and Jewish Italian) settled on German speech territory and sooner or later a shift of languages from Jewish French and Jewish Italian to German occurred, the result being a Jewish variety of German that had a Jewish French and Jewish Italian substratum and which evolved into today's Yidish. In contrast, the substratum of Pennsylvanish is certain earlier varieties of

German spoken by people who did not have the separate identity which their descendents (speakers of Pennsylvanish) were to have.

Which is to say, Yidish is not an outgrowth of German in the same way that Pennsylvanish is an outgrowth of German because whereas the first speakers of Pennsylvanish were German-speaking Germans, the first speakers of Yidish were not German-speaking Germans. Indeed, those speakers of Jewish French and Jewish Italian who came into contact with German (as well as their descendents down to the nineteenth century) never learned to speak German exactly as native speakers of German spoke it (nor did they have any desire to do so), so that, to use Schleicher's tree metaphor, the Yidish branch has never touched its German trunk.

Later, after that Jewish variety of German became recognizably Yidish, speakers of Yidish came into contact with a probably smaller group of Jews, speaking one or more Jewish languages largely of Slavic origin, and that group and/or their descendents sooner or later began shifting to Yidish, as a result of which Yidish came to have one or more additional substratal languages.

To that brief sketch of the factors resulting in the emergence of Yidish must be added Hebrew-Aramaic, which, though no longer an everyday spoken language by the time Yidish began emerging, has played an important role in its emergence and development because it is the language of the Jewish Bible, of the Talmud, of other sacred Jewish texts, and of most of the set Ashkenazic prayers, as well as the prestigious language in the Jewish world, as shown by the literal meaning of its name in several Jewish languages, 'the Holy Language'.

IV. Is the tree model suitable for the Karaite language?

The consensus appears to be that the Karaite language arose in Crimea and from there spread westward, but how it arose is still unclear.

The first Karaite to claim that the Northern Karaite Jews (speakers of Karaite and their descendents) were not of the same ancestry as all other Jews may have been Mordechai ben-Yosef Sultanski (Lutsk, c. 1772 – Eupatoria, 1862), himself a Karaite Jew:

All Rabbanites and Karaites who live in European countries are the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, peace be upon them, from the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and the half-tribe of Manasseh. The rest of the Jews, the

nine tribes and the half-tribe of Ephraim, who were expelled by the kings of Ashur, separated from the Kingdom of Judah and resettled into various countries, all confess the same religion and faith as the Karaites' (Sultanski 5680, chapter 3).

He offered, however, no evidence for his assertion.⁴

Whereas Sultanski believed the Northern Karaites to be Jews, certain Northern Karaites made more radical claims in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: (1) the Northern Karaites descend from a Turkic people who converted to the Mosaic faith and (2) that Turkic people is 'the Khazars'. Again, claims made without the presentation of any evidence.

The consensus of latter-day historians who believe that "the conversion of the Khazars" is not a myth is that at first the royal family converted to Rabbanite Judaism and then the elite ~ the nobility ~ the members of the king's court (descriptions of that group differ) did, but not the rest of the population of Khazaria (Golden 2007).

The evidence that they converted specifically to Rabbanite Judaism (thus, to the branch of Judaism that accepts the Talmud [= the Mishna and the Gemara] as a source of Jewish law) is the statement of King Yosef of Khazaria, in his letter to Chasday ibn-Shiprut, that his ancestor, '[King Obadiah of Khazaria] brought in Jewish scholars, and rewarded them with gold and silver. They explained to him the Bible, the Mishna, the Talmud, and the order of divine services.' If the letter is authentic (see below on the belief of certain latter-day historians that "the conversion of the Khazars" is a myth and the manuscripts that supposedly document it are contain nothing but fiction), the Northern Karaites (or any Karaites at all) could not descend from "the Jewish Khazars" because whereas the latter accepted 'the Mishna, the Talmud,' the Karaites categorically reject it, that rejection being, in fact, the chief doctrinal difference between them and Rabbanite Jews.

The fact that "the Jewish Khazars" were Rabbanites, whereas the Karaites are not, seems to be the major piece of evidence that the Northern Karaites do not descend from them, though one could counter-argue that the Northern

⁴ The advantage of the terms *Northern Karaite* and *Southern Karaite* is that they are readily understandable and they are symmetrical. The Northern Karaites are the speakers of Karaite and their descendents. The Southern Karaites are the other Karaites, thus, those who do not speak Karaite and do not descend from speakers of the language.

Karaites do descend from “the Jewish Khazars” and later abjured Rabbanite Judaism in favor of Karaite Judaism.

Other evidence chips away at the belief:

3. Membership in the Priestly and Levitical castes – among both Karaite and Rabbanite Jews – is open only to males who are the biological sons of members. All other Jewish males, including male converts to Karaite or Rabbanite Judaism, are Israelites. Since “the Jewish Khazars” would have been all converts, they would have had no Priestly or Levitical castes. Therefore, at least the Karaite members of those two castes cannot be of Khazar ancestry.
4. Karaite is a West Kipchak language whereas researchers believe Khazaric, the language of “the Jewish Khazars,” to have been either an Oghur language or an Oghuz language – and Karaite is neither (Erdal 2007 treats Khazaric to the extent that the few vestiges of it allow). One could counter-argue that Karaite could have begun as an Oghur or an Oghuz language and then been relexified into a West Kipchak one – but could it have been relexified to such an extent that nothing has remained of the alleged Oghur or Oghuz substratum?
5. The Khazars, including “the Jewish Khazars,” are not mentioned in documents postdating the eleventh century whereas the earliest-known mention of the Northern Karaites (however called) dates to the fourteenth century. One could counter-argue that that gap of about three hundred years may have resulted from the destruction of evidence and/or from its still not having been discovered.
6. Ankori (1959) presents more evidence against the assertion of a “Khazar Jewish” origin for the Northern Karaites.
7. So far as is known, not before the nineteenth century did any Northern Karaite claim that the Northern Karaites descend from “the Jewish Khazars.” One could counter-argue that the absence of any earlier claim is no evidence that they are not of that origin, though one could counter-counter-argue that the claim made in the nineteenth century was contrived by Northern Karaites in Russia to protect themselves from persecution (a subject to which we will return presently).

Thus, if we want to give supporters of the belief the benefit of the doubt, counter-arguments come to mind, but, even if so, it remains true that no

evidence *supports* the narrower belief that the Northern Karaites descend from “the Jewish Khazars” or the broader one that they descend from “a Turkic group that converted to Mosaic Judaism” or any of the possible counter-arguments.⁵ Those beliefs are still ipse dixits, as would be any of the counter-arguments unsupported by convincing evidence.

Deserving serious attention is the argument that “the conversion of the Khazars,” however it is described, is fiction (Gil 2011 and Stampfer 2013).

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Whereas Mordechai ben-Yosef Sultanski made the moderate claim (quoted at the beginning of this section) that ‘Rabbanites and Karaites who live in European countries’ are of one Jewish ancestry and all other Jews in his day were of a different Jewish ancestry, according to a later claim by Northern Karaites, they are biologically not of any Jewish ancestry at all.⁶ Until that

⁵ The argument that the broader belief must be true because the Northern Karaites speak or spoke a Turkic language is baseless because the affiliations of a people’s language and their ancestry are not necessarily the same. For example, the Maltese speak a language that is now the only living variety of Siculo-Arabic, which is a variety of Maghrebi Arabic, whereas their ancestors are likely to have been Sicilians and Calabrians who repopulated the Maltese islands about the tenth century CE (after it had been uninhabited for about two hundred years) with latter additions from southern Europe (Catalans, Greeks, Italians, Majorcans, Valencians) and elsewhere in Europe (Britishers, Irish, and Swabians). Thus, a language largely of Arabic origin spoken by persons of European origin.

⁶ If the Northern Karaites descend entirely from converts who espoused only the Jewish Bible, how to explain the presence in Karaite of usages deriving from non-Biblical Hebrew-Aramaic (of which section V.B.2 gives only a small sample)? Some might be of Yidish origin (though probably not if they originated in Crimean Karaite), but many cannot be because Yidish offers no even remotely possible etymon.

How, for example, should we etymologize Karaite שושבין [*shoshbin*] ‘witness [at a Karaite wedding]’? Neither the Jewish Bible nor Yidish offers a possible etymon and the Akkadian etymon of Talmudic Hebrew-Aramaic שושבין [*shoshbin*] ‘agent [of the bridegroom]’ is too far removed in time from Karaite society to be the immediate etymon of the Karaite word.

The only possible immediate etymon is Hebrew-Aramaic שושבין (*shoshbin*) ‘agent [of the bridegroom]’, the earliest evidence for which is in the Talmud and later Rabbanite writings (such as those of Maimonides), but how to explain that

more radical belief was voiced, Karaite Judaism was a movement within Judaism. It was a movement of Jews who believed that their kind of Judaism, in contrast to Rabbanite Judaism, was the true Judaism. It was not a breakaway movement (in the way that Protestantism, for example, broke away from Roman Catholicism when it became clear that the Protestant movement would not be tolerated within Roman Catholicism). The Southern Karaites, most of whom now live in Israel, still see themselves as Jews, as reformers within Judaism.

a group of converts and their descendents all of whom rejected the Talmud and later Rabbanite writings would come to use such a word?

Probably, one or both of these explanations apply to each element in the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite that does not come from the Jewish Bible, does not come from Yidish, and is not a spontaneous Karaite coinage:

1. It goes back to the time of the disputations between Southern Karaite Jews and Rabbanite Jews about whether Karaite Judaism or Rabbanite Judaism was the true Judaism. Since the two sides read each other's writings on the subject (as we know from [1] one side's quotations from the other side's works and [2] the impossibility of engaging in written disputation with opponents unless one has read their writings), as a result of which Karaite disputants quoted or used certain words used by Rabbanites; in time, those words entered one or more languages used by Southern Karaites; and from their speech and writing the words passed into that of Northern Karaites, namely Karaite.
2. Any number of Northern Karaite genealogical lines continue Southern Karaite lines, which continue Rabbanite lines, and the word passed in that way, from parent to child, from one or more vernaculars of Rabbanite Jews to the vernacular of Northern Karaite Jews.

Thus, possibility 1 does not presuppose or prove that any Northern Karaite genealogical lines continue Southern ones because Northern Karaites, without being of Southern ancestry, could have read and be linguistically influenced by Southern writings, whereas possibility 2 presupposes or proves a Southern Karaite, hence presumably an even earlier Rabbanite, origin for the lines in question.

At this late date, it may be impossible to decide whether one or both possibilities are right for each Karaite usage of Hebrew-Aramaic origin that cannot come from the Jewish Bible or from Yidish or be an innovation of Northern Karaites, but at least the question has now been asked and an examination of the etymology of the usages in the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite is now on the agenda of Karaite linguistics.

The more radical belief stemmed from the need that certain Northern Karaite Jews felt to dissociate themselves from the Rabbanite Jews in order to avoid undergoing the persecution that the latter were suffering in Russia in the nineteenth century. The earliest evidence for the radical belief is from shortly after 26 August 1827, the day that Tsar Nicholas I issued a decree requiring that every year each Jewish community (including each Karaite community) provide four males (raised to thirty in 1854 and 1855 because of the need for more soldiers during the Crimean War) between the ages of twelve and twenty-five per thousand males of its population, who would be conscripted into the Russian army for thirty-one years (six to be spent at military schools purposely chosen for their distance from the Pale of Settlement – Kazan, Orenburg, Perm, and Siberia, thus, far from their families and communities – and twenty-five of military duty, likewise at distant outposts), during which time they were badgered to convert to Russian Orthodoxy, harassed in other ways, and tortured (Slutsky 2008 gives gruesome details).

When the decree became known to the Karaites of Crimea, Simxa ben-Šoleme Babovič, probably the most prominent Karaite in Russia (section VI.B mentions him in another connection), went to St. Petersburg to petition Nicholas that the Karaites be exempt from conscription on the grounds that, though they were of ‘the Mosaic faith,’ they were not Jews or of Jewish ancestry (Miller 1993). His wish was granted, though there is no record that any proof of his *ipse dixit* was presented.

As a result, the Karaites of Russia were now on their way toward forging for themselves a non-Jewish identity, which, so far as we know, they had never attempted before and which the Southern Karaites have never attempted at any time – all in an understandable attempt to shield themselves from the persecution that Rabbanite Jews were suffering and would later suffer under the tsars.⁷

⁷ The current consensus among historians concerning the origins of Karaite Judaism appears to be the one in Cohen (1978): it arose as a blend of several theological movements in the Jewish world in what is now Egypt, Iran, and Iraq (the order in which those countries are mentioned here is alphabetical) and maybe the blend includes strands going back to the time of the Second Temple (in alphabetical order: Boethusianism, Essenism, and Sadduceeism).

Given currently available documentation, the consensus is that the Southern Karaites originated before the Northern Karaites. It also seems that the Northern Karaites’ religious beliefs (and practices?) derive from Southern ones, that is, whether the Northern Karaites descend genealogically from Southern Karaites,

Desperate times call for desperate measures, but desperate measures may run roughshod over the facts: no evidence has ever been adduced that the Northern Karaites descend from “the Jewish Khazars” (who may not even have existed) or that they descend from converts.

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In sum:

1. No evidence supports the assertion that the Northern Karaites descend from converts.
2. Some evidence speaks against it.
3. It is possible that certain Northern Karaite genealogical lines are of Southern Karaite origin and certain ones go back to converts, but percentages might be hard to establish.

Whether the tree model is appropriate for Karaite depends on the answer to a glossogenetic question (how did the Karaite language come about?), the answer to which depends on the answer to the ethnogenetic question (how did the Northern Karaites come about?), which, as we have just seen, has not been answered.

At most therefore, merely hypothetical answers to the glossogenetic question may be offered:

1. Karaite Jews migrated to an area where a West Kipchak language was spoken, they or their descendants adopted it, and it evolved into what we now know as Karaite. If so, the tree model is unsuitable for Karaite.
2. A group of non-Jewish speakers of a West Kipchak language converted to Karaite Judaism and their language evolved into what we now know as Karaite. If so, the tree model is suitable.

or Southern Karaites converted the non-Jews who were to be the first Northern Karaites, or each of those possibilities is right to some extent, Northern Karaite Judaism grew out of Southern Karaite Judaism.

If this has not already been done, it would be good to have contrastive students of as many kinds as possible of the two branches of Karaite Judaism: with respect to the Hebrew-Aramaic component of their vernaculars, with respect to religious practices, with respect to cookery, their liturgy, their music, and so on. Time is of the essence.

3. Karaite Jews migrated to an area where a West Kipchak language was spoken and they or their descendants adopted it. Non-Jewish speakers of that language or of a different West Kipchak language converted to Karaite Judaism. The language of the migrants and that of the converts blended into what we now know as Karaite (the number of strands in the blend could be more than two). If so, the tree model is partly appropriate.

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Generally in Karaite linguistics, the items of Turkic origin are considered “native words” (p. 123) or “indigenous elements” (p. 137) and those of other origins are considered “loan words” (p. 123), “borrowed elements,” or “non-native [...] elements” (p. 136). That dichotomy rests on the assumption that the tree model applies to Karaite and that the trunk out of which Karaite grew was Turkic, but since the assumption has not been proven, it would be better to speak of *components*, a neutral term, defined in footnote 3, which does not rest on any presuppositions about the answer to the glossogenetic question.

Contrast the two approaches:

1. The approach based on the assumption that the tree model is applicable to Karaite (because the Northern Karaites descend converts to Karaite Judaism) and on the assumption that the trunk is Turkic: Karaite דירט (*dert*) ‘four’ (< Turkic) is a native word whereas Karaite דור (*dor*) ‘generation’ (< Hebrew-Aramaic) is a loanword.
2. The approach which makes no glossogenetic assumptions: the first of those Karaite words belongs to the Turkic component and the second one, to the Hebrew-Aramaic component.

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Other terms used in Jewish intralinguistics, besides *component*, are:

1. *correlate* ‘language or language family from which the largest component in another language derives’. For example, West Kipchak is the correlate of Karaite; German is the correlate of Yidish; Spanish is the correlate of Judezmo; Persian is the correlate of Ğidi.
2. *Hebrew-Aramaic* is defined in footnote 2.

3. *Whole Hebrew-Aramaic* and *Merged Hebrew-Aramaic* (in the following passage, the locus classicus, they are called *Whole Hebrew* and *Merged Hebrew* respectively):

“Whole Hebrew seems to be a suitable name for the language of the running Hebrew texts read (from sight or memory) by a speaker of a Jewish language (whose everyday language, by definition, is not Hebrew), while ‘Merged Hebrew’ applies to the Hebrew component in any of the Jewish languages in which Hebrew, as it were, has taken shelter. The descriptive linguist can object, and immediately score a point, that ‘Merged Hebrew’ is in a sense misleading because it is no part of Hebrew any more: it has become part and parcel of the linguistic system of another Jewish language. Still the concept is very useful when interest is directed to the genealogical aspect. Moreover, it favors conclusions of a comparative nature since we deal with an element which all Jewish languages have in common” (M. Weinreich 1954: 85–86).

In 1975 I suggested three refinements in Weinreich’s coinages of 1954: (1) replacement of *Whole Hebrew* by *Whole Hebrew-Aramaic* and replacement of *Merged Hebrew* by *Merged Hebrew-Aramaic* (compare *Hebrew-Aramaic* in paragraph 2 above); (2) broadening of the definition of *Whole Hebrew-Aramaic* to include running Hebrew-Aramaic texts inserted into texts in a Jewish language other than Hebrew-Aramaic (= an instance of code-switching) such as the Hebrew-Aramaic salutations and complimentary closings in Karaite and Yidish letters (see section VIII.A); and (3) since Hebrew is a Jewish language, “a speaker of a Jewish language (whose everyday language, by definition, is not Hebrew)” is not right.

M. N. notes that “Hebrew interpolations are noted in transliteration, for we cannot be sure about the real pronunciation of Hebrew among Lutsk Karaims. [...]. In the Hebrew parts written separately, i.e. above all in the headings of the letters we comment only on abbreviations and obscure fragments. [...]. If a Hebrew word appears as an integral part of the Karaim sentence, we explain it in a footnote [...]” (p. 137).

He is right to distinguish (1) “Hebrew interpolations” ~ “Hebrew parts written separately” in a text in Karaite (= Karaite *Whole Hebrew-Aramaic*) and (2) “a Hebrew word as an integral part” of a text in Karaite (= Karaite *Merged Hebrew-Aramaic*) and I invite him and other students of Karaite to adopt the terms *Karaite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic* and *Karaite Merged Hebrew-Aramaic*.

V. Remarks on selected items in the chief components of Karaite

V.A. The Turkic component

Might the Karaite noun ביינן (*bijenc*) ‘wedding festivities’, which synchronically is derived from the Karaite verb stem -ביינ- (*bijen-*) ‘be glad of..., rejoice at...’ have come into being as a result of Polish and/or Ukrainian influence? On one hand, one may think that nothing could be more logical than deriving a word meaning ‘wedding festivities’ from a verb meaning ‘be glad of..., rejoice at...’ especially since, in times past, with wars, famines, poverty, and the like, weddings may have been one of the few opportunities to rejoice.

On the other hand, the same pairing of noun and verb is seen in Polish *wesele* ‘wedding festivities’ and *weselić się* ‘be merry, have fun, make merry, rejoice’ and in Ukrainian *весілля* (*vesilija*) ‘wedding festivities’ and *веселитися* [*veselytycja*] ‘be merry, have fun, make merry, rejoice’, so that one wonders whether ביינן (*bijenc*) may have arisen as a result of Polish and/or Ukrainian influence.

It would be good to know whether ביינן ‘wedding festivities’ occurs in varieties of Karaite far from Polish and Ukrainian influence. If it does, the foregoing suggestion could be wrong.

*

“The word אווללו *ullu* has been repeated here twice, apparently simply to intensify its meaning. [...] the facsimile shows that the second word was amended by the author. We strongly believe that if this was a mistake the author would have corrected it, as he did, e.g. three lines below [...]” (p. 238, ft. 648, where reference is to line 31).

Since the writer’s amending the spelling of the second instance of אווללו in line 31 tells us unmistakably that he reread at least this part of what he had originally written (so that if he had intended the word to appear just once, he would have crossed it out upon rereading), M. N. is in all likelihood right that the repetition is not a dittography.

V.B. The Hebrew-Aramaic component

As is well-known, the chief doctrinal difference between Karaite Jews and Rabbanite Jews is that although both accept the Jewish Bible (the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Writings) as a holy text and the Pentateuch in particular as a source of their law, Karaite Jews do not accept the Talmud (in any of its versions) as a source of their law.

Section V.B.1 gives a sample of Karaite usages of Jewish Biblical origin that do not differ significantly from their Jewish Biblical etymons in form or in meaning. Those usages therefore need no more than a brief comment, though if they do not come directly from the Jewish Bible (something not yet known), they require a more elaborate etymology (say, Karaite < Karaite Greek < the Jewish Bible).

Section V.B.2 gives a sample of Karaite usages that belong to the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite and fall into two categories: (1) those that are of Jewish Biblical origin and differ significantly from their Jewish Biblical etymons in form, meaning, or both; (2) those that are not of Jewish Biblical origin. Both kinds of usages need more than cursory treatment. I have provided as much as I could, which is often little.

V.B.1. Some Karaite lexemes that have etymons in the Jewish Bible and are not significantly different from those etymons formally or semantically

The Karaite interjection Karaite אמן (*amen*) 'amen' (p. 266), which M. N. tells me is finally stressed, is a good example of a lexical item in a Jewish language that could come from one or more substratal languages, from the Jewish Bible, and/or from one/or more Karaite prayers and of how we lack the information needed to determine which of those possibilities is right, though we may be sure that the word does not come from:

Polish, where *amen* 'amen' is penultimately stressed.

Russian, where *аминь* (*amin'*), though it has the same stress as the Karaite word, has a second vowel that would not yield the second one of the Karaite word.

Ukrainian, where *амінь* (*amin'*) is penultimately stressed and has a second vowel that would not yield the second one of the Karaite word.

Yidish, where אָמֵן (*omeyn*) ‘amen’, though it has the same stress as the Karaite word, has vowels that would not yield those of the Karaite word.

Since the Hebrew word is available right at home, namely, in the Jewish Bible and/or in Karaite prayers, or may have been retained from one or more substratal languages, such as Karaite Arabic, Karaite Greek and/or Karaite Jewish Persian, it is expected that speakers of Karaite did not go outside their community to borrow the Yidish or any of the Slavic words. See section V.D for a similar argument.

*

M. N. notes that the Karaite male given name ברכה (*beraxa*) is “An unusual masculine name among Karaims (Hebr. ברכה). Cf., however, the name *Berak* mentioned in Altınkaynak (2006: 133)” (p. 165, ft. 169) and in an email of 20 December 2017 clarifies that by “unusual” he meant ‘rare’.⁸

The oldest evidence for the Hebrew male given name ברכה (*beracha*) (< the identically spelled Hebrew common noun meaning ‘blessing’) is in First Chronicles 12:3. So far as I know, its only reflex is the identically spelled Karaite male given name under discussion here.

More tokens of that Karaite male given name are:

1. Бераха Койджу (*Beraxa Kojǧu*), the father (at the time a citizen of the Ottoman Empire) of Саббетай Койджу (*Sabbetaj Kojǧu*), a male who in 1861 was a pupil (at the time aged fifteen) at the Училище Исаака Синани ‘Isaac Sinani School’, a school for Karaite children in Simferopol (GAARK f. 241, op. 1, d. 44; the document is dated 1861). *Sabbetaj* shows preservation of a Hebrew geminate consonant, more examples of which are *xuppa* and *šammaš* (see section V.B.2 for both).
2. Poznanski (1916) mentions the following persons, whom he considers to be Karaites (the romanizations are his): Beracha b. Jefet (p. 45), one of the founders of a Karaite printing establishment in Crimea, Mordechaj b. Beracha

⁸ My remarks in this and the following paragraphs may be confusing without this clarification: in representing /x/ in Karaite given names, when quoting M. N., I preserve his choice of <χ>; when quoting Samuel Poznanski, I preserve his choice of <ch>; when representing the Yidish phoneme /x/, I am following the Standardized Yidish Romanization (which uses <kh>); and when representing the Hebrew phoneme /x/, I am following the General-Purpose Romanization of the American National Standard Romanization of Hebrew (which uses <ch>).

(ibidem), another founder of that establishment, Salomo b. Beracha ha-Kohen (p. 96), Beracha b. Isak ha-Kohen (p. 103), Beracha b. Isak ha-Lewi (ibidem), and Jakob b. Beracha (p. 110). Dates and places are not given but could presumably be determined by checking his bibliographical references.⁹

Even if we allow for the possibility that some of the Karaite men named *Beraxa* listed in the previous paragraph are the same person (to take a hypothetical example, Jakob b. Beracha could have been the son of Beracha b. Jefet), that would unlikely to be true in all cases, so that we do now have some additional attestations of the name, though the precise number is uncertain.¹⁰

⁹ In his list of copyists and owners of Karaite manuscripts, Poznanski (1917) suspects that this owner may be a Rabbanite: “Jomtob Beracha [...]. Der Name Jomtob kommt aber bei Karäern gar nicht vor, so dass er vielleicht doch Rabbanite war” (p. 111).

