

*Slaves, Money Lenders, and Prisoner Guards:
The Jews and the Trade in Slaves and Captives
in the Crimean Khanate¹*

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Abstract

The Crimea, a peninsula lying in the Northern part of the Black Sea, has been inhabited since ancient times by representatives of various ethnic groups and confessions. Trade in slaves and captives was one of the most important (if not the most important) sources of income of the Crimean Khanate in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The role which was played by the Jewish population in this process has still not been properly investigated. Nevertheless, written documents contain frequent references to the involvement of the Jewish population (both Karaite and Rabbanite) in the trade in slaves and prisoners of war carried out by the Crimean Khanate in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Despite their fragmentary character, the sources allow us to attempt to restore a general view of the problem and to come to essential conclusions regarding the role and importance of the Jewish population in the Crimean slave trade.

'O, bo lepiej puścić na mary, jak w niewole na Tatary!'
[Oh, it is better to lie on one's bier than to be in the
Tatar captivity!]

An Early Modern Polish proverb²

The Crimea, a peninsula lying in the Northern part of the Black Sea at the juncture of trade routes from Europe to the East, has been inhabited by representatives of various ethnic groups and confessions since ancient times. The Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Goths, Alans, Khazars, Cumans, Ottoman Turks, Crimean Tatars, and Russians succeeded one another in the struggle

¹ The preliminary version of this paper was delivered to the Thirteenth World Congress of Jewish Studies (Jerusalem, 2001). Quotations from the Polish sources will be given according to the original archaic spelling of the documents of that time (in sixteenth- to seventeenth-century Poland there often was no difference between *z* and *ż*, *sz* and *s*, *l* and *ł* etc.). The author is grateful to Professor Dan Shapira (Jerusalem) for his help and numerous advices related to the contents of this article.

² As cited in Leszek Podhorodecki, *Chanał Krymski i jego stosunki z Polską w XV–XVIII w.* (Warsaw, 1987), 64.

for dominance over the Crimea. While Jewish settlers left their mark in this region as well, there is yet no comprehensive work dedicated to the history of Crimean Jewry.³ The first Jewish settlers appeared in the Crimea after the conquests of Alexander the Great, when Judea became a part of the Hellenistic Orient. In all probability, they came to the Crimea from Asia Minor and the Caucasus not later than the first century AD and settled mainly in two Greek towns, Bosphorus (a.k.a. Panticapaeum, at present Kerch) and Chersonesos (at present, Sevastopol').⁴ During the late Middle Ages and Early Modern period the Rabbanite Jews and the non-Talmudic Karaites represented the local Jewish population. As important merchants and skillful artisans, the local Jews took active part in all offshoots of the trade activity of the Black Sea region.

Trade in slaves and captives was one of the most important (if not the most important) sources of income of the Crimean Khanate in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. According to some estimates, in the first half of the seventeenth century the number of the captives taken to the Crimea was around 150,000–200,000 persons.⁵ According to the most recent study by Darjusz Kołodziejczyk, based on the author's comprehensive examination of varied source material, a number of captives transported by the Crimean Tatars from Poland-Lithuania and Russia (not including the Caucasus) approached 10,000 per annum, that is two million for the period between 1500 and 1700. Thus, the Black Sea slave trade was fully comparable in size with the Atlantic slave trade of the same period (ca. two million between 1451 and 1600), and declined only in the eighteenth century.⁶

Indeed, travel accounts of Christian authors of that period are full of descriptions of sufferings of Christian slaves captured by the Crimean Tatars in the course of their raids to the adjacent to the Crimean Khanate states (mostly to Poland and Russia). Lithuanian ambassador to the Crimea, Michalon Lituanus (Mikhail Litvin), for example, described the sorrowful position of his fellow countrymen, whom he had seen in the slave-market in Caffa (Eastern Crimea). Of interest is the fact that Michalon mentioned a certain Jew,

³ Yehezkiel Keren's *Yahadut Qerim mi-qadmutah ve-ad-ha-shoah* (Jerusalem, 1981), which embraces the whole history of the Crimean Jews, is not always reliable.

⁴ The main archaeological finds that tell us about the existence of Jewish communities in these towns are tombstone and manumission inscriptions (juridical acts about releasing slaves). Highly important are also Hebrew graffiti found in the late Byzantine Christian basilica which was probably earlier used as a synagogue. See E. I. Solomonik, 'Drevneishie evreiskie poseleniia i obshchiny v Krymu' [The oldest Jewish communities and settlements in the Crimea], in *Evrei Kryma* (Simferopol' / Jerusalem, 1997), 10–15; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, vol. III, pt. 1 (Edinburgh, 1986), 36–38.

⁵ About 100,000 from them were captured in the period from 1607 to 1617. See A. L. Yakobson, *Srednevekovyj Krym* [The Medieval Crimea] (Moscow / Leningrad, 1973), 141; A. A. Novoselskii, *Bor'ba moskovskogo gosudarstva s tatarami v pervoy polovine XVII veka* [The struggle between the Moscow state and the Tatars in the first half of the XVIIth century] (Moscow / Leningrad, 1948), 436.

⁶ Darjusz Kołodziejczyk, 'Slave Hunting and Slave Redemption as a Business Enterprise: the Northern Black Sea Region in the Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries', *Oriente Moderno* n.s. 25:1 (2006): 151–152.

who was the head of custom office (*teloneum*)⁷ in Or (Perekop). The latter ‘while observing such numberless quantities of our captives taken there [i.e. to the Crimea], asked us whether our land was still abundant in people and whence we took such amount of mortals.’⁸ The Ottoman traveller, Evliya Çelebi, described the Tatar slave-market in Karasubazar in the following way: ‘A man who had not seen this market, had not seen anything in this world. A mother is severed from her son and daughter there, a son—from his father and brother, and they are sold amongst lamentations, cries of help, weeping and sorrow.’⁹

In spite of the fact that practically every academic work dedicated to the history of the Crimea mentions the importance of the slave-trade for the Khanate’s economy,¹⁰ the role which was played by the Jewish population (both Karaite and Rabbanite)¹¹ in this process still has not been properly investigated. Not much has been written on a subject apart from quite bi-ased writings of Karaite and Polish scholars, who created a myth of ‘generous Karaites’ ransoming Polish slaves and captives from the Crimea.¹² In this pa-

⁷ The Tatar and Turkish term for the ‘head of the custom office’ is *gümrük emini*. Was that the post occupied by this anonymous Jew?

⁸ Michalon Lituanus, ‘Michalonis Lituani de Moribus Tartarorum, Lituorum et Moschorum, Fragmina X’. In *Russia, seu Moscovia, itemque Tartaria* (Leiden, 1630), 189–214; idem, *Traktat o nravakh tatar, litovtsev i moskovitian* [The treatise about the rites of the Tatars, Lithuanians, and Moscovites], translated by V. I. Matuzova (Moscow, 1994), 72–74. This quotation explicitly shows to what extent the trade in slaves and captives was important for the Crimea’s economy. The reference to the Perekop Jew, the head of the local custom office, is one of the rare early references to the Jews as important officials in the Crimean Khanate. Other sources which supply information about the Karaite dignitaries of the Khanate belong mostly to the late eighteenth century.

⁹ Evliya Çelebi, *Księga podróży Ewliji Czelebiego* [The book of travel of Evliya Çelebi], transl. Zygmunt Abrachamowicz et alia (Warsaw, 1969), 308; idem, *Kniga puteshestvii* [The book of travels], transl. M. Kizilov (Simferopol’, 1996), 132.

¹⁰ Yakobson, *Srednevekovi Krym*, 141; S. V. Bakhrushin, ‘Osnovnye momenty istorii Krymskogo Khanstva’ [The main events in the history of the Crimean Khanate], *Materialy po Istorii, Arkheologii i Etnografii Tavriki* 3 (1993): 321; Alan Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford, 1978), 27 et al. For detailed historiographic survey see Kołodziejczyk, ‘Slave Hunting’. The question of the Tatar slave-trade in late-medieval period was extensively investigated by Lajos Tardy in his *A Tatarország Rabszolgakereskedelen és a Magyarok a XIII–XV Században* [The Hungarians and the Tatar slave-trade in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries] (Budapest, 1980); idem, *Sklavenhandel in der Tartarei: die Frage der Mandscharen* (Szeged, 1983).

¹¹ Unfortunately, every student of the history of the Crimean Jewry in late medieval to early modern times faces a very serious methodological problem. Gentile sources of this period seldom differentiated the Karaite (i.e. non-Talmudic) Jews of the Crimea from their Rabbanite brethren. Normally, they simply called them ‘Jews’ in their languages (Lat. *Judaei*, Turk. *yahudiler*, Germ. *Juden*, Rus. *жуды* etc.). This is why in most cases we can only very cautiously suggest, while taking into account some other indicators, whether ‘a Jew’ mentioned in this or that source was a Karaite or Rabbanite.

