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Ritter, Hans: *Wörterbuch zur Sprache und Kultur der Twareg I.* Twareg – Französisch – Deutsch. Elementarbuch der Twareg-Hauptdialekte in Algerien, Libyen, Niger, Mali und Burkina Faso mit einer Einführung in Sprache und Schrift, Poesie und Musik, Orientierung und Zeitrechnung. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2009. XVIII, 1069 S. 4°. Lw. ISBN 978-3-447-05886-5 – **Ritter, Hans (in Zusammenarbeit mit Prasse, Karl-G.):** *Wörterbuch zur Sprache und Kultur der Twareg II.* Deutsch – Twareg. Wörterbuch der Twareg-Hauptdialekte in Algerien, Libyen, Niger, Mali und Burkina Faso mit einer Darstellung von Phonologie, Grammatik und Verbalsystem. In Zusammenarbeit mit Karl-G. Prasse. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 2009. XXII, 1128 S. 4°. Lw. ISBN 978-3-447-05887-2.*

The new lexicon of Tuareg (South Berber) dialects in two volumes by Hans Ritter is evaluated below from the standpoint of a linguist conducting research on the place of the Berber lexicon in its broader Afro-Asiatic context.¹

The linguistic presentation of Tuareg begins with its classification in the Afro-Asiatic phylum and we find here a somewhat surprising order of branches (p. 1: 1. Semitic, 2. Egyptian, 3. Cushitic, 4. Berber, 5. Chadic, 6. Omotic) without any reasonable proof (although the author, only two lines later, correctly remarks how close Berber and Semitic are). I strongly object to this classification. First, the intense and extremely productive apophony widespread in Semitic, older Egyptian² and Berber (as right-

* My thanks go to Prof. W.G.E. Watson for checking the English of this review.

1 Cf. the series of papers entitled “Some Berber Etymologies” by the present author presenting fragments of a future Berber etymological dictionary counting already nine parts and 360 lexical entries. The latest one (with a bibliography of the preceding parts) is to appear in Allati, A. (éd.): *Auréoles berbères: Mélanges Offerts à Michael Peyron*, Köln, 2013, Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

2 Older Egyptian denotes the one millennium long language continuum of three subsequent phases (archaic, old, and middle Egyptian), which were apparently all strongly apophonic in their verbal morphologies (due to the lack of vowels in the hieroglyphic script, let us formulate it more properly: they must have been with the so many various sorts of *s̄dm=f* forms etc.), whereas the equally coherent continuum of Neo-Egyptian, Demotic and Coptic shows evident signs that Ablaut had ceased to be productive and its traces survived as frozen relicts from the older phases (e.g., fossilized conjunct participles, qualitatives in Coptic).

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ly noted by Prof. Prasse in his introduction on the very same page) is in clear opposition to the firm vocalism and much weaker apophony of Cushito-Omotic and Chadic, where it has a much less significant role in verbal morphology. Second, the inherited vocabularies of common Semitic and Berber have remained quite consistent in the daughter languages, which makes us suppose a relatively late separation of these branches. Instead, pharaonic Egyptian, a distinct branch, remained one single language and never split into different languages through the course of three millennia. Even Coptic can only be divided into dialects, which again is evidently in sharp contrast with the sometimes extreme lexical diversity in Cushito-Omotic and especially in Chadic. These have long been presumed to have split off from the common Afro-Asiatic parental phylum much earlier according to the glottochronological results of the Moscow school of comparative linguistics.

The authorship then shifts to K.-G. Prasse (professor emeritus of Copenhagen University), today the doyen of Tuareg studies. He begins with a brief presentation (pp. 1–2) of certain features shared by the Afro-Asiatic languages. First of all comes the principle of consonantal roots, which is so strong in the Northern group of Afro-Asiatic branches (Semitic, Egyptian, Berber) as described by me above. He states, correctly and not unimportantly in the present lexicon, that “semitische, ägyptische und berberische Wörterbücher werden daher gern nach den Konsonanten ..., ohne Rücksicht auf die Vokale, geordnet.” This is, strangely, not the case in this dictionary which surprisingly follows the long outdated model used in Berber-French dictionaries mainly published before and shortly after the 2nd World War, but already abandoned by Ch. de Foucauld in his monumental *Dictionnaire touareg-français*³ – quite correctly, since all the Berber languages are based on consonantal roots. To be frank, I know of no such Berber lexicon from recent times that would not be arranged according to consonantal roots. There is further discussion of this problem below.