Let us try to ascertain the person’s Jewish communal affiliation:

- יום-טוב (*yon-tef*, penultimately stressed and homonymous with the Yidish for ‘[Jewish] holiday’) is a Yidish male given name.
- יום טוב (*jonto*, finally stressed) is a Judezmo male given name.
- ברחה (*beraxa*), as noted in the text, is a Karaite male given name.

So far as I know, Judezmo has no male or female given name derived from the Judezmo common noun ברחה (*beraxa*) ‘blessing’.

It would thus seem that the person in question was a non-Ashkenazic non-Sefaradic Jew. Whether he was a Rabbanite Jew depends on whether Poznanski was right about the absence of **Jontov* (sic?) as a Karaite male given name.

Could *Beraxa* be a family name rather than a given name in the collocation “Jomtb Beracha”?

¹⁰ The Yidish female given name ברחה (*brokhe*) (< Yidish ברחה [*brokhe*] ‘blessing’ < Hebrew ברחה [*beracha*] ‘idem’) is irrelevant to the etymology of the Karaite male given name ברחה (*beraxa*).

Likewise irrelevant to that Karaite male given name is the Israeli Hebrew female given name ברחה (*beracha*), commonly pronounced /braxa/ (thus, with two features of Yidish origin: penultimate rather than ultimate stress and non-pronunciation of the mobile sheva). In my experience, all bearers of that Israeli Hebrew female given name are Ashkenazic.

The Hebrew male given name ברחה (*beracha*) has not been revived in Israeli Hebrew, possibly because it is too rare a name in the Jewish Bible for many people to know about it or possibly because the feminine gender of the underlying Hebrew common noun is felt to be an obstacle to bestowing it on males, and/or possibly because it would sound “feminine” because of the Israeli Hebrew female given name mentioned in the previous paragraph.

*

The Karaite male given name ברק (with full pointing: בְּרַק [berak]) may have been extracted from the Hebrew place name בני ברק (with full pointing: בְּנֵי בְּרַק [bene verak]) ‘Children of Berak’ (Joshua 19:45), in which case the lenition that the first consonant of the second element of the place name had undergone because the second element, when used independently of the place name, no longer undergoes lenition but reverts to its base form, with /b/.

The Karaite male given names ברכה (*beraxa*) and ברק (*berak*) are unrelated to each other.

*

Since the Israeli Hebrew male given name ברק (*barak*) is a revived name, it is too young to be relevant to the etymology of the Karaite male given name *Berak*. See section V.C for the same remark regarding the Israeli Hebrew female given name *Alija*.

To summarize,

1. The Hebrew male given name *beracha* and the Karaite male given name *beraxa* stand in a relationship to each other of etymon and cognate.
2. The Yidish female given name *brokhe* and the Israeli Hebrew female name *beracha* are etymon and reflex.
3. The names in 1 and the names in 2 are related to each other only as cognates.
4. The Hebrew male given names *berak* and *barak* may be related to each other and they are not related to any of the names mentioned in 1 and 2.

*

Yet Israeli Hebrew does have some unisex given names, such as יונה (*yona*), which as a male given name continues the Biblical Hebrew male given name so spelled (‘Jonah’ in the Book of Jonah, literally ‘dove’) and continues the Yidish male given name so spelled. As an Israeli Hebrew female given name, synchronically it comes from the identically spelled Hebrew feminine noun meaning ‘dove’ and diachronically it is a translation of the Yidish female given name טױבע (*toybe*), which consists of the Yidish common noun טױב [*toyb*] ‘dove’ and the Yidish feminine hypercharacterizer (ע- [-e-]; see footnote 28 for another example of the Yidish feminine hypercharacterizer -e).

The Karaite phrase ולא יעבור (*velo jaavor*) ‘just that and no more, no more than that’ (p. 156, ft. 129) was extracted from חק נתן ולא יעבור ‘he gave a law that shall not be transgressed’ (Psalm 148:6). Yidish has a different extraction from that verse: חוק-ולא-יעבור (*khok-veloy-yaaver*) ‘[an] inviolable law’, literally ‘[a] law [of God] that shall not be transgressed’. Thus, two borrowings, each independent of the other, from the same source.

*

The Karaite noun טורה (*torax*) ‘trouble, bother, effort’ comes from טורה in Deuteronomy 1:12 and Isaiah 1:14, where its meaning is identical or close to that of its Karaite reflex.

*

The sources of Karaite למגדול ועד קטן (*lemigadol vead katan*) ‘both great and small’ (p. 252, ft. 710) are Esther 1:5 and 20.

*

Karaite סוף (*sof*) ‘end’ occurs five times in the Jewish Bible.

*

M. N. romanizes the Karaite female given name רבקה as *Rebeka* (p. 337), that is, the Polish female given name *Rebeka* and/or the Russian female given name *Ревекка*. However, it seems improbable that a writer of Karaite would represent just one vowel of a trisyllabic word (<ה> represents /a/). Most likely, the Polish and Russian names would be spelled *ריביקא in Karaite.

This etymology is likelier: רבקה is the traditional Karaite female given name derived from the identically spelled Hebrew female given name, which appears several times in Genesis 24. It occurs once in each of three of the sixteen letters.

M. N. tells me that “<Ryfka>, a Polish spelling, was common among South-Western Karaims” (email of 20 December 2017). That spelling is the Polish-based romanization not only of the Karaite female given name mentioned in the previous paragraph but also of the Yidish female given name רבקה *(*rifke*), which is a cognate of the Karaite name (the Yidish name has also been romanized in Polish as *Rywka*).

With respect to pronunciation, four of the segmental phonemes of the Karate female given name רבקה are clear, as is its stress: /riʔ'ka/. The only question concerns the realization of the third vowel: [v] or [f]?

All that is unclear is the phonetic realization of /v/: it must be either *[v] (which would be the etymologically expected consonant) or *[f] (which would be a Karaite innovation, that is, devoicing before a voiceless consonant).¹¹

We cannot rely on the Polish pronunciation of <Rywka> to tell us whether the Karaite female given name רבקה has *[f] or *[v] because Polish phonology requires that /v/ before /k/ be realized as [f]. Likewise with respect to <Ryfka>, another Polish-alphabet romanization of the Karaite name and of the Yidish name.

Also, if we suppose for the sake of argument that the Karaite name has *[v], there would be no way of representing that phone before /k/ in Polish because *[vk] does not occur in that language (*cewka* 'bobbin', *lawka* 'bench', *truskawka* 'strawberry', and all other Polish words spelled with <wk> are pronounced only with [fk]). It can never be overemphasized that conventional spellings and respellings of names must be used cautiously. They are not phoneticians' recordings.

*

The Karaite noun תשובה (*tešuva*) 'answer, reply' (p. 320) goes back Job 21:34 and 24:36.

V.B.2. Some Karaite lexemes that belong to the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite and either (1) are of Jewish Biblical origin and differ significantly from their Jewish Biblical etymons in form, meaning, or both or (2) have no etymons in the Jewish Bible

Two kinds of lexemes belonging to the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite need extended treatment: (1) those that are of Biblical Hebrew-Aramaic origin and differ significantly in form, meaning, or both from their Jewish

¹¹ In רבקה (*rifke*), the Yidish reflex of that Hebrew name, devoicing is universal, but voicing returns in ריווע (*rive*), a back-formation from רבקה (*rifke*), that is, by removal of *-ke* as if it were the homophonous Slavic-origin Eastern Yidish diminutive suffix *-ke*.

Biblical etymons and (2) those that do not have Jewish Biblical etymons. In the present review-essay, only brief treatment is possible.

With respect to the first category, researchers should try to decide, for each Karaite usage, whether (1.a) the changes occurred in Karaite or (1.b) the Karaite lexemes are not of immediate Jewish Biblical origin and the changes occurred somewhere between the Jewish Biblical etymons and the Karaite reflexes (say, Biblical Hebrew-Aramaic > Karaite Greek > Karaite or, to take another possibility, Biblical Hebrew-Aramaic > Jewish Arabic > Karaite Arabic > Karaite).

With regard to the second category, researchers should try to decide whether (2.a) the lexemes are spontaneous Karaite coinages, which arose under no alloglottal influence, or (2.b) they have a prehistory in one or more other languages (Ġidi? Jewish Arabic? Jewish Greek? Yidish? and so on).

Where Yidish is mentioned below, the language may figure in the etymology of the Karaite lexeme. Such influence would have been possible only where speakers of Yidish significantly outnumbered those of Karaite, thus not in Crimea. See footnote 5.

*

Karaite אַפּילין בלא מועילין יותר מלין בלא מועילין (en *lehaarix yoter milin belo moilin*) ‘verba non sunt mutuplicanda praeter necessitatem’ (p. 256, ft. 750, and p. 261, ft. 784) is a complimentary closing indicating that the writer of the letter believes that he [women would probably not know this closing] has made his point and therefore need not go on. The writer follows Mishnaic and later Hebrew by using the Jewish Aramaic feminizing suffix ין- (*-in*) as a pluralizing suffix instead of the Hebrew (usually masculine) pluralizing suffix ים- (*-im*).

*

Karaite אפילו (*afilu*) ‘even’ (p. 264) is an adverb that goes back to an identically spelled Hebrew adverb appearing in post-Talmudic Rabbanite Hebrew-Aramaic. At least two other Jewish languages besides Karaite have reflexes of the Hebrew word: Judezmo אפילו (*afilu*, finally stressed) and Yidish אפילו (*afile*, penultimately stressed). If the Karaite word is penultimately stressed (as the Yidish word is), it is in all likelihood of immediate Yidish origin. M. N. tells me that he does not know where the stress falls in the Karaite word, which is not listed in any dictionary.

*

Karaite “בני מקרא”. Noteworthy is the fact that the Karaims are addressed here as בני מקרא ‘sons of the Scripture’ (without vowel signs) – *bene miqra*. The reading of בני as *bene* rather than *benei* was preferred by Karaim writers, as ascertained by Jankowski (2009: 504 and 519). Cf. also our commentary in § 116” (p. 252, ft. 709).

The pronunciation in both Karaite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic and Karaite Merged Hebrew-Aramaic is in all likelihood */be'ne/ *[be'ne], just as Henryk Jankowski intended. Those who include no vowel between /b/ and /n/ and those who indicate a diphthong instead of a monophthong in the second syllable (<ei>) in their romanization of Karaite בני (= Karaite Merged Hebrew-Aramaic) and Karaite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic בני, whether consciously or unconsciously, are following latter-day Israeli Hebrew pronunciations, which are no guide at all to Karaite pronunciations.¹²

*

Karaite ודי למבין. “Hebr. ודי למבין ‘and it is enough for one who understands;” (p. 211, ft. 459), that is, ‘verbum sat sapienti est’. Hebrew has לחכימא ברמיזא but, so far as I know, not ודי למבין?*. Yidish has די לחכימא ברמיזא (*day lakhakime birmize*), ודי לחכימא ברמיזא (*veday lakhakime birmize*), ודי למבין (*veday lameyvvn*), and והמבין יבין (*vehameyvvn yovvn*).

Karaite and Yidish thus share an expression: Karaite ודי למבין and ודי למבין.

*

Karaite ושלוחה בינצגה מינדין (p. 204, ft. 417; translated on page 206 as ‘And greetings to Biñcia from me’). The syntagm ושלוחה occurs in Proverbs 17:1 and Ezekiel 16:49, but neither verse is a likely source. The word ושלוחה was probably

¹² The pandemic of Israeli-Hebraization of everything that could unjustifiably be Israeli-Hebraized is not limited to Karaite. Someone at the Library of Congress, not recognizing even so frequent a Yidish given name as דוד on the title page of an all-Yidish publication, romanized it as “David” (cf. Israeli Hebrew *david*) and thereby turned a fully Yidish name, דוד-לייזער גאָלד, into the non-existent “David-Leyzer Gold.” The Yidish name דוד has never been pronounced with */a/ in the first syllable.

extracted (not necessarily by the writer of the letter) from a longer Karaite Hebrew complimentary closing (see section VIII.A) and by the time the letter was written (on 12 November 1853 N. S.) the fragment had become lexicalized in the same way that certain salutations and complimentary closings in other languages have been shortened, for instance, in English: *I remain, yours truly*, > *Yours truly*, > *Yours*..

*

Karaite חתימה (*xatima*) ‘signature’. The word is first attested in post-Talmudic Rabbanite Hebrew-Aramaic. Yidish has חתימה (*khsime*) ‘idem’, with penultimate stress. The Karaite and Yidish words are in all likelihood cognates. M. N. tells me that he does not know where the stress falls in the Karaite word.

*

Karaite טבע (*teba*) ‘character’ (p. 319). M. N. tells me that when writing his book, he had no research literature on Karaite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic or Karaite Merged Hebrew-Aramaic at his disposal, but now, after reading Harviainen (2013), he would romanize the word as *teva*, which is indeed the expected pronunciation. Harviainen (2013) is a step in the right direction: it deals with Karaite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic pronunciations but not with a separate, though related, topic, Karaite Merged Hebrew-Aramaic pronunciations, that is, the pronunciations of Karaite words of Hebrew-Aramaic origin.

Yidish has טבע (*teve*) 1. ‘character, nature’. 2. ‘custom, habit’, with penultimate stress. The Karaite and Yidish words are likely to be cognates and probably do not stand in a relationship of etymon and reflex to each other.

*

Karaite כוונה (*kavvana*) ‘intention’ (p. 293). The word does not appear in the Jewish Bible. Yidish has כוונה (*kavone*) ‘idem’, with penultimate stress.

*

Karaite חפה (*xuppa*) ‘marriage [ceremony]’ (p. 245, line 13, and p. 284). The word shows preservation of a Hebrew geminate consonant, more examples of which are *šammaš* (see below) and *sabbetaj* (see section V.B.1).

Joel 2:16 reads in part *מחפתה וכלה מחדרו ויצא חתן* ‘Let the bridegroom go forth from his *חדר* and the bride out of her *חפה*’ and Psalm 19:6 reads *והוא כחתן יוצא מחפתו ישיש כגיבור לרוץ אורח חפה* and rejoices as a strong man to run his course’.

Thus, (1) a bridegroom is mentioned in each verse in connection with an enclosure of some kind; in Joel 2:16 it is called a *חדר* and in Psalm 19:6, *חפה* (spelled *חופה* in later Hebrew); and (2) a bride is mentioned just in the first verse, also in connection with an enclosure, called a *חפה*. The two verses are therefore discrepant as far as the precise meaning of *חפה* is concerned: in Joel, his enclosure is not called a *חפה* (hers is) but in Psalms, it is (where hers, unfortunately, is not mentioned).

In any case, the meaning of *חופה* ~ *חפה* ‘[Jewish, whether Karaite or Rabbanite] marriage [ceremony]’ is not found in the Jewish Bible (Freehof 1967 gives details on the semantic history of the word).

Yidish has *חופה* (*khufe*) ‘marriage [ceremony]’, with penultimate stress. The Karaite and Yidish words are probably cognates.

See Karaite *ביינץ* (*bijenc*) in section V.A.

*

Karaite ירוי. “The abbreviation should be resolved as Hebr. ירושלמי (a title given to a person who has made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem)” (p. 185, ft. 304).

The Yidish noun *ירושלמי* (*yereshalme*) means 1. ‘Jerusalemite [native and/or resident of Jerusalem]’. 2. ‘Jew who has made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem’. Probably, both the Karaite and the Yidish usages derive from the same usage in an older variety of Hebrew-Aramaic.

*

Karaite *מדרגה* (*madrega*) ‘degree, extent’. In Biblical Hebrew, *מדרגה* (*madrega*) is only a concrete noun (‘steep mountain’).

Yidish has *מדרגה* (*medreyge*) ‘degree, level; extent’, that is, with the same abstract meaning as the Karaite word. The source of the Yidish usage is Medieval Hebrew (Hebrew *מדרגה* [*madrega*] with that abstract meaning is found, for example, in the works of Todros ben-Meshulam ben-David [Elgrably-Berzin 2014: 101], who was born in Arles in the early part of the fourteenth century and is also known as *Todros Todrosi*).

The Karaite usage is presumably of the same origin as the Yidish one, in which case the Karaite and Yidish words are cognates.

*

Karaite “מועד (*moed*) ‘holiday’ [...] < Hebr. מועד ‘festival’. 2. ‘half-holiday’” (p. 302). The Karaite word is applied to a Karaite holiday and it is presumably also applied to a Rabbanite holiday but not to a non-Jewish holiday. If so, ‘[Karaite and Rabbanite Jewish] holiday’ would be a better translation (Jewish Arabic מועד and Judezmo מועד have that meaning, so that the Day of Atonement, for example, but not Easter is a מועד).

With respect to etymology, the earliest known meaning of Hebrew מועד is ‘appointed time’, as in Numbers 9:2–3: יעשו בני ישראל את הפסח במועדו בערב עה: יום בחודש הזה ‘The Children of Israel shall observe Passover at its appointed time: in the fourteenth day of this month [...]’.

Because the word מועד appears in the Jewish Bible in passages referring to Jewish holidays (as in those two verses) and especially because the second of the six orders of the Mishna, which order deals with the proper way of celebrating the Jewish holidays, is called סדר מועד (*sefer moed*), reflexes of the word in certain other Jewish languages (at least Judezmo and certain varieties of Jewish Arabic) mean ‘[Jewish] holiday’, hence the assumption that the same is true of Karaite מועד.

The Hebrew for ‘[Jewish half-holiday]’ (that is, the intermediate days of Passover and the Feast of Booths) is מועד קטן (*moed katan*) (literally, ‘little [Jewish] holiday’), which is irrelevant here. Through an oversight, M. N. assigned that meaning to Hebrew מועד. All mention of the half-holiday should be omitted.

*

Karaite מתפלל (*mitpalel*) “‘one who offers prayers’ [...] < Heb. מתפלל ‘one who prays’” (p. 302). At least in the single passage in which the word occurs in the sixteen letters that M. N. has analyzed (letter 54, line 12, p. 211), the word designates a certain kind of elected officer of a Karaite community.

The Hebrew noun מתפלל (*mitpalel*) or any form of it does not occur in the Jewish Bible, but the underlying verb, התפלל (*hitpalel*), does and its relevant meaning here, as we will now see, is ‘pray [to God]’ in an effort to intercede for one or more persons’.

The Karaite noun מתפלל (*mitpalel*) has two meanings. Firkovič (1915: 28) says, in Sophie Thompson’s English translation, ‘Why does a praying person – מתפלל *mitpalel* wear a טלית during prayer?’, and on page 30 he says, again in

her translation, 'In each kenasa there should be [...] A **Mitpalel** also called a **Sheliyah tzibur**, ie, the envoy of the community, who represents the Karaite community during the declaration prayers to God but most of the prayers are declared by the *Hazzan*' (boldface and italics in the translation). Letter 54 shows the word in the latter meaning.

*

Karaite סדר. M. N. resolves the Hebrew abbreviation 'לספר as לסדר and as לסדר, which he translates respectively as 'of the weekly portion (of the Pentateuch)' and 'of the Passover seder' (p. 343).

The abbreviation appears six times in the letters. Five instances are to be resolved as לסדר, which consists of Hebrew preposition ל (*l*) here meaning 'of', and the construct state of the Hebrew noun סדר (*seder*), here meaning 'portion of the Pentateuch chanted aloud by a designated reader during certain prayer services during a single week'. It is a synonym of פרשה (*parasha*) and סדרה (*sidra*), mentioned three paragraphs below.

Although the sixth instance occurs in a passage mentioning Passover, that holiday is not relevant to it. Rather, the sixth instance is to be resolved as לספירת (*lisefirat*), which consists of the preposition mentioned above (in the meaning stated there) and the construct form of the verbal noun ספירה (*sefira*) '[act of] counting'. Particulars will follow four paragraphs below, after comments on the other five instances.

With respect to the five instances to be resolved as לסדר, the earliest division of the Pentateuch into weekly portions was into 141, 154, or 157 parts (the exact number is now uncertain), which were read in a cycle lasting three years (Moses 1991 gives detailed information on the triennial cycle). Those parts are called סדרים (*sedarim*) (singular סדר [*seder*]) in Hebrew, explained two paragraphs above.

Later, the custom arose of dividing the Pentateuch in such a way that all parts could be read in one year. Those parts are called פרשות (*parashot*) (singular פרשה [*parasha*] 'portion of the Pentateuch chanted aloud by a designated reader during certain prayer services during a single week') and סדרות (*sidrot*) (singular סדרה [*sidra*] 'idem') in Hebrew. The construct states are פרשת- (*parashat-*) and סדרת- (*sidrat-*) (in the singular) and פרשות- (*parashot-*) and סדרות- (*sidrot-*) (in the plural).

Most Jews today observe the one-year cycle. Until reading the letters in M. N.'s book, I had understood that Karaite Jews observe the three-year cycle,

but the appearance of both *leseder...* and *lefarashat...* in the letters implies that at least the Karaites of Lutsk have used both the triennial cycle (of *sedarim*) and the annual one (of *parashot*). If so, the triennial cycle is probably the older one among Karaites and the annual one was, at least in Lutsk, possibly adopted from local Ashkenazim (presumably in recent times).

With respect to the sixth instance of the abbreviation, reference is to the verbal counting of the forty-nine days between Passover and the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15–16). Karaite Jews begin to count after the Sabbath that occurs during Passover (Rabbanite Jews begin on the second day of Passover, the sixteenth of the month of Nisan). Each of the forty-nine days is called a *יום הנף* (*yom henef*) in Hebrew, a term which indeed appears in the passage containing the abbreviation.

*

Karaite פקיד (*pakid*) 1. ‘official [person]’. 2. ‘elderly person, senior’ (p. 309). “We reconstruct the meaning of the word *pakid* based on its Hebrew equivalent and KarT. *pakyd* ‘elderly person, senior’ noted by Kowalski (1927: 223)” (p. 259, ft. 770). The reconstructed meaning to which M. N. is referring here is sense 2.

Hebrew פקיד appears in the Jewish Bible in the sense of ‘[civil] overseer’ (Genesis 41:34 and Nehemiah 11:22) and ‘[military] overseer’ (Second Kings 25:19).

If one tries to explain the semantic change from the Biblical Hebrew meaning ‘overseer’ to the presumed Karaite *‘elderly person, senior’ without reference to any third language, one could suggest that since overseers tend to be older rather than younger, the change is not surprising and that certain uses of Hebrew זקן (literally, ‘old man’) could have stimulated it (another meaning of זקן is ‘chieftain’ and the word also appears in the collocation זקן שופטים ‘chief justice’). I offer that two-part suggestion without any conviction that it is right (and probably with skepticism).

If we consider a language or languages other than Hebrew and Karaite, these words come to mind: Polish *starosta*, Russian *староста*, Ukrainian *староста* (compare Slavic *star-* ‘old’), and, if the Karaite word might have acquired the meaning *‘elderly person, senior’ in Trakai, Panevėžys, or elsewhere on Lithuanian speech territory, one thinks of Lithuanian *seniūnas* (compare Lithuanian *senas* ‘old’). Might, therefore, Karaite פקיד *‘elderly person, senior’ be the result of analogy (in the same way that Karaite ביינין ‘wedding’, discussed in section V.A, may be)? That too is a suggestion offered without any conviction.

*

Karaite קה"ק (p. 153, ft. 74). M. N. resolves the abbreviation as קהילות קודש (*kehilot kodeš*), which is indeed one of its established resolutions.

At least in recent years, the remaining active Karaite synagog in Istanbul, called in Turkish *Karahim Sinagogu* ~ *Karaim Sinagogu* ~ *Karayim Sinagogu* ~ *Karay Sinagogu* (those names need to be etymologized), has also been called *kal kados bekusta* 'Holy Congregation in Constantinople', a name which probably began as Karaite Greek but which seems to have become Judezmozized to this or that extent.

On the surface, *kal* seems to be the Southeastern Judezmozic noun קהל (*kal*) 'synagog'. The next word, *kados*, can mean only 'of holiness' (often better translated by an adjective, 'holy'), but *'holy synagog' is not a Jewish (whether Karaite or Rabbanite) usage, whereas קהל קדוש 'holy congregation' is, so that we assume that the name *kal kados bekusta* originally meant 'Holy Congregation of Constantinople' but under the influence of the pronunciation of the Judezmozic cognate (קהל [*kal*] 'synagog') of Karaite Greek קה"ק '[Jewish (Karaite and/or Rabbanite)] congregation', the Karaite Greek word, at least in the name of this synagog, came to be pronounced exactly as its Judezmozic cognate is.