¹² E.g. Bohdan Baranowski, ‘Przyczynki do stosunków Karaimów ze wschodem muzułmańskim’, *Myśl Karaimska* 12 (1939): 11–19; idem, ‘Dzieje jasyru na Gródku karaimskim’, *Myśl Karaimska* s.n. 2 (1947): 40–52. *Myśl Karaimska* is hereafter referred to as *MK*. In passing, it is important to mention that authors published in *MK* usually neglected the role of the Crimean and Polish Armenians in the process of slave redemption. Nevertheless, the importance of Armenian merchants in this process is testified in many published and archival documents (e.g. Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, Archiwum Koronne Warszawskie, Dział Tatarskie—hereafter: *AGAD AKW*, *Dz. Tatarskie*—k. 61, t. 69, no. 211; and k. 61, t. 62, no. 204; cf. Kołodziejczyk,

per I will disprove this and some other stereotypes, which appeared because of biased and superficial analysis of source material available. Moreover, as will be shown in the article, a few documents related to the role of the Karaites in the slave trade were interpolated or even entirely fabricated. The article also introduces many archival documents and little known printed sources, some of which are published in the appendix.

Jews—intermediaries in ransoming slaves and prisoners of war

Practically every article written by Karaite authors of the 1920–30s was full of emotional references regarding the generosity of the Polish-Lithuanian and Crimean Karaites who, in their view, constantly participated in ransoming of the Polish prisoners.¹³ In order to substantiate this claim a special article was composed by a non-Karaite Polish Orientalist, Bohdan Baranowski. The article was published in *Mysł Karaimska* (Pol. ‘Karaite thought’), which was, perhaps, the most important Karaite periodical of the twentieth century. There, on the basis of archival and already published sources, the author suggested that the Karaites were ransoming Polish prisoners from the captivity not because of financial interests, but as a consequence of their generous nature and incredible fidelity to the Polish kings.¹⁴ However, the author seems to deliberately distort historical truth: some of the published sources which Baranowski is referring to . . . unfortunately do not exist. His references to archival sources are often too imprecise (sometimes he indicates only numbers of archival folders, without specifying exact call numbers and pages of the documents). As is shown below, the only archival source, which was directly related to the Crimean Karaites, was sort of ‘censored’ by the author. Even the title of the article indicates the author’s bias: non-existent toponym *Gródek Karaimski* (Pol. Karaite town), which is not reflected in any Early Modern source, is, undoubtedly, the author’s corruption of Turk. *Çufut Qal’eh* (Jews’ Castle; cf. also Russian *Zhidovskii Gorodok* or German *Judenfestung*).¹⁵

Discovered by me archival documents and printed sources present readers with completely different picture of the Karaite involvement in the Tatar slave trade. First, a number of sources testify to the fact that the Jewish population of the Crimean Khanate (and the Karaites among them) often bought slaves for their domestic purposes (see below). Second, the sources, which describe the mediation of the Crimean Karaites and Rabbanites in the redemption of captives and prisoners, undoubtedly, present this process as a part of their commercial activity, giving no regard concerning generosity or other elevated

‘Slave Hunting’, 157).

¹³ See numerous articles published in *Mysł Karaimska* from 1924–1947.

¹⁴ Baranowski, ‘Dzieje jasyru’, esp. 51–52.

¹⁵ Equally pseudohistorical is his reference to a small island on the Dnieper called *Karajteben* (ibid., 50; perhaps, a corruption of *Kara Tepe* (=Black hill). This toponym, however, has nothing to do with the Karaites. *Çufut Qal’eh* (Turk. Jews’ Castle) was an important mountainous stronghold in the Crimea, inhabited by the Karaites, most likely, from the mid-fourteenth until the end of the eighteenth centuries. The Karaites were the only inhabitants of this settlement approximately from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards (see more in Mikhail Kizilov, *Karaites through the Travellers’ Eyes* (New York, 2003), 147–198).

feeling whatsoever.

Especially detailed is the information of Martinus Broniovius (Marcin Broniewski) in the chapter ‘Captivorum apud Tartaros ratio’ of his ‘Tartariae Descriptio’ (1578). He mentioned that the ambassadors from Christian countries were usually trying to bribe the Jews or Tatars (*Judaeos vel Tartaros pecunia corruptos*) in order to ransom Christian captives. These ‘corrupt’ Jewish and Tatar merchant normally offered them the price, which was much lower than that, which would be offered to them by Tatar officials. In his opinion, participation of these bribed Jews and Tatars had been extremely important for the successful redemption of captives.¹⁶

Travellers’ information about the Jewish mediators in ransoming slaves is confirmed by other sources. A Rabbanite merchant from Caffa, Hoca Bikiş Gökğöz (in Russian sources *Hozia Kokos*),¹⁷ perhaps the most famous medieval Crimean Jew, had special dealings with the Russian Tsar Ivan III over the redemption of Russian prisoners in the 1470s. In spite of the fact that the Russian merchants who had been captured by the Şirin bey Mamaq were very grateful to Hoca and even gave him some money, the Jewish merchant tried to get some additional money by cheating the Tsar. Regardless, he certainly played a crucial role in the release of these captives.¹⁸

Some of the Crimean Jews were sent to negotiate purchase and redemption of the captives in remote European and Oriental countries. Highly interesting was the destiny of the merchant Meir Ashkenazi of Caffa, who was appointed envoy of the Tatar khan to Kraków (Poland). He often travelled to the Orient and was killed between the 15th and the 25th day of Tammuz (July), 1567 by corsairs near Dakhel in Upper Egypt together with all the passengers on the ship. In the same 1567 he delivered a group of slaves (prisoners of war) from Egypt to Gava (port near Genoa).¹⁹ One of the letters of the Crimean *vezir*

¹⁶ Martinus Broniovius, *Martini Bronovii de Biezdzfedeia bis in Tartariam nomine Stephani Primi Poloniae Regis legati Tartariae Descriptio* (Cologne, 1595), 21–22; idem, ‘Opisanie Kryma’ [The description of the Crimea], transl. I. G. Shershenevich, comm. N. N. Murzakevich, *Zapiski Odesskogo Obshchestva Istorii i Drevnostei* (hereafter: *ZOOID*) 6 (1867): 363–364.

¹⁷ Hoca Bikiş / Bikiş, a Jew, son of Gökğöz, an influential merchant in Caffa (also called ‘Bikiş son of Gökğöz’), was mentioned in the Caffa register of 1487 (Halil Inalcik, *Sources and studies on the Ottoman Black Sea*, vol. 1: *The Customs Register of Caffa 1487–1490* (Harvard, 1996), 74). Previous scholars could not identify the proper name of this important historical figure and called him according to a corrupt Russian spelling ‘Hozia Kokos’ (*Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii Moskovskogo gosudarstva s Krymskoyu i Nogaiskoyu ordami i s Turtsiei*, vol. 1: *S 1474 po 1505 god*, in *Sbornik Imperatorskogo Russkogo Istoricheskogo Obshchestva* 41 (1884): 6–9, 12–13, 40, 50). Cf. VI. Ogorodnikov, ‘Ivan III i zarubezhnye evrei’, *Sbornik statei v chest’ Dmitriia Alexandrovicha Korsakova* (Kazan’, 1913), 57–63; *Regesty i nadpisi. Svod materialov dlya istorii evreev v Rossii*, vol. 1 (St Petersburg, 1899), 77–79; Yulii Gessen, *Istoriya evreiskogo naroda v Rossii*, vol. 1 (Petrograd, 1916), 23–24.

¹⁸ *Pamiatniki diplomaticheskikh snoshenii*, 6–9, 12–13, 40, 50.

¹⁹ He was apparently a native of Poland and moved to Caffa together with his parents. His brother studied in *yeshivah* in Brest-Litovsk, whereas his widow and children remained in Caffa. On his biography see the testimony of the witness Elijah ben Nehemiah given before the board of rabbis in Safed in *responsa* of Moses of Trani (part 2, no. 78) (Herman Rosenthal, ‘Ashkenazi, Meir, of Kaffa (Crimea)’, *JE* 2 (NY / London, 1902), 199–200; for Polish documents see: Maurycy Horn, ‘Udział Żydów w kontaktach dyplomatycznych i handlowych Polski i Litwy z zagranicą w XV–XVII w.’, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* 3–4 (1990): 7). He was,

(=minister) Sefer Gazı Ağa to the Polish chancellor Prażmowski mentioned that the Swedish captives seized in 1661 were sent to Poland under the escort of 'my servant Dzinalny with a Jew Arslan'.²⁰ It is interesting to note that this Jewish merchant whose Turkic name *Arslan* ('Lion') shows his Crimean or Ottoman origin, was sent together with these captives to such remote country as Poland. His mission, undoubtedly, was to negotiate monetary problems related to the redemption-fee for the Swedish captives.

In contrast to Baranowski's statement concerning active and wide involvement of the Karaites into the process of captives' redemption, there are but a few sources which directly tell us about the role, which was played in this process by the Karaites. In 1614 a Crimean Jew (most likely a Karaite from Çufut Qa'eh) Abraham ben Berakhah ransomed a Nogay prisoner Mamay bin Mohammed at the price of 120 florins, which the latter was supposed to pay him back.²¹ In another article of his, Baranowski quoted a certain document found by him (according to his own words) in the archive of Nieświeskie.²² According to this document, two Galician Karaites²³ ransomed from the captivity a certain Tatar soldier. Later this soldier turned out to be a cousin of the *kalga*²⁴ *Agatumkiery* from the Giray clan, the Tatar dynasty which had been ruling the Crimean Khanate. The Karaites were somehow aware of this fact (even though the Polish officials considered this Giray to be one of the regular captives) and in order to show their veneration fell in dust in front of this captured Tatar. Afterwards the Karaites redeemed the captive from the Polish soldiers at a very low price, 'grabbed horses' tails and, while obnoxiously jumping, followed this pagan.' The whole story sounds highly interesting, but, when taking into consideration Baranowski's casual treatment of Karaite-related sources, one cannot be entirely sure regarding the veracity of this source and its interpretation by this scholar.²⁵

perhaps, the only Crimean diplomat of Jewish origin in the sixteenth century; a few Karaites were appointed ambassadors to Moscow in the seventeenth century.