Prasse continues this subchapter with some remarks on the position of Tuareg within the Berber languages vs. dialects (pp. 2–3). His brief statement, that “weder die Herkunft der Berber insgesamt, noch ... der Zeitrahmen der angenommenen Aufteilung(en) zwischen Nord- und Saharaberbern schlüssig zu bestimmen sind”, is surprising since it does not even mention A. Militarev’s research in this direction, which was conducted over seven-

³ Paris, 1951–52, Imprimerie Nationale de France.

ral decades.⁴ Prasse's observation that the Tuareg dialects, in comparison to the North Berber ones, are less influenced by Arabic loans and have retained much more of the common Berber vocabulary, is a fact I can fully agree with in the light of my own research on the Afro-Asiatic legacy in the Berber lexicon. In the past decades, I have published a number of etymological studies reaffirming the fairly abundant lexical archaisms of Tuareg not just in its Berber setting, but also in a wider Afro-Asiatic context.⁵

Ritter then resumes authorship in the chapter on Tuareg speakers and their language and dialects. His excursus on the etymology of the name Tuareg (originally proposed by K.-G. Prasse)⁶ is rather obscure for those who are not specialists in the problems of Berber ethnonyms, including me. Apparently, the toponym *Targa* (the ancient Tuareg name of Fezzan in Libya) ended up as the well-known term *Twareg* (with *-w-*), via "eine dialektarabische Ableitung", which is all the explanation provided by Ritter. In fact, Maghrebi Arabic *tawāṛəg* is the internal (broken) plural⁷ of sg. *targi* "Tuareg man", which, according to this theory, is considered to be the nisbe of the toponym *Targa*. Prasse considers modern literary Arabic *ṭawāriq* (pl.) vs. *ṭāriqiyy* (sg.) as merely secondary backformations from the dialectal ones. All this suggests that the name Tuareg may be a *Fremdbenennung* (albeit, ultimately, of Berber origin),⁸ but recently this has been

questioned. It is a pity that Ritter ignored A. Militarev's important alternative theory.⁹ He was inclined to see the ethnonym Tuareg as a the local Arabic rendering of Tuareg as *tūraq* < **ta-wray-t* (with *-g-* for *-q-*), the feminine singular denoting the language of the *ūray-ən* (pl.) "people of a Tuareg stem, descendants of *Awriy*". The name of a single tribe could have been extended by the Arabs to all the other Tuareg peoples.

Whereas Ritter devoted some attention to the etymology of the ethnonym Tuareg, he did not consider the famous etymological problem of the *Eigenbenennung* of the Tuareg and of the Berber in general (masc. sg. *ā-mahāy* in North Tuareg, *ā-mašay* in Southwest, *ā-mažəy* in Southeast). Unfortunately, the considerable discussion and literature on its origin¹⁰ are not mentioned at all. The Proto-Berber etymon **a-maziyy*, pl. **i-maziyy-ən*, "Berber man", already reflected in the works of classical writers¹¹, is usually equated with Egyptian *mšwš* (the name of a Libyan tribe in late New Kingdom sources)¹², which poses a number of questions¹³. Moreover, the problem of the concurring etymologies of Berber **a-maziyy*, which Ritter failed to consider, is perhaps of no little interest here. F. Nicolas¹⁴ saw in it a deverbal **m-* prefix derivative from

4 Cf., e.g., his study *Livijsko-guančskie jazyki. I. Obščie svedenija*. In: Solncev, V. M. (ed.): *Jazyki Azii i Afriki. IV, kniga 2*. Moskva, 1991, Glavnaja redakcija Vostočnoj Literatury, pp. 148–162. Or see Militarev, A. Ju.: *Shemy razdelenija afrazijskoj sem'i jazykov (po glottohronologii), karty rasprostraneniya drevnepis'mennyh i sovremennyh afrazijskih jazykov*. In: *Lingvističeskaja rekonstrukcija i drevnejšaja istorija Vostoka. Čast' 3*. Moskva, 1984, Nauka, pp. 44–50, and schema 2–3.

