

Stefan Gašiorowski: Review of О. Береговський, С. Побуцький, Я. Поташник, *Karaïmi ta ïh rol' u kontekst svìtovoi spìl'noti. Materiali mižnarodnoi konferencii* [Karaïmi ta ïh rol' u kontekst svìtovoi spìl'noti. Materiali mižnarodnoi naukovoï konferencii] 'Karaites and Their Role in the Context of the Global Community. Materials from an International Conference'. Галич: Національний заповідник "Давній Галич", 2012, 98 pages.  
ISBN - 966-8090 - 56 - 9.

On the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Museum of Karaite History and Culture in Halicz, Ukraine, the local nature reserve "Davnij Galič" (Bygone Halicz) organised an international conference under the title *Karaïmi ta ïh rol' u kontekst svìtovoi spìl'noti* (Karaites and their role in the context of the global community), which took place on 17 September 2012 in this city. As in previous years, post-conference materials came out the same year. They were recommended for publishing by the scientific committee of the afore-mentioned nature reserve.

The reviewed publication consists of 16 short articles and informational texts about the culture and history of the Karaites from Russia and Ukraine. This volume begins with the article entitled *Džereloznavčij analiz karaïms'kogo kolofonu* (Source study on a Karaite colophon) by the late Professor Jarosław Daszkiewicz (1926–2010), a distinguished Ukrainian historian, and deputy

director of the Lviv Ukrainian branch of the Institute of Archeology and Source Studies M.S. Hrushevsky. It is a reprint of the introductory part of his article entitled *Danilo Romanovič i episkop Petro v osvıtlenni karaïms'kogo džerela* (Daniel Romanovych and bishop Peter in the light of a Karaite source), which was published in the Ukrainian language not long ago.<sup>1</sup> Presumably, the editors' intention was for this article to raise the academic standard of the discussed collective work, which includes numerous trivial and fragmentary texts.

Three thematic groups can be distinguished among the articles written by living authors on topics connected with the history, culture and religion of the Karaites in Ukraine. As many as nine works about history are included in the discussed book, and thus history is most numerously represented. They articles are mainly of a general character on the history of the Karaites of Halicz, and do not bring anything new to historical research. This includes, among others, Nadiâ Vasil'čuk's *Vulicâ Karaïms'ka u mîstî Galič* (A Karaite street in the town of Halicz) (pp. 40–44), Svitlana Kukula's *Galic'ki karaïmi: živa istoriâ (Rodina Novahovičiv)* (The Halicz Karaites: a Living History. The Nowachowicz Family) (pp. 59–63), Pobuc'ka Lûbov's *Problemi zniknennâ galic'kih karaïmiv* (The Issue of the Extinction of the Halicz Karaite) (pp. 67–69), and Andrij Čemerins'kij's *Kil'ka štrihiv do istorii gromadi karaïmiv u Galiči* (A Few Sketches on the History of the Karaite Community in Halicz) (pp. 83–91). From this collection, the article by Natalia V. Âblonov's'ka, Ph.D., a journalist and lecturer at Taurida National V.I. Vernadsky University, deserves more attention. Her short text was given the title *Žurnal krims'kih karaïmiv "Izvestiâ Karaïmskogo Duhovnogo Pravleniâ" (1917–1919)* (The Journal of the Crimean Karaites *Izvestiâ Karaïmskogo Duhovnogo Pravleniâ* (1917–1919)) (pp. 13–16). "*Izvestiâ Karaïmskogo Duhovnogo Pravleniâ*" (The News of the Karaite Spiritual Consistory), edited by Aron Ilicz Katytk, hazzan of the Karaite community in Feodosia, initially appeared under the title *Izvestiâ Tavričeskogo i Odesskogo Karaïmskogo Duhovnogo Pravleniâ* (The News of the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Consistory) and constituted an official organ of the Karaite Spiritual Consistory. In her text on the periodical, N. V. Âblonov's'ka actually devoted only two paragraphs to the periodical

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Andrij Felonûk, Ph.D., for indicating this correlation. Â. DAŠKEVIČ, *Danilo Romanovič i episkop Petro v osvıtlenni karaïms'kogo džerela*, [in:] Â. DAŠKEVIČ, *Postati: Narisi pro diâčiv istorii, politiki, kul'turi*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, L'viv 2007 pp. 35–61.

itself, as she mainly dealt with all Karaite journals which appeared in Russia and Poland in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is a shame, as this subject is generally known, as this author and other scholars, including Ūrij Babinov from the university in Sevastopol, have written about it previously.<sup>2</sup>

The text by Alexandr Azarievich Babadžan (hazzan from Simferopol) corresponds with the above-mentioned article. It is dedicated to the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Consistory (pp. 36–39), and includes a brief outline of the history of the institution from 1837 to 2001 on the basis of preserved sources from the state archive in Crimea and published documents.