²⁰ Pol. 'posyłam sługę swego Dzinalny z żydem Arslanem' (AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie, k.61, t.155, no.299. O wyruszeniu na pomoc ... oraz prośba o konwoj ... dla jencow szwiedzkich pojmanyh przez age w Polsce, fol.2). The Turkish name 'Arslan' can also be found in the list of the members of the Karaite community of Caffa in the sixteenth century (Oleksander Halenko, 'Judeiski hromady Osmanskoi Kefy seredy XVI st' [Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Caffa in the mid-XVIth century], *Skhodoznavstvo* 3–4 (1998): 59).

²¹ *Manuscript Department of the Library of Lithuanian Academy of Sciences* (hereafter: *MS LMAB*), F.143, no.1177, fol.3v–4r.

²² List do Jabłonowskiego. Archiwum Nieświeskie. Luźne Akta Wojskowe z XVII wieku (as referred to in Baranowski, 'Przyczynki', 18).

²³ In addition to the Karaite communities of the Crimea, Lithuania, and Volhynia, there also was a small Karaite colony in Eastern Galicia (Halicz, Kukizów, Lwów, and a few smaller settlements).

²⁴ *Kalga* (or *kalgay*) *sultan* was the second person in the Crimean Khanate after the Khan. The *kalga's* main residence was in the town of Akmeçet (modern Simferopol').

²⁵ Baranowski, 'Przyczynki', 17–19. Unfortunately, the veracity of this document cannot be verified: this document, as well as many other priceless materials from Polish archives, disappeared in the flames of the Second World War and the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

Jews as slave and prisoner owners

As already been said, Baranowski and Karaite authors of the 1930s often mentioned the fact that the participation of the Karaites in mediation regarding the redemption of captives was purely non-pragmatic. The idea that the Karaites could buy or own slaves and prisoners for their own purposes has not even been mentioned. Again, objective analyses of sources yields a different picture—numerous documents of the Tatar period testify to the fact that the Karaite population of the Crimea possessed slaves and used slave labour.

The earliest sources regarding involvement of Jewish population of the Crimea into the slave trade date back to the medieval period. The *Vita* of the Kievan monk Eustratios (1096) tells about the cruel tortures and crucifixion of Eustratios in Cherson (south-western Crimea, now a part of Sevastopol) performed by an unmerciful Jewish slaver, who wanted to convert the monk and his colleagues to Judaism. In spite of the fact that some didactic parts of the story can hardly be trusted, most of modern scholars consider that the story contains grains of historical data about the Jewish slave traders, who were expelled from the town about a year later.²⁶

Before starting analysing the documents related to the Jewish slave-ownership in the Early Modern Crimea, it is worthwhile saying a few words about legal side of the problem. In both the Ottoman and Tatar parts of the Crimea there were a few minor legal limitations for non-Muslims concerning the purchase of slaves. Normally Jews and Christians were not allowed to purchase Muslim slaves. According to de Peyssonel, Christians and Jews were also forbidden to purchase the best slaves—Circassians and Abhazians, who were supposed to be bought only by Muslims.²⁷ Some sources testify that the Jews in Turkish lands were observing the Biblical prescription of releasing a slave on the seventh year of his or her servitude. Ivan Lukyanov (beginning of the eighteenth century) remarked: ‘The Turks are more merciful than the Greeks, and the Jews are also much better than them [than the Greeks]; a prisoner of a Turk is released after seven years, and if a Turk [Rus. *turchin*] dies—you may get freed after a year; by a Jew [Rus. *y iuda*] also—freedom in seven years . . .’²⁸

This tradition is also testified by Karaite sources. In the mid-eighteenth century Karaite woman Rebecca and her daughter were purchased by a Rabbanite Jew in Constantinople, who subsequently took them to Thessaloniki. Rebecca worked for his Rabbanite master for six years, and in accordance with the aforementioned Jewish tradition was subsequently released on the sev-

²⁶ ‘Zhitie prepodobnogo ottsa nashego Evstratiya’, in *Kievo-pecherskii Paterik* (Kiev, 1903), 147–150. For a discussion of this source see Henrik Birnbaum, ‘On Some Evidence of Jewish Life and Anti-Jewish Sentiments in Medieval Russia’, *Viator* 4 (1973): 225–255; G. G. Litavrin, ‘Kievo-pecherskii paterik o rabotorgovtsakh-iudeiakh v Chersone i muchenichestve Evstratiia Postnika’, in *Vizantiia i slaviane* (St Petersburg, 1999), 478–495; Alexander Pereswettoff-Morath, ‘Simulacra of Hatred’, *Ad Imperio* 4 (2003): 615–616.

²⁷ Charles de Peyssonel, *Traité sur le Commerce de la Mer Noire*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1787), 180.

²⁸ As quoted in Ilya Zaitsev, “‘Vol’naya gramota” turetskogo sultana “nekoemu rusinu””, *Rossiya i turkskii mir. Tiurkologicheskii sbornik* (Moscow, 2002), 233; cf. *ibid.*, 240, ft.29; Litanus, *Traktat*, 89.

enth. She received her *ktav hofshit* (liberation certificate) and moved to Constantinople, where she worked for another Rabbanite Jew, Jacob Kamondo (קאמונד), this time, however, for money and food.²⁹ This testimony is highly important for our topic also because it seems to be the only evidence that a Jew, in fact, was allowed to enslave and use the servile labour of his own religious brethren!

Ottoman fiscal data testify that the Karaites possessed slaves in Caffa, the main Ottoman port of the Crimea. The Turkish *defter* (=register) of the Caffa *eyalet* (=province) of 1542 mentions six females, who were slaves (*esir*) belonging to the members of the Karaite community of Caffa. Their names and status were indicated in the register in the following way: *Esir-i-Şalom Aslan marya rus*³⁰ (=Russian ‘marya’,³¹ a slave of Shalom Arslan); *Esir-i-Isaq nam marya* (=a slave of Isaac named Maria³²); *Esir-i-Can-Gerey marya rus* (=Russian ‘marya’, a slave of Can Gerey); *Esir-i-Muşi Quzı marya* (=‘marya’, a slave of Moses Quzi); *Esir-i-Muşi marya* (=‘marya’, a slave of Moses); *Esir-i-Isaq marya rus Ulyana* (=Ulyana, Russian ‘marya’, a slave of Isaac).³³

Not only the Karaite, but also the Rabbanite community of Caffa took active part in the slave trade. In 1609–1610 members of the community had problems with the tax exacted by the *sar ha-’ir* (undoubtedly, *paşa*, i.e. Ottoman governor, of Caffa) for the permission to trade in slaves. The tax was apparently too high and many tried to avoid it by concealing data concerning the exact number of slaves. Community *beit din* (court of justice) decided that anyone guilty of hiding the slaves was to pay five silver coins. It is also clear from the document that some members of the community used the slaves

²⁹ The National Library of Russia in St Petersburg (hereafter: *NLR*), F.946, Evr.I, Doc.I.48 (Doc.35). It is unclear however, whether this practice of the release after six years of servitude was observed by Jewish slavers of the Crimean origin. For more information regarding Rebecca’s case see below. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mrs Darja Vassytinski (Jerusalem) for pointing out at this valuable source.

³⁰ The term *rus* was normally used to indicate slaves of Orthodox Slavic origin from the territories of modern Ukraine and Russia; the bulk of them were, most likely, the Rusyns (Ruthenians), orthodox subjects of the Polish king, ancestors of modern Ukrainians, and Russians (cf. Kołodziejczyk, ‘Slave Hunting’, 159).

³¹ Evliya Çelebi mentioned that in the Crimean Khanate female slaves were usually called *difka* (a corruption of Russian *devka* or Ukrainian *divka*) and *marya* (probably because ‘Maria’ was one of the most widespread names of these captives: Çelebi, *Księga podróży*, 355, ft.454; idem, *Kniga putesthestvii*, 172–173, ft.441). In most cases *marya* was just a generic term used to denote Russian female slaves. The term *difka* was usually used to denote young women and virgins, while the designation *marya* was applied to adult women. As one can see from the register, one of these *maryas* (=women) had a typical Russian name of Ulyana. For the male captives the terms *kopna* or *konia* were used (*kopna* is likely a corruption of the Polish word *chłop*, meaning a peasant or a young man; see Çelebi, *Księga podróży*, 355, 362 and 367). Sometimes male captives from Slavic countries were called by the generic terms *kazak* and *sarı Ivan* (i.e. ‘Ivan with red/light brown hair’) (Zaitsev, ‘“Vol’naya gramota”’, 232, ft.5). Hebrew sources usually used term *shevi* to indicate a prisoner or captive; term ‘*eved*’ was used to denote a male slave and *shifxa*—a female one.

³² Here the word *marya* is used, most likely, not as a generic term, but as a personal name: *nam marya* literally means ‘named Maria’.