In <kados> we have /s/ < */š/. The word so pronounced is probably Jewish Greek rather than Judezmozic.

The problem of sorting out tangled threads in multilingual communities is especially acute when the languages are obsolescing and the fieldworker, faced with material that has characteristics of several languages but clearly belongs to none of them, must try to peel away the accretions in order to arrive at something readily classifiable.

I faced that problem on 21 June 1987, when interviewing a Romaniote Jew born in Athens in 1916 to two Romaniote parents born in Chalkis and wanted to elicit from her any vestiges of Jewish Greek that she might remember. Since from birth to 1946, when she left Greece for France, she had lived in Athens, where Sefaradic Jews outnumbered Romaniote ones in that city during those years, I knew that her own Greek was probably influenced by Judezmozic, the language of the Sefaradic Jews, and I therefore started most questions with the words, "Rappelez-vous comment vos parents disaient...?" ('Do you remember how your parents used to say...?') in order that her answers, as far as possible, reflect Chalkis, not Athens, usage, but her parents' Greek, it turned out, had been so influenced by Judezmozic (they had lived much of their adult life in Athens) that many of her responses, even though she had a clear recollection

of how they spoke and I believe she reported accurately, were not in Jewish Greek but in Judezmo (Gold 1987). Possibly, her parents had picked up those usages in Athens; possibly, the Romaniote Jews of Chalcis in her parents' day were themselves already using them; and possibly some of the usages she reported are to be explained in one way and some in the other way.

*

Karaite רוחמה. The Book of Hosea relates that God ordered that a certain newborn girl be named לֹא רַחֲמָה (*lo ruchama*) 'who has not obtained compassion' (chapter 1, verse 6) and later ordered that the sons of Judah and Israel call [each of] their daughters רַחֲמָה (*ruchamah*) 'who has obtained compassion' (chapter 2, verse 3).

The second of those given names is the (immediate? non-immediate?) etymon of the Karaite female given name רוחמה (pp. 168 and 337), borne at least by Ruchama Zarachowicz, nee Szulimowicz (1900–1984), and of the Yidish female given name רוקמה (*rukhame*). The Karaite name (presumably stressed on the last syllable) and the Yidish one (stressed on the next-to-the-last) are presumably cognates.

Whereas the Karaite name is lautgesetzlich (Hebrew kubuts – in the first syllable – and kamats gadol – in the second and third syllables – are in Karaite reflected as /u/ and /a/ respectively; the Karaite consonants are lautgesetzlich too), the second syllable of the Yidish name is not: kamats gadol in this Hebrew name should not be reflected as /a/ in Yidish (the expected Yidish reflexes are רֶאָכְמֶה (*rokhme*) [with penultimate stress], which occurs, and **rukhome* [with penultimate stress], which so far as I know does not occur). Consequently, the immediate etymon or etymons of the Yidish name are unclear, though its ultimate origin in those verses in Hosea is not.

*

Karaite שמש (*šamaš ~ šammaš*). “shammash: attendant, custodian in kenesa (Karaim temple) [...] < Hebr. [...] ‘attendant caretaker or synagogue janitor’” (p. 318). The second pronunciation shows Karaite preservation of a Hebrew geminate consonant, more examples of which are *xuppa* (see above) and *sab-betaj* (see section V.B.1), whereas the first pronunciation shows either an internal change in Karaite שמש (de-gemination of geminate /m/) or the influence of Yidish (Yidish *shames* ‘caretaker [of a synagog]’ does not have a geminate middle consonant).

In Firkovič (1915: 30), Karaite שמש is defined as follows (in Sophie Thomson's translation):

“A *Shamash*, who during worship assists the *Hazzan*. He announces *tzedaka*, i.e. charitable gifts for health – *berakha*, and for peace (of souls of the deceased), community members – *zekher*. The *Hazzan* declares the prayers for the health and peace of the community” (boldface and italics in original) Firkovič presumably had Crimean Karaite usage in mind.¹³

Cognates of the Karaite word exist in other Jewish languages too, such as Judezmo (שמש [*samas* ~ *šamas*], both with final stress) and Yidish (שמש) [*shames*], with penultimate stress) and possibly no two cognates have precisely the same meaning. For example, in Ashkenazic communities, announcing monetary contributions in the synagog (cf. “He announces *tzedaka*, ie charitable gifts [...]”) is one of the duties of the (Yidish) גבאי (*gabe*), not the (Yidish) שמש (*shames*). It would be good to have a comprehensive study, through time and through space, of that family of words.

*

Both Karaite תחבולה (*taxbula*) ‘cunning’ (p. 319) and Yidish תחבולה (*takhbule*) ‘determined effort, determined measure, expedient, remedy, strategy, tactic’ (as in אָננעמען שטרענגע תחבולות [*onnemen shtrenge takhbules*] ‘take strict measures’) go back in one way or another to the feminine plural noun תחבולות (*tachbulot*) ‘advice, counsels [pieces of advice]’, which occurs in Proverbs 11:14, 12:5, 20:18, and 24:6.

In the first of those verses, the context makes clear that the word refers to good advice: ‘Where no [wise] direction is, a people falls; but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety’ (nothing in the Hebrew original corresponds to the English word wise; rather, the entire verse implies that the direction [advice] is wise).

Similarly in the third and fourth ones: ‘Every purpose is established by counsel; and with good advice carry on war’ and ‘For with wise advice thou shalt make thy war; and in the multitude of counsellors there is safety’.

¹³ It is good to have that definition because usually one cannot rely on Hebrew dictionaries for correct translations of Karaite Hebrew lexemes or of lexemes belonging to the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite because they are compiled by non-Karaites.

Only the second verse strikes a negative tone of any kind: 'The thoughts of the righteous are right; but the counsels of the wicked are deceit'.

Consequently, to explain the negative connotation of the Karaite word (which occurs in part of a letter reading in translation 'And with great cunning and slyness they make efforts to execute their will without respect for the intentions of our brothers' [p. 258]), we conclude that it goes back, in one way or another, to the second verse, so that the first, third, and fourth ones are irrelevant to its etymology.

In contrast, the Yidish word, as the gloss 'determined effort, determined measure, expedient, remedy, strategy, tactic' implies, connotes a strong intention to accomplish a goal, so that in Yidish one may contrast, for instance, אָננעמען מיטלען צו כאַפֿן באַשרײַבערס (*onnemen mitlen tsu khapn bashraybers*) 'take measures to catch graffitists' and אָננעמען תּחבולות צו כאַפֿן באַשרײַבערס (*onnemen takhbules tsu khapn bashraybers*) 'take determined measures to catch graffitists'.

In any case, since the Hebrew word as used in the Jewish Bible refers to advice whereas the Karaite and Yidish ones do not, semantic innovation has occurred somewhere along the etymological chain from Biblical Hebrew to Karaite and to Yidish. Also, the Hebrew word occurs in the Jewish Bible only in its plural form whereas the Karaite and Yidish ones are singulars, so that back-formation has also occurred. Whether Yidish has in any way influenced the form and/or meaning of the Karaite word is an open question.

V.C. The Slavic component

"It would not be out of place to suggest that the writing of the Slavonic loanwords was strongly influenced by the Slavonic spelling and does not reflect the real contemporary pronunciation. We must remember, however, that the Karaims of Lutsk, at least those living at the beginning of the 20th century spoke Polish almost perfectly, as is clear from Smoliński's (1912: 116) report quoted in § 12. Thus, pronouncing consonant clusters should not have caused problems for them" (p. 35, ft. 20). The report is "starsze pokolenie, a z młodego przeważnie kobiety, mówią czysta bez obcych naleciałości polszczyzną," which M. N. translates as 'the older generation and from among the younger generation mostly women speak beautiful Polish, without foreign influences'.

Although M. N. may be right that the Karaites in Lutsk at the beginning of the twentieth century spoke Polish almost perfectly and although we have

no reason to question Smoliński's honesty, he was not a sociolinguist making a full-dress study of their Polish and he had no pretensions of being one. Writing for an illustrated weekly for hikers about 'The Karaites and Their Synagog in Lutsk' (= the title of his article), he was interested chiefly in getting good photographs and writing an interesting story about the Karaites and their synagog. During the possibly just a few hours he spent in the town, he presumably sought out the most knowledgeable person or persons in the Karaite community, who may have been those who knew Polish better than others. His statement, therefore, might best apply just to the Karaites to whom he happened to speak. We do not know one way or another.

See section II on Karaite Polish.

*

Karaite “בחורה אליה: It seems more than plausible that Mardkowicz's reading (1933a: 10) of this fragment as *bachur Ilija* is correct, even though there is a clearly legible word-final -a in בחורה. The latter form would suggest that the word written here is, in fact, Hebr. בחורה 'girl, maiden', which would prompt the conclusion that the name אליה should be read rather as *Alija* (< Hebr. עליה 'feminine name') since *Ilija* is a masculine name. The reading *bachura Alija* is hardly probable, first of all because this name was never in use among the Karaims” (p. 239, ft. 659).

One of these possibilities may be right:

1. The person in question is a woman, as we see from the photographic reproduction on page 376, which indisputably reads בחורה אליה (four lines up), that is, we have here (1) the Hebrew (?) and/or Karaite (?) common noun בחורה 'young unmarried woman' and either (2.A.) the Russian female given name *Алиа* (< the Arabic female given name *علياء* < the identically spelled Arabic feminine adjective meaning <exalted>) or (2.B.) a Karaite female given name derived immediately from the Russian or the Arabic female given name mentioned in 2.A.
2. The person in question is a man. Hence the correct form of the common noun is the masculine one, בחור, and following it is the Karaite male name אליה (*eliya*, finally stressed?), which is shortened from the Karaite male given name אליהו (*eliyahu*, finally stressed? penultimately stressed?), which is derived from the Hebrew male given name אליהו (*eliyahu*) 'Elijah' (the Yidish reflex of that Hebrew male given name is likewise a shortening:

אליה [elye] ‘Elijah’, penultimately stressed). Among the Karaites so named have been the father of Aharon ben-Eliyahu (d. 1369; see section V.D) and Eliya Bašyaçi (about 1420–1490). If so, the last letter of <בחורה> may be explainable in one of two ways:

- 2.A. The superfluous letter is an example of homeoteleuton induced by thinking ahead either to the last letter, the last phoneme, or both of the next word, that is, as the writer of the letter was about to finish writing the common noun, he may have already been thinking of the name אליה and, having the spelling and/or the pronunciation of that name in mind, he inadvertently added <ה> to the common noun.
- 2.B. The Hebrew collocations בחורה + personal name and בחור + personal name are ungrammatical, that is, the common noun in such collocations must have the definite article (as in הבחורה נעמי ‘the girl named Naomi’ and הבחור קהת ‘the boy named Kehath’). The writer could have so realized after inadvertently omitting it and just as inadvertently misplaced it when adding it. Possibilities 2.A and 2.B thus involve a mistake of one kind or another.

The letter in which בחורה אליה appears is dated 16 September 1904 (p. 235). Judging from the word בחורה, one assumes that the person in question was then in her late teens or early twenties, born therefore about 1884, at which time the Hebrew female given name that M. N. mentions (עליה), which is specifically Israeli Hebrew, in all likelihood did not exist. Even if it did exist in the early 1880s, it would have been so rare as to be unknown to the Karaite (or the Rabbanite) Jews of Lutsk or of any other place in the Russian Empire. See section V.B.1 for a similar remark about the Israeli Hebrew male given name *Barak*.

Also, the Israeli Hebrew female given name עליה has an unmistakable Zionist connotation (it comes from the identically spelled Israeli Hebrew common noun meaning ‘immigration [of a Jew or Jews] to the Land of Israel and settlement there’), it thus being an unlikely name for a Karaite born at the time the bearer in question was presumably born.

Spelling would be further evidence that the Israeli Hebrew name is not the etymon of the Karaite one if the writer of the letter were the father of its bearer, that is, if he was so knowledgeable about Hebrew that in the 1880s he was aware of the Israeli Hebrew name, which at the time must have been extremely rare (if it at all existed then – which is doubtful), he would not have misspelled it with an alef.

One must be careful with Hebrew dictionaries, as with all dictionaries, for unless they date the material, one cannot tell whether a lexeme, a meaning, or anything else they list is very old, very new, or somewhere in between.

In contrast, bestowal of a female given name of Polish, Russian, or Ukrainian origin in the Karaite community of Lutsk would probably not have been unusual in the 1880s.

*

M. N. gives Polish *fura* ‘cart, wagon’ and Russian *фурга* (*fura*) ‘idem’ as the immediate etymons of Karaite פֹּוּרָא (*fura*) ‘idem’ (p. 280). If Ukrainian *фурга* ‘wagon, van’ (Andrusyshen and Krett with Andrusyshen 1981) was used in Lutsk during the nineteenth century, it too could be an immediate source of the Karaite word (besides Polish). Mel’nyčuk et alii (1982–2006) also treat the word.

Russian is unlikely to be a source of the Karaite word because the native, primary, and habitual language of most of the local non-Jewish population of Lutsk was either Polish or Ukrainian and therefore Russian, in tsarist times, could probably have been the source only of administrative vocabulary, technical vocabulary, and other vocabulary items referring to the bigger world (in certain instances, Yidish may also have been the source of Lutsk Karaite words referring to local realia, but not in this case because Yidish פֹּוּר [fur] ‘idem’ [*<* regional informal German *Fuhr* ‘idem’ *<* German *Fuhre* ‘idem’] would not yield a bisyllabic word and because in Lutsk Yidish, which is a variety of Southeastern Yidish, פֹּוּר has /i/, which would not yield Karaite /u/).

*

Karaite צי (*ci*) ‘if, whether’. *cy... cy...* ‘whether... or...’ *<* Pol. *czy* ‘if, whether’, Ukr. *чи* ‘id.’” (p. 274).

Here we have an example of convergence.

One’s first impulse might be to see Karaite צי (*cy*) as coming from the mazurated form of Polish *czy*. *Mazuration* is the English name and *mazurzenie* is the Polish name of the replacement of the Polish retroflex voiceless and voiced fricatives (/ʂ/ and /ʐ/) and retroflex voiceless and voiced affricates (/tʂ/ and /dʐ/) by the corresponding alveolar voiced and voiceless fricatives (/s/ and /z/) and alveolar voiced and voiceless affricates (/ts/ and /dz/). Those names are fairly misleading since the replacement has occurred not only in

the Polish of Masuria and Mazovia (however those two geographical regions or administrative areas may be defined) but also in certain varieties of Polish spoken in Lesser Poland, Greater Poland, and Silesia.

However, Lutsk Karaite, indeed, all of Southwestern Karaite (= the Karaite of Lutsk and Galicia) is coterritorial with varieties of Polish in which mazuration has not occurred:

“Nie mazurzy Wielkopolska, Kujawy, ziemia chełmińska i dobrzyńska, całe Pomorze, Warmia oraz wschodnie skrawki polskiego terytorium językowego: Suwalskie, Podlasie, wsie nad górnym Wieprzem aż po Bug, wsie między Wisłokiem i Sanem. Nie mazurzy też południowy Śląsk, poczynając od linii Strzelce Wielkie – Chrapkowice” (Klemensiewicz, Lehr-Splawiński, and Urbańczyk 1981: 146),

that is, ‘Mazuration is absent in the Polish of Greater Poland, Kuyavia, Chełmno Land, Dobrzyń Land, all of Pomerania, Warmia, the eastern parts of Polish speech territory (Suwałki and Podlaskie voivodeships, villages on the Upper Wieprz River as far as the Bug River, and villages between the Wisłok and San rivers), and southern Silesia beginning at the Strzelce Wielkie – Chrapkowice Line.’

Consequently, for a spatial reason, Polish influence is to be ruled out.

One’s second impulse might be to see Karaite װ (*ci*) as coming from the Eastern Yidish conjunction װ (*tsi*) (which does appear to come from Polish *czy* in its mazurated form). That Yidish conjunction would be a perfect etymon for the identically spelled Karaite conjunction (or vice versa) phonologically, but a good phonological match is not the only measure of the correctness of a proposed etymology.

Here, the hierarchy of borrowings is more important than phonological identity: it is a universal of language that deep influence of one language on another language (for example, the borrowing of function words, such as prepositions and conjunctions) is possible only if at least fairly extensive superficial influence has already occurred (for example, the borrowing of a significant number of content words, such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives). A proposed “Karaite < Eastern Yidish” etymology would not meet that criterion (nor would a proposed “Eastern Yidish < Karaite” one) because there is no evidence of any significant Yidish influence on Karaite (or vice versa).

Consequently, for a logical reason, Yidish influence is to be ruled out.

Rather, as becomes clear from Németh (2014), we have here an instance of de-alveolarization, which occurred in Southwestern Karaite about 1800

and is independent of mazuration in Polish (and in Northeastern Yidish, which is not only not coterritorial with Southwestern Karaite but also not even contiguous to it).

M. N.'s etymology of Karaite צי (*ci*) is therefore right.

Following are five more examples of the irrelevance of Yidish (and Hebrew) to Karaite etymology:

*

Karaite פול דרמו (*pul darmo*) 'dirt-cheap, for a song' = translation of Polish [za] *póldarmo* 'idem' (pp. 184, [ft. 296], 275, and 313).

The etymological relationships between the following German, Polish, and Yiddish idioms remain to be determined and the question of whether the Israeli Hebrew one is also of immediate German and/or Polish origin remains to be answered:

1. German *halb gratis* 'dirt-cheap, for a song'.
2. Polish *za póldarmo* 'idem'.
3. (solely Eastern?) Yidish בחצי-חינם (*bekhotse-khinem*) 'idem' (> informal Israeli Hebrew בחצי חינם (*bachatsi-chinam*) 'idem').
4. (solely Eastern?) Yidish האלב אומזיסט (*halb umzist*) 'idem' (literally, 'half free').

Since German has influenced Polish far more than the latter has influenced the former, the Polish expression is likely to be of German (and/or Eastern Yidish) origin.

The Yidish expressions are presumably of German and/or Polish origin.

It is thus not clear whether the Polish expression reflects the Eastern Yidish ones or vice versa, but one of those possibilities could be right – or both the Polish and the Eastern Yidish expressions could be of immediate German origin – or, if one or both of the Yidish expressions has also been used in Western Yidish, the German expression may be of Western Yidish origin (whether or not the Polish expression is of Eastern Yidish origin).

Therefore, with respect to the German, Polish, and Yidish expressions, their relationship is not clear aside from the probability that Polish is not the source of the German one.

The etymology in paragraph 3 is certain. Whether German and/or Polish is an additional immediate source of the Israeli Hebrew expression is unclear.

*

Karaite “בירמי בילני. The locution is a syntactic calque of Pol. *dać znać* ‘to let know’, Russ. *дать знать* id. or Ukr. *дати знати* id.” (p. 219, ft. 496).

(Solely Eastern?) Yidish לֹאזֶן וויסן (*lozn visn*) ‘idem’ and German *wissen lassen* ‘idem’ are not additional immediate etymons of the Karaite usage. The etymological relationships between Eastern Yidish, German, Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian usages remains to be determined. This much is clear: Karaite and Yidish are not sources, whether immediate or non-immediate, of the usages in the other languages and Polish is unlikely to be the source of the German one.

*

See section V.A. on a possible Turco-Slavic blend.

V.D. A suggested etymology for Karaite *kenasa* ~ *kenesa* ~ *kensa* ‘[Karaite] synagog’

The secondary literature almost always says that the etymon of Karaite *kenasa* ~ *kenesa* ~ *kensa* ‘[Karaite] synagog’ is Arabic كنيسة (*kanīsa*) ‘non-Muslims’ house of worship [such as a church or synagog]’, but one wonders why Jews, whether Karaites or Rabbanites, would import a word instead of using lexical resources easily available at home (see the discussion of Karaite אמן [*amen*] in section V.B.1 for a similar argument).

A less often voiced suggestion is that the Karaite word comes from Arabic كنيس (*kenīs*) ‘synagog’ (at least in recent times, that Arabic word has been used at least in Libya, Egypt, Israel, and Lebanon; for example, one of the synagogues in Safed now called in Hebrew בית הכנסת רבי משה אלשיך זיע”א [*bet hakeneset rabi moshe alshech zechuto yagen alenu amen*], that is, ‘The Synagog of Rabbi Moshe Alshech May His Merit Shield Us Amen’ was once called اسطنبولية ال كنيس [el-*kenīs el-istambulīya*] ‘the Synagog of the Istanbulians’ in Arabic, reference being to Jews from Istanbul).¹⁴

¹⁴ If one knows the English word *cloister* 1. ‘Christian monastic establishment’. 2. ‘area within a Christian monastery or convent to which the religious are normally restricted’ and the regional Yidish word קלויסטער (*kloyster*) ‘[Roman Catholic] church’ but nothing about their etymology, one will intuitively suppose that the Yidish word comes from some language or languages widely used by Roman

M. N. is also skeptical of an Arabic origin: “Cf. Ara. كنيسة *kanisa* temple” (p. 295).

Here is a suggested etymology for the Karaite word that involves only Jewish languages:

1. The starting point is either the Hebrew compound noun בית כנסת (*bet-keneset*) (with full pointing, בֵּית כְּנֶסֶת) ‘synagog’ (literally, ‘house of assembly’) or the Jewish Aramaic compound noun בי כנישתא (*be kenishta*) (with full pointing, בֵּי כְּנִישְׁתָּא) ‘idem’ (with the same literal meaning). One of them must be the etymon and the other, the reflex. The consensus today seems to be that the Jewish Aramaic noun was the model for the Hebrew one.
2. At least contemporary Ġidi (the Jewish correlate of Persian, also called Ġudi) has *kanisa* ~ *kenisa* ‘synagog’.¹⁵ It remains to be seen how far back in time the word can be attested. In any case, the resemblance between those two forms and Karaite *kenasa* ~ *kenesa* ‘[Karaite (and/or Rabbanite?)] synagog’ is clear and, one may suppose, not coincidental.
3. Rather, one may suppose further, either the Ġidi word and the Karaite word are cognates of each other or one is the etymon of the other (in that case, given the fact that a number of Karaite words have been etymologized as being from “Persian,” the likelier etymology would be Karaite [<?] < Ġidi, thus, with the possibility that one or more links in the etymological chain remain to be supplied). Possible middle links (in various numbers and orders) are Jewish (Karaite and/or Rabbanite) Arabic and Jewish (Karaite and/or Rabbanite) Greek. See observation 6 below on the possibility that Karaite Greek once had כנסה* (*kenesa*) ‘[Karaite] synagog’.
4. If they are cognates, the etymon common to both would be the second element in the Hebrew or the Jewish Aramaic compound noun mentioned above.

Catholics and not that the English word or any formally and semantically similar ones in other non-Jewish languages (such as German *Kloster* and Polish *klasztor*) come from Yidish.

¹⁵ Rabbi Yamin Levy, of the Iranian Jewish Center / Beth Hadassah Synagogue, in Great Neck, New York, confirmed both forms in an email of 21 December 2017. According to the synagog’s website, the synagog is also called *Kenissa Beth Hadassa* (<https://www.bhgn.org/?page=history>; accessed on 26 December 2017). The term correlate is defined in section IV.

If the Karaite word is a reflex of the Ğidi word, supporting evidence would be the presence of Karaite Jews on Persian speech territory in the early days of Karaite Jewry. We would suppose that Rabbanite Jews used the Ğidi word and that when certain of them left Rabbanite Jewry to become Karaite Jews they took the word with them.

Possibly, one may go further by saying that Rabbanite Ğidi is the substratal language of Karaite Ğidi and the latter is a substratal language or the substratal language of Karaite.

5. The problems faced by anyone wanting to refine that proposed etymology by introducing one or more missing links is that, whereas the migrations of the Karaites are by now fairly well known (Ankori 1969, Polliack 2003, and other recent publications), information appears to be lacking about words meaning 'synagog' in earlier times in the languages concerned or possibly concerned and the dates of use of the known words so meaning are just as hard to come by (in that connection, let us recall Francien de Tollenaere's warning against indulging in anachronistic etymologizing: "Etymologiseren zonder dateren van het materiaal is varen zonder kompas" [de Tollenaere 1983: 28], that is, 'Etymologizing without dating the material is like traveling without a compass').
 - 5.A. Hebrew בית כנסת (*bet keneset*) is attested in the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate of Berachot, folio 6a, and elsewhere in the Talmud.
 - 5.B. Jewish Aramaic בי כנישתא (*be kenishta*) is attested in the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate of Berachot, folio 17a, and probably elsewhere.
 - 5.C. The Tractate of Berachot probably predates 500 CE, which is a reasonable date for the first stage of the proposed etymology, that is, both those Hebrew and the Jewish Aramaic compound nouns meaning 'synagog' were presumably in existence before the Jewish people split into Karaite and Rabbanite branches.
6. Aharon ben-Eliyahu was a prominent Karaite theologian and philosopher who was active when the Byzantine Empire in general and Constantinople in particular were the center of Karaite Jewry. Latter-day researchers agree that in 1354 he composed גן עדן (Aharon ben-Eliyahu 1354) in that city and that he died there in 1369. They disagree with respect to the year of his birth – 1300; about 1300; 1317; 1326; 1328; about 1328; 1329 – and his place of birth – Cairo; Nicomedia – but those two questions may be irrelevant to the matter at hand, namely, the possibility that the work, which is in Hebrew, contains evidence for Karaite Greek *כנסה (*kenesa*) '[Karaite] synagog'.