By contrast, Petr Kaleta dealt with an unknown subject regarding interest in the Crimean Karaites in the Czech press and publications in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (pp. 17–23). It appears that some rudimentary information about Karaites appeared in Czech publications and encyclopaedias only after 1841, and mainly when the sights and the picturesque landscape of Crimea was being described. They were frequently treated as a Jewish sect, and Chufut-Kale was indicated as their main area of settlement.

Two biographical articles also deserve attention, i.e. one by Igor Koval', Ph.D, Associate Professor of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, and another one by Viktor Dzevanovskij, an employee of the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. The former describes the life and oeuvre of Roman Pašin (1938–2000), a specialist in regional and cultural studies and researcher of the history of the Halicz Karaites (pp. 24–30), whereas the latter focuses on the remnants of the valuable collection of Seraya M. Shapshal (1873–1961), held at the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg. The collection consists of 81 coins at the Numismatics Department, four chamails (khama'il)<sup>3</sup> in the Department of the East (i.e. the Department of Archaeology of Eastern Europe and Siberia and the Oriental Department) of the same museum, and 20 rare manuscripts written in the following languages: Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Azerbaijani, which are at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

<sup>2</sup> N. V. ÂBLONOV'S'KA, *Etnična presa Krimu: istoriâ ta sučasnist*, Simferopol' 2006 Krim's'ke navčal'no-pedagoične deržavne vidavnictvo", p. 312; J. A. BABINOW, Narodowe wydawnictwa periodyczne wschodnioeuropejskich Karaimów, [in:] *Żydzi i judaizm we współczesnych badaniach polskich. T. III*, collective work edited by K. PİLARCZYK, Kraków 2003, pp. 439–448.

<sup>3</sup> A collection of Muslim prayers, a prayerbook.

In the book under review, four articles from the field of Karaite culture were published. The first, a very general one by G. O. Lebedêva, Ph.D., presents the culture of national minorities as a significant part of Ukrainian culture (pp. 31–35). In the second one, Galina Ostašuk noted the variety of Karaite proverbs and specific sayings (pp. 64–66); however, this subject had already been discussed in a number of works by scholars of great esteem, such as Seraya M. Shapshal, Professor Tadeusz Kowalski, and Professor Ananiasz Zajączkowski. Âroslav Potašnik also dealt with the peculiarities of Karaite ethnography in his text (pp. 76–82), in which he pointed out its eclectic nature and numerous borrowings from other cultures. The author elaborated on the Karaite coat of arms, language, anthroponomy, customs and holidays. In addition, Hristina Basovs'ka discusses decorative motives and epitaphs on Karaite tombstones of the cemetery in Halicz (pp. 92–98), a subject discussed earlier in the catalogue of these tombstones published in 2000.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, the last two articles included in the discussed book must be presented. They refer to questions of a religious nature. In his article (pp. 51–58), Êvgen Kramar took notice of the Karaites' origins, the etymology of the name, compared the Karaite religion to the Jewish one and briefly discussed the history and the demographic data of the Karaites while attempting to answer the question “who are the Karaites?” In the last article, A. Ū. Polkanova described religious ideas in the anthroponyms of the Crimean Karaites (pp. 70–75).

In conclusion, it must be stated that the commemorative book *Karaïmi ta ih rol' u kontekst svitovoï spil'noti* does not claim a right to being fully exploratory or setting new directions of research in the field of history and culture of the Karaites in Ukraine, yet it is a significant work in terms of the popularisation of the subject matter, which may reach many members of the lay audience interested in the history of national religious minorities in Eastern Europe.

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<sup>4</sup> *Karaïms'ke kladovišče bilja Galiča. Katalog nadmogil'nych pam'jatnikov*, J. DAŠKEVIČ (academic ed.), compiled by Ī. ŪRCENKO, O. KEFELI, N. ŪRCENKO, O. BEREGOVSKIJ, L'viv-Galič 2000.