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Editorial note

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This issue of *TURKIC LANGUAGES* begins with Emine Yılmaz's obituary of the outstanding Turkish linguist Talat Tekin, who passed away on November 29, 2015. He was one of the most stimulating and electrifying scholars in the field, always prepared to wage bold and cheerful intellectual feuds in support of his innovative ideas.

In his article "Remarks on the ethnonym Khitan", András Róna-Tas deals with the East Old Turkic designation *Ḳītan*. The original final *-ń* and its dialectal equivalents *-y* and *-n* existed at least from the 9th century on. The word occurs in Khitan texts in the forms "qīta", "qītan", and "qītas". According to the author, "qīta" may have been the singular, "qītan" a collective self-denomination, and "qītas" the plural form, together probably constituting a tripartite opposition used for animate nouns.

Dmitrij Nasilov presents an article on Turkic markers consisting of a verbal noun plus *-čī*. Orkhon Turkic, Old Uyghur, and Karakhanid texts display various modal forms used for future reference such as *-tačī*, *-mačī*, *-yučī*, *-yīčī*, *-makčī*. The author attempts to find functional and semantic reasons for the emergence of this pattern in Turkic verb systems and for its stability in later Turkic languages. He also addresses some theoretical problems of the evolution and functioning of grammatical morphemes in agglutinative languages, in particular, whether *-čī* can be added to both nominal and verbal stems.

Marcel Erdal discusses the origins and shapes of some early Turkic names and titles as reflected in early Chinese sources of the 6th–9th centuries. The aim is to correct a few misconceptions among Turcologists on the basis of these data. Thus the tribal name Karluk should be read as "Karılık" or "Karılık" in the Orkhon inscriptions. The title known as *eltäbär* should be read as "{h}elitbär" or "(h)elitbär". No Turkic names or titles occur in the documents of the first Türk Empire.

Hendrik Boeschoten discusses problems of lexicography in pre-Chaghataic East Middle Turkic texts, in particular the difficulties encountered when working with lexicographical works written in the old tradition of Arabic grammarians. An interesting example is the *Kitāb al-af'āl*, a recently discovered and edited source. Though its author does not define which kind of Turkic it reflects, the variety presented relates to Central Asia rather than to the Mamlūk sphere of Egypt and Syria.

Daniel Barry deals with laryngeal features and vowel length in Turkic. It is generally held that primary vowel length has given rise to the development of lenis stops in certain contexts. The author questions the viability of contrastive vowel length as a reconstructed feature of Proto-Turkic. He proposes an alternative view, according to which vowel-length contrasts occurring before stem-final obstruents reflect an earlier voicing contrast in final obstruents. The proposal is based on two

cross-linguistically common phenomena: final devoicing and the tendency of vowels to be longer before voiced consonants.

Shinji Ido presents and analyzes a short late 19th-century Uzbek text in Hebrew script, written by a Bukharan bilingual who had Tajik as his native language but also possessed competence in Uzbek. His language can be identified as a variety of Uzbek, although it exhibits some features that distinguish it from modern Standard Uzbek. Since the text is written in fully vocalized Hebrew script, it provides detailed information about the vowel phonology of the Uzbek variety once spoken in Bukhara.

Kenjegül Kalieva deals with case suffixes added to third-person possessive suffixes in the Batken dialect, one of the least explored Kirghiz dialects. The case forms are compared with those of Standard Kirghiz and the neighboring languages Uzbek and Uyghur. Clear differences from the standard language are found in the accusative, dative, locative, and ablative forms. As in Uyghur, the accusative suffix is *-nI* instead of Standard Kirghiz *-n*. As in Uzbek, the dative suffix is *-gA* instead of Standard Kirghiz *-nA*, which is close to Uyghur. As in Uzbek, the locative suffix *-dA* and the ablative suffix *-dAn* lack the “pronominal *n*”. A few hypotheses that might explain this complex situation are presented.

Aminem Mementimin explores and analyzes different means of expressing volitional modality in Modern Uyghur, namely the hypothetic (conditional), optative, imperative, and voluntative moods, as well as the aorist, which can indicate volition in combination with other grammatical elements. The discussion is illustrated with instructive examples.

Peter Piispanen deals with folklore borrowings in north-eastern Siberia, suggesting a number of etymologies for loans found in Tundra Yukaghir and Kolyma Yukaghir folktales: one (Pre-)Yakut word, five Evenki words, and one *Wanderwort*, spread among several languages. The loans are analyzed in terms of their chronology, phonology, and semantics. Some cases of uncertain cultural borrowings are also discussed.

Éva Á. Csató reports on a workshop devoted to the Turkic optative, and Sinziana Preda reports on the current linguistic status of the Tatar minority in Romania. Finally, Delio Proverbio reviews a volume on spoken Ottoman in “mediator texts”, and László Károly presents István Mándoky Kongur’s book on Kumans and Hungarians.

The editor wants to add an overdue note on the death of Hans-Jürgen Kornrumpf on December 15, 2012. Born in 1926, Kornrumpf spent most of his career at the Faculty of Translation Studies, Linguistics and Cultural Studies of Mainz University. Though his main field of interest was history, he made important contributions to linguistics as the author of several excellent German-Turkish dictionaries.

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