According to the author of unsigned 2017a: ft. 2, a version of Aharon ben-Eliyahu's עדן, which she or he does not specify (no bibliographical reference is given) contains this passage:

אכן מצאנו הכתוב הראה התפלה גם בזולת בית המקדש, ואפילו חוצה לארץ, כאשר אמר: «וּבְקִשְׁתֶּם מִשָּׁם אֶת־ה' אֱלֹהֵיךָ וּמִצִּאתָ» (דברים ד', כ"ט), ואמר: «וּקְרֵאתֶם אֶת־יְהוָה וְהִתְפַּלְלֶתֶם וְהִתְפַּלְלֶתֶם אֵלַי» (ירמיה כ"ט, י"ב). ואמר שלמה [המלך] ע"ה: «וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֱלֹהֵי דָרְךָ אֲרָצָם» (מלכים א', ח', מ"ח). ונאמר: «וְאֵהִי לָהֶם לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעֻט [בְּאֲרָצוֹת אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ שָׁם]:» (יחזקאל י"א, ט"ז), כי אפילו בגלות יש לי בהם השגחה לשמוע תפלתם בעת קראם אלי... נמי כל מקום שיחדו ישראל להיכנס ולהיקהל לשם הוא מקדש מעט. וקראו «מעט» למיעוט-ההשגחה בו, והעילה ידועה. ואמר: «בְּמִקְהֵלוֹת בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים» (תהלים ס"ח, כ"ז), «בְּמִקְהֵלִים אֲבָרְךָ ה'»: (שם כ"ו, י"ב) – וזהו טעם הכנסה»

Thus, in that version, Aharon ben-Eliyahu derived (presumably Karaite Greek) כנסה* '[Karaite] synagog' from the Hebrew root כנס 'enter, go in' (it would be better to take the presumed Karaite Greek word back to the second element of the Hebrew compound noun or the Jewish Aramaic one mentioned above, then proceed from the noun to a verb and from the verb to a root).

However, since I could not find presumably Karaite Greek כנסה* in Aharon ben-Eliyahu 1866 (did I fail to see it?) and do not have access to Aharon ben-Eliyahu 1354 (either manuscript), 1864, or 1972, we cannot be sure that our fourteenth-century writer used the word. For all we know, it could be a Karaite rather than a Karaite Greek word interpolated in some latter-day edition of his work. All known manuscripts and editions of Aharon ben-Eliyahu's *Gan Eden* should be examined.

7. In "The Beginnings of Dejudaization: Kenesa/Kenasa – an Official Name for a Karaite Synagogue" (Kizilov 2015: 96–100), Mikhail Kizilov tries to disprove the claim that Karaite כניסא '[Karaite] synagog' (*kenesa*) arose after 1911 by noting that the word in that sense occurs once in each of two poems by Yosef ben-Yeshua, a Karaite poet who lived in Volhynia in the seventeenth century (p. 97). Kizilov's source for the verses he quotes is Mardkowicz (1932). M. N. tells me that since Alexander Mardkowicz "often altered texts to make them comprehensible to his readers" (email of 28 December 2017), we cannot be sure that the poet used the word. It would be good to see the text from which Mardkowicz quoted the poems.

8. However, if it is accepted that Karaite *kenesa* (with its variants) and Ğidi *kanisa* ~ *kenisa* are etymologically related in some way, that relationship would be circumstantial evidence that both words are old, a for recent relationship (say, dating only to the nineteenth or twentieth century) would be unlikely: (1) Karaite < Ğidi, (2) Ğidi < Karaite, or (3) Ğidi and Karaite < a common recent source.

Consequently, though Kizilov may have been wrong to rely on Mardkowicz (we say “may” because maybe Mardkowicz did copy accurately from an authentic manuscript of the seventeenth-century poet), in the end he is right that the claim that the Karaite word came into existence only after 1911 is wrong. Indeed, it would be impossible to believe that any speaker of Karaite could have coined the Karaite word after 1911 and in a short space of time it came to have several phonological forms (formal variation, as we know from historical linguistics and from linguistic geography, is a sign of age) and it became accepted in a large number of Karaite-speaking communities (as we also know from historical linguistics and from linguistic geography, widespread spatial distribution, especially in times before mass communication, is a sign of age).

9. In earlier times, Karaite and Rabbanite Jews worshipped in the same synagogues and thus belonged to the same Jewish communities, as we see, for example, here:

Damûh². Here is the church of Cosmas and Damian, their brethren and their mother, which was restored by the Shaikh Abû Sa‘id, the scribe, who was a member of the Diwân al-Mukâtabât. Near it there is a garden containing a well with a water-wheel, upon the high road. The Jews have in this district a synagogue¹, enclosed by a wall, within which are lodgings for them, and a garden in which are trees and palms, and a circular well with a water-wheel. Here disputes took place between the sects of Rabbanites and Karaites concerning the lighting of lamps. It is said that the prophet Moses, in the days of Pharaoh, visited this place, and prayed in it, and slept in it² (Butler and Evetts 1895: 196–197; the Arabic original may be seen in the photographic reproduction of the entire text, which is unpaginated, at the end of the book; Butler and Evetts did number the folios there).

The three footnotes (the first two of which appear on page 196 and the third, on page 197) are:

² Our author seems to imply that this place is in the province of Al-Jizah, and Al-Maḵrīzī, who calls this place Damūh as-Sabā^c, and names the church of Saints Cosmas and Damian as well as the synagogue there, actually states that it is in that province. ‘Abd al-Laṭīf also states that Damūh was in the province, and near the town of Al-Jizah. At the present day there is a Damūh as-Sabā^c in the district of Dakarnas in the province of Ad-Dakahlīya. Could our author, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf and Al-Maḵrīzī, who are not always good geographers, have made a mistake? Could the mistake have arisen from the similarity of the names Damūh and Ṭamwaih which is next named? The latter place is sometimes called Ṭamūh. See also Quatremère, *Mém.* i, pp. 136–138.

¹ Al-Maḵrīzī says that this had been a church.

² ‘Abd al-Laṭīf states that Moses lived at Damūh in the province of Al-Jizah; see *Al-Mukhta ar*, ed. White, p. 116” (end of quotation).

Although the foregoing quotation pertains to an area where Karaite has never been spoken or written, it does prompt a question about the semantic history of Karaite כְּנִיסָא (*kenesa*) and its variants: has the word ever meant *[Rabbanite] ‘synagog’ or simply meant *‘synagog’? If not, does Karaite have a word or words so meaning?

10. (The following is not original with me). One or both of these possibilities are presumably right:
 1. The second element of Jewish Aramaic בֵּי כְּנִישְׂתָא ‘house of assembly’ and/or the second element of Hebrew בֵּית־כְּנִסְתָּא ‘idem’ inspired Jewish Greek συναγωγή (*synagōgē*) ‘synagog’ (>> English *synagog*, Polish *synagoga*, Russian *синагога*, etc.), literally ‘[act of] assembling, [act of] bringing together, [act of] gathering’ (= a verbal noun), < the transitive verb συναγειν (*synágein*) ‘assemble, bring together, gather’ = συν- (*syn-*) ‘together’ + the transitive verb ἀγειν (*ágein*) ‘carry off, lead’.
 2. Jewish Aramaic בֵּי כְּנִישְׂתָא and/or Hebrew בֵּית־כְּנִסְתָּא was translated into (Christian? Jewish?) Greek as *οἶκος συναγωγῆς (*oukos synagōgēs*) ‘house of assembly’, which was later shortened to συναγωγή (*synagōgē*) (with replacement of the genitive by the nominative form).
11. Another Karaite word for ‘synagog’ is בֵּית כְּנִסְתָּא (*bet keneset*), which comes immediately and/or non-immediately from the identically spelled Hebrew compound noun mentioned in the proposed etymology. Thus, Karaite כְּנִיסָא (*kenesa*), with its variants, and Karaite בֵּית כְּנִסְתָּא (*bet keneset*) are

presumably related etymologically. Its age remains to be determined. Whether *bet keneset* is a romanization reflecting a pronunciation or the pronunciation of the Karaite word remains to be seen.

12. “It seems that in Galicia the [Karaite] term *kenesa* was usually abridged to a shortened version *kensa*” (Kizilov 2015: 47; the bracketed addition is mine). “In the present work, the more literary variant of this term, *kenesa*, will be used” (idem, p. 48). The Karaite variants *kanza*, *kenas*, and *kineza* are “colloquial variants of *kenasa* ~ *kenesa*” (idem, p. 72). “East European Karaites often used the term *kenesa/kenasa* (sing.; pl. *kenesalar/kenasalar* as a colloquial substitute for the official and literary *beit-haknesset*” (p. 96).

Thus,

1. Kizilov labels several variants: “colloquial” and “official and literary.”
2. A word meaning ‘[Karaite] synagog’ is expectably of high frequency in Karaite-speaking communities.
3. Frequently used words may be shortened (for an example, see page 292, s.v. *kanuz*, in M. N.’s book).
4. Since information on the spatial and temporal distributions of the variants is either lacking or far from abundant, any proposed etymology must be tentative and may have to be revised.

We therefore note the presumed dropping of *בִּי* and/or *בֵּית* and offer these tentative etymologies (which suggests one more reduced form, **kansa*, because it seems to be the bridge needed between the forms on both sides of it):

- Hebrew *bet keneset* >> Karaite *kenesa* > *kenasa* > *kenas*.
- Karaite *kenesa* > *kineza*.
- Jewish Aramaic *be kenishta* >> Karaite *kanista* > (> **kansa?*) > *kanza*.

How is /z/ in *kineza* and *kanza* to be explained? Does its presence rather than /s/ help us etymologize those two variants?

13. In evaluating the foregoing proposals and in refining them or offering others in replacement thereof and/or in addition thereto, one should take into account the stress of the words because an etymology must account, inter alia, for any difference in stress between an etymon and its immediate reflex.

In that connection, let it be noted that (1) stress in a reflex is not a reliable guide to the stress in an immediate etymon (for instance, the penultimate stress of Polish *kienesa* ~ *kieniesa* and Russian *кѣнасса* ~ *кѣнѣсса* and the final stress of Russian *кѣнасá* do not necessarily mean that the immediate etymon or etymons of those words are so stressed too) and (2) one must be sure to consider the stress in the appropriate topolects and chronolects of the source languages (for example, since the position of stress has changed in Aramaic and Hebrew over the years, one cannot go by its current position).

14. The non-Jewish Arabic, non-Jewish Persian, and other non-Jewish (by 'Jewish' here is meant 'Karaitic Jewish and Rabbanite Jewish') have been amply treated (for an older summary of the research and a bibliographical guide thereto, see the entry KANĪSA in Houtsma et alii, 1913–1936, vol. 4, p. 717; no words in Jewish languages meaning 'synagog' are mentioned there, but words so meaning in Islamic languages are).

In conclusion, the foregoing attempt at an etymology for Karaite *kenesa* and variants suggests that "from Arabic" is a facile etymology, based on a mere resemblance between a Karaite and an Arabic word. All Karaite words attributed to "Arabic" need to be re-examined.

*

Given the difficulties of Karaite etymological research, M. N. is right to be noncommittal in these two etymologies:

1. רחמיט (*raxmet*) 'mercy, charity'. "Cf. Ar. رحمة, *raḥma* 'mercy'" (p. 313).
2. זאמאן (*zaman*) "[...] 'time' [...] Cf. Ar. زمن *zaman* 'time'" (pp. 326–327).

The questions to be asked are how many languages are involved in the etymology of each of those words and in what order do they appear in the etymological chain: one or more Turkic languages, one or more varieties of Arabic and/or of Jewish Arabic, and one or more varieties of Persian and of Ġidi. Hebrew זמן (*zeman*) 'time' probably does not figure in the etymology of the second Karaite word because, if it were the etymon of the Karaite word, it would likely be spelled etymologically: * \langle זמן \rangle .

*

“We reconstruct the meaning of the KarL. verb *remez et-* on the basis of KarL. *remez* ‘sign’” (p. 259, ft. 775). M. N. translates the passage in which that verb occurs as “And it is not so as they point out [~ indicate] that [...]”

At least one of the following languages is presumably the immediate source of one or the other of those Karaite words and two or all three could be:

1. Non-Biblical Hebrew, which has the noun רמז (*remez*) ‘gesture, hint, intimation’ (Jastrow 1926).
2. Arabic, which has the root ز م ن, whence, for example, the Arabic noun رَمَزٌ <cipher, code>.
3. Turkish, which has the noun *remez* ‘sign’ (< the Arabic noun mentioned in 2), and/or one or more other Turkic languages.

*

See also section VI.B on Karaite טרוק (*trok ~ trox*) ‘Trakai’ and אדיס (*ades*) ‘Odessa’.

VI. A comparison between [1] Lutsk Karaite as reflected in the sixteen letters and [2] Yidish

VI.A. A few examples of similar Slavic influence on Lutsk Karaite and on Eastern Yidish

Slavic influence on Lutsk Karaite and on Eastern Yidish has resulted in the existence of a number of Lutsk Karaite and Eastern Yidish cognates. Since the relationship between them is that of cognates, not that of etymons and reflexes, one should not see in them evidence for Karaite influence on Eastern Yidish or vice versa. Here are some examples of Karaite and Eastern Yidish cognates deriving from the same Slavic source:

“The Karaim fragment is somewhat obscure. The expression אבי ארי means literally ‘if only further’ what seems to be a calque of such Slavonic expressions as Pol. *aby dalej* or Russ. *Абы дальше* id. meaning roughly <no matter what happens, the important thing is to go on>” (p. 186, ft. 325).

Eastern Yidish אבי ווייטער (*abi vayter*) is a translation of the Polish expression (unlike Polish *aby*, Eastern Yidish אבי [*abi*] is finally stressed) and informal Israeli Hebrew הלואי הלאה is a translation of the Eastern Yidish one

with possible reinforcement from the Russian one and maybe a little from the Polish on too. The Eastern Yidish and Israeli Hebrew idioms express a wish that the good situation under discussion or in focus continue.

Is there any reason to be unsure of the meaning or origin of the Karaite expression? The problem seems to be only the minor one of finding the best English equivalent and M. N.'s translation is eminently acceptable.

*

Karaite “בגנימין”: A calque of Russ. *несмотря* <in spite of> or Pol. *nie bacząc* ‘regardless of’” (p. 196., ft. 363).

Eastern Yidish has ... געקוקט אויף... ~ גישט געקוקט אויף... ~ גיט קוקנדיק אויף... ~ גישט קוקנדיק אויף... ~ *(nisht gekukt af... ~ nit gekukt af... ~ nisht kukndik af... ~ nit kukndik af...)* 1. ‘despite...’ 2. ‘regardless of...’, which is a translation of Polish *nie bacząc na...* (the Polish expression includes a participle (specifically, a contemporary [imperfective] adverbial participle), as does the Eastern Yidish one (either a past participle, געקוקט [*gekukt*] ‘looked’, or a present participle, קוקנדיק [*kukndik*] ‘looking’). The Eastern Yidish expression with a present participle is translated from the Polish expression.

*

Karaite וקזל (*vakzal*) ‘depot, station [building], terminal, terminus, train station’ and Eastern Yidish וואַקזאַל ~ וואַגזאַל ~ וואַקזאַל ~ וואַגזאַל (*vokzal ~ vogzal ~ vakzal ~ vagzal*) ‘idem’ are cognates. The immediate etymon of all those Karaite and Eastern Yidish forms is Russian *вокзал*. With regard to the first syllable of those forms, /a/ in the Karaite word and in two of the Eastern Yidish forms reflect Central, Southern, and Standard Russian /a/ (akanye) whereas /o/ in the other two Eastern Yidish forms reflects Northern Russian /o/ (okanye in that syllable) and/or a spelling pronunciation of a Yidish transliteration of the Russian word.¹⁶

The forms with /g/ reflect Russian voicing of /k/ before /z/ and those with /k/ are spelling pronunciations of transliterations of the Russian word.

At least one Yidish dictionary lists פֿאָקסאַל (*foksal*), from Polish *foksal*, with no indication of the stress. If the word is penultimately stressed, it is phonologically unintegrated (the integrated form would be **foksl*). If it is finally

¹⁶ Additional possible sources of /a/ in Eastern Yidish are Belarusian and Polissian varieties of Ukrainian. Akanye in certain varieties of South Slavic languages is irrelevant to Yidish.

stressed (under the influence of any of the Russian forms mentioned in the previous paragraph), it is integrated.

Thus, the Karaite word reflects one of the four possible permutations of the two Russian variables and the four Eastern Yidish forms reflect all four permutations. See below on Karaite זרז (*zaraz*).

*

Karaite זרז “*zaraz* ‘immediately, quickly, at once, right away’ < Pol. *zaraz* ‘immediately’, Ukr. *зараз* id.” (p. 327).

Regional Eastern Yidish זאַריס (*zaris*; older spelling) ~ זאַרעס (*zares*; newer spelling) ‘right away’ comes from Polish and/or Ukrainian (if the spatial distribution of the Yidish word were known, we might be able to tell whether it is solely from Polish, solely from Ukrainian, or from both languages).¹⁷ In any case, the Yidish word does not figure in the etymology of the Karaite one.

Yidish being, on the whole, a stress-timed language rather than a syllable-timed one (though Northeastern Yidish is less stress-timed than other varieties

¹⁷ On the matter of older and newer spellings mentioned here and later in this review-essay: from the earliest attestations of written Yidish until the nineteenth century, and still among traditional spellers, the custom has been to represent [ə] by the letter <י> (*yod*), as in גיווען (*given*), the past participle of Yidish זיין (*zayn*) ‘be’.

In the nineteenth century, however, certain persons began imitating German spelling, where <e> represents [ə], as in the first and third syllables of *gewesen*, the past participle of German *sein* ‘be’. They reasoned by analogy: because German <e> in a stressed syllable not infrequently corresponds to the letter <ע> (*ayen*) in Yidish (as in German *wenn* ‘when’ = Yidish ווען [*ven*] ‘idem’ and German *Wetter* ‘weather’ = Yidish וועטער [*veter*] ‘idem’) and because <e> represents [ə] in German, let <ע> (*ayen*) represent [ə].

Unfortunately, that new way of representing [ə], though it was no improvement over the traditional way (which needed no improvement), was enshrined in the Soviet Spelling Codex [for Yidish] (1920) and in the Standardized Yidish Spelling (1937); and, since the Standardized Yidish Romanization closely follows the latter orthography, <e> instead of <i> became enshrined in that romanization (early 1940s).

Consequently, the notations “older spelling” and “newer spelling” here and later in this review-essay refer to the letters *yod* and *ayen* respectively as representations of [ə]. There is no difference in pronunciation when the two letters represent that sound.

Footnotes 36 and 38 also deal with Yidish spelling in the Soviet Union.

of the language) and Karaite being a syllable-timed one, it is not surprising that, whereas the second syllable of the Yidish word mentioned in the preceding paragraph has a reduced vowel in the second syllable, the second syllable of the Karaite word has preserved the full vowel of its etymon or etymons.

Also worthy of note is the fact that whereas the spelling of the Yidish word is based on the phonetic realization of its etymon or etymons, namely, with word-final [s] (represented in Yidish by <ס>), the spelling of the Karaite word is a transliteration of its etymon or etymons (Polish word-final <z> and/or Ukrainian word-final <з> → Karaite word-final <ט>).

One wonders, therefore, how the last phoneme of the Karaite word is realized in Lutsk Karaite: if *[s], Karaitophones followed Polish and/or Ukrainian pronunciation (despite the spelling of the Karaite word with <ט>); if *[z], the Karaite pronunciation is a spelling pronunciation based on Karaite, Polish, and/or Ukrainian spelling. Possibly, both pronunciations have been used in Karaite.

VI.B. Some definite, possible, and impossible examples of Yidish influence on Karaite and one definite example of Karaite influence on Yidish

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Rabbanite Jews outnumbered Karaite Jews probably everywhere in the Russian Empire except Crimea. In the town of Lutsk, for example, the census of 1864 returned a total of 4973 persons, of whom 3428 were Rabbanite Jews, 221 were Karaite Jews, and 1324 were non-Jews. In the census of 1895, the figures were respectively 15,125, 12,007, 72, and 3046. Also in 1895, the figures for the District of Lutsk excluding the town were respectively 188,636, 18,775, 42, and 169,819.

Given those relative figures and the probably similar ones for the rest of the western Russian Empire except Crimea (where Karaite Jews far outnumbered Rabbanite Jews) as well as the fact that Yidish was then the native language of the overwhelming majority of Rabbanite Jews in that part of the empire in the nineteenth century, Yidish influence on Karaite in that place and at that time (as well as earlier and later) is possible.¹⁸

¹⁸ The Russian census of 1897 showed a total population of 125,640,021 persons, of whom 5,215,805 said they were Jews (and 12,894, Karaites) and 5,063,156 said their native language was Yidish (no figures for Karaites can be extrapolated from the figure of 13,373,867 given for native speakers of “Turko-Tatar”).

When evaluating the possibility of Yidish influence on Karaite, one should always try to see whether the Karaite usage under scrutiny has been used in Crimea because there Yidish influence is probably out of the question, so that if, say, we have noted the presence of a Karaite usage in Lutsk (where Yidish influence on Karaite is possible) and of the same usage in Crimea (where it is not), the likeliest etymology for the Karaite usage is Crimean Karaite > (> ?) Lutsk Karaite. Whether any exceptions occur (Eastern Yidish > Lutsk Karaite [> ?] > Crimean Karaite) remains to be seen. Likewise with respect to usages in any other variety of Karaite used in the western Russian Empire and/or in Austria-Hungary that might be considered as being of possible Yidish origin.

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Karaite “גד: An abbreviation of a monetary unit. Most likely it should be equated with the so-called גדולים ‘lit. big ones, big coins’ mentioned by Mann (1931) on pages 986–993 and translated as Pol. ‘groszy’. The term is attested in the taxation documents of Karaims in the 17th–18th centuries” (p. 223, ft. 530).

The coin in question was first put into circulation in France in 1266. During the Middle Ages it was called a *denarius grossus* ‘thick denar’ in Medieval Latin (*grossus* < Classical Latin *crassus* ‘thick’). Later, somewhere in the Jewish world (Italy?), it occurred to someone, probably a merchant, to coin a cryptic name for the coin. Possibly, the Medieval Latin adjective *grossus* ‘thick’ reminded the coiner of the Italian adjective *grosso* ‘big’, which in turn reminded him of the Hebrew adjective גדול (*gadol*) ‘big, large’ (masculine plural גדולים [*gedolim*]), and thus was born a cryptolectalism which only those knowing at least some Hebrew would understand.

If so, the Hebrew cryptolectalism גדול (*gadol*) ‘thick denar’ must at some point have started coming to the attention of Yidish-speaking business people, possibly first in northern Italy (Italy north of the Po River once had a sizable Yidish-speaking community), thence to central Europe, thence to eastern Europe, where speakers of Karaites could have learned it from speakers of Yidish.

Alternately, if the Hebrew cryptolectalism reached Greece (I have no evidence that it did), Karaites there could have acquired it and later taken it to Crimea, whence it could have reached Karaites in eastern Europe, thus, without transmission from Yidish.

All that, of course, is speculation, with no evidence to back it, but when you have bits of information that are obviously related (a coin called a *denarius*

grossus first minted in France in 1266, a Yidish cryptolectalism meaning ‘big one’, and a Karaite cryptolectalism with the same meaning used by a speaker of Karaite writing a letter in Lutsk in 1868), you look for the most probable links – and here there are at least two routes by which the usage may have reached that town no more than 602 years after the coin in question was first mined.

It is worthy of note that speakers of Yidish and of Karaite abbreviate the cryptolectalism in the same way.

See immediately below for another cryptolectal numismonym.

*

M. N. writes as follows regarding Karaite רוביל כסף ‘silver ruble [coin and amount]’:

“[...] the word *keseḥ* ‘silver’ (< Hebr. כסף) appears twice postpositionally following Hebrew syntax, cf. *otuz bes rubel keseḥ* ‘thirty-five silver roubles’ (5:2) and *on rubel keseḥ* ‘ten silver roubles’ (52:8). Perhaps under the influence of this collocation, the word *kimis* is used postpositionally in the fragment *kyrk rubel kimis* ‘forty silver roubles for a year’ (6:11)” (p. 58). The three letters in question (nos. 5, 52, and 6) were written after 1890, 12 November 1853, and on 9 July 1849 respectively.

