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ЭТАПЫ СТАНОВЛЕНИЯ И ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЙ
КОНФЕССИОНАЛЬНОГО САМОУПРАВЛЕНИЯ КАРАИМОВ
РОССИЙСКОЙ ИМПЕРИИ (ПО АРХИВНЫМ ДОКУМЕНТАМ)

Аннотация: в статье проанализированы материалы фонда 241 «Таврическое и Одесское караимское духовное правление Таврического губернатора» (ТОКДП) Государственного архива Республики Крым (ГАРК, г. Симферополь). В указанном фонде – две описи, систематизированные по хронологическому, номинальному и географическому принципам. Документы фонда свидетельствуют о различных направлениях деятельности ТОКДП – религиозной, организационной, просветительской, общественной. Духовное правление до момента его закрытия в 1920-х гг. являлось основной инстанцией по решению вопросов в сфере брачно-семейного права караимов, образовательной и воспитательной деятельности караимской молодежи.

Ключевые слова: Российская империя, Крым, караимы, органы конфессионального самоуправления, Государственный архив Республики Крым.

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STAGES OF FORMATION AND ACTIVITY OF BODIES OF
CONFESSIONAL SELF-GOVERNMENT OF THE KARAITES OF THE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE (BASED ON ARCHIVED DOCUMENTS)

Abstract: The article analyzes the materials of fund 241 “Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration of the Taurida Governor” (TOKSA) of the State Archive of the Republic of Crimea (SARC, Simferopol). The said fund contains two inventories, systematized according to chronological, nominal and geographical principles. The foundation’s documents indicate various areas of activity of the TOKSB – religious, organizational, educational, public. Spiritual board until its closure in the 1920s was the main authority for resolving issues in the field of marriage and family law of the Karaites, educational and educational activities of Karaite youth.

Keywords: Russian Empire, Crimea, Karaites, bodies of confessional self-government, State Archive of the Republic of Crimea.

One of the extensive archival collections where materials related to the history of Crimean Karaites are preserved is the State Archive of the Republic of Crimea (SARC) in Simferopol. The most informative collection for the stated research topic in the SARC is Fund 241, “Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration of the Taurida Governorate”. The records in this fund consist of two inventories, comprising a total of 2053 archival documents dating from 1837 to 1920 [3, p. 513–573].

Initially, the collection of documents of the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration (TOKSA) was stored in Eupatoria directly under the administration. After the early 1920s, following the liquidation of all religious institutions by the Soviet authorities, the documents of the TOKSA, along with the funds of the Karaite National Library “Karay-Bitiklig”, were temporarily in the custody of the Eupatoria Local History Museum. Subsequently, most of the archive of the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration appears to have been transferred to the Central Archive Management of Crimea [2, p. 125–135]. Currently, these documents held in the State Archive of the Republic of Crimea in Simferopol. Separate additions to the collection

of documents of the administration occurred in the following years, including those from the Eupatoria State Archive.

Among the most substantial documents in Fund 241 are those such as the draft charter for the management of the spiritual affairs of the Karaites, “Regulations on the Taurida Karaite Clergy” (1837), materials directly related to the activities of the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration and the expansion of its powers, correspondence regarding the status of the “cave city” Chufut-Kale, petitions for granting Karaites various civil rights and economic privileges (e.g., exemption from military conscription, double fishing tax, etc.). There are also documents related to the project of a new marriage charter for the Karaites, documents about the presence of the head and members of the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration at high-level audiences, celebrations, the presentation of gifts to the august individuals by the Karaites, the reception of members of the imperial family and distinguished guests by the Karaites, and much more.

Fund 241 contains materials from the congresses of the Karaite clergy and national congresses held with the participation of delegates from the Karaite communities (1898, 1897–1899, 1908, 1910, 1917, 1919), during which delegates discussed current issues of a doctrinal and social nature. For example, in the protocols and resolutions of the meetings of the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration, there is information about the election of candidates to various positions within the Karaite clergy, such as hahams, gazzans, and shamashim, and their swearing allegiance to the Russian throne. Among the documents are bilingual texts of the oath in Russian and Karaite languages, dating back to 1869, 1871, 1872, 1874, and 1879. Information on the election of elders in Karaite kenesas, along with their duties, attestation reports, formulary lists of clergy, materials on the awarding of orders and medals, and the conferral of the title of honorary citizen to spiritual figures from the Karaites are also preserved.