³³ Halenko, ‘Iudeiski hromady’, 59. According to their names and other details, these female slaves were of Slavic origin, probably from Poland, Ukraine and Russia.

as their domestic servants.³⁴ One more internal Jewish document, originating most likely, also in the Rabbanite community of Caffa³⁵ testifies that the slave trade was indeed perceived as a profitable commercial enterprise. This document (1616) examines the case of certain Joseph ben Shabbatai, who together with his companion Meir ben Jacob took a group of captives from their friend Isaac. Later Joseph ben Shabbatai, apparently, refused to pay Meir his share—and consequently was forced to pay 10 florins to the latter by the Caffa *beit din*.³⁶

The unusual story of the Don Cossack Ivan (Ivashko) Vergunenok is also closely connected to the Jewish community of Caffa. About 1640 Vergunenok was captured by the Tatars during the military raid. He had been sold to a Jewish (most likely Karaite) merchant in Caffa, where he claimed to be a son of Prince Dimitri, the heir to the Russian throne. Later he was bought by the Crimean Khan, who apparently wanted to use him in the planned war with Russia. The Khan kept him in chains in *Zhidovskii Gorodok* ('Jews' Town', Russ. transl. of Turk. 'Çufut Qal'eh') for three years and in 1646 sold him to the Turkish sultan.³⁷ Another Cossack (in original—*kazak*) whose name is not mentioned by the source was transferred to the Karaite merchant Samuel ben Daniel to be kept in his place. During the night, however, the Cossack managed to escape.³⁸ This happened, most likely, in Çufut Qal'eh.

Çufut Qal'eh, an isolated mountainous fortress near Bahçesaray, the capital of the Crimean Khanate, in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries fulfilled a role of a large prison for numerous important captives of the Tatar khans (see below). This is why documents preserved us names of the Karaite slave-owners from this town. A document from 1613 mentions the Russian female slave Servinaz,³⁹ who was kept in slavery by a Karaite Jewess of Çufut Qal'eh Malkah, daughter of Elijah. Malkah did not want to liberate Servinaz in spite of the fact that her mother declared Servinaz to be free a short while before her death. It needed a meddling of the Muslim court of justice in order to fulfill mother's will and liberate Servinaz.⁴⁰ A Crimean (Karaite?) Jew Jacob ben Joseph (in Russian original: *жид Яков усупов*) bought a group of prisoners in Kilia in 1692. Later he transported them to the Crimea; some of them

³⁴ NLR, F.946, Evr.I, Doc.III 7 (Kr. 6).

³⁵ Or, possibly, from Karasubazar (modern Belogorsk).

³⁶ NLR, F.946, Evr.I, Doc.III 11 (Kr.10).

³⁷ See the Russian archival documents published in S. M. Solov'ev, *Istoriya Rossii s drevneishikh vremen*, vol. 5, pt. 9–10 (Moscow, 1961), 462–463 and 466. Alan Fisher's reading of these documents is erroneous. The scholar, with the reference to the same Solov'ev's documents that were used by me, mentioned that 'he [i.e. Vergunenok] had been castrated [!] and converted to Judaism [!!!]' (Alan Fisher, 'Muscovy and the Black Sea Slave Trade', *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 6:4 (1972): 587). Nevertheless, there is no indication that such measures were applied to Vergunenok in the Russian original of the documents. Maybe Fisher mixed up Solov'ev's documents with some other Russian sources available to him?

³⁸ MS LMAB F.143, no.1177, fol.4. It is not clear whether this *kazak* was indeed one of the Cossacks or just a male slave (see above).

³⁹ This name is of Persian origin; it was apparently given to her by her Muslim owner instead of her real Slavic name.

⁴⁰ MS LMAB F.143, no.1177, fol.1. See the full text of this highly interesting case in Appendix 3.

apparently turned out to be used as slaves in Çufut Qal'eh.⁴¹

Driven to desperation slaves could easily turn against their masters, as was the case with the eighteenth-century Crimean Jewish slave-owner who was killed by his slave in his own vineyard. By the order of the Khan Maqsd Giray the murderer was sentenced to death and delivered into the hands of the Jewish community. Nevertheless, a serious obstacle appeared: the Jews, who were not allowed to shed human blood, could not fulfill this sentence. Therefore, Maqsd Giray allowed the Jewish community to use Old Testament precepts, and the culprit was stoned to death.⁴² Following the famous twentieth century Karaite leader, Seraya Szapszał (1873–1961), we may cautiously suggest that the owner of this slave was a Karaite from Çufut Qal'eh.⁴³

A seventeenth century Polish document, a letter of the Polish ambassador to the Crimea, W. Szmeling, mentioned the fact that one of the Polish servants (*czeladnik*), captured in the battle of Czudnow (1661), was kept in Çufut Qal'eh. According to B. Baranowski's citation of this document, he was *na Kale zaprzędany* ('sold to [Çufut] Qal'eh').⁴⁴ However, when I found the original of this document, I discovered that the text in fact sounds *u Żyda na Kale zaprzędany* (i.e. 'sold to a Jew in [Çufut] Qal'eh').⁴⁵ From the text of the document it seems that this Jew (undoubtedly, a Karaite) was keeping this Pole just for his domestic purposes.

Some other sources mention the fact that Jewish population (without specifying whether it was Karaite or Rabbanite) of the Crimean Khanate bought slaves and prisoners. One of the Dominican friars, Giovanni da Lucca (around 1630), mentioned that in the Tatar towns of the Crimea 'there are always slaves to be sold. The Turks, Arabs, Jews, Armenians, and Greeks often buy them.'⁴⁶ Pierre Chevalier in his 'Histoire de la Guerre des Cosaques contre la Pologne' (1663) wrote that the Tatars were used to sell their captives to Christian and Jewish merchants of Caffa. As the payment for the captives the Tatars usually received Turkish horses, weapons, clothes and some other goods.⁴⁷ Russian ambassadors to the Crimea, Stepan Tarbeev and Ivan

⁴¹ 'Spisok so stateinogo spiska pod"yachego Vasiliia Aytemireva, posylannogo v Krym s predlozheniem mirnykh dogovorov', *ZOOID* 18:2 (1895): 44–45.

⁴² François de Tott, *Memoirs of Baron de Tott, Including the State of the Turkish Empire and the Crimea, during the Late War with Russia*, transl. from French, vol. 1, pt. 2 (London, 1785), 95–96). For the excerpt from this interesting testimony see Appendix 4.

⁴³ Cf. Seraya Szapszał's work published posthumously as *Karaimskaia narodnaia entsiklopediia*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1995), 93.

⁴⁴ Baranowski, 'Dzieje jasyru', 49.

⁴⁵ AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie, k.60, t.117, no.122. List W. Szmelinga, posła na Krym, do Jana Kazimierza króla Polskiego, fol.7.

⁴⁶ Giovanni da Lucca, 'Fatta da me Fra Giovanni da Lucca Dominicano circa il modo di vivere colle particolarita de costumi delli Tartari Percopiti, Nogai, Circassi, Abbaza etc. Mangrilli e Giorgiani', in *Bibliographia Critica delle Antiche Reciproche Corrispondenze* by Sebastiano Ciampi (Firenze, 1834), 55; idem, 'Opisanie Perekopskikh i Nogaiskikh Tatar, Cherkessov, Mingrel'ov i Gruzin' [The description of the Perekop and Nogay Tatars, Cherkess, Mingrels, and Georgians], *ZOOID* 11 (1879): 482. Note that the Jews are the first to be mentioned after the Muslim inhabitants of the peninsula, the Turks and Arabs.

⁴⁷ Pierre Chevalier, *Istoriya viini kozakiv proty Polshchi* [The history of the war of the Cossacks against Poland], transl. Yu. I. Nazarenko (Kiev, 1993), 60–61.

Basov (1628) informed that Canıbeğ Giray had to gather Turkish captives (Russ. *турецких людей*) from the Tatar nobility and the Jews (perhaps, the Karaites) in order to return them to Turkey.⁴⁸ Martinus Broniovius (Marcin Broniewski) (1578) mentioned that Crimean captives had often been sold to Jewish merchants from other countries.⁴⁹

Jews as slave- and prisoner-guards

Çufut-Qal'eh (Turk. 'Jews Fortress'), the medieval Crimean town with numerous and influential Karaite community, from the end of the fifteenth century practically until the Russian annexation of the Crimea in 1783, was constantly used by the Tatar officials as a place for housing important and significant prisoners.⁵⁰ Evliya Çelebi (1666) wrote: 'There is no way to get out of this prison in Çufud-Qal'esi, unless your remains are taken from there in a coffin. To such extent this prison resembles inferno.'⁵¹ At the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, the Tatar administration was moved from the town, thus practically leaving Çufut Qal'eh in the disposition of the Jewish (Karaite) and Armenian communities of the settlement. According to Evliya Çelebi already in 1666 duties of the commandant, garrison, guards, and door-keepers of Çufut Qal'eh were fulfilled by the local Karaites. This situation seemed to Çelebi quite an extraordinary one. He remarked that he had not seen 'such an independent Jewish fortress' in any other country of the world.⁵² At the end of the seventeenth century the duties of the *qapuci* (Turk.; here in the sense 'commandant of the fortress', not just a 'door-keeper') of Çufut Qal'eh were fulfilled by the Karaite Saltık. This Karaite executive was apparently a very influential official, who not only managed to administrate the whole fortress, but also sustained close contacts with the Khan and its deputies.⁵³ Nevertheless, in my opinion, the Karaites could hardly fulfill the duties of armed guards of prisoners—as non-Muslims they were not allowed to bear arms according to the *dhimmi* rules. Therefore, we may assume that duties of the

⁴⁸ 'Iz istorii snoshenii Moskvys s Krymom pri tsare Mikhaile Fedoroviche' [From the history of the diplomatic relations between Moscow and the Crimea at the time of the Tsar Mikhail Feodorovich], in *Izvestiia Tavricheskoi Uchenoi Arkhivnoi Komissii* 39 (1906): 72.