5 Cf., e.g., Takács, G.: *The Origin of Ahaggar h in an Afro-Asiatic Perspective*. In: Chaker, S. & Zaborski, A. (eds.): *Études berbères et chamito-sémitiques. Mélanges offerts à Karl-G. Prasse pour son 70^e anniversaire*. Paris & Louvain, 2000, Éditions Peeters. Pp. 333–356. Takács, G.: *Ahaggar h and Ghadames b in an Afro-Asiatic Perspective*. In: Isaksson, B. & Laanatz-Aringberg, M. (eds.): *About the Berbers – History, Language, Culture, and Socio-Economic Conditions*. Uppsala, 2004, Uppsala Universitet, pp. 31–65.

6 My thanks go to Prof. K.-G. Prasse, Prof. A. Zaborski, and Dr. M. Kossmann for consulting on this matter.

7 Following the pattern like literary Arabic *ḥawāriḡ* "Kharijites, literally: dissenters, dissidents, rebels" deriving from *vhrḡ* "to exit" or sg. *ḥāsir* vs. pl. *ḥawāsir* "bare, denuded".

8 Supposed to be identical with the Tuareg word (with fem. article *ta-*) attested, e.g., by East Tawllemmet and Ayr *targa* "irrigation channel" (Tuareg root *vrg*), cf. Prasse, K.-G.; Alojaly, Gh.; Mohamed, Gh.: *Dictionnaire touareg-français (Niger)*, Copenhagen, 2003, Museum Tusulanum Press, University of Copenhagen, p. 656.

9 Cf. Militarev, A. Ju.: *Garamantida v kontekste severoafrikanskoj istorii. Sud'ba odnogo naroda glazami lingvisty*. In: *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii 3* (1991), pp. 139–140; id.: *Glazami lingvisty: Garamantida v kontekste severoafrikanskoj istorii (vmesto posleslovija)*. In: Kobiščanov, Ju. M. and Militarev, A. Ju. (eds.): *Garamantida (afrikanskaja Atlantida)*, Moskva, 1994, Izdatel'skaja Firma "Vostočnaja Literatura" RAN, pp. 248–249; id.: *Eine Garamantiade im Kontext der nordafrikanischen Geschichte*. In: Funck, B. (Hrsg.): *Hellenismus: Beiträge zur Erforschung von Akkulturation und politischer Ordnung in den Staaten des hellenistischen Zeitalters. Akten des Internationalen Hellenismus-Kolloquiums, 9.–14. März 1994 in Berlin, Tübingen, 1996*, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), pp. 736–737.

10 Which has been accumulated and discussed most recently by myself in the *Etymological Dictionary of Egyptian*. Volume Three: m-. Leiden, 2008., E. J. Brill, pp. 624–626.

11 Greek *Μάξιες* (Herodot), *Μαξίκες* (Ptolemy), *Μάζυες* (Hecataeus), Latin *Mazices* (Aethicus, Euagrius, Nicephorus Callistus, Philostorgius, Ammianus Marcellinus), *Mazac/ges* (Claudian, Lucan, perhaps Suetonius), *Maxytani* (Justin).

12 As G. A. Wainwright, *JNES* 48 (1962), p. 92 stated on the *Mšwš*, "the main body of the tribe only differed from the Libu in not being tattooed ... and in their fashion of wearing the phallus-sheath instead of the kilt which is the dress of the Libu".

13 Such as the *-w-* (usually unexplained) and second *-š* (assimilation from **-h* = Berber **-y* due to the proximity of the first *-š*?) in Egyptian. In addition, we would have to assume the second radical of the underlying Berber root was around 1200 BC not **-z-*, but still the original Afro-Asiatic lateral sibilant **-š-*, which might well have been reflected by Egyptian *-š-*.