Similarly here: in the collocation רוביל כימים (*rubel kimis*) ‘silver rouble’, “The [second word] is used postpositionally, probably due to Hebrew syntactic influence” (p. 146, ft. 38).

M. N. has in mind the Hebrew construct relation, a relationship between two or more concatenated nouns, as in אם הילדה (*em hayalda*) ‘the mother of the girl, the girl’s mother’; word for word, ‘mother the-girl’, where the juxtaposition of the two noun phrases creates a syntactic and semantic connection between them, the first noun phrase being the head of the collocation and the second one being dependent on the first one (as in Old French, for example, *Hôtel-Dieu* ‘hôpital de fondation ancienne dans certaines villes [notamment à Paris], qui recevait les indigents et qui était administré par l’Église’ [*Trésor* s.v.], literally, ‘hostel of God, God’s hostel’; word for word, ‘hostel God’; Darmesteter 1874 gives details on the French construction, which is unrelated to the construct state in the Afro-Asiatic family of languages).

The Russian government minted silver rubles from 1704 to 1897. The fact that the second element of Karaite רוביל כסף (*rubel keseḥ*) and of Eastern Yidish רובל-כסף (*rubl-keseḥ*) is not the usual word for silver in Karaite and

Eastern Yidish (which are respectively כימיש [*kimis*] and זילבער [*zilber*]) but the Hebrew for 'silver' tells us that those numismonyms are intended to be cryptolectalisms (see the immediately previous discussion for another Jewish cryptolectal numismonym involving Hebrew).

M. N. may be right that the syntax of רוביל כסף (*rubel kesef*) and רוביל כימיש (*rubel kimis*) is due to the influence of Hebrew. A second possibility is Eastern Yidish רובל-כסף (*rubl-kesef*) > Karaite רוביל כסף (*rubel kesef*) = the model for Karaite רוביל כימיש (*rubel kimis*). A third possibility is the influence of Eastern Yidish, which has רובל-כסף (*rubl-kesef*) 'silver ruble [coin and amount]', which likewise exemplifies the construct relation. The fourth possibility, probably remote in light of the relatively small size of the Karaite-speaking population and the relatively large size of the Yidish-speaking population, is Karaite influence on Yidish.

If Karaite רוביל כסף arose in Lutsk or in Halych and is of Yidish origin, speakers of Karaite heard [rɪl] (= the pronunciation of Yidish רובל [*rubl*] in Southeastern Yidish, of which Lutsk Yidish and Halych Yidish are varieties), so that a Karaite borrowing from local spoken Yidish should have yielded כסף־ריביל*, that is with /i/ rather than /u/, but the first vowel of the first element of the Karaite numismonym was replaced by /u/ under the influence of the German, Karaite, Polish, Russian, and/or Ukrainian word meaning 'rouble' (all of which have /u/). In contrast, in Panevėžys, Trakai, Vilnius, and any other place on Northeastern Yidish speech territory, speakers of Karaite would have heard the Yidish for 'rouble' pronounced with /u/, so that no need for changing the vowel would have been felt.

In sum, it would be good to know whether רוביל כסף has been used in other varieties of Karaite too because an idea of its spatial distribution would give us a better idea of what the possible etymologies are and of how likely each one is.

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Karaite and Yidish seem to be the only two languages in which the name of Trakai is monosyllabic. In fact, at the phonemic level, the two names could not be more like each other (Karaite טרוק (*trok* [but also *trox*]), Yidish טראָק /*trok*/), the slight difference in spelling (/o/ is represented by <ו> [vav] in Karaite and by <אָ> [komets-alef] in Yidish) being due to different spelling conventions.

In all other languages that might, even remotely, be relevant to the etymology of those two names, the names of the place are bisyllabic:

- Belarusian: formerly *Трóкi* (*Tróki*), now *Трака́ў* (*Trakáŭ*)
- German: formerly *Tracken*, later *Traken*, now *Trakai*
- Latvian: *Trāķi*
- Lithuanian: *Trakai* (< *trakai* ‘glades’, the plural form of Lithuanian *trakas* ‘glade’)
- Polish: *Troki*
- Russian: formerly *Трóку* (*Tróki*), later *Трака́ў* (*Trókai*), now *Трака́ў* (*Trakáŭ*)
- Turkish: *Trakai* ~ *Trakay*
- Ukrainian: older *Трóку* (*Tróki*), now *Трака́ў* (*Trakáj*).

Speakers of Belarusian and Polish presumably heard the Lithuanian first-declension nominative plural ending *-ai* /i/ of *Trakai* (/‘traki/), rightly understood it to be a plural ending (because their languages have such an ending), and retained it in their names for the place (Polish *Troki* does not come from *troki* ‘straps’, the plural form of Polish *trok* ‘strap’).

The former Russian name of the city may have come about in the same way or it may be of Belarusian and/or Polish origin.

Though the presence of /o/ in the Karaite, Polish, and Yidish place names tells us that the Karaite and Yidish ones derive from the Polish one (the Polish name of a place in eastern Europe is unlikely in the extreme to derive from Karaite or from Yidish), the precise relationship is unclear.

That the Yidish name of *Trakai* is a singularization of its Polish name is unlikely because Yidish has at least four examples of retention (through replacement of a Polish plural ending by a Yidish one) of the morphologically marked pluralness of Polish (and other?) place names. In the following list, the Yidish plural ending is יס- [-is] ~ עס- [-es], those being respectively its older spelling and its newer one, with no difference in pronunciation between them, and the Polish plural ending is *-i* or *-y* (all the Yidish names have initial stress):

1. וויקיס (*vikis*) ~ וויקעס (*vikes*) < Polish *Dwikozy*
2. זאָרימביס (*zorimbis*) ~ זאָרעמבעס (*zorembe*s) < Polish *Zoręby* (formerly the official name and still the nonstandard name of the place now officially called *Zaręby* in Kielce County, formerly in Opatów County)
3. מאַרקיס (*markis*) ~ מאַרקעס (*markes*) < Polish *Marki*

4. נאַליפֿיקיס (*nalifikis*) ~ נאַלעפֿקעס (*nalefkes*) < Polish *Nalewki* (the name of a street in Warsaw, now called *ulica Bohaterów Getta*, and of the surrounding neighborhood).¹⁹

An exception to that tendency, however, is possible, though I doubt that such is the case. Polish *Troki* should have yielded Yidish טראָקיס* ~ טראָקעס* (*trokes ~ trokis*).

A second possibility is that the Yidish name comes from the Karaite name (in the latter's pronunciation with /k/). That would be possible only if the Yidish name (as we know it today, that is, as a monosyllable) postdates the presence of Karaites in Trakai. For that purpose, we need not only attestations of the Yidish name or names of the town but also verification for the several statements in the secondary sources about the presence of Karaite and Rabbanite Jews in the town. Among them are:

1. Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania granted 'Jews' the right to live there in 1388.
2. He brought several hundred Karaite families to live there in 1392.
3. Grand Duke Casimir IV of Lithuania granted Magdeburg rights both to the town and to the Karaites in 1441 (Rabbanite Jews are not mentioned).
4. Both the Karaite and the Rabbanite Jews were expelled from Trakai in 1495, when all the 'Jews' of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were expelled.
5. After the order of expulsion was rescinded (in 1503), both Karaite and Rabbanite Jews settled in Trakai.
6. In 1516, Grand Duke Sigismund the Old of Lithuania allowed 'the Jews' of Trakai to hold two annual fairs.
7. In 1553, the Karaite Council of Lithuania convened in Trakai and approved regulations governing all Karaite Jews in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The regulations were subject to the approval of the [Rabbanite] Jewish Council of Lithuania and in 1568 the Karaite Council submitted them to the latter council.

¹⁹ All the formally plural place names mentioned above are grammatically singular, so that they take singular verbs when used as subjects, for instance, Yidish זאַרימביס איז אַ דאָרף לעם לאַגיוו (*zorimbis iz a dorflem lagiu*) 'Zaręby is a village near Łagów'.

8. After 1625, significant numbers of Rabbanite Jews began to settle in Trakai.
9. In 1646, Grand Duke Vladislovas Vaza of Lithuania granted the local Karaite Jews' request for an order forbidding Rabbanite Jews to settle in Trakai and to compete with them commercially.
10. In 1679/1680, when the 'Jews' of Trakai were falsely accused by local Christians of having kidnapped a Christian child in order to use his blood in religious rituals during Passover, the Karaite and Rabbanite Jews of Trakai united to fight the charge.
11. In 1714, the two groups signed an agreement to settle any differences they might have in the future without seeking judicial redress from the non-Jewish authorities.
12. In 1795, with the Third Partition of Poland, Trakai became part of the Russian Empire.
13. In 1804, the Russian government expelled the 'Jews' from the villages surrounding Trakai. An unspecified number went to live in the town, where the order of expulsion did not apply to Karaite or Rabbanite Jews. The Karaites tried to prevent the Rabbanite expellees from settling there; it is not known to what extent they succeeded.
14. In 1862, the Russian government allowed Rabbanite Jews to live in the town (which does not necessarily mean that from 1795 to 1862 none were living there).

A third possibility is that older Belarusian /'troki/ and/or Polish /'troki/ yielded Yidish */'trokə/ (the full vowel in the second syllable of the Belarusian and Polish names would have obligatorily been weakened to [ə] in Yidish).²⁰ If so, the corresponding demonym would have been formed by adding *-er* to the place name. That addition would have caused [ə] to have no representation in the surface form (*/'trokə/ + *-er* = *troker*) – **trokeer* would be unphonotactic, as we see from the present of just one vowel in numerous Yidish demonyms derived from Yidish place names ending in *-e*, as here:

²⁰ At least two non-authoritative websites, one in English and the other in German, give *troke* as the Yidish name (the romanization implies the pronunciation /'trokə/), but do not quote any source for it and do not asterisk it, and do not say it is unattested. The monosyllabic form, in contrast, is well-attested.

- בלאָדעווע (blodeve) 'Włodawa' → בלאָדעווער (blodever)
- גראָדנע (grodne) 'Hrodna' → גראָדנער (grodner)
- חַיפֿה (kheyfe) 'Haifa' → חַיפֿער (kheyfer)
- קאַוונע (kovne) 'Kaunas' → קאַוונער (kovner)
- ריגע (rige) 'Riga' → ריגער (riger)²¹

From the demonym *troker* (= **troke* + *-er*) a monosyllabic Yidish place name, *trok*, could have emerged as a back-formation, thus a result of metanalysis of the demonym.²²

Whichever possibility or possibilities are right, the Yidish demonym would turn out to be *troker*.

With respect to the Karaite name, M. N. suggests that it comes from Polish *Troki* (p. 330). That would be a phonological change (apocope) or a morphological and semantic one (singularization).

With respect to apocope, it would be good to know to what extent apocope is attested in Karaite.

With respect to singularization, it usually occurs when a plurale tantum is felt to be semantically anomalous (for example, English has *scissors*, a plural form because reference is to both blades [the original lexeme, still used, is *pair of scissors*], but the back-formed singular *scissor* 'pair of scissors' is also used, at least informally, because a pair of scissors is seen as one tool; likewise *archive* is now found besides the traditional form, *archives*, because a collection of documents, etc. is seen as a single collection or a single place). Consequently, Karaites' singularization of Polish *Troki* would presumably have been motivated by their seeing the town as one place.

A third possibility is that the Karaite name (in its pronunciation with /k/) comes from the Yidish name. That would be possible (but still not proven) only if the Yidish name (as we know it today, that is, as a monosyllable) is older than the Karaite one.

²¹ In contrast, the second syllable of German *Riga* is a full vowel, /a/, and, in conformity with a general German rule, it is retained in the adjective and demonym: *Rigaer* (likewise, *Breda* → *Bredaer*, *Buda* → *Budaer*, *Rheda* → *Rhedaer*, and so on).

²² A probable example of a Yidish place name resulting from metanalysis of the corresponding Yidish demonym is שאויל (shavl) 'Šiauliai', which is presumably the result of metanalysis of the Yidish adjective and demonym *shavler* 1. 'of Šiauliai'. 2. 'native and/or resident of Šiauliai' = Yidish **shavle* 'Šiauliai' [< Polish *Szawle* 'idem'] + the Yidish suffix *-er*.

Given the fact that at all times when both Karaite and Rabbanite Jews were living in Trakai, the former, so far as available figures allow us to judge, outnumbered the latter, it is likelier, if the Karaite and Yidish names do stand in a relationship of etymon and reflex to each other, that the Yidish name comes from the Karaite one. We will return to the Karaite name presently.

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The foregoing remarks about the Karaite and Yidish names of Trakai to some extent apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the known Karaite and Yidish names of Odessa: Karaite אָדֵס (*ades*) and Yidish אָדעס (*ades*, with final stress).

Odessa was founded on 2 September 1794. Whenever its Karaite name arose (presumably, late in the eighteenth or early in the nineteenth century), the city, as Crimea in general, presumably had more Karaite than Rabbanite Jews. Therefore, if the Karaite and Yidish names do stand in a relationship of etymon and reflex to each other, the Yidish name is likelier to come from the Karaite one. Later in the nineteenth century, the Rabbanite population Odessa grew larger than the Karaite one, but by that time the Karaite and Yidish names of the city had in all likelihood been coined, so that the later demographic situation is irrelevant to their genesis.

A second possibility is that the Yidish name was back-formed from the Yidish demonym אָדעסער (*adeser*), the original stem of which could have been the place name אָדעסע* (*adese*) 'Odessa', which would have come unproblematically from the Russian and/or Ukrainian name of the city (respectively Одесса and Одеса). Thus, metanalysis would have resulted in the reinterpretation of Yidish *adeser* (= Yidish **adese* + Yidish *-er*, with obligatory omission of *-e* of the place name in the surface form) as *ades* + *-er*.

M. N. suggests to me that the Karaite name of Odessa could come from the Russian name of the city by apocope. Foregoing remarks about apocope apply here too.

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When first seeing the Karaite spelling לױצקא 'Lutsk' (p. 329), I was reminded of a phenomenon in older Ashkenazic Hebrew (both Eastern and Western) which to this day I cannot explain: the written form of certain monosyllabic toponyms ends in what seems to be a silent alef, for instance, אָפּטא 'Opatów' instead of אָפּט (*apt*) and פּײַרדא 'Fürth' instead of פּײַרט (*firt*). What

was the purpose of the superfluous letter? To make the name look longer (“weightier”)? If so, why was that necessary or desirable? In latter-day Yidish, no such letter appears: אָפּט (*apt*) ‘Opatów’, בריסק (*brisk*) ‘Brest (in Belarus)’ and ‘Brześć Kujawski’ (in Poland),²³ דאַנץ (*dants*) ‘Gdańsk’, לאָדזש (*lodzh*) ‘Łódź’, לויצק (*loytsk*) ‘Lutsk’, לייפּץ (*laypts*) ‘Leipzig’, פּײַם (*peym* [also *peyem*]) ‘Bohemia’, פּראָג (*prog*) ‘Prague’, פֿירט (*firt*) ‘Fürth’, and so on.

The alef in Karaite לויצקא (*lutska*) ‘Lutsk’, however, is not a silent letter: the Karaite name of the town is bisyllabic and the alef stands for /a/. Is that a paragogic vowel because word-final */ck/ would not be phonotactic in Karaite?

So far, therefore, we have no evidence that silent final alef is found in any Karaite place name.

*

At some time or times in the prehistory or the history of Yidish, certain (pre-Yidish? Yidish?) reflexes of Hebrew-Aramaic /ḥ/ (represented by <ח>) began to disappear. Whether the change was [1] */ḥ/ > */h/ > Ø, [2] */ḥ/ > Ø, or [3] both is not clear, though direct evidence that Ø was the end result remains in Yidish to this day, such as [1] the Eastern Yidish verb stem -מעק (*mek-*) ‘cross out, efface, erase’ (as in the imperfective Eastern Yidish verb מעקן [*mekn*] ‘idem’ and the Eastern Yidish perfective verb אויסמעקן [*oysmekn*] ‘idem’), which goes back to the Hebrew verb stem מקח (<mqḥ > ‘idem’), and [2] the Yidish female given name סימי (older spelling) ~ סימע (newer spelling) (*simi* ~ *sime*), which goes back to the Hebrew female given name שמחה (<šmḥh>), which in turn comes from the Hebrew common noun שמחה ‘gladness, happiness, joy’.²⁴

²³ To disambiguate בריסק (*brisk*) or when speaking or writing formally about the two cities, one uses בריסק דליטע (*brisk delite*) ‘Brest’ and בריסק דקו (*brisk deku*) ‘Brześć Kujawski’.

²⁴ Yidish still has the male given name שימחה (*simkhe*), which, like the Yidish female given name סימע ~ סימי, goes back to the Hebrew common noun שמחה ‘gladness, happiness, joy’ (<kh> in the romanization of the Yidish male given name שימחה stands for /x/). The reason for the preservation of a fricative in the male name but not in the female one is that in the traditional Jewish world greater attention is paid to the “correct” (= etymological) pronunciation of male given names (hence the preservation of the fricative in the male given name) than to that of female given names (hence the loss of the fricative in the female given name was of no concern).

That phenomenon in the prehistory or early history of Yidish came to mind when I learned of the Karaite male (given? informal?) name סימא (*sima*) (p. 338), borne at least by Simxa ben-Šoleme Bobovič (1788–1855), who was born in Crimea and was active in Tauride, Odessa, and Trakai (section IV mentions him in another connection). Here, then, was a pairing of names that proved that a connection between the two exists in Karaite, whatever its precise connection may be in his case: was he given a compound name at circumcision – שמה סימא* – or was he given just the name שמה* at that time and was informally called סימא*?

It is hard to believe that the absence of /x/ in the Yidish female given name *sime* and its absence in the Karaite male (given? informal?) name *sima* is a coincidence, but how the two phenomena are linked is unclear.²⁵

If so, it is impossible to see in what language or languages (one or more substratal languages of Yidish and of Karaite?) that phenomenon could have occurred, especially since, at least as far as Yidish is concerned, it is believed to have occurred in the Rhineland (though a number of Yidish words, including personal names, with Ø corresponding to historical /h/, made their way eastward into Eastern Yidish, whether as a result of migration, diffusion in situ, or both) and it is unimaginable that a substratal language of two Jewish languages – Yidish and Karaite – could span the Rhineland and Crimea, unless we supposed that the substratum was two similar Jewish varieties of Greek (Rabbanite Greek for Yidish and Karaite Greek for Karaite), which were coterritorial in Greece.

Paul Wexler has suggested that certain varieties of Yidish lie on a Balkan substratum. Might Rabbanite Greek be half of that substratum, namely, the part that supposedly underlies certain varieties of Yidish? Since the Balkans are about midway between Crimea and the Rhineland, one might imagine a Balkan substratal influence on both Eastern Yidish (with possible westward diffusion of the results) and Crimean Karaite, but since he has not proven the existence of such a substratum underlying certain varieties of Yidish (despite adducing abundant evidence, most of which turns out to lack the weight of fact), we could not adduce that alleged substratum as the factor inducing the emergence of the name borne by Simxa ben-Šoleme Babovič.

²⁵ We may immediately discard the possibility that the Karaite male (given? informal?) name סימא (*sima*) comes from *Сума* (a short form of the Russian female given name *Серафима*) or from the Yidish female given name סימע ~ סימי (*sime* ~ *simi*).

Here is an example of a Yidish lexical item that Wexler has adduced as possibly originating in what he says may be a Turko-Iranian substratum of certain varieties of Yidish but which is in fact a relatively recent borrowing from Southeastern Judezmo (I have resolved his abbreviations):

A curious [Yidish] word of Turko-Iranian origin is *prakes* plurale tantum 'stuffed cabbage', found in Rumanian and Ukrainian Yiddish as far north as Ovruch in the northern corner of the Žytomyr Oblast' and Dubrovyca in the northern part of the Rivne Oblast', both points bordering on Belarus [...]. On the surface the Yiddish term looks like a syncopated form of Turkish *yaprak dolması* or *yaprak sarması* 'stuffed vine leaves, vegetables' (< *yaprak* 'leaf'). The problem is that no Slavic languages, including Balkan Slavic and Rumanian, appear to have the Turkish word for 'leaf', which is the etymon proposed by Herzog et al. (2002, 3) via a Slavic intermediary [...]. Yidish *prakes* may [...] be a deformation of Persian *berg* 'leaf', attested in Ottoman Turkish as *barg*, or Arabic *waraq* [...] (Wexler 2002: 522).

The correct etymology (with glosses omitted) includes apheresis but not "deformation":

Regional Southeastern Yidish (newer spelling) פראַקעס (*'prakes*) ~ (older spelling) פראַקיס (*'prakis*) (with apheresis of the pretonic syllable of the Judezmo etymon) < Southeastern Judezmo יאפראַקיס (*ja'prakes* ~ *ja'prakis*) = the hypothetical Judezmo singular יאפראַק* (*ja'prak*) [< the first element of Turkish names of foods such as *yaprak (dolması)* and *yaprak (sarması)* < Turkish *yaprak* 'leaf' < Old Turkic *yapurgak* ~ *yapırgak* 'idem' < Proto-Turkic **japur-gak* 'idem'] + the Judezmo plural marker יס (-*es* ~ *-is*).

Notes to the etymology:

1. Southeastern Judezmo is approximately the Judezmo of the Ottoman Empire and succession states.

Judezmo *japrakes* ~ *japrakis* is masculine plural and Yidish *prakes* is plural. So far as I know, both the Judezmo and the Yidish words are pluralia tantum. *Japrakis* is the phonological variant in, for example, Rumanian Judezmo, which may be the immediate source of the Yidish word. If so, the Judezmo plural ending *-is* was reinterpreted as the Eastern Yidish ending *-es*.

Six set collocations including the Judezmo word are די יאפראַקיס די יאפראַקיס פ'אלסוס, יאפראַקיס די פארה, יאפראַקיס די קארני, יאפראַקיס די ירינג'ינה, יאפראַקיס קון ארוס, יאפראַקיס קון פ'אב'אס, יאפראַקיס קון ארוס.

2. The earliest evidence for a Sefaradic presence on Rumanian speech territory is from Wallachia and is dated 1496, though the borrowing dates to a later time. In the absence of dated texts for the Yidish and Judezmo words, all we can do is say: (1) the Yidish word could not have arisen before there were enough Judezmophones in Rumania to be able to influence Yidishophones (“enough” is not definable) and (2) the greater the spatial distribution of the Yidish word outside Rumanian speech territory, the older it is (because in the days before mass communication, we assume that its diffusion in Southeastern Yidish was *in situ*, which took time).

Rumania was the place in Europe where speakers of Judezmo and of Yidish were most in contact with one another.

3. Retention in Judezmo of the initial stress of Turkish *yaprak* would have resulted in antepenultimate stress (**yaprakes* ~ **yaprakis*), which would have run counter to a slight tendency in Judezmo not to retain it, a tendency noted both in older Judezmo words (Old Spanish *águila* ‘eagle’ > Judezmo (*a'gila*) ‘idem’ and Old Spanish *cántiga* ‘song’ > Judezmo קאַנטיגה (*kan'tiga*) ~ (*kan'tige*) ~ קאַנטיקה (*kan'tika*) ‘idem’ (though Max Leopold Wagner may have been right that the shift in the latter Judezmo word resulted from the influence of the Judezmo feminine singular diminutive ending *-ika*) and younger ones (English *Rivington* [the antepenultimately stressed name of a street in New York City] > New York City Judezmo ריבֿינגטון [*riving'ton*] and English *Washington* [the antepenultimately stressed place name and personal name] > New York City Judezmo גואַשינגטון [*gwas'ing'ton*]).
4. Were Yidish *yaprakes* ~ *yaprakis* very old (as a word of substratal origin is by definition), it would have one of two features neither of which it actually has:

4.A. Either initial stress: **yaprikes*.

4.B. Or its stressed vowel would be */o/ (phonetically, isochronic [ɔ]) in that part of Southeastern Yidish speech territory where stressed */ǎ/ has become /o/, that is, where *tote-mome-loshn* is spoken (Gold 2009 gives details in connection with the stressed vowel of Southeastern Yidish *pestrame* ‘pastrami’).

An example of a Yidish word of possibly immediate Turkish origin that exhibits the change described in 4.B is the penultimately stressed noun in the Yidish place name די מאָלע (*di mole*) ‘the Old Section [of Kamianka, Ukraine]’, which was reported to me in the early 1970s by

Boris Chubinsky, who was born and raised in Kamianka, the Yidish name of which is (older spelling) קאַמינקי ~ (newer spelling) קאַמענקע (*kamenke* ~ *kaminki*, both antepenultimately stressed); only after his death did I learn that more than one inhabited place in Ukraine is named *Kamianka*, so that it did not occur to me to ask him in which one he was born.