⁴⁹ Martinus Broniovius, *Tartariae Descriptio*, 21; idem, 'Opisanie Kryma', 363. Most of 2000 slave dealers in sixteenth-century Istanbul were Jews, which is reflected in Jewish and Gentile sources alike. In the seventeenth century the Ottoman authorities tried to eliminate non-Muslims from the slave trade, but yet some Jews inevitably remained in the business (Kołodziejczyk, 'Slave Hunting', 155, ft.31; cf. Fisher, 'Muscovy', 584). Jewish slavers, who were selling the most beautiful female slaves, were also mentioned in Pitton de Tournefort, *Relation d'un voyage du Levant*, vol. 2 (Lyon, 1717), 233.

⁵⁰ Among the 'reluctant travellers' imprisoned in Çufut Qal'eh were such famous persons as the Prince of Transylvania Janos Kemeny (1657), Polish hetmans Potocki and Kalinowski (1648), Russian boyar Vasilii Sheremetev (1660–1681), Russian ambassadors V. Aytemirov (1692–1695) and A. Romodanovski (1681). For details see Mikhail Kizilov, *Karaites through the Travellers' Eyes* (New York, 2003), 190–191.

⁵¹ Çelebi, *Księga podróży*, 268; idem, *Kniga Puteshestvij*, 94).

⁵² Çelebi, *Księga podróży*, 267.

⁵³ 'Spisok so stateinogo spiska', 35–36, 38–39, 42–43, 68. The source called him in Russian *zhidovskoi kapychei* (*sic*) and mentioned that he was in charge of the whole town.

armed guards for the prisoners kept in the fortress were fulfilled by the Tatar soldiers-*sekbans*.⁵⁴

Highly interesting is the question of the location of this prison. Local historians suggested to locate this prison in one of the cave-dungeons situated on the southern slope of Çufut Qal'eh.⁵⁵ In our view, however, this cave-prison was used only for such prisoners whose conduct evoked wrath of the Tatar officials, whereas other, more respected prisoners were located in normal buildings. Sources clearly suggest that the numbers of captives imprisoned in the fortress could be sometimes quite considerable (perhaps, as much as several tens individuals). Thus, the aforementioned small cave dungeon could not possibly accommodate all of them. Some other seventeenth- to eighteenth-century sources suggest that, in fact, there were more than one or two buildings in the territory of Çufut Qal'eh that were used as a prison.⁵⁶ In the second half of the eighteenth century one of such prisons was located in the house of the Karaite Aaron Hoca.⁵⁷

In 1648, after the Corsun battle, a number of noble Polish dignitaries were taken prisoners by the Crimean Tatar army.⁵⁸ According to the seventeenth century chroniclers Hacı Mehmed Senai and Hachatur Kafayeci, two most important of them, hetmans Potocki and Kalinowski were later transferred to the prison of Çufut Qal'eh.⁵⁹ Numerous archival documents supply us details of their Crimean imprisonment, however, they do not provide any information on the role of the Karaites.⁶⁰

A Karaite document of rather suspicious origin, allegedly found by Seraya Szapszał in the Karaite library 'Karay Bitikliği', tells about the attempt to house Timophei, the son of the (in)famous Cossack hetman Bohdan Khmel-nitski, as a hostage in Çufut Qal'eh. According to this document (or, rather,

⁵⁴ See on this 'Spisok so stateinogo spiska', 38–39. *Sekban* means literally 'a keeper of hounds'. In the Crimea *sekbans* constituted a special detachment of the Khan's army equipped with muskets.

⁵⁵ A. G. Gertsen, and Y. M. Mogarichev, *Krepost' Dragotsennostei. Çufut-Qal'eh. Kyrk-Or* [The fortress of treasures: Çufut Qal'eh, Qırq-Or] (Simferopol', 1993), 92–93.

⁵⁶ 'Spisok so stateinogo spiska', 7.

⁵⁷ In Russian 'Aaron-Kochesh-Balbush' (perhaps, a corruption of Aharon Hoca (or Qoyçu) *ba'al ha-bayit* (i.e. the landlord)). In 1777 Selim Shah murza and two other Tatar dignitaries were imprisoned in his house. This is according to the Karaite chronicler Azaria ben Eliah, 'Sobytiia sluchivshiesia v Krymu v tsarstvovanie Shagin-Girej-khana' [Events which happened in the Crimea during the rule of Shagin Girej Khan], transl. A. Firkovich, *Karaimskaia Zhizn'* 5–6 (1911): 74–75. The complete Hebrew original is soon to be published by Golda Akhiezer (Israel).

⁵⁸ Some sources say that this happened after the battle on *Zheltye Vody* (Podhorodecki, *Chanat Krymski*, 75, 135).

⁵⁹ Edmond Schütz, 'Eine armenische Chronik von Kaffa aus der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29 (1975): 159; Hacı Mehmed Senai Kırımlı, *Kniga pohodov* [Book of Raids], transl. K. A. Useinov (Simferopol, 1998), 26–27.

⁶⁰ AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie, k.60, t.106, no.111, fol.2 (according to this document, while being imprisoned, Potocki and Kalinowski borrowed a lot of money and received such costly gifts as fur coats and bedclothes); *ibid.*, k.62, t.117, no.451; *ibid.*, k.62, t.58, no.390, fol.2. According to the last document, Potocki left his son in the Crimea as a hostage; the son was not ransomed by the hetman even as late as in 1651, i.e. three years after the supposed date of his redemption. Unfortunately, the document does not mention whether Potocki's son was kept in Çufut Qal'eh or in Bahçesaray.

to its Russian translation published by Szapszał, the Karaite community refused to house Timophei because of their hatred towards the Zaporozhian Cossacks who killed colonel Eljasz Karaimowicz (according to Szapszał, this colonel belonged to the non-existent Karaite clan of the Uzuns).⁶¹ Even the first acquaintance with this document, the absence of its original, and its suspicious style, not to mention the striking improbability of the story, strongly suggested that it was a Szapszał's forgery. My suspicions were justified in April 2002, when—browsing one of Szapszał's notebooks, which he started in Constantinople, in 1927, among quotations from other sources related to Eljasz Karaimowicz—I found a document in Hebrew characters written in Szapszał's hand. This document, composed in Crimean Tatar, represents two *different* versions of the 'draft' of this 'seventeenth century' Karaite document, evidently composed by Szapszał, most likely in the 1930s.⁶²

Jews as prisoners' money-lenders and providers of food

In addition to prisoners of war, seventeenth century Çufut Qal'eh very often housed, so to say, 'unofficial' prisoners, i.e. the members of disagreeable foreign embassies, whose position sometimes was even worse than that of important captives. They were not allowed to leave Çufut Qal'eh, did not receive any monetary or food supply, were often threatened and humiliated.⁶³

Again, very often it were Jewish merchants who facilitated their position by lending money and food-supply. Petr Savelov (1628) mentioned, in his account to the Tsar Mikhail Romanov, that, because of the war in the Crimea, he and other members of the embassy were forced to spend about nine weeks in the beleaguered *Zhidovskii Gorodok* (Çufut Qal'eh) almost dying from starvation and purchasing victuals from the local Jews (undoubtedly, the Karaites).⁶⁴ Sources even preserved exact record of the amount of money and goods, which were borrowed by the members of this embassy during their stay at Çufut Qal'eh.⁶⁵ Andrei Nepeitsyn (1634) remarked that he had left his goods to be kept in *Zhidovskii Gorodok* at *zhidovin Ezra's* (= 'Ezra the Jew') place.⁶⁶ More details concerning the drastic circumstances of Nepeitsyn and Dvorianinov's stay at the embassy in the Crimea (1634) are provided

⁶¹ S. M. Szapszał, 'O prebyvanii Bogdana Khmel'nitskogo i ego syna Timofeia v Krymu' [On the stay of Bogdan Khmel'nitski and his son Timophei in the Crimea], *Voprosy Istorii* 8 (1955): 145. I plan to dedicate a separate article to Eljasz Karaimowicz (often contaminated with Wadowski or Barabash), as a historical figure, a colonel of Cossacks, and legendary hero of twentieth century Karaite scholarship.

⁶² Both version are heavily corrected with Szapszał's own hand, some names are written in a completely different manner, some new characters are introduced into the story—an impossible thing when someone is dealing with the original of a document (MS LMAB, F.143, no.918, fol.2r).

⁶³ Podhorodecki, *Chanat Krymski*, 75.

⁶⁴ 'Posylki v Krym v XVII veke' [Embassies to the Crimea in the 17th century], *ZOOID* 24 (1902): 75.

⁶⁵ 'Iz istorii', 101–102.