14 Quoted by K.-G. Prasse: *Manuel de grammaire touareg. I–III. Phonétique – écriture – pronom*, Copenhagen, 1972, Université de

the root attested in East Tawllemmet as *a-žžay* “to walk in a proud, haughty manner”. Instead, T. Sarnelli¹⁵ and A. Ju. Militarev¹⁶, prefer to analyse it as an *m-* prefix form of common Berber **vzwy* “to be red”¹⁷, while K.-G. Prasse¹⁸ treated his Proto-Berber **a-māziy* as a nomen agentis (prefix **ma-*) of a transitive verbal root that he identified with Ahaggar *a-hey* “razzier”, which is certainly mistaken¹⁹. Later, Prasse²⁰ rejected his own idea. Strangely, K. Zibelius²¹ explained the Berber word from its Greek/Latin reflex (not *vice versa*). It may well be, however, that Berber **vmzy* cannot be explained purely on Berber grounds. O. Rössler²² suspected it to have been an ancient ethnonym inherited from the common Afro-Asiatic past²³ as it is also found in Lowland East Cushitic (Somali *mudug* “self-designation of one part of the Somali”) and Central Chadic (Logone *muzugu* “people in Cameroon”).

Copenhagen, p. 9, fn. 4, and by A. Ju. Militarev in his paper entitled Glazami lingvisti: Garamantida v kontekste severoafrikanskoj istorii (vmesto posleslovija). In: Kobiščanov, Ju. M. and Militarev, A. Ju. (eds.): Garamantida (afrikanskaja Atlantida), Moskva, 1994, Izdatel'skaja Firma “Vostočnaja Literatura” RAN, p. 248, fn. 16.

15 Sarnelli, T.: Sull'origine del nome *imāzigen*. In: Mémorial André Basset (1895–1956). Paris, 1957., Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien Maisonneuve, pp. 132–134.

16 Militarev, A. Ju.: *Tamāhaq* Tuaregs in the Canary Islands (Linguistic Evidence). In: Aula Orientalis 6 (1988), 197, #3.2.1.3; id.: Garamantida v kontekste severoafrikanskoj istorii, p. 139; id.: Livijsko-guančskie jazyki. I. Obščie svedenija. In: Solncev, V. M. (ed.): Jazyki Azii i Afriki. IV, kniga 2. Moskva, 1991, Glavnaja redakcija Vostočnoj Literatury, p. 151; id.: Glazami lingvisti: Garamantida v kontekste severoafrikanskoj istorii (vmesto posleslovija). In: Kobiščanov, Ju. M.; Militarev, A. Ju. (eds.): Garamantida (afrikanskaja Atlantida), p. 248.

17 This, however, certainly excludes any comparison with Eg. *mšwš*, however attractive the postulate **a-ma-zwiy* may seem, since it would only be plausible if Berber **z-* derives from Afro-Asiatic **š-*. But this is not the case here, since the **z-* of Berber **vzwy* is cognate with North Omotic **zok-* “red” (whose **z-* cannot originate from an older lateral), cf. G. Takács, BSOAS 63/2 (2000), 268–9.

18 Acta Orientalia 23/3–4 (1959), pp. 197–200.

19 The Ahaggar form cannot derive from an earlier **azey* as Prasse supposed. On the contrary, the *h-* here is original (i.e., not from **z-*), cf. North Berber: Shilh *ay* “to take, attain”, Qabyle *ay* “to take”, West Berber: Zenaga *yokka* (aorist) “to take” etc.

20 Prasse, K.-G.: A propos de l'origine de *h* touareg (tahaggart). In: Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-filosofiske Meddelelser 43/3 (1969), p. 80.

21 Zibelius, K.: Afrikanische Orts- und Völkernamen in hieroglyphischen und hieratischen Texten. Wiesbaden, 1972, Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, p. 131.

22 Oriens 17 (1964), p. 205.

23 Already O. Bates: The Eastern Libyans, London, 1914., Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., p. 42, surmised in a rather obscure way that it “radically once was a common ethnic name of Western Hamites”.

