Two Controversial Questions of History of “Small” Turkic Languages in Ukraine: Urum, Karay, Qrymchaq in comparison with Gagauz

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In 2006 a field study of small Turkic languages was conducted in Ukraine in cooperation with South Korean Turkologists. The study was aimed to revive, preserve and study the language and culture of Turkic-speaking Christian, Judaic and Karay minorities. The present research aims were to compare the results of that field study and to throw additional light on two problems of history of Turkic languages. The first one was to set a status of the Azovian Urum language from the point of view of its dictionary and morphology, concerning to Crimean Tatar. There is a consideration to compare this language with historical genesis of the Gagauz people and Gagauz language. The paper deals with conserved only in Crimean Karay and non-conserved in Qrymchaq and Urum old (Qypchaq) Past Perfect – *gan in its historical dimensions. The second one was to find evidences of developing the Qypchaq Perfect Past in the Urum language. We also tried to point some moments of the history of small Turkic languages in Ukraine, in which Qypchaq elements have been obliterated almost in whole, but Oguz elements still are surviving.

Key words: insular Turkic languages, Ukraine, Karay, Urum, Qrymchaq, Participle *gan.
Our research is devoted to the history of so called ‘small’, or, in other words, ‘insular’ Turkic languages. They are, for example, Balkan Turkic languages or Turkic languages in Ukraine as Urum, Karay, Qymchaq and particularly Gagauz. There are significant results obtained in the studying of the Turkic languages and theirs dialects (world Turkology disposes of dialectological atlases for Azerbaijani, Kirghiz, Chuvash, Tatar). But, in spite of these achievements, researchers until recently lost and haven’t found touch with the languages and dialects of small ethnic groups, as for instance the Turkic languages in Ukraine. At the same time, all the materials concerning their history are of fundamental importance for comparative studying of historical development of all Turkic languages. Being in insular position, the languages and dialects of the region interacted between each other as closely-related, and with Russian, Ukrainian and Greek – as unrelated ones. Because of this in the languages of mentioned ethnic groups innovations have appeared, several archaic elements have been conserved etc.

The history of the constitution and development of the languages of small ethnic groups and insular dialects should be considered in the light of the history of its native speakers. These languages could be considered as a kind of research laboratory, where over the relatively short time in conductive situation the language processes, which usually expected to be developed during the long centuries, were taking place. The materials for the history of insular / isolated languages also are of great value. Their formation and development happened within more or less known chronological frames. And, what is especially important for the historical linguistics, we know history of both insular and surrounding it metropolitan languages and dialects.

Therefore we don’t take into consideration Crimean Tatar as an object of the research, mostly because Crimea was actually its metropolitan area where the language was born and developed. But, in the same time, we engage Crimean Tatar in our comparative studies as well as all other languages as well.

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