⁶⁶ 'Skazanie sviashchennika Iakova' [The narration of the priest Jacob], *ZOOID* 2:2 (1848): 686.

by Russian sources. According to them, the ambassadors left their valuables at the homes of some Jewish moneylenders (undoubtedly, Karaite merchants of Çufut Qal'eh and Yaşlov). However, under the torture the ambassadors confessed this fact. The moneylenders, when taken to Bahçesaray, *убоясь и видя пытку* (=‘being terrified of the tortures’), informed the officials of the exact location of the hidden valuables.⁶⁷

Sometimes foreign embassies stayed in Yaşlov, a small settlement of the clan of *Yaşlov beys* between Akmeçet (modern Simferopol') and Bahçesaray. In all probability there also were Jewish merchants who had financial affairs with members of the embassies. Andrei Nepeitsyn (1634), for example, remarked that he had stored some of his goods at the place of ‘the Jew Ezra of Yaşlov’ (*у жидовина у Изрыну Яиловскова*).⁶⁸

A very late nineteenth century Karaite tradition mentioned the presence of the Karaite population in Taş Yarğan (a.k.a. Taş Carğan), a small Tatar settlement close to Akmeçet (Simferopol).⁶⁹ The Karaite *hakham* S. Szapszał included Taş Yarğan in his list of the Crimean Karaite settlements.⁷⁰ The stay of foreign embassies in this village is mentioned in the letter of M. Broniewski to the Polish king Stefan Batory (1.01.1579).⁷¹ Broniewski was kept there in a kind of ‘mild imprisonment’. Taking into account the aforementioned nineteenth century data, and the fact that in all settlements (Çufut Qal'eh, Yaşlov, Mangup) where the members of the foreign embassies were housed there was, necessarily, a Jewish population, it can be very cautiously supposed that—in Taş Yarğan, in the sixteenth/seventeenth centuries—there was also a Jewish (most likely, Karaite) population that fulfilled ‘supplementary’ functions to prisoners (i.e. money lending and providing victuals).

The Karaite population of Mangup fulfilled similar ‘supplementary’ functions (i.e. lending of money and providing victuals) with regard to imprisoned captives.⁷² One of the Dominican friars, who were imprisoned there in 1663, mentioned the fact that he and his companions had received some help from the merciful Jewish women of Mangup.⁷³

⁶⁷ Novoselskii, *Bor'ba*, 243.

⁶⁸ ‘Skazanie sviashchennika Iakova’, 686.

⁶⁹ P. I. Koeppen, *O drevnostiakh Iuzhnogo berega Kryma i gor Tavricheskikh. Krymskii Sbornik* [On the antiquities of the Southern coast of the Crimea and the Taurian mountains: the Crimean collection] (St Petersburg, 1837), 289–290; cf. Edmund Hojecki, *Wspomnienia z podróży po Krymie* (Warsaw, 1845), 233.

⁷⁰ Seraja Szapszał, *Karaimy i Chufut-Kale v Krymu* [Karaites and Chufut-Kale in the Crimea] (Simferopol' 1993, reprint of St Petersburg edition of 1896), 7.

⁷¹ The ambassador calls the settlement *Tassarlaganus pagus Tartaricus* (Martinus Broniovius, *Tartariae Descriptio*, introduction to the work, no page numbers).

⁷² On the history of the Karaite community of Mangup, another important Crimean town with the numerous Karaite community, see Kizilov, *Karaites*, 199–215; idem, ‘Karaite Communities of Chufut-Kale and Mangup: History and Topography of the Settlements’, in *Karaite Judaism. A Guide to Its History and Literary Sources*, ed. Meira Polliack (Leiden, 2003), 759–787; idem, ‘K istorii karaimskoj obshchiny Mangupa’ [On the history of the Karaite community in Mangup], *Vestnik EUM* 7 (25) (2002): 113–122.

⁷³ Ambrosius Eszer, ‘Neue Forschungen zur Geschichte der II. Krim-Mission der Dominikaner (1635–1665)’, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 41 (1971): 227.

Jews as 'objects' of the trade in slaves and captives

As well as other inhabitants of the region, the Crimean Jews often became victims of the military raids and slave traders. The Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi admiringly described Tatar raids and seizure of captives. According to the traveller, in the 1640s and 1650s the Crimean Khan Islam Giray III invaded Polish lands seventy-one times and captured 200,000 Jews, later selling each for the price of a full tobacco pipe.⁷⁴ Despite the fact that such information was probably an exaggeration, it gives some idea of the number of Jewish captives taken during such raids and the attitude towards them.

The life and vicissitudes of the rabbi Moses ben Jakob ha-Goleh (=the Exiled) of Kiev (1440–1520), one of the most famous European Jewish thinkers of that time, were closely related to the military campaigns of the Crimean Tatars. Already in 1482–1483 his children were captured during the Tatar sack of Kiev and taken to the Crimean slavery. The rabbi himself was enslaved during the Tatar siege of Lida in 1506 and taken to the Crimean town of Eski Qırım (Sulkhat). In spite of his bitter polemics with the Karaite leaders, Moses ben Jacob was redeemed through the joint efforts of the local Rabbanite and Karaite communities. After his release, the rabbi stayed in Caffa until the end of his days and became the leader of the local Rabbanite community, where he introduced a unified liturgical model.⁷⁵ It is only through his spiritual authority and introduction of this new amalgamated tradition that a local community, which consisted of a few rival groups before, became a united group with common religious denominator.⁷⁶ Thus, paradoxically enough, in this case the Tatar slave trade unwillingly played a decisive role in the forming of the local Jewish community.

Warsaw Archive for Old Documents (AGAD) contains a highly interesting document related to the release of the Polish Jew 'Zaczek' (i.e. Isaac) from the Crimean captivity. The document exists in two versions: one is supposed to be the Polish translation of the lost Tatar original. In the short archival description it is attributed as the letter of the Crimean khan Mehmed Giray IV (ruled 1641–1644, 1654–1666) to the Polish chancellor.⁷⁷ The other is catalogued as the Russian (or, rather Old Belorussian)⁷⁸ translation of the same document

⁷⁴ Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, 527, as quoted in Hacı Mehmed Senai, *Historia chana Islam Gereja III*, transl. and ed. Z. Abrahamowicz (Warsaw, 1971), 64. In 1666, to avoid additional taxation on the slaves introduced by Adil Çoban Giray, local slave owners were selling three healthy slaves for one golden piece (Çelebi, *Księga podróży*, 361).

⁷⁵ S. Zinberg, 'Avraam Krymskii i Moisei Kievskii', *Evreiskaya starina* 11 (1924): 101–109; Golda Akhiezer, 'The History of the Crimean Karaites during the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries', in *Karaite Judaism: A Guide to Its History and Literary Sources*, ed. Meira Polliack (Leiden, 2003), 747–748.

⁷⁶ Later the Crimean Rabbanite Jews started to be culturally Tatarized, and felt themselves very different from the Ashkenazic Jewish settlers, who started emigrating to the Crimea from the end of the eighteenth century onwards. In the second half of the nineteenth century this group started to be called 'the Krimchaks', i.e. the Crimean Jews.

⁷⁷ *AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie*, k.60, t.88, no.93. Skrócony przekład dwóch tureckich listów z Krymu do Polski [XVII w.] (in Polish).

⁷⁸ The catalogue says *język ruski*, which is not the same as *język rosyjski* (=the Russian language).

and is dated to ... the rule of Mehmed Giray I (1514–1523).⁷⁹ In my opinion, the presence of the Belorussian translation suggests that this document was, most likely, composed during the rule of Mehmed Giray I—at the time of Mehmed Giray IV, in the seventeenth century, this language was used in the official correspondence much less frequently.

Despite their different dating and the fact that they were written in different languages, content of the both documents is practically identical. Both letters present the request to return to the Khan's servant 'Obrahim' (also a Jew?)⁸⁰ the money, which he had borrowed to the Polish Jew Isaac ('Żyd naimie Zaczek'). Isaac needed this money to be released from the Crimean captivity. The time for return of the money had gone, and additional request was dispatched to Kamieniec Podolski (Poland, modern Ukraine) to find Isaac there. Nevertheless, even after this neither money, nor Isaac could be found.⁸¹ The letters again mention the necessity of finding Isaac and return of the debt. We do not have at our disposal any other materials concerning the solution of this affair. However, it is possible to come to the following conclusions. First, the Jews, even from such remote from the Crimea places as Kamieniec Podolski, also were sometimes captured in the course of the Tatar military raids. Second, Isaac (Zaczek) was such an important person (or perhaps, his redemption-fee was so high) that the Crimean Khan himself at least two times wrote to the high Polish officials to clarify his matter.

Equally unusual was the story of the Crimean imprisonment of the Karaite pilgrim to Jerusalem, Joseph ben Joshua from Derażno (Poland). It was described by him in the *piyyut* in the Galician dialect of the Karaimo-Kipchak language⁸² entitled *Karanhy bulut* (=Black cloud). The poem was dedicated to his stay in the Crimea in 1666, where he was thrown into a terrible prison in Bahçesaray 'in the Khan's palace with the chain on the neck'. Joseph ben Joshua's supplication to lead him out of the 'harsh captivity' was soon attended to. Nevertheless, the Khan (most likely, Mehmed Giray IV) confiscated the money, which the Jewish pilgrim needed to travel to Jerusalem. Therefore, Joseph ben Joshua could not realize his plans and was forced to stay in Çufut Qal'eh for three years, where he studied the Torah with local sages. Thus, for him the Crimean imprisonment turned out to be a very important part of his life and religious education.⁸³

⁷⁹ *AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie*, k.65, t.3, no.579. Przekład tureckiego listu Mehmed Gereja I chana krymskiego do kanclerza wielkiego koronnego. Prośba o zwrot pieniędzy za wykup pewnego Żyda ... [1514–1523].