In the following section (pp. 5–9), Ritter surveys all the Tuareg dialects, including Ghadames and Audjila (although admittedly their lexical data are not listed by Ritter in his dictionary), in addition to their closest relative Ghat Tuareg – to our surprise, since both these “dialects” have generally been classified clearly as East Berber.²⁴

The section on language and script in North African and Saharan history (pp. 16–24), written by O. Rössler, has a number of noteworthy points. First of all, one has to disagree with the use of non-scientific Egyptian ghost-forms such as *Čemeħu*, *Mešweš*, and *Rebu* (p. 16), correctly *Tmħ.w*, *Mšwš*, and *Rb.w*, whose purely fictitious vowels (unfortunately, so frequent even in scholarly literature) are not based on any linguistic evidence and may easily mislead non-Egyptologists. Equally disturbing is how Rössler (p. 16, fn. 4) quotes the Old Hebrew name of first king of the 22nd Dynasty: the strange form *Bušaḳ* (sic) has to be emended to *Šišaḳ* ~ *Šūšaḳ* (1 Kings 14:25). Most importantly, however, I am puzzled by the monotonous and dogmatic repetition of a number of Rössler's daring allegations, all referring to how ancient Berber is: “das Berberische ... ist vielmehr bis auf den heutigen Tag eine höchst konservative alt-afroasiatische Sprache geblieben; diese Beobachtung gilt noch im besonderem Maße für die Twareg-Sprache” (p. 16) or “Die Berbersprache ist eine sehr ‘archimorphe’ hamitosemitische Sprache mit äußerer und ‘innerer’ Flexion” (p. 17) or “Im Kern ist das Berberische bis heute eine ganz urtümliche Sprache. ... Man kann das Twareg als die klassische Form des Berberischen betrachten” (p. 18). I have to disagree strongly with such an all too generalized speculation without linguistic evidence. Rössler's apparent assumption of the archaism of verbal apophony can only work if we admit, *a priori*, that Proto-Afro-Asiatic morphology was equally apophonic. This is true for Semitic, older Egyptian and Berber, but I am not aware that anyone has already thoroughly demonstrated it for the whole Afro-Asiatic family, although there are indeed promising signs from Chadic too²⁵. But what about other domains of Berber grammar? Shall we casually extend this idea to phonology too, for instance? Hardly. Throughout my research over the past 12 years or so, summarised in my most recent book with

24 Most recently, cf. Kossmann, M.: Essai sur la phonologie du proto-berbère. Köln, 1999, Köppe, p. 27.

25 In this respect fundamental are the numerous studies by H. Jungraithmayr, doyen of Chadic linguistics, on the relics of apophony in the verbal systems of numerous languages both in West Chadic and East Chadic.

an essay in Afro-Asiatic historical phonology,²⁶ I have clearly pointed out the Berber consonantal system to be the most innovative and simplified one due to erosion, many phoneme mergers and *Lautverschiebungen*. By the way, this is also true of ancient Egyptian almost to the same degree, whereas several modern African cognate groups, such as South Cushitic or North Bauchi (West Chadic), with minimal or zero apophony still retain astonishing archaic traits (e.g. affricates, pharyngeals, laryngeals) that have long since vanished from the older common Berber parental language. In other words, not every domain of the grammar changes in the same manner. I know of no Afro-Asiatic language that is *uralt* in all aspects.

In this chapter, the debate on the etymology of Tifinagh (*ti-finay*, pl.), the name of the Tuareg (and Libyco-Berber) script,²⁷ as well as on its origin, are also touched upon by Rössler (p. 19). He rejects²⁸ the older and widespread theory of deriving it from Latin (*littera*) *punica* “Punic (letters)”²⁹ and instead suggests Greek *πίναξ* “table” as its source. However, Tifinagh was not recorded on school palettes, as rightly pointed out just a couple of pages later in Ritter’s lexicon (p. 26) by L. Galand in his chapter, also devoted to research on the Libyco-Berber script. He considered it to be the product of a natural development of mere geometrical patterns, whose coincidence with the Semitic signs would be due to pure chance. It is a pity that neither Ritter nor Galand paid attention to the study by S. Chaker and S. Hachi, published in 2000³⁰. These two scholars, rejecting the Phoenician (Punic) etymology and origin of the Tuareg (name

of) the script, while not excluding Semitic influence, reconstructed the original meaning of Tuareg **ti-finay* as “*les épitaphes*” on the basis of a native Berber etymology. This is the Tuareg (Adrar of Ifoghas) verbal root *vfnɣ* “to write” (imperative *e-fney*) connected to Qabyle (North Berber) sg. *a-fniq*, pl. *i-fniq-en* “1. coffre, 2. coffert” (Dallet)³¹ = “le grand coffre domestique” (Chaker, Hachi). Unfortunately, all these scholars ignored A. Militarev’s (lesser-known) research (in Russian)³² from recent times on the comparison of the Tifinagh, Old Tuareg, Saharan and various Libyan writing systems with the Phoenician and South Semitic scripts.

