

## Werk

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Korea, but while the first one was used as a geographical and ethnic designation, Coohiyan indicates the ruling dynasty of Korea.

Edward Tryjarski, in his paper (221-226), quotes fragments based on the memoirs of Faustyn Ciecierski, a Polish Catholic priest, who was condemned to forced settlement and labor in Nerchinsk in 1798-1801. Tryjarski has collected those parts of the memoirs that reveal the nature of tea barter between Chinese merchants and the population of Dauria (that is the mountainous region east of Lake Baikal). The author also sheds light on the production and consumption of “kirpičnyj čaj” (tea in bricks) and various strong alcoholic drinks like vodka and milk brandy.

Hartmut Walravens, in his paper *Fünfehn Kamelladungen Gelehrsamkeit. Russische Bücherkäufe in Peking im Jahre 1821* (227-251), gives a catalogue based on the inventory-list of the Chinese and Manchu books bought by Egor Fedorovič Timkovski in China in the year of 1821. We learn that the books were bought for the Imperial Library in Sankt-Petersburg (29 items), for the Library of the Asiatic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (20 items) and for the Oriental Institute planned to be set up in Irkutsk (19 items).

Mark Kirchner: Review of Astrid Menz & Christoph Schroeder (eds.), *Türkiye’de dil tartışmaları* [Language discussions in Turkey]. İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2006. 257 pages.

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The volume under review is edited by two German scholars who were employed in academic institutions in Turkey at the time of publishing. It contains ten highly interesting papers presented at an interdisciplinary symposium entitled *Türkiye’de Dil tartışmalarında yeni yönelimler* “New Directions in Language Discussions in Turkey” held at Bilgi University İstanbul in 2004. The range of the topics under discussion is rather broad. Colleagues from departments of English or German studies may wonder how it is possible to discuss questions of the status of minority languages, orthographic issues and problems related to the language vs. dialect status within a language family in a single volume. Besides that, some papers are clearly scientific in their approach while others are written in a more or less journalistic style. What may look rather accidental and disparate to colleagues in more established disciplines is actually a very important contribution for the discussion in Turkey and in Turkology. There are two reasons for that: Firstly, sociolinguistic issues and language politics are less established as a field of research in Turkology, which is and was dominated by

traditional philological approaches and by structural linguistics. Secondly, language issues are a highly politicized topic in Turkey. Several major questions can hardly be discussed in an open atmosphere because of national taboos. In most cases the general political attitude of the author determines the discussions. This book is an important step toward developing less biased discussions in Turkey and in Turkology and bringing together divergent positions. However, the present book is far from presenting a neutral, purely academic perspective on these issues. It is to the same degree a volume about “language discussions” as it is a contribution to ongoing discussions. With this in mind, the author of this book review cannot refrain from commenting on some never ending discussions.

The first paper, on “Turkish after 1980” (11–23), is by Murat Belge, who is the author of many important contributions in the fields of Turkish politics, society and language. The author gives a general outline of the development of Turkish after the 1980 coup d'état. According to Belge, major factors are the end of the language reform process and the development of private radio and television channels. In connection with the end of the language reform, which was in fact a project of language purification, Belge wonders why Turkish leftists identified themselves with a movement which can be suspected of having close relationship with racist and nationalist ideology (12). When we take Kemalism as an anti-imperialist, anti-religious modernist movement, it is not astonishing that leftists could identify with many aspects of this movement—and that the military junta put an end to language purification, which had developed from a Kemalist to a “socialist” project. Murat Belge is not very positive about the development of Turkish in the past 25 years. In a conversational tone, he complains that new unintelligible idiomatic expressions and wrong syntactic features have emerged from the incompetent translations of foreign films (18). Belge's pessimistic criticism of language in (new) media bears the imprint of pessimistic conservative language critics when he laments over incorrect use of original Arabic vowel length and Persian *izafet*-constructions in contemporary Turkish and proposes the introduction of Ottoman Turkish as an elective in Turkish schools (21).

Bernt Brendemoen's paper “Deviations and Norms in Popular Linguistic Discourse” (25–39) is a thorough evaluation of Turkish popular discussions on problems in the field of lexicon and orthography. Astrid Menz, one of the editors, treats “Turkish Spelling in Spelling Guides and in Practice” (41–71) and Tevfik Turan makes some comments on “Literary Criticism as Linguistic Criticism” (73–82). M. Berk Balçık's paper “Language Politics in Turkish Television” (85–118) should be read in the context of Belge's aforementioned contribution. He agrees with Belge in pointing to the fact that liberalization and de-monopolization of the national Turkish broadcasting market was of major significance for the development of Turkish language and culture, but he cannot agree with those who are constantly bemoaning the degeneration and loss of correct Turkish as a consequence of this process (94). The second part of Balçık's paper is a critical analysis of the developments and discussions in Turkey when it was decided in 2004 in the context of EU negotiations to permit, under very limited conditions, TV-broadcasting in the language of Muslim minorities.

