

Foreword and acknowledgments

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Beyond 'Khoisan': Historical relations in the Kalahari Basin

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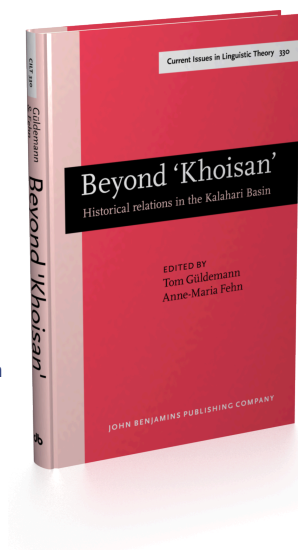
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Foreword and acknowledgements

This book aims to contribute to the effort of disentangling the genealogical and areal relations of the indigenous Non-Bantu ‘click’ languages of southern Africa. These highly under-described and mostly endangered languages have been subsumed conventionally under the unsubstantiated concept of a ‘Khoisan’ language family, following Greenberg (1963). However, there is a growing body of evidence that they in fact belong to three distinct linguistic lineages, Khoe-Kwadi, Kx’a and Tuu, which share certain traits as a result of convergence within the geographical area called ‘Kalahari Basin’ (Güldemann 1998b). The attempt to determine whether certain traits are present due to contact or inheritance is thus a recurrent theme in this collection of papers. This approach is applied to various semantic, phonological, and grammatical domains of the languages at issue, including kinship terminology, consonant systems, multi-verb constructions, demonstrative and relative constructions, spatial terminology, body-part terminology, numeral systems, and nominal gender and agreement. Improved internal classifications within established lineages are presented, too, based on the analysis of phonological, lexical and morpho-syntactic features. Finally, data from molecular anthropology are also integrated here in order to shed light on other non-linguistic aspects of the population prehistory of the area.

The volume’s thematic preoccupation arose out of the project network ‘The Kalahari Basin Area: a “Sprachbund” on the Verge of Extinction (KBA)’ (see <http://www2.hu-berlin.de/kba/>) in general, and the workshop ‘Genealogical and Areal Linguistic Relations in the Kalahari Basin’, in particular. The KBA project was carried out within the framework ‘Better Analyses Based on Endangered Languages (EuroBABEL)’ of the European Science Foundation (see <http://www.esf.org/?id=4632>). The workshop was held in Osaka in 2011 as part of the ‘20th International Conference on Historical Linguistics (ICHLXX)’ (see <http://www.ichl2011.com>), at which all papers except for the introduction were presented in their first version. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support by the EuroBABEL Programme and all national funding agencies involved in the support of the project in general and the workshop in particular.

Authors and editors dedicate this volume to the memory of Henry Honken, our dear and respected colleague who passed away while this book was being

prepared. An obituary which was originally intended for this volume but could not be published here will appear in Berthold & Fehn (eds., forthcoming).

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The Editors