Two features of Kamianka Yidish מאָלע show that it is an old borrowing of Turkish *mahalle* ‘district, neighborhood, quarter, section [of an urban area]’ and/or of Rumanian Judezmo *maala* ~ *maale* ~ *mala* ‘idem’: (1) the Turkish word and the Rumanian Judezmo word (in all its variants) have final stress whereas the Kamianka Yidish word has penultimate stress, it thus exhibiting the retraction of stress to the first syllable typical of certain Yidish nouns and (2) it exhibits /o/ < */ă/.

Kamianka Yidish מאָלע (*mole*), therefore, is older than regional Southeastern Yidish פראַקיס (*prakes*) because it exhibits, first, retraction of the Judezmo and/or Turkish final stress to its first syllable and, second, stressed */ă/ > /o/ (the changes occurred in that order) whereas the other word exhibits neither. Consequently, the first word presumably arose at a time when parts of Ukraine belonged to the Ottoman Empire or were its vassals and the second one is probably no older than the nineteenth century.

5. The influence of Judezmo and Turkish on Yidish deserves a comprehensive study. Note that only immediate transfer is a sign of influence, there being four possibilities:
 - Judezmo > Yidish
 - Turkish > Yidish
 - Judezmo and Turkish > Yidish
 - Judezmo and/or Turkish > Yidish

Which is to say, an etymology such as Turkish > Polish > Yidish is evidence for Turkish influence on Polish and for Polish influence on Yidish but not for Turkish influence on Yidish. So-called “indirect influence” does not exist in language.

6. Diachronic linguists often look not for identities but for patterned differences (as in the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European) and, with respect to Yidish, you discard any evidence that does not accord with Max Weinreich’s reconstruction of the Proto-Yidish stressed vocalism (unless

you can prove the relevant part of his reconstruction wrong) because the older an item in the latter-day language is, the more phonological changes it should have undergone (contrast 'mole and 'prakes) and every item of substratal origin that has survived into the latter-day language will, by definition, have undergone all the phonological changes pertinent to it (not just those involving stressed vowels) whereas the younger an item is, the fewer it may have undergone because it could have arisen *after* potentially pertinent changes ran their course, an example being the English noun *pastrami* (Gold 2009), which, despite what English dictionaries say, could not possibly come from Yidish because the Yidish word they give as the etymon had undergone a change (before the English word came into existence) that is not reflected in the English word.²⁶

To return to the Karaite male given name סימא (*sima*): the fact Simxa ben-Šoleme Bobovič also went by that name and the fact that the Yidish male given name שימחה (*simkhe*) and the Yidish female given name סימע (*sime*) are related to each other is probably not a coincidence (because the loss of the phoneme represented by the letter <ח> is too idiosyncratic to have occurred independently in two Jewish languages) but what lies under those presumed two tips of the same iceberg is unknown.²⁷

²⁶ All or almost all who have in recent years proposed various substratal languages for Yidish as a whole or for certain Yidish topolects in particular in place of the ones proposed by Max Weinreich (Jewish French and Jewish Italian), namely, those proposing Bavarian, Gothic, Sorbian, and Turkish Iranian have overlooked the general guideline that one looks not for identifies or similarities but patterned differences and, in the case of Yidish, the particular guidelines mentioned in the text concerning his reconstruction of the stressed Proto-Yidish vocalism. Eventually they will have to consider Western and Eastern Yidish usages of immediate Old High German origin, which are not compatible with their proposals (Gold in preparation).

²⁷ Possibly, the Crimean Karaite male personal name סימא (*sima*) is unrelated to the Karaite male given name שמחה (*simxa*) and the two have become associated only because of their auditory similarity, not because they are etymologically related to each other. A similar possibility exists in Yidish:

Because the Yidish male compound given name קלוימוס-קלמן (*kloynemes-kalmen*) is fairly frequent, it has been asserted that the second element comes from the first one, but the assertion has not been proven (though it could be right). All that is clear at this time is that the Yidish male given name קלוימוס (*kloynemes*, initially stressed) comes immediately and/or non-immediately from the Jewish

We have now seen in section VI.B several examples of how raising a question in one Jewish language, even it has not been answered, can stimulate the raising of the same or a similar one in another Jewish language.

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No relationship seems likely between the Karaite female hypocoristic “בינצגה (dimin.) [...] < Pol. *Binia* or *Sabina*” (p. 204, ft. 408) and the Yidish female given name ביי (older spelling) ~ בינע (newer spelling) (*bini* ~ *bine*), which consists of the Yidish common noun *bin* ‘bee’ and the Yidish feminine hypercharacterizer *-e* (pronounced [ɛ] in most varieties of Yidish).²⁸

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Greek male given name Καλωνυμος, literally, ‘good name’, which comes from the non-Jewish Greek male given name so spelled (borne, for example, by Καλωνυμος Ἀλεξανδρεως, known in English as *Calonymus of Alexandria* [floruit 530s CE]).

The Jewish Greek name was the model for the Judezmo male given name שם טוב (*sinto*, finally stressed), which consists of Hebrew שם (*shem*) ‘name’ and Hebrew טוב (*tov*) ‘good’.

The assertion that the Yidish male given name קלמן (*kalmén*, initially stressed) comes from the Hungarian male given name *Kálmán* (< the Irish male given name *Colmán*) is based on nothing more than their auditory similarity (also visual similarity when the Yidish name is romanized). Since on one hand the Yidish name is universal at least in Eastern Yidish (its status in Western Yidish remains to be determined) and on the other hand the Yidish-speaking Jews of Hungary have not been linguistically influential elsewhere in the Yidish-speaking world, the assertion is untenable.

That seemingly strange etymology “Hungarian < Irish” is explained by the fact that an Irish pilgrim named *Colmán* was in 1012 on his way to the Holy Land when in Stockerau, Austria, he was tortured and hanged on the false charge of being a spy. Because he was later widely venerated in Hungary (among other places), Hungarian parents often named their sons for him, hence Irish *Colmán* > Hungarian *Kálmán*. If Ashkenazic parents have named their sons קלמן in Yidish and *Kálmán* in Hungarian, that is only because of the chance similarity between the two name. The parents’ pairing the names is not an authoritative etymology.

²⁸ See footnote 9 for another example of the Yidish feminine hypercharacterizer *-e*. The belief is unfounded that the bisyllabicity of that Yidish female given name shows that it comes from German *Biene* ‘bee’.

Surprisingly, some of the family names [of Karaites] in Galicia reflected not the Polish, but the Polish-Yiddish pronunciation of the Hebrew names e.g. *Icko* instead of Polish 'Izaak', *Mordko* instead of 'Mordechaj', *Szulim* instead of 'Szalom' etc. All these family names were given to the Karaites at the end of the eighteenth century, most likely by the local Austrian officials, who did not really care about the differences between Karaite, Yiddish, and Polish pronunciations of Hebrew. Nevertheless, it seems that the Karaites themselves never objected to these surnames (Kizilov 2015: 167; double quotation marks in original; the bracketed addition is mine).

The quotation would read better if, instead of “not the Polish, but the Polish-Yiddish pronunciation of the Hebrew names e.g. *Icko* instead of Polish 'Izaak', *Mordko* instead of 'Mordechaj', *Szulim* instead of 'Szalom' etc.,” it read as follows:

“not Polish reflexes of Hebrew names but Southern Yidish reflexes thereof, such as Yidish *itske* (= *itsye* [a short form of the Yidish male given name *itsik*] + replacement of *-ye* by the Eastern Yidish hypocoristic ending *-ke*), Yidish *mortke* (= **mort-* [= the first syllable of the Yidish male given name *mortkhe* 'Mordecai'] + the Eastern Yidish hypocoristic ending *-ke*), and the Yidish male given name *sholem* in its Central Yidish pronunciation (with /u:/ in the first syllable) and/or Southeastern Yidish pronunciation (with isochronic /u/ in that syllable), the names being recording as best as conventional Polish spelling allows, that is, for example, since conventional Polish spelling has no way of representing [ə] unambiguously [in the Standardized Yidish Romanization, which is used throughout the present review-essay, it is represented by <e>, as above in *itske*, *itsye*, *mortke*, *mortkhe*, and *sholem*], <o> is used word-finally in Yidish male personal names (as in <Icko> and <Mordko>) and <a> is used word-finally in Yidish female personal names (the spelling <Szulim> is a bit unusual; one expects <Szulym>, which indeed occurs in numerous Polish texts).”

Any form of the Karaite male given name שלום (*shalom*) with /u/ instead of /a/ in the first syllable shows the influence of Southern Yidish (= Central Yidish + Southeastern Yidish), where the Yidish male given name שלום (*sholem*) has either /u:/ (in Central Yidish) or isochronic /u/ (in Southeastern Yidish). The map in Gold (2017: 269) shows the approximate boundaries of those two Yidish topolects.

It follows that the vowel in the first syllable of the Karaite family name *Szulimowicz* reflects the influence of Southern Yidish.

M. N. tells me that one bearer of the family name *Szulimowicz* in Halych dropped the first <z> after World War Two. Since *Sulimowicz* is a family name borne either mostly or exclusively by Christians, the change may have been motivated by a desire that the family name not reveal any connection to Karaites and that it not lead to the assumption that he was a Rabbanite Jew.

One may ask whether Kizilov's suggestion is right that the presence in Galicia of Karaite personal names with features of Yidish origin may be due to the fact that they were assigned "by the local Austrian officials, who did not really care about the differences between Karaite, Yiddish, and Polish pronunciations of Hebrew."

If all those officials were non-Jews (as I suppose), they knew neither Karaite nor Yidish nor Hebrew, so that they would have recorded what they heard (as best they could as non-phoneticians unacquainted with the languages in question could) or what they were given in writing. If so, they would not be the source of those features. Indeed, they could *not* have been, because any speaker of German or Polish hearing Karaite /a/ in *Szalom-* (the expected stem of the Karaite family name mentioned above) would have heard it as German /a/ or Polish /a/ and thus recorded it by writing <a>, not <u>.

Here is an alternate explanation (though it is predicated on an unproven assumption):

With the first and third partitions of Poland (1772 and 1795), the Jewish population of Austria increased considerably. The decree of Emperor Joseph II of Austria of 28 August 1787 required that by 1 January 1788 all Jews in the country have permanent family names. At that time, the government, unless I am mistaken, considered Karaites to be Jews and thus part of the Jewish communities. Given the fact that most of the Jews in Austria were Rabbanites, it was probably they who occupied most or all of the positions in the community administrations.

If so, and if the procedure was that Jews (Karaites and Rabbanites) first had to report their given and family names to Jewish community officials (= my unproven assumption), who then had to report all the collected names to the government, Yidish-speaking community officials, not government officials, would have been the ones who Yidishized the names of many Karaites, not deliberately or out of malice but simply because we tend to hear the unknown or the unfamiliar as what we do know and is familiar to us, so

that they would have heard Karaite and Karaite Hebrew-Aramaic names and recorded them according to the pronunciation of their Yidish and Ashkenazic Hebrew-Aramaic cognates.²⁹

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M. N. notes that “*Szoleme* is a variant of the Hebrew name שלומה used among Crimean Karaims [...]” (p. 253, ft. 717; see also pp. 252 and 340). Since Yidish influence is out of the question in Crimea (see above on Sima the number of Yidishophones there has been too small in comparison to the number of other Jews), we should not see the influence of Northeastern Yidish in *Szoleme* (the Yidish male given name mentioned in the previous paragraph has isochronic /o/ in that Yidish topolect).

Rather, as M. N. says, the Crimean Karaite male given name *Szoleme* comes from the Hebrew male given name שלומה ‘Solomon’. Metathesis probably accounts for the order of the first four phonemes of the Crimean Karaite name. The change of vowel in the last syllable remains to be explained.

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M. N. tells me that he has found the Karaite noun רטמן just once in the corpus of Lutsk Karaite known to him and never in Karaite material of any other provenience. He writes,

In the edited material, there is one other lexeme not previously attested in Lutsk Karaim. The word is ultimately of German origin, but the question of the exact donor language will remain.

²⁹ Two examples of hearing the unfamiliar and reinterpreting it as the familiar: for many years, I could not understand why the musician “Sérgio Ozawa,” a Japanese born and raised in Japan, had a Portuguese given name and I thought that an Argentine composer was named “Óscar Piazzolla” (I had heard both names many times and either never saw them in writing or, if I did, never paid attention to their spelling). When I finally did seem the names in print, I was surprised to see that the first musician’s given name was actually *Seiji* (a Japanese name till then unknown to me) and that the second one’s was actually *Astor* (which I had known only as a German and an English family name and thus found incomprehensible in the slot of a Spanish given name). My ear had interpreted or folk-etymologized the unknown in terms of the known. I have heard people in the United States mention *old-timers’ disease* (= how they hear *Alzheimer’s disease*).

ratman ‘1. advisor; 2. the member of the town council’ (2:83) << Germ. *Ratmann* ‘1. advisor; 2. the member of the town council’ (GrimmDW XIV 202), most likely via the mediation of Yidd. ראָטמאַן ‘councilman’ (Harkavy 1925: 470) –pronounced probably as *ratman* (~ *rotman*). For the idiolectal articulation of <אָ> as [a] instead of [o], see Mazin/de Woolf (1927: 6). The word was written as <הרטמן> in the manuscript, i.e. with Hebr. ה ‘definite article’” (p. 91, §125, “One word of uncertain origin not previously attested in Lutsk Karaim”).

“**ratman** ‘1, advisor; 2. the member of the town council’. [...] < Germ. *Ratmann* ~ *Ratsmann* ‘1. advisor, secretary; 2. the member of the town council’” (p. 313).

This etymology is presumably right: Karaite רטמן (*ratman*) < Polish *ratman* (defined in Doroszewski 1958–1969 as ‘radny miejski; rajca’, that is, ‘alderman, city councilor, town councilor’) < German *Rathmann* (now spelled *Ratmann*) ‘idem’. The oldest evidence for the Polish word is from 1848: “nieraz syn szewca lub krawca, syn burmistrza lub ratmana [...] w naukach przechodził podkomorzyców i innych paniczów” (de Vincenz and Hentschel 2010 s.v., updated on 6 May 2011).

Since the letter in which רטמן appears was written in 1868 (p. 217), we need not consider the possibility that the presence of German in Lutsk from 29 August 1915 to 22 February 1918, when the city was under Austro-Hungarian military occupation, may be relevant to the etymology of Karaite *ratman*.

German *Ratsmann* is irrelevant because Karaite רטמן does not have /s/. Yidish is irrelevant because the first vowel of Yidish ראָטמאַן (*rotman*) ‘alderman, city councilor, town councilor’, which is /o:/ in Western Yidish, /u:/ in Central Yidish, isochronic /u/ in Southeastern Yidish, and isochronic /o/ in Northeastern Yidish, is not realized in a way that speakers of Karaite would hear as Karaite /a/.

Also, Yidish is unlikely to be the source of a Karaite word referring to non-Jewish civil administration or government in the Russian Empire (see the discussion of the term *determinant* in section IV), whereas, at least in Lutsk, Polish and/or Russian is likely to be.

In sum, Yidish does not figure in the etymology of Karaite רטמן (*ratman*), which comes from Polish *ratman*, which comes from German *Ratmann*. If the Karaite word has been used in Galicia, it would presumably come immediately from German.³⁰

³⁰ Mazin and de Woolf (1927) is overflowing with misspellings, with heaps of German the authors believed was Yidish, and with truckloads of other blunders so crass that the Augean Stables pale in comparison. The following brief passage is

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Gold (1989) hypothesizes that if a language has just one word of Jewish interest, it will mean 'Jew' or 'Jewish', and that if it has just two, the other one will mean either 'synagog' or 'rabbi'. Similarly, we may hypothesize that if Yidish has just one word of Karaite interest, it will mean 'Karaite' (noun and/or adjective), and that if it has just two, the other one will mean either '[Karaite] synagog' or 'spiritual leader [of a Karaite community]'.

Yidish indeed has a noun meaning 'Karaite' and an adjective meaning 'Karaite', as well as a glottonym meaning 'Karaite', all of which contain a stem (-קראַי [kroye-]) of Hebrew-Aramaic origin (< -קראי [karai-]):

1. the ethnonyms קראַי (kroye) (masculine singular), קראַים (kroyem) (masculine plural), קראַיטע (kroyete) (feminine singular), קראַיטעס (kroyetes) (feminine plural).
2. the glottonym קראַיש (kroyish), and
3. the declinable adjective קראַיש (kroyish), all with initial stress.

the basis for M. N.'s remark about "the idiolectal articulation of <א> as [a] instead of [o]":

"The vowels וּ and וֹ always have an א above them viz. אָבער. The difference between וּ and וֹ in reading is very slight, some Jews will say אָבער [ober] or פֿאָטער [foter] instead of [אָבער] (aber) or [פֿאָטער] [fater]" (p. 6, where reference is to the vowel signs pasekh and komets; the bracketed additions are mine).

"Vowels" should be vowel signs. The first sign also appears under tsvey yudn (<ײ>) to form the grapheme pasekh tsvey yudn (<ײַ>). The last word of the first sentence is not Yidish but German aber clothed in Yidish garb. Those two vowel signs represent not "very slight" or even "slight" differences in pronunciation because they represent different phonemes, which every competent Yidishophone easily distinguishes when hearing them or when pronouncing them (though it is true that the phonemes have in certain environments in certain topolects merged). The correct spelling of the words romanized as ober and foter is אָבער and פֿאָטער. The wording makes it seem that what follows "some Jews will say" is two mispronunciations and that what follows "instead of" is the corresponding right pronunciations, but the truth is the other way round: the first two words are authentic Yidish words (with a total of four mistakes in spelling) and the second two are German words clothed in Yidish garb.

Everything in those two brief sentences is thus wrong.

M. N. is not to blame for relying on Mazin and de Woolf (1927) because he had no warning of the authors' intellectual fraud, which has been exposed for the first time in the present review-essay.

And Yidish indeed has a word meaning ‘spiritual leader [of a Karaite community]’ (which is also, so far as I know, the only Yidish word of immediate Karaite origin): חכם (*khakham*), pronounced /xa'xam/, as its Karaite etymon is. The plural form of the Yidish word, חכמס (*khakams*), pronounced /xa'xams/, is morphologically innovative inasmuch as the plural form of Karaite חכם is חכמלר /xaxam'lar/), though it is not expected from the viewpoint of Yidish, which has other bisyllabic nouns ending in /m/ that obligatorily or optionally take the plural marker <ס> (-s): בעזעמס (*bezems*) ‘brooms’ (also בעזעמעס [bezemes] ~ בעזעמער [bezemer]), בוידעמס (*boydems*) ‘attics, garrets’ (also ביידעמער [beydemer]), איידעמעס (*eydems*) ‘sons-in-law’ (also איידעמעס [eydemes] ~ איידעמער [eydemer]), ליאַרעמס (*lyarems*) ‘hues and cries, uproars’, and טורעמס (*turems*) ‘towers’, all of which plural forms, like the singular ones, are stressed on the initial syllable.³¹

VII. The Karaite alphabet and Karaite spelling in their Jewish setting

Figure 1 outlines the evolution of writing systems from Egyptian hieroglyphs to the Karaite alphabet (not all alphabets are listed).

As long as what was once called “the Paleo-Hebrew alphabet” and the “the Later Hebrew alphabet” were used to write only Hebrew, calling them collectively “the Hebrew alphabets” and individually “the Paleo-Hebrew alphabet” and “the Later Hebrew alphabet” was justified. However, as Jews began using “the Later Hebrew alphabet” for other languages too (1.1.1.3.1.1 in figure 1 gives a sample), often modifying that alphabet to better represent phonemes and phonemic contrasts absent in Hebrew, those names in double quotation marks became unsuitable as scientific terms because it was confusing to use the adjective *Hebrew* in both the hyperonym “the Hebrew alphabets” (the alphabets used to write Jewish languages, including Hebrew) and the hyponym “the Hebrew alphabet” (the alphabet used to write Hebrew).

For that reason, Gold (1982), which section VII of the present-review essay replaces, suggests the hyperonym *the Jewish alphabet*, so that the term *the Hebrew alphabet* is shorn of its non-monosemy and thus becomes once again monosemous, hence unambiguous.

³¹ At least Halych Yidish also has contemptuous and offensive ethnonyms for Karaites, שייגעץ (*sheygets*) for a male (plural שקאַצים [skhotsim]) and שיקסע (*shikse*) for a female (plural שיקסעס [shikses]). The romanization of the singular forms in Kizilov (2015: 66), line 13, is not quite right

Figure 1: From Egyptian hieroglyphs to the Karaite alphabet

- I. Egyptian hieroglyphs
 - I.I. the Proto-Sinaitic alphabet
 - I.I.I. the Proto-Canaanite alphabet
 - I.I.I.I. the Paleo-Jewish alphabet [used to write Hebrew; replaced about 2500 years ago by the alphabet mentioned in I.I.I.3.I]
 - I.I.I.I.I. the Samaritan alphabet
 - I.I.I.I.2. the Phoenician alphabet
 - I.I.I.I.2.I. the Greek alphabet
 - I.I.I.I.2.I.I. the Armenian, Coptic, Cyrillic, Georgian, Glagolitic, Gothic, Old Italic, and Latin [also called *Roman*] alphabets [each of those eight alphabets is a separate development of the Greek alphabet]
 - I.I.I.3. the Aramaic alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.I. the Later Jewish alphabet [used to write Hebrew and Old Jewish Aramaic]
 - I.I.I.3.I.I. the alphabets of Jewish languages other than Hebrew and Old Jewish Aramaic, such as Ġidi, Jewish Arabic, Jewish French, Jewish Greek, Jewish Italian, Judezmo, Karaite, New Jewish Aramaic, and Yidish]
 - I.I.I.3.2. the Palmyrene alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I. the Syriac alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.I. the Nabatean alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.I.I. the Islamic alphabet³²
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.I.I.I. the Persian alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.I.I.I.I. the Ottoman Turkish alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.2. the Sogdian alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.2.I. the Old Uyghur alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.2.I.I. the Manchu alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.2.I.I.I. the Xibe alphabet
 - I.I.I.3.2.I.2.I.2. the Mongolian alphabet
 - I.I.I.4. the Ancient South Arabian alphabet

³² Since “the Arabic alphabet” is both a hyperonym and a hyponym, it is as ambiguous as “the Hebrew alphabet” when the broader and the narrow senses are not expressed differently (see section VII on *the Jewish alphabet* versus *the Hebrew alphabet*). The distinction which other researchers make between *the Islamic alphabet* and *the Arabic alphabet* is good.

VII.A. Features of Karaite spelling found in other Jewish languages too

Reference here is to the Karaite language as written from the seventeenth century to at least the second half of the twentieth century, namely, in a variety of the Jewish alphabet (rather than to the Cyrillic, Lithuanian, and Polish alphabets that became increasingly common beginning in the twentieth century).³³

Because Hebrew-Aramaic is the prestigious language in the Jewish world, all or nearly all lexemes belonging to the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Jewish-alphabet languages are spelled as in Hebrew-Aramaic (the result being that the spelling of such lexemes usually does not reveal their pronunciation, does not reveal it fully, and/or is to this or that extent misleading) whereas the spelling of lexemes belonging to the other components is more or less morphophonemic, thus, much more representative of their pronunciation.³⁴ Compare, for example, these spellings:

1. Words belonging to the Hebrew-Aramaic component: Karaite שבת (*sabat*) ‘Sabbath’, Judezmo שבת (*šabat*) ‘idem’, and Yidish שבת (*shabes*) ‘idem’. The three spellings preserve the spelling of their common etymon, Hebrew שבת. The spellings give readers an approximate idea of what the consonantal phonemes are (since each of the three letters could, hypothetically, stand for either of two consonantal phonemes, they do not reveal which phoneme they represent), and they reveal nothing about the number of vowels or give readers even an approximate idea of what they are. They reveal nothing about stress either (but that is true of all Jewish-alphabet languages).
2. Words belonging to other components: Karaite צימביליר (*tsembiler*) ‘small kerchiefs, small shawls’ (p. 274), Southeastern Judezmo טיפטיקוס (*tefterikos*)

³³ The latest letter in Németh (2011) is from 1923 and M. N. tells me that he has seen a Karaite-alphabet text from 1940 and “there are some [Karaite-alphabet] texts from the second half of the twentieth century but not many” (email of 20 December 2017).

³⁴ Since Hebrew or Hebrew-Aramaic is the prestigious language in traditional Jewish societies, both Karaite and Rabbanite, its spelling too is considered holy, hence the retention of that spelling in other Jewish-alphabet languages. Georgian Jews, however, consider not just Hebrew-Aramaic but also the Jewish alphabet to be so holy that they do not use it to write Kivruli (the Jewish correlate of Georgian).

~ *tiftirikus*) ‘small notebooks’, and (at least) Anykšciai Yidish סאַפּיזשנאָקיס (older spelling) ~ סאַפּעזשנאָקעס (newer spelling) (*sapezhankes*) ‘bergamot pears’. The spellings represent most segmental phonemes, both consonantal and vocalic, unambiguously (Karaitic and Judezmo) or they represent all of them unambiguously (Yidish), a subject to which we will return three paragraphs below. However, they reveal nothing about stress.