Nurettin Demir's article (119-146) on the status of Turkic languages other than Turkish (the English translation of the title in the English summaries at the end of the book is not correct and obscures Demir's thesis!) is an attempt to argue for the official Turkish position which denies language status to Turkic languages like Uzbek, Tatar, Kazakh, etc., defining them instead as Uzbek Turkish, Tatar Turkish, Kazakh Turkish, etc. – and Turkish as the language of a whole language family. According to the official Turkish point of view, the members of 'Turkish' as a language family are not languages, *dil*, but a kind of dialects, *lehçe*. Interestingly, adherents of this approach do not use the term *lehçe* for Turkish, the official language of the Republic of Turkey. Not unlike other discussions in the field of language and politics in Turkey, the discussion whether other Turkish languages are really "languages" has been highly politicized. Turkish Turkologists who employed the internationally accepted nomenclature for the other Turkic languages were often suspected of supporting the Soviet politics of creating many small nations with national languages. What is analyzed as divide and conquer politics by many, not only Turkish scholars, can probably be better understood as circumstances wherein those politicians who were responsible for implementing the official language politics of the Soviet Union applied the conditions in the closely related Slavic languages to the Turkic languages in question. In addition it should be noted that the development of several Turkic languages as independent literary languages had begun many years before the October Revolution. Demir (119-120), however, gives the impression that Turkic languages are a product of artificial separation and language engineering. The fact that in Turkish *Türkçe* is the denomination of the official language of Turkey as well as the denomination of all Turkic languages as a language family causes several problems that do not exist in other language families. However, Turcologists in Turkey like Demir could have easily accepted or created a terminology like *Türkçe* "Turkish" vs. *Türk dilleri* or *Türki diller* "Turkic languages" if there had been a wish to separate the name of the most important language of this language family from the name of the language family as a whole. Mingling both concepts is part of a more general concept which insists on the "Turkishness" of the speakers of Turkic languages living outside Turkey. Thus the language of the Tatars and of many other Turkic peoples is called *Tatar Türkçesi*, lit. "Tatar Turkish," etc., despite the fact that these denominations are refused by the local peoples. Demir is aware of that (143), but he even uses the denomination *Türk* in designations beyond languages. Thus, in Demir's terminology as well as in the commonly used Turkish terminology, the Central Asian Turkic speaking republics are named *Türk cumhuriyetleri* "Turkish republics" (142), which in fact implies a close relationship between these ethnically rather heterogeneous states and the Republic of Turkey in a more than purely linguistic sense. Without a doubt, the denomination system used in Turkey can be useful when varieties spoken outside Turkey are clearly descendents of Turkish, like *Bulgaristan Türkçesi* "Turkish of Bulgaria". In the search for objective measures for defining the language vs. dialect status of "entities" such as Tatar or Uzbek, Demir discusses mutual intelligibility. This is the most interesting part of his paper (133–136). He is right when he says that unprepared tests based on written

texts are not a suitable base for the evaluation of mutual intelligibility. Such tests may be useful when they are applied in combination with other, more elaborate methods, such as the evaluation of the learning process on a time scale. Mutual intelligibility and the use of mutual intelligibility in foreign language teaching is an important research field in the study of Romance languages, which form a language group similar in the degree of mutual intelligibility to the Turkic languages. In Turkish academic or popular discussions, the degree of mutual intelligibility between Turkic languages is generally exaggerated. Demir (135) quotes statements of Turkish Turkologists who believe that Turks working in Kazakhstan will understand 80% of everyday Kazakh within six weeks. In practice, the Turkish claim denying the language status of other Turkic languages does not motivate students to invest much effort in learning these languages. In Turkey, even in the academic field of Turkology, few students or scholars have relevant active competence in other Turkic languages. In his article Demir goes to some length to show that those few Turkish Turkologists who use the international denomination system for the members of the Turkic language family had originally accepted the official Turkish position and changed their opinion after going abroad. He gives the impression that these scholars unnecessarily argued against the established denomination system (128–132). The international position is discussed in brief by Demir under the heading “Yabancı Bilim Adamlarının Görüşleri” (‘The opinions of foreign scholars’ 137–139). The author mentions Wilhelm Radloff’s famous “Versuch eines Wörterbuchs der Türk-Dialekte” (1893–1911), but he fails to notice that the state of the art handbook and the present journal are both entitled “Turkic languages”. Turkish is the largest and most elaborate language within the family of Turkic languages. It has great potential to serve one day as a lingua franca in the independent Turkic-speaking republics of the former Soviet Union in addition to Russian if the speakers of Turkish are not suspected of disregarding and undervaluing the richness and the tradition of other Turkic languages.

Özlem Eraydın Virtanen’s contribution on “Language Politics in Turkey in the Light of European Union Relations” (147–184) casts a light on the development of the legal status of languages other than Turkish spoken on the territory of the Republic of Turkey. The first part of her paper (–162) is a general introduction to the problem; in the second part the reader finds interesting material and critical analyses especially on the restrictive attitude of the Turkish government towards the languages of Muslim minorities and on recent changes in this politics. Together with Balçık’s paper, the reader obtains valuable information on a topic that is often discussed without deeper knowledge in international newspapers and journals. In her argumentation, Eraydın Virtanen supports demands of the European Union and stresses that she does not know of any historic situation where the recognition of minority language rights has led to the partition of a country (180). This sounds rather strange in light of what happened in the Soviet Union and in several Eastern European countries during the last decade of the 20th century. The volume under review contains three more papers: Meryem Şen’s empirical study “Attitudes towards Regional Dialects” (185–208) investigates the attitudes of Turkish standard language speakers towards the various regional dialects

of Turkey. Christoph Schroeder gives an excellent survey on “Turkish as a Mother Tongue or as a Foreign Language and the Teaching of Turkish in Western Europe” (209–228). Schroeder recommends taking into consideration the fact that children who learn Turkish as a mother tongue in Western Europe may be more successful if Turkish were taught considering the real bilingual and diaspora-Turkish background of the pupils. The last paper of the book by Zeynep Kızıltepe and Seran Doğançay-Aktuna is on “The Status of Foreign Languages in Turkey with an Emphasis on Higher Education” (229–240).

The volume was reviewed in several Turkish newspapers and journals; a second edition is being prepared in these days. All this shows a vivid interest in Turkish languages politics, in sociolinguistic and related issues. The volume edited by Menz and Schroeder is an important step to establishing new research fields in Turkology.