⁸⁰ The standard Muslim form of this name is *Ibrahim*, not *Obrahim*.

⁸¹ *AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie*, k.65, t.3, no.579, fol.3; *ibid.*, k.60, t.88, no.93, fol.3.

⁸² Karaim (a.k.a. 'Karaimo-Kypchak / Qaraimo-Qipchaq') belongs to the Kypchak languages of the Oguz-Kypchak sub-group of the Common Turkic languages belonging to the Turkic branch of the Altaic family of languages (for details see now Dan Shapira, 'Miscellanea Judaeo-Turkica: Four Judaeo-Turkic Notes (Judaeo-Turkica IV)', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 27 (2002): 475–496).

⁸³ The collection of the Hebrew manuscripts in the Bodleian library of Oxford contains a very interesting version of *Karanhy bulut* of Crimean provenance (MS Heb. F.5, fols.5–8; cf. Adolf Neubauer, and Arthur Cowley, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1886), 140, no.2725: 'Hymns in the Tatar language'). The slightly different version of this poem was found by me in the *macuma* (Turk. 'copybook') of Rafael ben Joshua

Redemption of brethren-in-faith from the harsh and unmerciful Muslim captivity was considered an elevated and noble deed in the Jewish society of that time. One of the seventeenth century documents calls this matter *mitsvah gdolah* (great commitment) and emphasizes the necessity of collecting *tsedaqah* (alms) for this purpose.⁸⁴ As was the in the case of the rabbi Moses ha-Goleh, who was redeemed through the joint efforts of the Rabbanite and Karaite communities, the Rabbanites and Karaites often forgot about their religious conflicts in order to save lives of their religious brethren. A letter from Mordecai ben Samuel of Qırq Yer (i.e. Çufut Qal'eh) of 1677 is largely dealing with the problem of the release of the Karaite and Rabbanite captives kept in Constantinople. The Karaites of Çufut Qal'eh agreed to contribute to the release of the captives, mentioning, however, the fact that the Karaite community of Constantinople also should take part in ransoming captives.⁸⁵

One more document, however, shows that sometimes members of both communities could not forget about their religious conflicts—and refused to redeem members of a different community. The letter of the Karaite community of Constantinople of 1753 addressed to Isaac ben Moses Sinan Çelebi (סינאן ציליבי) and Judah ben Moses Sinan Çelebi, leaders of the community of Çufut Qal'eh, narrates a story of a certain Karaite woman, Rebecca, and her daughter. The letter mentions that Rebecca and her daughter were brought as slaves to Constantinople by a certain Muslim (Turkish?) merchant, who wanted to sell them to the local Rabbanites. Nevertheless, the Rabbanites did not want to ransom them since they were of Karaite denomination. Therefore, the Rabbanite authorities sent them to the Karaite community of the city. The latter, however, did not believe that Rebecca and her daughter were Karaite—and refused to purchase them. After all they were bought by a certain Rabbanite merchant Judah Dalion (דליאון), who used as his domestic servants. Being released after six-year service Rebecca was for a while free, but then for some unclear reason was imprisoned again. For some unclear reason (the document is somewhat incomplete), the Karaite community blamed the Rabbanites of being guilty of Rebecca's new imprisonment. The letter mentions the vicious and rotten character of the Rabbanite community and their religious practices. Moreover, it also refers to the help received from one of the Crimean Khan's important authorities in this matter.⁸⁶

In passing, it is important to mention that for many Jews the time spent in slavery turned out to be a drastic experience that forced them to change their religious views and opinions about religion. For example, Joshua ben Abraham Eschel (Herschel) was twice enslaved during his travels (once in the northern parts of the Crimean Khanate and once on his way to Italy). The second slavery, when he was beaten and humiliated, happened to be a turning

Grigulewicz in MS LMAB, F.305, no.220, fols.17r–20v. See also Jan Grzegorzewski, 'Caraimica. Język Łach-Karaitów', *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 2:2 (1916–1918): 268–270, 274–270; M. Nosonovskii and V. Shabarovskii, 'Karaimy v Derazhno: stikhotvornyi rasskaz o razrushenii obshchiny', <http://www.coe.neu.edu/~mnosonov/ka/>

⁸⁴ NLR, F.946, Evr.I, Doc.I 23 (Doc.19).

⁸⁵ Ibid. In fact only one Rabbanite captive, Israel Nishbah (נישבה), is mentioned by name.

⁸⁶ NLR, F.946, Evr.I, Doc.I.48 (Doc.35).

point in his life. While being ransomed and taken care of by a Christian superintendent Reinhardt, he decided to convert to Christianity c.1722. During the baptism he received a Christian name Friedrich Albrecht Augusti, studied theology in Jena, Gotha, and Leipzig, and died as a priest in Eschenberge.⁸⁷

Conclusion

As has been demonstrated in the article, despite their fragmentary character, the sources allow reconstructing a general picture of Jewish involvement into the Crimean trade in slaves and captives. Moreover, they allow developing an absolutely new perspective on the role of Jewish population in the history of the Crimean Khanate. The sources testify that Jewish population played a highly significant role in the trade in slaves and captives of the Crimean Khanate in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The ways, in which the Jews were engaged in this business, were varied and diversified—from mediators in trade and money-lenders to commandants of the Jewish fortress of Çufut Qal'eh, from wealthy slave-owners to misfortunate victims of the Tatar predatory raids. Moreover, the Jews played important role in international trade and were sometimes appointed influential state officials of the Crimean Khanate. A Jewish merchant was highly important for those who wanted to redeem their relatives at a lesser price than that that was offered by Tatar officials (see the testimony of Martinus Broniovius). A Jewish merchant could also be sent to solve financial matters of important captives as far as Sweden (e.g. the case of the Jewish merchant Arslan); he could purchase captives to use them as his domestics or sell them to Jewish merchants from other countries. A Jew could also be a commandant of the whole mountainous fortress housing important prisoners belonging to Tatar khans (e.g. the Karaite *qapuci* Saltik). Nevertheless, the Jews themselves could often become victims of Tatar slavers.

Sources also testify to the development of travel and trading routes between the Crimea, Poland, and countries of the East. Meir Ashkenazi, for example, who lived most of his time in Ottoman Caffa in the Crimea, travelled to Poland, Italy, and Egypt, where he was eventually killed. A redemption-fee for a Polish Jew Isaac was so high that the Crimean Khan himself twice sent a letter to Poland, the second time together with his servant Obrahim (also a Jew?) (see appendices 1 and 2). The seventeenth- to eighteenth-century Karaite pilgrims often used the Crimean land as an interchange station on their way to the Holy Land. Apart from Joseph ben Joshua, whose travel to Palestine was not completed, we know the names of other Karaites pilgrims who reached the Holy Land.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ A. Beck, 'Augusti: Friedrich Albrecht', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 1 (Leipzig, 1875), 684–685; Ernst Friedrich and Anton Augusti, *Nachrichten von dem Leben, Schicksalen und Bekehrung Friedrich Albrecht Augusti* (Gotha, 1783). *Inter alia*, Augusti is known as an author of a highly important description of the Karaite religious doctrine and ethnographic customs (Friedrich Albrecht Augusti, *Gründliche Nachrichten von denen Karäiten: ihren Ursprung, Glaubenslehren, Sitten und Kirchen-Gebräuchen*, Erfurt, 1752).

⁸⁸ E.g. travel diaries of Samuel ben David (1641–1642), Benjamin ben Elijah (1785–1786),

Of great interest is also 'supplementary' activity of Jewish population of Çufut Qal'eh and Mangup, who often lent money and sold important goods and victuals to the members of foreign embassies residing in the Crimean Khanate in the seventeenth century. Very often it was Jewish merchants whose financial assistance allowed ambassadors to survive the wrath of the Tatar khans, lack of food and water, and inclemency of the Crimean weather. On the basis of the testimonies of our sources one can also add to the map of the Crimean settlements with the Jewish population such places as Yaşlov and, most likely, Taş Yargan. Crimean historians could also benefit from the fact that these two small settlements had sometimes been used as residence for foreign embassies. It is also very important that the sources show weakness of the twentieth century Karaite and Polish scholarship regarding the allegedly self-sacrificing and absolutely non-pragmatic participation of the Karaites in ransoming of the Polish captives.

The Tatar slave trade in the Crimea, which began in the late Middle Ages and continued well into the eighteenth century, was finished only with the Russian acquisition of the Crimean Khanate by Russian Empire in 1774–1783. Surprisingly, the annexation of the Crimea sparked messianic speculations among some Jewish sectarian movements, such as Sabbatians in Turkey and Polish Frankists.⁸⁹ Indeed, this event signified a beginning of a new era for the Jewish colonization of this area, when thousands and thousands of the Ashkenazic Jews from Eastern Europe rushed to the Crimea, with its mild and hospitable climate, vineyards, plough lands (which were largely unoccupied after the Tatar and Turkish emigration), and promising commercial potential. Nevertheless, local Jewry no longer took part in slave trade since it was completely abolished by the Russian government immediately after the annexation.

and Moses ben Elijah Halevi (1654–1655) (see full Hebrew texts of their diaries in Jonas Hayyim Gurland, *Ginzei Yisra'el be-Sankt-Peterburg*, vol. 1 (Lyck, 1865), 1–54).