Learning to spell words in the first category is much harder than learning to spell those in the second one, so that less proficient spellers tend to make more mistakes with etymological spellings than with the others (see section VII.D).³⁵

Since in traditional Jewish communities of days gone by, Hebrew-Aramaic was, with few exceptions, taught only to men (most women were either illiterate or taught to read and write only the vernacular language), we expect that women writing, say, letters in Jewish-alphabet languages would spell words belonging to the Hebrew-Aramaic component phonemically or morphophonemically rather than etymologically (that is true at least of Judezmo and Yidish). With respect to Karaite, M. N. tells me that he has never seen any Karaite-alphabet Karaite writing from the pen of a woman. Could it be that writing Karaite in the Karaite alphabet has been taught only to males?

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Jewish-alphabet languages have reached various stages on the path toward the ideal for all languages written alphabetically: orthographic bi-uniqueness, whereby the number of graphemes and the number of phonemes is equal and each grapheme represents just one phoneme, so that persons knowing the graphemes and knowing what phonemes they represent always know how to pronounce what they see and can easily set down in writing what they hear.

³⁵ Hypothetical examples involving Polish will illustrate the difference between spellings reflecting current pronunciation and those reflecting etymology. Imagine that Roman Catholic users of Polish decided that since Latin is a holy language, Polish words of immediate or non-immediate Latin origin should be written identically to their Latin etymons rather than according to their current pronunciation in Polish. Thus, instead of *biskup* ‘bishop’, *klasztor* ‘monastery’, *krzyż* ‘cross’, *msza* ‘mass’, *mszał* ‘missal’, and *poganin* ‘pagan’, *episcopus*, *claustrum*, *crux*, *missa*, *missale*, and *paganus* respectively.

For example, with respect to the monophthongs of Judezmo (diphthongs are not considered here), four graphemes represent the five monophthongal phonemes of the language:

1. <י> stands for /i/ and /e/.
- 2–3. <ה> stands for /a/ word-finally and <א> stands for that phoneme word-initially and word-medially.
4. <ו> stands for /o/ and /u/.

Consequently, Judezmo has achieved less than full orthographic bi-uniqueness with respect to /i/ and /e/ and to /o/ and /u/ and two graphemes represent /a/, though the double use to which <י> and <ו> are put is not necessarily dysfunctional because they also represent diaphonemes: unstressed /i/ and unstressed /e/ constitute a diaphoneme, as do unstressed /o/ and /u/, so that <פִּיזוֹ> ‘son’, for instance, represents both /fižo/ (the pronunciation in Salonika for example) and /fižu/ (the pronunciation in Bitola for example) and <פִּיזוֹ> ‘idem’, for instance, represents both /ižo/ (the pronunciation in Istanbul for example) and /ižu/ (the pronunciation in Rhodes for example), though other diaphonemes are not represented in spelling, for instance, the one constituted by /f/ and Ø, as we see in the two Judezmo-alphabet spellings of the word for ‘son’, where a single letter or diacritics is unavailable to represent both /f/ and its absence.

With respect to the monophthongal phonemes of Karaite (in both stressed and unstressed position), M. N. gives a detailed analysis of the representation of all the segmental phonemes in the sixteen letters (pp. 106–119), from which we see that full pointing is the norm (at least in the sixteen letters analyzed in the book), but without pointing and, with respect just to the stressed monophthongs, the spelling system is almost identical to that of Judezmo:

1. <י> stands for /i/ and /e/.
2. <א> stands for /a/ in word-initial position (as in אֱלוֹק [alok] ‘nevertheless’) and word-final position (as in פֹּרֵא [fura] ‘cart, wagon’)
3. Certain writers represent word-medial /a/ by <א> (as in נֶאֱצֵאִלְמִטּוֹ [nacalstvo] [p. 303]) and certain ones represent it by Ø (as in נֶאֱצֵאִלְנִיק [nacalnik] [p. 303])
4. <ו> stands for /o/ and /u/.

*

Once we have thorough histories of the spelling of every Jewish-alphabet language, it will be possible to make more-detailed comparisons and maybe suggest the possibility of orthographic influence.

VII.B. Five parallels between the Karaite-alphabet spelling of Karaite and the Tatar-alphabet spelling of Tatar Belarusian and Tatar Polish

In reviewing M. N.'s book, Michael Tarelko notes “numerous parallels between the writing of the published letters and the writing of the texts written by the Tatars of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the Arabic letters in the Slavic (Belarusian and Polish) languages (the five parallels are numbered below for ease of reference):

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Parallel 1 “– So the letter aleph or aleph combined with vowel points is used for indicating word-initial vowels in the published Karaim letters: אביילי [abajly] ‘honourable’ (p. 101, 106, 264); איס [is] ‘work’ (p. 286). The same function of this letter is characteristic also of Slavic (Belarusian and Polish) texts in the Tatar manuscripts: ابو [al’bo] ‘or’ (P971, fol. 14a:1; 33:13), ابي [aby] ‘that’ (P97, fol. 11a:2; 41b:8), ام [im’e] ‘name’ (P97, fol. 30b:2) etc.

Parallel 2 “– In the published Karaim texts there is a tendency to distinguish velar [k] and palatal [k'] by using koph (ק) and kaph (כ), respectively, when rendering them (p. 103, 110, 122). The analogous tendency is in the Slavic (Belarusian and Polish) texts written with the Arabic letters by the Tatars of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The velar consonant [k] is regularly rendered with ق (q): قاراص [karac] ‘караць’ (P97, fol. 35a:6) ‘to punish’; قرول [krol] ‘кароль’ (P97, fol. 5a:10; 5b:8 etc.) ‘king’, and the palatalized [k'] with the letter ك (k): منك [menk'i] ‘пакуты’ (P97, fol. 11b:7) ‘torments’; كد [k'edy] ‘калі’ (5a:11; 29b:12 etc.) ‘when’. The exceptions to this rule are very rare in both the Karaim and the Tatar texts: כולדום [koldum] ‘I begged’ (p. 110); קין [kin] ‘day’ (p. 110); قلفادنونط [k'ilkadz'es'ont] ‘some dozens’ (P97, fol. 14b:2); قلفا-قروص [k'il'kakroc] ‘some (times)’ (P97, fol. 32a:6); غورالق [goralk'i] ‘vodka’ (P97, fol. 34a:3).

Parallel 3 “– Furthermore, the palatal [ś] tends to be noted with shin (שׁ), as opposed to [s] rendered mainly by samech (ס) (p. 112, 123). Such distribution of the functions between the letters שׁ and ס in the Karaim writing can be compared with the functions of the letters س and ص in the Tatar manuscript: صين [syn] ‘son’ (P97, fol. 9b:6 etc.); سلا [s’ila] ‘force’ (P97, fol. 37a:8).

Parallel 4 “– Some parallelism can be seen also in the use of the letters of the emphatic and non-emphatic sounds [ṭ] and [t] (p. 113). The letter ס in the published Karaim letters notes both [t] and [ṭ], whereas ט is used in the words of Hebrew origin. In the Tatar manuscripts ط consistently is used for [t], while ت is used in the words of Arabic origin such as تفسير [tefsir] ‘comment, translation’, نيت [nijet] ‘intention’ etc.

Parallel 5 “– The letter yodh is occasionally used in the Karaim texts after tzadhe (צ) and nun (נ) to indicate palatals [č] and [ń] (p. 122, 124, 140, 211–210). The same way of marking the palatals is characteristic also of the texts in the Slavic (Belarusian and Polish) languages written with the Arabic letters by the Tatars of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Compare, زصيا [žyc’a] ‘of life’ (P97, fol. 34a:8); لصيونص [l’ec’onc] ‘flying’ (the manuscript of 1885, fol. 323b); نيوياصط [n’ev’asta] (the manuscript of 1885, fol. 405a) ‘woman’; كانيو [kan’u] ‘to the horse’ (the manuscript of the 20th century, fol. 232b:15).

“The list of the parallels between the orthographic systems of Tatar texts written in the Belarusian or Polish language with the Arabic letters and of the Karaim texts especially in the words of Slavic origin can be continued. Both ethnic groups, being in the same state and inhabiting a common Slavic environment, could resolve the problem of the adaptation of Hebrew and Arabic script respectively to the non-Semitic texts in the same way and perhaps with possible mutual influence” (Tarelko 2013: 258–360; footnotes not quoted).

Comment

The five parallels give every sign of being due not to Tatar influence on Karaites or to Karaite influence on Tatars but to the fact that the Tatar alphabet is a form of the Islamic alphabet; the Karaite alphabet is a form of the Jewish alphabet; the Islamic alphabet and the Jewish alphabet share ancestors (see Figure 1 at the beginning of section VII); and a convention regulating the spelling of words derived from holy languages (Hebrew-Aramaic in the case of Karaite and Rabbanite Jews and Arabic in the case of Muslims) the parallels could be separate continuations going back to the same source?

With respect to parallel 1, in all Jewish-alphabet languages, the first letter of every word that begins with a vowel is, with one exception (in Yidish), alef and, so far as I know, the first letter of every word in every Islamic-alphabet language that begins with a vowel is alif. That seems to be an inheritance from an earlier Semitic language:³⁶

- Hebrew אלף אדריכלים אמריקנים ‘a thousand American architects’
- Judezmo אטראס אונדזי אניוס ‘eleven years ago’
- Yidish אַכט אױסטערלישע אייזלענדער ‘eight bizarre Icelanders’
- Arabic ألف أسود أفريقي ‘a thousand African lions’

*

With respect to parallel 2 (“a tendency to distinguish velar [k] and palatal [kʰ] by...”), the Hebrew letters qōḇ and kāḇ originally represented /q/ (phonetically [q]) and /k/ (phonetically [k]) respectively and the Arabic letters qāf and kāf originally represented /q/ (phonetically [q]) and /k/ (phonetically [k]) respectively. Also,

1. Hebrew /q/ and Arabic /q/ are reflexes of Proto-Semitic */q/, realized as *[kʰ], an emphatic velar stop.

³⁶ The Yidish exception concerns the letter ayen (<ע>), which represents several vowels and occurs word-initially (as well as word-medially and word-finally). Hence, for example, עלעף עסטרייכישע עלטער-מלכות (*elef estraykhishe elter-malkes*) ‘eleven Austrian queens dowager’.

M. N. found two instances of the letter ayin representing /a/, once word-initially and once word-medially (p. 106). Neither is due to the influence of Yidish, where ayen relatively seldom represents /a/, for example, על-בן (al-keyn) ‘hence, therefore’, ענווים (anovim) ‘meek persons, modest persons’, and עשרת-הדיברות (aseres-hadibres) ‘the Decalog, the Ten Commandments’. All Yidish words containing ayen representing /a/ belong to the Hebrew-Aramaic component.

As noted in section VII.A, such words, except in the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation, are spelled more or less like their Hebrew-Aramaic etymons, rather than according to their pronunciation in Yidish, so that it is Hebrew-Aramaic spelling, not Yidish pronunciation, which determines whether ayen should be used (were the three sample words given in the previous paragraph to be spelled according to their Yidish pronunciation and in disregard of their etymology, the spelling would be אסערעס-האדיברעס, אַנאָוים, אַל-קיי, thus, all with pasekh-alef (<א>) representing /a/.

Footnotes 17 and 38 also deal with Yidish spelling in the Soviet Union.

2. Hebrew /k/ and Arabic /k/ are reflexes of Proto-Semitic */k/, realized as *[k], a voiceless velar stop.
3. The Hebrew letter qôp and the Arabic letter qāf descend from the same letter.
4. The Hebrew letter kāp and the Arabic letter kāf descend from the same letter.

Therefore, the second shared feature exemplifies identical solutions to the same problems facing the devisers of Tatar spelling and of Karaite

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With respect to parallel 3 (Karaite “palatal [š] tends to be noted with shin (שׁ), as opposed to [s] rendered mainly by samech”), since Hebrew shin and samech respectively represent /š/ and /s/ respectively, Karaite follows Hebrew, which probably continues the same earlier Semitic tradition that Arabic continues. If so, descent from a Semitic source explains the parallel.³⁷

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With respect to parallel 4, a shared concern for preserving the spellings in a holy language, which for Karaite and Rabbanite Jews is the Hebrew-Aramaic component (because Hebrew-Aramaic is the language of the Jewish Bible) and for Muslims is the Arabic component (because Arabic is the language of the Quran) has resulted in a convergence.

In the other components, a desire for economy, and a concern that learning to read and write be as easy as possible have led to the choice of just one grapheme if a phoneme could, in principle, be represented by two or more.

³⁷ The Tatar alphabet (a variety of the Islamic alphabet) once used by the Tatars in the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania to write Tatar Belarusian and Tatar Polish consists of twenty-eight graphemes: twenty-three adopted from the Arabic alphabet, three from the Persian alphabet, and two indigenous ones (that is, graphemes which are not derived from, or modeled on, any graphemes in any other alphabet).

Since the Karaite alphabet (a variety of the Later Jewish alphabet) consists of the twenty-two letters of the Later Jewish alphabet and the latter is not distant from the Islamic alphabet (see Figure 1 at the beginning of section VII), we should not be surprised if a certain number of spelling conventions turned out to be similar or identical in Jewish- and Islamic-alphabet languages.

Thus, for instance, in Yidish (1) in the Hebrew-Aramaic component three graphemes are used for representing /s/, the right one depending on the spelling of the Hebrew-Aramaic etymon in question (for instance, <ס> [*samech*] in סוף [*sof*] ‘end’, <ש> [*sin*] in שונא [*soyne*] ‘enemy’, and <ת> [*sof*] in the male given name קהת [*kehos*]); and (2) in all the other components, just one grapheme, <ס> (*samech*), represents /s/.³⁸

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The fifth parallel is an example of convergence resulting from the fact that it is natural to use a graph representing [j] to indicate that the previous consonant is palatalized (not surprizingly, therefore, Yidish, subject to certain conditions, uses <י> for that purpose (in section VI.B, see ליאַרעמס [*lyarems*], the plural of ליאַרעם [*lyarem*], which comes from Polish *larum*).

³⁸ Here is a summary of the componential distribution of the graphemes in the Standardized Yidish Spelling of 1937, now the norm in Yidish outside the Soviet Union. Students of other Jewish-alphabet languages and of Islamic-alphabet languages will easily be able to make similar summaries.

1. In spelling words of Hebrew-Aramaic origin, all the graphemes of Yidish are used more or less according to how their Hebrew-Aramaic etymons are spelled.
2. In the other components of the language, (1) <בַּ> (*veyz*, representing /v/), (2) <ח> (*khes*, representing /x/), (3) <כ> (*kof*, representing (/k/), (4) <ש> (*sin*, representing /s/), (5) <ת> (*tof*, representing /t/), and (6) <ת> (*sof*, representing /s/), are not used because those phonemes are represented by the graphemes (1a) <וו> (*tsvey vovn*), (2a) <כ> (*khof*), (3a) <ק> (*kuf*), (4a) <ס> (*samekh*), (5a) <ט> (*tes*), and (6a) <ס> (*samekh*) respectively.

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It is hard to agree with Michael Tarelko that only the letter tav (<ת>) and not the letter tet (<ט>) occurs in the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite (see parallel 4): tet occurs if the Hebrew-Aramaic etymon has it. Thus, Karaite has <טבע> and <טורה>, both with tet (pp. 319 and 321 respectively) and <תשובה> and <תחבולה>, both with tav (pp. 319 and 320 respectively), because the Hebrew etymons of those four words have those letters, whereas in other components of the language only tet occurs. Likewise in other Jewish-alphabet languages except in the Soviet Union beginning in 1920 and in the Russian Federation, where all components of Yidish have <ט> and where <ת> and <ת> are not used at all).

Footnotes 17 and 36 also deal with Yidish spelling in the Soviet Union.

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The fifth parallel is an example of convergence resulting from the fact that it is natural to use a graph representing [j] to indicate that the previous consonant is palatalized (not surprisingly, therefore, Yidish, subject to certain conditions, uses <י> for that purpose (in section VI.B, see ליאַרעמס [lyarems], the plural of ליאַרעם [lyarem], which comes from Polish *larum*).

In Spanish, when the diacritic in the letters <Ñ> and <ñ> (both representing /n/) is unavailable (as on non-Spanish keyboards), people write /Ni/ and /ni/ respectively, thus adding the letter one of the functions of which is to represent the semivowel [j].

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In sum, the first three parallels are convergences resulting from Tatars' adherence to certain Islamic writing traditions and Karaites' adherence to certain Jewish writing traditions, both of which traditions go back to the same source in earlier Semitic. The fourth parallel is an example of reverence for the spellings in holy languages. The fifth parallel is an example of how two speech communities, each independently of the other, chose the same common-sense solution to solve a spelling problem faced by both of them.

It would be good to know what the other parallels are.

VII.C. The significance of mistakes in spelling in the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite (with an excursus on two-part periphrastic verbs in Judezmo, Karaite, Ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazic English, and Yidish)

M. N. makes the interesting and in all likelihood accurate observation that “These two words and the word *kompromitacja* in lines 15–16 are the only ones that are vocalised in the text. This suggests that the vowels signs have been used here to express emphasis; for a similar case cf. line 11:22. This is probable also in light of the context” (p. 211, ft. 458).

Is pointing for emphasis attested in other Karaite texts and in texts in other Jewish-alphabet languages?

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M. N.'s etymology of Karaite זוחה (p. 238, line 34, and p. 376, 12 lines up) is “< (?) Heb. זוכה ‘winning (winner), deserving [...]’ (p. 327) and his translation of the sentence in which it occurs is ‘it will therefore be well-deserved [when] your soul will stand in [= join] paradise alongside the just’ (p. 241), which he tells me should be ‘So may you know [...] that [in return] for what you have done, your souls will be worthy of standing in Paradise alongside the just’. That improved translation makes זוכה fully appropriate in the sentence and his supposition that זוחה is a misspelling of זוכה (< the Hebrew root זכה ‘deserve, merit’) is right. The misspelling presumably tells us that the writer pronounced the Karaite letters <ח> and /כ/ identically, in all likelihood as */x/.

Several Jewish languages (Hebrew-Aramaic is not one of them) have two-part periphrastic verbs consisting of (1) a normally conjugated auxiliary verb derived from the non-Jewish correlate (the respective correlates for Ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazic English, Yidish, Judezmo, and Karaite are English, German, Spanish, and some other form of West Kipchak) and (b) an invariable element derived from the masculine singular form of a Hebrew-Aramaic participle, which varies for gender (masculine and feminine) and number (singular and plural).

For example, whereas in Hebrew the participle זוכה has four forms (in romanization, masculine singular *zoche*, feminine singular *zocha*, masculine plural *zochim*, and feminine plural *zochot*), the Karaite reflex of that participle, as we see in the sentence translating as ‘So may you know [...] that [in return] for what you have done, your souls will be worthy of standing in Paradise alongside the just’, is זוכה, which we know from the writer’s pointing of the word (p. 376) is the masculine rather than the feminine singular form, that is, *zoche*.

Here are some example sentences showing the invariable element (underlined) in the two-part periphrastic verb construction:

Ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazic English (the verb is *be nifter* ‘pass away [a euphemism for ‘die’]’):

- *He was loy-aleykhem nifter three weeks ago.*³⁹
- *She was loy-aleykhem nifter three weeks ago.*
- *Both brothers were loy-aleykhem nifter three weeks ago.*
- *Both sisters were loy-aleykhem nifter three weeks ago.*

³⁹ Ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazic English *loy-aleykhem* ‘may the misfortune not befall you’ < Yidish לא-עליכם (*loy-aleykhem*) ‘idem’. If similar wishes are used in Judezmo and Karaite, I do not know what they are.

Were those sentences to be translated into Hebrew, נפטר (*niftar*), the masculine singular form, would be right only in the first sentence. Likewise in the Yidish and Judezmo examples below: only the sentence with the masculine singular subject would be translated into Hebrew with נפטר (*niftar*).

Yidish (the verb is ניפטר ווערן [*nifter vern*] ‘pass away’, literally ‘become *nifter*’):

- מיין טאטעשי איז לא-עליכם ניפטר געוואָרן (*mayn tateshi iz nifter gevorn*) ‘my dad, may the misfortune not befall you, has passed away’
- זיין מומעשי איז לא-עליכם ניפטר געוואָרן (*zayn mumeshi iz nifter gevorn*) ‘his auntie, may the misfortune not befall you, has passed away’
- אונדזערע ברידער זענען לא-עליכם ניפטר געוואָרן (*undzere brider zenen nifter gevorn*) ‘our brothers, may the misfortune not befall you, have passed away’
- ווען זענען ענקערע שוועסטער ניפטר געוואָרן? (*ven zenen enkere shvester nifter gevorn?*) ‘when did your sisters, may the misfortune not befall you, pass away?’

Judezmo (the verb is סיר נפטר [*ser niftar*] ‘pass away’, literally ‘be *niftar*’):

- סוס קוסחואיגרו חואי נפטר (*sus kusxwegru xwe niftar*) ‘their ~ your [polite plural] co-father-in-law has passed away’
- מואיטרה קוסחויגרה חואי נפטר (*mwestre kusxwegru xwe niftar*) ‘our co-mother-in-law has passed away’
- מואיסטרוס קוסחואיגרוס חואירון נפטר (*mwestrus kusxwegrus xwerun niftar*) ‘our co-fathers-in-law ~ ‘our co-parents-in-law have passed away’
- לאס קוסחואיגראס חואירון נפטר (*les kusxwegres xwerun niftar*) ‘the co-mothers-in-law have passed away’

Thus, in all three languages, *nifter* ~ ניפטר ~ נפטר (*nifter* ~ *niftar* ~ *niftar*) is invariable, in contrast to its etymon: Hebrew-Aramaic masculine singular נפטר (*niftar*) feminine singular נפטרה (*niftera*), masculine plural נפטרו (*nifteru*) feminine plural נפטרו (*nifteru*).

To return now to the Karaite example of the two-part periphrastic verb mentioned above, it is (with the incorrect spelling) זֹחֶה בּוֹלוֹר זְנָלְרִינִיז (*zoxe bolur žanlarynyz*) ‘your souls will be worthy’ (p. 238, line 34; original reproduced on page 376). The subject of the periphrastic verb is plural whereas זוכה (*zoxe*) (sic recte) is invariable (its Hebrew-Aramaic etymon, as expected, is the masculine singular form: זוכה [*zoxe*]).

Since Hebrew-Aramaic and non-Jewish languages provide no model for two-part periphrastic verbs with an element derived from a Hebrew-Aramaic participle (even less so for two-part periphrastic verbs with a participle that does not vary for gender and number) and since such verbs have an idiosyncratic feature (an invariable element, derived from a variable one, when we would expect a variable one), it is hard to believe that such verbs arose independently in each Jewish language that has them (see section VIII.A for the same reasoning with respect to Hebrew salutations in letters written in Karaite by men). This much is clear even now: Ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazic English has such verbs as a result of the influence of Yidish, though it remains to be determined whether any specific Ultra-Orthodox Ashkenazic English periphrastic verbs are innovations in that variety of English (*be nifter*, for example, is not an innovation; it was inspired by Yidish *nifter vern*).

Consequently, how Judezmo, Karaite, Yidish, and any other Jewish languages having two-part periphrastic verbs with an invariable part of Hebrew-Aramaic origin came to have such verbs remains to be seen. The first step is to ascertain how many Jewish languages have them.

See below on the writer of the letter in which the Karaite periphrastic verb discussed above occurs.

*

Karaite משרט (*mesharet*) 'servant'. Another misspelling is <ט> instead of <ת> (p. 301). Interestingly, the writer of the letter in which it appears was the father of the writer of the one in which <ת> instead of <ב> is used and both mistakes occurred in the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite.

With respect to the relationship between the two writers, two misspellings are probably not enough to allow us to infer anything. It would therefore be unwise to conclude, for example, that father and son (because of a pressing need to earn money to support their families?) had to leave school prematurely and therefore were not so proficient in the spelling of the words in the Hebrew-Aramaic component of Karaite as they could have been (though that could well be the case).

*

In Karaite, as in most other latter-day Jewish languages (except at least Jewish Yemenite Arabic, Yemenite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic, Yidish, and Ashkenazic

Hebrew-Aramaic), the vowel points patach and kamats gadol represent the same phoneme, /a/. When those points occur in Karaite words of non-Hebrew-Aramaic origin, the writer is free to use either of them to represent that phoneme, as in דומדן (*dumadan*), the ablative form of דומא (*duma*) 'Duma', in line 4 of letter 2 (p. 372), where he pointed the mem with a patach and the second dalet with a kamats. Such free variation, in fact, tells us that the underlying Hebrew-Aramaic protophonemes, represented by patach and kamats in Hebrew-Aramaic, have merged in Karaite Whole Hebrew-Aramaic and in Karaite Merged Hebrew-Aramaic.

