Turkic Languages

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Editorial note

Turkic Languages, Volume 15, 2011, Number 1

The present issue of TURKIC LANGUAGES contains contributions to various problems of general Turcology.

An-King Li publishes the first part of an article concerning the meaning structure of Turkic denominal verb formatives, taking a cognitive approach to the topic.

David Brophy deals with Mongolic-Turkic language contacts in 18th century Xinjiang, analyzing the Mongolic vocabulary of a hagiographical work written in the Ili valley.

Mária Ivanics investigates the origins of a specific motif (“the donkey turned into a girl”) found in the preface to the Book of Dede Korkut.

Julian Rentzsch deals with expressions of modality attested in the Baburnama, the autobiography of the Timurid ruler Babur, classifying them according to functional and semantic criteria.

Fikret Turan reports on a symposium concerning dictionary compilation and lexicographic studies, arranged by the Kubbealtı Foundation, Istanbul.

Astrid Menz reviews the collective volume “Exploring the eastern frontiers of Turkic”, edited by Marcel Erdal and Irina Nevskaia and containing papers on South Siberian Turkic and Yellow Uyghur.

Heidi Stein presents Hendrik Boeschoten’s “Alexander stories in Ajami Turkic”, a text containing a “striking mixture of Oghuz and East Turkic features”.

Abdurishid Yakup reviews Gunnar Jarrings’ “Central Asian Turkic place-names”, a monumental work of extremely high linguistic value.

The same reviewer discusses a grammar of modern Uyghur published by Frederick De Jong.

Finally an important note: The journal TURKIC LANGUAGES has been added to an archive of digital open-access journals, which will make it accessible online with a ‘moving wall’ of one year. Previous issues have been retrodigitized and will, provided the authors give their permission, be added to the archive. The web address is: http://www.digizeitschriften.de/openaccess/.

Lars Johanson
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The present issue of TURKIC LANGUAGES contains articles dealing with various aspects of general and comparative Turcology.

As a contribution to the discussion on lamdacism versus sigmatism, Anton Antonov & Guillaume Jacques reexamine the etymology of the Turkic word for ‘silver’, kümüş, a Wanderwort that has spread to different languages. Since the proposed Chinese etymology raises a number of problems, a new source for the word is sought. Sino-Tibetan and Austro-Asiatic turn out to share the word. Several scenarios for the borrowing are considered. Both the Sino-Tibetan > Turkic path and the Turkic > Sino-Tibetan path are possible. Both Sino-Tibetan and Turkic may also have borrowed the word from an unknown language. The authors hypothesize the existence of an unattested Sino-Tibetan language from which the word might have been copied into the neighboring languages. They admit, however, that there is no way to determine which of the possible hypotheses is the correct one.

Birsel Karakoç presents a new analysis of the copular markers ol, är-ür, and tur-ur in Karakhanid, arguing that their distribution corresponds systematically to two kinds of clauses, ‘specificational’ (ol) and ‘characterizational’ (är-ür, tur-ur) clauses.

Aljona Tazranova deals with Altay Turkic ‘three-component analytical verbal constructions’, consisting of two converb forms plus a finite auxiliary verb, and forming temporal, modal, and actional items.

An-King Lim publishes the second part of an article on the meaning structure of Old Turkic denominal verb formatives. The first part of the text appeared in TURKIC LANGUAGES 15, 3–50. The formatives are examined according to the principles of Cognitive Grammar, each suffix being considered a symbolic structure with a specific pairing of meaning and sound.

Yong-Sŏng Li, whose book ‘A study of the Middle Chulym dialect of the Chulym language’ was reviewed by Valeriya Lemskaya in TURKIC LANGUAGES 14, 248–258, comments on a number of problems dealt with in the review and gives some additional information.

Raihan Muhamedowa deals with the use of the Kazakh participle degen ‘saying’ as a particle. Four functions of degen are defined: (i) modifier of a noun, (ii) emphatic particle, (iii) topic particle, and (iv) contrastive topic particle.

Aynur Abish & Éva Á. Csató describe recent developments in Kazakh as spoken in China, new challenges caused by the changed educational policy and the increasing impact of urban environments. The situation is illustrated with two texts (in the original, glossed and translated) as examples of new linguistic attitudes and habits of the younger generation of Kazakh-speakers. These seem to confirm that the Kazakh...
language in China is facing a new period in which extended bilingualism will lead to numerous contact-induced changes.

Éva Á. Csató reports on a symposium on ‘Kazakh in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan’, convened in December 2011, by the Institute of Turcology at the University of Gießen, Germany. The symposium was arranged in the framework of a long-term project funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.

This issue of our journal concludes with a review by Julian Rentzsch, Szeged, of Peter B. Golden’s recent book on Turks and Khazars.

*Lars Johanson*