⁸⁹ Paweł Maciejko, *The Frankist Movement in Poland, the Czech Lands, and Germany (1755–1816)*, D.Phil. thesis (Oxford, 2003), 171.

APPENDICES

1. *Polish translation of the letter of the Tatar Khan Mehmed Giray to the Polish Chancellor concerning the redemption fee for the Jew Isaac of Kamieniec.*⁹⁰

Machmet Gierei Carskie słowo⁹¹

Radzie JKM⁹² Panu Kanclerzu Polskiemu pokłon. Przytem oznajmujemy Waszej M. yż pirwej tego sługa nasz Obrahim, od nas posłany będąc do JKM Zyda naimie Zaczka [i.e. Isaac] zniewoli wykupiwszy pusił, iakoż JKMci o list swoi Hospodarski naon czas dotego Zyda do Kamienca Podolskiego posłać roskazał, zeby ten Zyd temu słudze naszemu pomienionemu Obrahimu tę summe pieniędzy zapłacił, aniżeli tego Zyda za listem JKMci w Kamieniu nie został y te sume pieniędzy nikt mi za tego Zyda nie zapłacił, oczym ia Panie Kanclerzu, do Waszei Mci, ten moi list pisac kazałem przez terażniejszego gońca naszego Tawuja, gdy do rąk Wmci oddany będzie, WMc Panie Kanclerzu otem wiedząc, staraniem swoim JKMci Bratu naszemu o tem mowie i tę summe pieniędzy co nasz sługa Obrahim za Zyda wydał dla zapłaty pilności y starania swojego raczył, zaco byśmy od Wmci wdzięczni byli. Oto WM pilnie żądamy, zeby nieinaczej aby zapłata była zatem zacziwey przyjazni poreczamy.

2. *Western Russian (Belorussian) translation of the letter of Tatar Khan Mehmed Giray to the Polish Chancellor concerning the redemption fee for the Jew Isaac of Kamieniec.*⁹³

Махмед Кгерей цара слово

Раде его королевской милости пану канцлеру польскому поклон притом ознамует вашей милости иж первой сего слуга наш Ибрагим от нас послан будучи до его королевской милости жида наме⁹⁴ Зачку з неволи выкупивши пустив якож его королевской милости и лист свой государский он час до того жида до Каменца Подольского послати розказал жебы того жида тому слузе нашому помененному Ибрагиму

⁹⁰ *AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie*, k.60, t.88, no.93, fol.3. Skrócony przekład dwóch tureckich listów z Krymu do Polski [XVII w.].

⁹¹ A literary translation of Turkish *Mohammad-Giray-han süzemez*. This beginning is typical of many documents, which originated in the chancellery of Mehmed Giray IV (see S. F. Faizov, *Pis'ma khanov Islam-Gireya III i Mukhammed-Gireya IV k tsariu Alekseiu Mikhailovichu i korolitu Janu Kazimiru 1654–1658* (Moscow, 2003), 87).

⁹² Abbreviation for *Jego Królewskiej Mości* (His Royal Majesty).

⁹³ *AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie*, k.65, t.3, no.579, fol.3. Przekład tureckiego listu Mehmed Gereja I chana krymskiego do kanclerza wielkiego koronnego. Prośba o zwrot pieniędzy za wykup pewnego Żyda ... [1514–1523]. It is very likely that this translation was done not from the Tatar original, but from the Polish translation. The author of the translation used Latin characters a few times (e.g. in the words 'дан' and 'до' instead of Cyrillic 'дан' and 'до'). The language of this translation seems to be Western Russian (a.k.a. Old Belorussian)—the main official language used in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. Apparently, this translation was done for circulation in those regions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth where this language was mainly used.

⁹⁴ Apparent calque from the Polish *na imię* (=called/named).

тую суму пенязей⁹⁵ заплатил нижли того жида за листом королевской милости у каменцу не зостал и тую суму пенязей ништо ему за того жида не заплатил о чем я пане канцлеру до вашей милости тот мой лист писать казал через теперяшнего гонца нашого Тавуя⁹⁶ кды дорук вашей милости дан будет ваша милость пане канцлеру о том ведаючи старанем своим его королевской милости брату нашому о том мовити и тую суму пенязей што наш слуга Ибрагим за жида выдал для заплаты пилности и старания своего для научинити рачил зашто быхмо вашей в.М. вденчли. Ото ВМ. пилне жидамы жебы неиначей абы заплата была затем жичливой приязни поручамы.

3. *A document from the kadiasker's⁹⁷ register concerning the case of the Russian female slave Servinaz and its Karaite owner, Malkah, daughter of Elijah (translated from Crimean Tatar).*⁹⁸

A man named Musalli bin Muhammad called to the sitting of the court of justice⁹⁹ Malik binti Ilyayi [Malkah, daughter of Elijah], a daughter of the Jewess (*yehudiye*) Gevher bint Avraham, who lived and died in [Çufut] Qal'eh and who declared that after her death this female slave Servinaz, coming from Russia, of medium height, with fair eyebrows and large eyes, be considered free. [Musalli bin Muhammad] declared: 'This Servinaz is currently free, but Malik without any reason is keeping her in slavery. Let her be asked by the court.' During the inquiry Malik denied liberation of the slave and declared: 'I am keeping her as a servant because I inherited her from my mother Gevher and my mother did not declare her free.' When she was asked to prove this, righteous people Şaban bin Hamza and Aliş bin Cemal Çelebi, who came to testify in the court, declared the following: 'Gevher, the owner of Servinaz, declared Servinaz to be free when she was still alive and acknowledged her as liberated. We are the witnesses that Servinaz was called free by Gevher and we give our testimonial evidence.' Upon hearing these testimonies, which were accepted by the court into account, the third part of testimonial property left by Gevher was found to exceed the value of the aforementioned slave. Even though Malik did not recognize that one third is enough to redeem the slave, it was decided to free Servinaz without any redemption fee, which

⁹⁵ Polish *pieniądze* (=money).

⁹⁶ Corrected in the original to *Тавуя*. Another document also called this ambassador *Tatu* (*AGAD AKW Dz. Tatarskie*, k.60, t.81, no.86).

⁹⁷ I.e. the senior judge. There were two *kadiaskers* in Ottoman Turkey. According to Evliya Çelebi there also was a *kadiasker* in the Crimean Khanate (in 1666 the functions of *kadiasker* were fulfilled by Murtaza Ali efendi). Nevertheless, according to the traveller, the Khan appointed judges to the *kadlıks* by himself (Çelebi, *Księga podróży*, 277–278).

⁹⁸ This valuable Tatar document, together with a few other documents, also related to the Karaite community of Çufut Qal'eh, was copied in the twentieth century, most likely by the Karaite Boris Kokenay (Rostov-upon-Don) or one of his relatives. This collector of Karaite manuscripts possessed also many other Tatar documents, including extracts from the *kadiasker's* registrars. Unfortunately, the seventeenth-century originals of the documents disappeared and only Kokenay's copies, which were made in Latin script, survived (MS LMAB F.143, no.1177, fols.1–2v).

⁹⁹ We may assume that the sitting of the court took place in Bahçesaray, the Khans' capital.

was documented on the request of the interested party. The document was written on 23 *Zulhadji* 1022 [25 Dec. 1613]. The witnesses: Selim efendi ibni Haşim bek, Ali efendi ibni Eşbolat, Yusuf bin Şaban, Mahmud bin Abdullah, Devletgeldi bin Kozmin and others.

4. *Testimony of Baron de Tott concerning the murder of the Crimean Jewish slave owner.*¹⁰⁰

The slave of a Jew had assassinated his Master, in his Vineyard,¹⁰¹ and complaint was laid, by his nearest of Kin. The Culprit was seized, and, during his trial, some zealous Mahometans determined to make him a Turk,¹⁰² in hopes to obtain his pardon. The Cham¹⁰³ [Maqsud Giray] pronounced sentence of Death, and the Murderer's Conversion was pleaded. It is necessary to remark, that the Laws of Tartary ordain the Criminal to be punished by the hand of him he has been offended, or by the Persecutors. In vain was it objected, that a Turk might not be left to the mercy of Jews: I would deliver them my Brother, answered the Cham, were he guilty; my province is to do Justice, and as to his Conversion and its Rewards, I leave those to Providence. The Devotees contrived, however, by their intrigues, to retard the execution of judgement till the Friday-afternoon, that their Convert might take advantage of that Law which obliges the offended Party to execute Sentence within twenty-four hours, knowing that the Jewish Rights of Sabbath began at Sunset. Nevertheless, the Assassin, loaded with chains, was brought to the Butt on which these kind of Executions were performed. But here a new obstacle arose. The Jews are forbid to shed human blood, and the public Cryer was sent through the Town to offer a considerable sum to any one who would undertake the office of Executioner; but this office, the most miserable of the Tartars disdains. An account of the proceedings was carried to the Judgment-seat of the Cham, and the Enthusiasts hoped to gain their point; in which, however, they were deceived. Macksood-Gueray [i.e. Maqsud Giray khan] permitted the Jews to execute the Law according to the precepts of the Old Testament, and the Murderer was stoned to death.

¹⁰⁰ de Tott, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 95–96.

¹⁰¹ There are some data that the Karaites possessed their gardens in the Belbek valley and some other parts of the Crimea's south-west, next to Bahçesaray (Broniovius, *Tartariae Descriptio*, 21).

¹⁰² I.e. to convert him to Islam.

¹⁰³ I.e. 'Khan'.