In terms of analyzing the relationships between the Karaite community and the Rabbanite Jews, correspondence about the rights and privileges of Karaites and the non-application of laws established for Russian Jews (1875, 1880, 1881) is of great

importance. For example, it is worth highlighting case number 580 of Fund 241 titled “Highest Order that Restrictive Decrees about Jews Should Not Apply to Karaites” (Inventory 1, 1894) [1, s. 1]. The appearance of such documents prompted by the fact that, despite the adoption of the law on April 8, 1863, which equated Karaites with the Christian population of the empire in terms of rights, some local authorities in certain regions continued to consider Karaites as Jews, resulting in the application of restrictive measures. In 1910, the Minister of Internal Affairs, P.A. Stolypin, issued a special circular to governors, city mayors, and regional leaders, explaining that such episodes of categorising Karaites by regional authorities as part of the Jewish population should not be allowed in the future. Governors were instructed to explain the provisions of the updated law on Karaites to all institutions and officials and the circulars of the Ministry of Internal Affairs from November 5, 1881, and February 8, 1893 [4, p. 76–77].

While reviewing the documents in Fund 241, materials related to the construction and opening of Karaite religious structures, kenesas, prayer houses, as well as schools and educational institutions (both traditional, confessionally oriented, and Russo-Karaite ministerial schools opened after the mid-1860s educational reform in Russia), were identified. The fund contains records with information about the organisation of the Society for the Assistance to Poor Karaites (1869), projects and reports of the “Eupatoria Karaite Society for the Care of Poor Karaites” (1880, 1903), and the establishment of the “Society for the Assistance to Insufficiently Educated Karaite Youth” by students from the Karaites (1881).

In the documents of Fund 241, there are preserved handwritten versions of the charters of charitable societies (many of them with annotations and marginalia from the compilers themselves and higher-ranking officials to whom these documents were submitted for approval), as well as their printed copies. These include the charters of the Kiev (1903), Eupatoria (1898–1903), Theodosia (1896) Karaite charitable societies, the Karaite almshouse “Yardym” named after Akbike Shapshal (1919), and documents related to their activities, reports, and correspondence about the composition and work of the Commission for Aid to Karaite Refugees from the western

provinces of the Russian Empire during World War I (1915). There is documentation from the “Eupatoria Karaite Society for the Care of Poor Karaites”, resolutions on voluntary donations in the kenesa for the benefit of the poor, lists of donors, and materials on the assistance provided by Karaite communities to the starving population of the Kazan province and other materials (1899).

Among such documents, mention should be made of the minutes of the meetings of the “Society for Aid to Karaites Affected by Military Actions” (1917), materials on the organisation and charter of the “Society for Assistance to Needy Karaites” (1898, 1903), documents about the establishment of the “Society for Assistance to Needy Students in Karaite Schools in Eupatoria” (1895, 1905), reports and financial records of the society, lists of society members and students (1906, 1907, 1908, 1910).

The Spiritual Administration also extended its influence to the field of education, actively participating in the organisation of the educational process in schools and institutions opened for Karaite youth. Among the most informative records in the fund on this topic are information and correspondence from the Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration with the communities in Crimea about the state of Karaite educational institutions in the Taurida Governorate, the allocation of funds for their maintenance, the appointment and conduct of exams, the issuance of certificates to school and institution graduates, the appointment of teachers, the student population, the opening of a Karaite school in Chufut-Kale by the Russian authorities to prevent the departure of its residents (1848–1860). There are charters and projects for the establishment of the Eupatoria Karaite Women’s Vocational School (1869, 1902). Among the records, materials stand out concerning the removal of restrictions on Karaite girls who completed their studies in gymnasiums, limitations imposed on Jews (1880), as well as the lifting of restrictions for the admission of Karaite women to the Higher Medical Courses in St. Petersburg (1896). The charter, projects, and educational programs of the Alexandrov Karaite Spiritual School (AKSS) in Eupatoria are also preserved – the central educational institution for Karaites, opened at the initiative of the renowned Karaite educator, public figure, and pedagogue Ilya Ilyich Kazas (1832–1912).

In conclusion, it can be deduced that the materials of Fund 241, “Taurida and Odessa Karaite Spiritual Administration of the Taurida Governorate”, stored in the State Archive of the Republic of Crimea, are an important and highly informative source for studying the history of the establishment and functioning of the institutions of religious self-governance of the Karaites in the Russian Empire in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

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