In contrast, when /a/ occurs in Karaite words of Hebrew-Aramaic origin, writers strive to use the diacritics (vowel points and other aids to pronunciation) occurring in the etymons (because Karaites consider Hebrew-Aramaic to be a holy language, hence they so consider its spellings too). Their degree of success depends on how much Hebrew-Aramaic they know. Those less proficient in Hebrew-Aramaic spelling may not use the etymologically required ones, as we see here: "אַבְרָהָם: The Hebrew name is erroneously written: instead of אַבְרָהָם" (p. 140, ft. 2), where the writer represents each /a/ of the Karaite male given name אברהם (*avraham*) by a patach (nothing could be more logical if the convention were not that the spelling of Karaite words of Hebrew-Aramaic follows the spelling of their Hebrew-Aramaic etymons) when in fact the second and third instances of that vowel should each be represented by a kamats.

In contrast, in line 14 of letter 2, where the zayin of גזר המלך 'a decree of the sovereign' is pointed with a kamats gadol (the line is photographically reproduced on page 372; M. N.'s romanization is on page 220; his comment, in footnote 503 on the same page; and his translation, on page 228) because, although it is true that the Hebrew-Aramaic rule calls for mobile sheva in the first syllable of the noun גזר when it is used in the construct state, the rule is possibly not observed with respect to Karaite גזר המלך (we do not know one way or the other).

Precisely that possibility for Karaite is a reality in Yidish, where a not insignificant number of Yidish reflexes of Hebrew collocations containing a construct-state form show non-compliance with the Hebrew rule requiring the replacement of a full vowel by [ə] (represented by mobile sheva). Consider, for example, this etymology:

Hebrew לשון הקודש (*leshon hakodesh*) 'Hebrew-Aramaic' (where the lamed is pointed, as shown, with mobile sheva, representing [ə], because in that collocation the first noun is used in its construct-state form; contrast לשון,

the form that that noun takes when not used in the construct state) yielded Yidish לִשׁוֹן-קוֹדֵשׁ (*loshn-koydesh*) ‘idem’, thus, without retention in Yidish of the construct-state form of Hebrew לִשׁוֹן.

Here are a few more Yidish examples (all explanations are omitted; just the Yidish form, in romanization, showing non-compliance with the rule is shown, followed by what the Yidish form (asterisked) would have been if there had been compliance):

- *orn-koydesh* ‘Holy Ark’, not **arn-koydesh*
- *loshn-sage-nehoyer* ‘euphemistic language’, not **leshoyn sage-nehoyer*
- *mokem-miklet* ‘refuge, sanctuary, safe haven’, not **mekoym-miklet*
- *mokem-menukhe* ‘place of rest; refuge’, not **mekoym-menukhe*
- *mokem-koydesh* ‘[Jewish] house of prayer’, not **mekoym-koydesh*
- *mokem-toyre* ‘place [town, city, etc.] of great Jewish learning’, not **mekoym-toyre*
- *sholem-bayes* ‘domestic tranquility; harmony [between any two persons, whether living together or not]’, not **shloym-bayes*.

Consequently, in theory, retention of a full vowel (**/a/*) in the first syllable of Karaite גזר המלך is possible (had there been retention, the Hebrew spelling would have required patach, not kamats gadol). Mardkowicz’s and M. N.’s correction of kamats gadol (p. 220, ft. 503) is thus right, but we do not know whether the correction should be to mobile sheva (= their correction, possibly right) or to patach (possibly right). Yidish, by the way, has only reduction in גזר-המלך [gzar-hamelekh] (where the absence of [פ] does not mean that the vowel point is quiescent sheva; rather, Yidish phonotactics requires that [פ] drop out here, as it does in *gzeyre* ‘evil decree’, *gzeyre-shove* ‘analogy’, and *gzeyle* 1. ‘robbery’. 2. ‘booty’).

*

“שלומו: The unusual spelling can probably be explained as a mixed spelling of Hebr. שלומו ‘Shlomo’ and שלומה ‘Solomon’” (p. 257, ft. 756). שלומו, literally, ‘his peace’, is good Hebrew (most likely to occur, at least in recent times, in sentences such as מה שלומו ‘how is he?’ and שלומו טוב ‘he is well’, a possible response to that question) but no male given name so spelled appears to exist. Therefore, when writing שלומו, the writer of the letter seems to have had in mind, as M. N. rightly says, the male given name שלומה ‘Solomon’ and the fact that in the non-Hebrew-Aramaic components of Karaite, as well as

in certain Karaite words of Hebrew-Aramaic origin, such as סוף 'end', /o/ is represented by <ו>.

VII.D. Two unexpected spellings

קיים (*kayyam*). The word appears in a Karaite sentence that M. N. translates as follows: "you write not to send money to anyone, which will be unshakably [= certainly done]" (pp. 240–241) and on which he comments as follows: "The use of the word *kajjam* remains unclear here" (p. 241, ft. 674; the photographic reproduction of the sentence appears on page 376).

The Karaite word is derived from the Hebrew root קים, two derivatives of which are Hebrew מקוים (*mekuyam*) 'is being carried out' and יקוים (*yekuyam*) 'will be carried out'. One or the other of those two derivatives would fit in the slot where the inappropriate word קיים (*kayyam*) appears and the result would be not only grammatical but also semantically appropriate: each word would unproblematically refer to the addressee's request that money not be sent. If forced to prefer one collocation over the other, we would pick יקוים because מקוים looks more like יקוים than like מקוים.

*

"Hebr. כפי לה, written in lines 22 and 23, remain obscure for us in this context" (p. 165, ft. 177). The Hebrew preposition כפי (*kefi*) is easy to read on line 22 (the photographic reproduction is on page 382) and it is clearly an orthographic word there. Since the next line begins with לה, which is clearly followed by a space, we know that whatever word was intended after כפי ended in the two letters לה.

Two possibilities come to mind: either the second word is Hebrew לה 'to her' or it is a longer word ending in those letters (the third possibility, namely, that more than one word is missing is not likely since there seems to be no space for it on the sheet of paper, even if we assume, as we will now do, that part of the right-hand side of the sheet is missing).

Whereas the top, bottom, and left sides of the single sheet on which the entire letter is written are somewhat jagged, the right side, where the second word appears at the beginning of line 23, is straight, which suggests that the envelope in which the letter was sent was cut open by the addressee with a pair of scissors and, as a result, the beginning of the second word was cut off and is thus lost.

Unless Hebrew כפי is followed either (1) by the conjunction ו (she) + a sentence or (2) a noun phrase, it is not being used grammatically. Since כפי לה meets neither requirement (לה is an orthographic word consisting of the preposition ל inflected for the third-person feminine singular), either letters are missing at the beginning of line 23 (as suggested above) or the writer's understanding of the use of כפי was deficient.

VIII. Two customs (one, epistolary; the other, nuptial)

VIII.A. Whole Hebrew-Aramaic salutations and complimentary closings in letters written in Karaite by men

In the writing of letters in Jewish languages other than Hebrew, the custom of using Whole Hebrew-Aramaic salutations and Whole Hebrew-Aramaic complimentary closings is found at least among Karaite-speaking Karaite males (Németh 2011b) and Yidish-speaking Ashkenazic males (the custom seems to be observed only by male letter-writers, which is understandable in light of the fact that Jewish women in times past were rarely given education in Hebrew-Aramaic to be able to write in that language).

Comparisons of salutations and of complimentary closings in Jewish languages would be useful (Gold 1979 contributes a bit to the research). This near identity of the following Karaite and Yidish (as well as Ashkenazic Hebrew) salutations inquiring after the addressee's or addressees' health may be noted:

1. Karaite and Karaite Hebrew-Aramaic ואחר דרישת שלומכם וטובכם ~ ואחר דרשי שלומכם וטובכם. The salutations may be abbreviated to ואחדש"ו (pp. 172, ft. 219, and 341).
2. Yidish and Ashkenazic Hebrew-Aramaic אחרי דרישת שלומך הטוב ~ אחרי דרישת שלומכם הטוב. The salutations may be abbreviated to אחדש"ט.
3. Yidish and Ashkenazic Hebrew-Aramaic אחר דרישת השלום ~ אחר דרישת שלומו הטוב. The salutations may be abbreviated to אחדה"ש.

Since neither the Jewish Bible nor the Talmud has possible etymons or models and since the salutations are too idiosyncratic to allow us to suppose a chance

coincidence, there must be a genetic connection of some sort between, on one hand, the Karaite and, on the other hand, the Yidish and Ashkenazic Hebrew-Aramaic salutations (see section VII.C for the same reasoning with respect to two-part periphrastic verbs). Common descent from identical or similar usages in some third language seems to be the likeliest explanation. Less likely is Ashkenazic influence on Karaites and, given the significantly greater number of Ashkenazim than Karaites, least likely is Karaite influence on Ashkenazim.

It would be good to know whether those salutations have been used by Karaites where Ashkenazic influence is unlikely or impossible: Crimea.⁴⁰

VIII.B. Veiling the bride

“בס ייפמק”: Literal translation: ‘the covering of the head’. The term *bas japmak* is most probably related to the (Trakai) Karaim tradition, according to which after the bride and the groom had been brought to the parents to receive their blessing, the bride sat down in the middle of the room and let the hazzan and the groom cover her head with a veil. We can read about this custom in Kowalski (1927: 227–288), who cites a description of a Karaim wedding in Trakai, drawn up around 1873 and delivered to him by Ananjasz Zajączkowski” (p. 247, ft. 701). “Karaim wedding tradition, the main point of which is the covering of the bride’s head with a veil” (p. 269).

The Karaite ceremony just described is almost identical to the Ashkenazic custom of veiling the bride: on the day of the marriage, shortly before the ceremony begins, the bridegroom, accompanied by his parents (or, in their absence, two older relatives, or, in their absence, two older people) and possibly with his friends following behind them, proceeds to where the bride is seated and covers her face with a veil.

In Yidish the Ashkenazic custom is called באַדעקנס ~ דער בלה-באַדעקנס (*s’kale-badekns ~ der kale-badekns*), literally, ‘the covering of the bride’, or, for short, דער באַדעקנס ~ ס’באַדעקנס (*s’badekns ~ der badekns*), literally, ‘the covering’

⁴⁰ For the record: when any of those salutations is used in Yidish, it is a sentence unit, so that an inflected verb follows immediately, as here: אַחַרִי דְרִישַׁת שְׁלוֹמְךָ הַטּוֹב ווִיל אִיךְ אַיִךְ זָאָגן אַז (akhrey drishes shloymkho hatoyv, vil ikh aykh zogn az....) ‘after inquiring about your good health, I want to tell you that...’.

(Yidish also has the verb phrase *באדעקן די בלה* [*badekn di kale*] ‘cover the bride’).⁴¹

The inspiration for both the Karaite and the Ashkenazic customs is presumably Genesis 24:65, Genesis 29:14–30, or both.

In Genesis 24:65 we read that ‘She said to the slave, “Who is this man who is walking in the field toward us?” Said the slave, “He is my master.” She took the veil and covered herself’.

The slave’s master was Isaac, who was about to marry Rachel. In that verse, veiling oneself presumably signals one’s obedience to one’s soon-to-be husband.

Genesis 29:14–30 tells of Laban’s tricking Jacob into marrying Leah (instead of Rachel, whom Jacob wanted to marry) by putting a heavy veil over Leah’s head just before the wedding in order that Jacob not realize that she was not Rachel. If those verses are the inspiration, by placing the veil over his bride himself rather than letting his soon-to-be father-in-law do so, the bridegroom is presumably making sure that no one is tricking him into marrying someone else.

Other explanations offered for the Ashkenazic custom are that the bridegroom is signaling his commitment to clothing and protecting the bride and that he is signaling that he values her for more than her external beauty.

All the explanations are assumptions, whether phrased as such or not, and nothing has been proven or disproven. If the Karaite custom (the spatial currency of which remains to be determined) is limited to the Karaite community of Trakai or to Karaite communities in proximity to Ashkenazic ones, it may be of immediate Ashkenazic origin.

⁴¹ In Ashkenazic English, the ceremony is called *badekns* ~ *kale-badekns* and in Ashkenazic American English it is also called *badekn*. All three are count nouns, which take a null ending in the plural (“I’ve witnessed many *badekns*”) and are typically preceded by a definite or indefinite article, a demonstrative adjective, or a possessive form. The American English noun *badekn* is either back-formed from Yidish *באדעקנס* (*badekns*) misconstrued as a plural form or it comes from the Yidish verb *באדעקן* (*badekn*) in the verb phrase *באדעקן די בלה* (*badekn di kale*) or both explanations are right. When the singular form of the noun is *badekn* in English, there is a regular plural, *badekns* (“one *badekn*,” “two *badekns*”).

IX. Problems in using Russian lists of taxpayers (*ревизские сказки*) for anthroponymical and genealogical purposes

The imposition of a poll tax (*подушный налог*) in the Russian Empire in 1718 made censuses necessary, which generated lists (*ревизские сказки*) of persons subject to taxation. Such censuses, taken from 1720 to 1858, were from time to time revised (Stampfer 1997 concerns part of one of the censuses). In 1886, the tax was abolished, but meanwhile, beginning in 1860, local censuses, for general purposes, were taken from time to time, the last of them in 1917. In 1897, the first and only national census in the Russian Empire was taken.

In attempts to avoid paying the poll tax, an unknown number of persons gave fictitious names, wrong dates of birth, or both, and if they lived to the next census, the names and dates they reported could this time be different from the earlier ones. For anthroponymical and genealogical reasons, therefore, the lists should be used cautiously. M. N. mentions them at least six times (pp. 139, 187 [ft. 322], 197 [ft. 374], 243, 256, and 331) and he seems to have found no information of doubtful authenticity.

X. Linguistic terminology

It would be good to know the reason for preferring the Hebrew plural adjective and noun קראים (*karaim*) 1. [adjective] 'Karaite'. 2. [noun] 'Karaites' as the stem for adjectives and nouns meaning 'Karaite' in Lithuanian (*karaimų*), Polish (*karaimski* and *Karaim*), Russian (*караимский* and *караим*), and Ukrainian (*караїмський* and *караїм*).⁴²

Those forms are especially unusual since Karaite does have an /m/-less morpheme {קאריי ~ קארי} (*karaj*). In other languages, as well as in older Polish, /m/-less stems are usual, as in English *Karaite*, German *Karäer* ~ *Karait*, Hebrew קראי (*karai*) (with the expected inflected forms, קראי [karai], קראית [karait], קראים [karaim], קראיות [karaiyot], and glottonym, קראית [karait]), older Polish *Karaita* (plural *Karaići*), Portuguese *caraita*, and Spanish *caraita*.⁴³

⁴² Might the mistaken belief of some Karaites in the nineteenth century that the stem *karait-* comes from Turkish *kara it* 'black dog' (Kizilov 2015: 57, ft. 247) have led to a preference for Hebrew קראים (*karaim*) as the stem for a new ethnonym and glottonym?

⁴³ Yidish usage, given in section VI.B, is based on Hebrew usage.

Older Hebrew has two more glottonyms meaning ‘Karaite’:

1. לשון קדר (*leshon kedar*), literally, ‘the language of Kedar [mentioned in Genesis 25:13 and First Chronicles 1:29 as the second son of Ishmael]’. The slight phonological similarity between קדר (*kedar*) and קראי (*karai*) may have triggered application of לשון קדר (*leshon kedar*) to Karaite.
2. לשון ישמאל (*leshon yishmael*), literally, ‘the language of Ishmael [mentioned in Genesis 16:3 as the first son of Abraham and Hagar]’. Since Ishmael and Isaac were sons of Abraham and since the Karaite Jews and the Rabbanite Jews are two branches of the Jewish people, the glottonym may have resulted from likening the branches to the brothers.

Here are four more examples of the Jewish custom of designating peoples, places, and languages by names of persons and places mentioned in the Jewish Bible, where they have *other* referents (a custom presumably inspired by a similar Byzantine Greek one). Only אשכנז (*ashkenaz*) and ספרד (*sefarad*) are still used.

3. Hebrew אשכנז (*ashkenaz*), appearing in Genesis 10:3 and First Chronicles 1:6 as the name of a certain person and in Jeremiah 51:27 as that of a certain place.

In ancient times, the ethnonym ‘Scythian’ was applied to a group of nomads speaking a language or languages belonging to the Eastern branch of the Iranian languages and living north of the Black Sea from about the eighth century BCE to about the first century CE. Latter-day researchers call them *the classical Scythians*.

From about the third century to the eighth centuries CE, the ethnonym ‘Scythian’ became ever vaguer as it was applied to a growing number of peoples speaking any number of languages (of whatever origin) who lived on the Pontic-Caspian steppe. The list of such peoples includes at least the Agathyrsi, the Amardi, the Amyrgians, the Androphagi, the Budini, the Dahae (including the Parni), the Hamaxobii, the Indo-Scythians (including the Apracharajas and the Kambojas), the Gelonians, the Massagetæ (including the Apasiacæ), the Orthocorybantians, the Saka, the Sindi, the Spali, the Tauri, and the Thyssagetæ (unsigned 2017b). Szemerényi (1980) is the most detailed study, at least to the date of publication, of the ethnonym ‘Scythian’.

In some way, Hebrew אשכנז came to be applied to several groups of Jews, the most recent group so named being Yiddish-speaking Jewry and

their descendents (Ashkenazim). Krauss (1931/1932), Krauss (1935), Modelski (1910), and Poznanski (1911) deal with the name אשכנז, as does an article by Julius Brutzkus in Yidish (in ייִווּף-בלעטער), for which I have mislaid the reference.

Probably related in some way to the ethnonym 'Scythian' are also *Aschuz*, *Aşhanas*, *Eşkenez*, and *İşkenaz*, the current Turkish names of four inhabited places near one another in northeastern Turkey, which presumably indicate that the earlier or the earliest inhabitants of the places were 'Scythians'. If so, it may now be impossible to determine precisely who the 'Scythian' eponyms were (see the possibly incomplete list of candidates three paragraphs above). The least we may say with respect to those four inhabited places is that since the approximate southwestern boundary of the area of maximum extent of the languages belonging to the Eastern branch of the Iranian languages more or less during the first century BCE (thus, during the Middle Iranian period linguistically speaking), maybe before and/or afterwards too, was not far from the four places, 'Scythians' could have founded them or lived in those four places in significant numbers earlier.

4. הגר (*hagar*), appearing in Genesis 15:1, etc. as the name of a handmaiden of Sarah and the second wife of Abraham, was later associated with Hungary because of its phonological similarity to Yidish אונגערן (*ungern*) 'Hungary'. Hence the older Hebrew glottonym לשון הגר (*leshon hagar*) 'Hungarian'.
5. ספרד (*sefarad*) appears in Obadiah 1:20 as the name of a place, possibly the one in Media called *Saparda* and *Sparda* in Old Persian or the one in Lydia called *Saparda* or and *Sparda* in Old Persian, *Sfard* in Lydian, Σάρδεις (*Sardeis*) in Ancient Greek, *Sartmahmut* in older Turkish and *Sart* in today's Turkish, and *Sardes* and *Sardis* in English. The Hebrew name later came to be associated with the Iberian Peninsula, presumably because of its slight phonological similarity to the Latin place name *Hispania* and/or the Spanish place name *España*. In older Hebrew, undageshed <פ> represented /p/.
6. תוגרמה (*togarma*), appearing in Genesis 10:3 as a the name of a certain person, was later associated variously with Phrygia, Turkey, and the Khazars.

*

In a descriptive study such as M. N.'s, one does not expect to see any form or derivative of the English word *contaminate* or of its etymons, reflexes, or

cognates in any language (“a contaminated form of Russ. [...]” [p. 45], “assuming contamination with the Russian [...]” [p. 120, ft. 780], “a contaminated form of Russ. [...] and Ukr. [...]” (p. 126), “contaminated with [...]” [p. 223, ft. 528], “a contamination of [...] and [...]” [p. 226, ft. 583], “a contaminated form of the Russ. [...] and the Karaim form [...]” [p. 239, ft. 660], and maybe elsewhere too), which are inappropriate in objective research, as his research clearly is, because of their literal meaning.⁴⁴

English has an ample supply of descriptive substitutes untainted by any negative connotation or associations: the verb *blend* (as in “English *coydog* ‘*Canis latrans*’ was coined by blending English *coyote* and *dog*”) the adjective *blended* (as in “English *motel* is a blended word formed from English *motor* and *hotel*”), the verbal noun *blending* (as in “A blending of English *breakfast* and *lunch* yielded English *brunch*”), the non-verbal noun *blend* (as in “English *smog* is a blend of English *smoke* and *fog*”), as well as *amalgam*, *amalgamation*, *anacoluthon*, *blend-word*, *cross*, *etymological merger*, *fusion*, *fusion word*, *portmanteau*, *portmanteau word*, *stump compound*, *telescope word*, and *telescoped word*.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *Contaminate* and its family are on a par with *bastardization*, *corruption*, *deformation*, and their families, which can easily be replaced at least by these objective terms and their families: *adaptation*, *alteration*, *change*, *derivative*, *descendant*, *development*, *folk etymology*, *modification*, *reflex*, *reshaping* (not to mention longer collocations, where applicable, such as *coined by folk-etymological association with...*).

⁴⁵ At least two other kinds of blends are:

1. phonological blends, such as phonemic overlaps, in which two words share a syllable or part of a syllable.
2. syntactic blends, for example,
 - 2.A. English “different to...” (as in “This book is in many respects different to all others”), which is a blend of *different* [*from...*] and [*similar*] *to...*;
 - 2.B. English “different than” (as in “This book is in many respects different than all others”) which is a blend of *different* [*from...*] and any number of collocations with the comparative form of an adjective, such as *more puzzling* [*than*]...;
 - 2.C. “He has *not* the patience *nor* the capacity to learn policy or master the fine points of political strategy” (Rubin 2016; italics added), which blends, on one hand, *not... or...* and, on the other hand, *neither... nor...*

The non-verbal noun *blend* has been in use at least since 1911 or 1912 (Wood 1911–1912).

Natalie Lavrova's aim in Lavrova (2010) is to "to prove that, firstly, contamination has nothing negative in itself and, secondly, that the term aptly reflects the notion that is behind it."

If the first noun in that quotation refers, as suggested by the absence of italics, to the linguistic phenomenon known as *blending* and by other objective terms (see above), no descriptive linguist denies that blending exists or that it is worthy of objective study. If that noun is, rather, the linguistic term "contamination," it is inherently unsuitable because of its literal meaning, which stretches all the way back, uninterrupted, to the ancestor of the family, the Latin verb *contaminare*, the earliest known meaning of which is 'defile with filth, pollute, foul; infect with a disease'.⁴⁶

She does not prove that "contamination" is an indispensable linguistic term (although she seems to think she has) and never gives examples of "contaminations" that could not be described as blends, etc.

She concedes that "The contiguous [?(D. L. G.)] terms 'blends', 'telescope words', 'portmanteau words', etc. can be synonymous with contamination on condition that they are treated broadly and are meant not only to cover word-forming contamination but syntactic as well."

No descriptive linguist claims that syntactic blends should not be studied or that syntactic blends should not be called blends. *Telescope word* and *portmanteau* are inappropriate designations for syntactic blends (also called *syntactic amalgams* and maybe in other objective ways too).

In sum, the ideal linguistic term has not just descriptive power but also explanatory power (also called *descriptive value* and *explanatory value* respectively).

⁴⁶ Possibly, speakers of Polish and Russian (I have not looked into other languages) are unaware of how bad "contamination" sounds in English as a descriptive linguistic term because in their languages the unpleasant (non-linguistic) meaning is expressed by a word (Polish *zanieczyszczenie* and Russian *загрязнение*) that is entirely unrelated to the linguistic term (Polish *kontaminacja* and Russian *контаминация*).

To them I say, "If you do not feel how bad "contamination" sounds in English as an objective linguistic term, imagine someone saying or writing, "Angielskie słowo *smog* jest przykładem zanieczyszczenia" 'the English word *smog* is an example of *zanieczyszczenie*' and Russian "Английское слово *smog* является примером *загрязнения*" 'the English word *smog* is example of *загрязнение*'.

For the sake of terminological uniformity, it would be good to replace Polish *kontaminacja*, Russian *контаминация*, and similar terms in other languages.

At a minimum, a linguistic term should have descriptive power. *Contamination*, *bastardization*, *corruption*, and *deformation* do not meet that requirement.

XI. Conclusion

For over a thousand years, several versions of a story have been told about three blindfolded persons who touch the same elephant in an effort to learn what kind of animal it is. Each person feels a different part, just one part, and then they share their impressions, realizing that each fully disagrees with the other two. Finally, the blindfolds are removed, they see that they have been talking about the same animal, and they understand that cooperation is the best way of discovering the whole truth.

Karaite linguistics and Karaite intralinguistics have a rightful place not only in Turkic linguistics but also in Jewish intralinguistics, and in the relevant branches of areal linguistics. Only a view from all sides can reveal the whole truth.

XII. References

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