The following chapter by L. Galand, another doyen of Berber linguistics, on research into the Libyco-Berber script, corrects certain points of Rössler’s chapter in the light of more recent research.

Finally, the long introductory part of the dictionary closes with Ritter’s chapter (pp. 58-65) specifying the principles of how the enormously huge Tuareg lexical material was arranged and presented. May these principles be confronted here with the observations of an eager user of Berber and other Afro-Asiatic dictionaries. The section “Quellenbearbeitung” justifies how the author normalised the transcription systems of his various sources and why he decided to omit the names of languages/dialects from the Tuareg-German-French lexicon part: “Durch die Quellenziffern wurde ... die dialektale Zugehörigkeit und ... Herkunft der Einträge festgehalten”, which, in my experience, unfortunately makes it substantially more difficult to use the mass of data. It would have been much better to abbreviate these names by their initial capitals, as in Prasse’s *Dictionnaire Touareg-Français*³³ or his *legendary essay on the sources of Ahaggar h*³⁴.

An even more serious problem with the usability of the first volume of this dictionary arises due to Ritter’s method of arranging the lexemes according to a “*mor-*

²⁶ Takács, G.: *Studies in Afro-Asiatic Comparative Phonology (Consonants)*. Berlin, 2011, Dietrich Reimer Verlag. For Berber see pp. 83–109.

²⁷ Ahaggar sg. *ta-finēqq* “letter of the Tuareg script”, pl. *ti-finay* “the Tuareg script”, East Tawlemmet and Ayr *ta-fināq*, pl. *ši-finay* and Ayr *ti-finay*, resp.

²⁸ The Phoenicians, the only possible mediators of the Northwest Semitic script to the Berbers called themselves as “Canaanites”.

²⁹ Supported by several authors, whom Rössler failed to mention for some reason, cf. Hanoteau, A.: *Essai de grammaire de la langue tamachek*, Alger 1896, Jourdan, p. 5; Zyhlarz, E.: *Konkordanz ägyptischer und libyscher Verbalstammtypen*, in: *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 70 (1934), p. 108, fn. 1; Vycichl, W.: *Punischer Spracheinfluss im Berberischen*, in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 11 (1952), p. 203; Prasse, K.-G.: *Manuel de grammaire touareg, I-III: Phonétique – écriture – pronom*, Copenhague, 1972, Université de Copenhague, p. 149; Militarev, A. Ju.: *Anri Lot o jazyke i pis'mennosti tuaregov*, in: Lot, A. (Lhote, H.): *Tuaregi Ahaggara*. Moskva, 1989, Nauka, p. 260.

³⁰ Chaker, S. and Hachi, S.: *À propos de l'origine et de l'âge de l'écriture libyco-berbère. Réflexions du linguiste et du préhistorien*. In: Chaker, S. & Zaborski, A. (eds.): *Études berbères et chamito-*

sémitiques. Mélanges offerts à Karl-G. Prasse pour son 70^e anniversaire. Paris, Louvain, 2000, Éditions Peeters, pp. 95–111, cf. especially pp. 104–106.

³¹ Dallet, J.-M.: *Dictionnaire qabyle-français. Parler des At Mangelat (Algerie)*, Paris, 1982, SELAF (Société d'études linguistiques et anthropologiques de France), p. 210.

³² Militarev, A. Ju.: *Garamantida v kontekste severoafrikanskoj istorii. Sud'ba odnogo naroda glazami lingvista*. In: *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii* 3 (1991), pp. 147–157.

³³ Prasse, K.-G.; Alojaly, Gh.; Mohamed, Gh.: *Dictionnaire touareg-français (Niger)*, Copenhague, 2003, Museum Tusulanum Press, University of Copenhagen.

³⁴ Prasse, K.-G.: *A propos de l'origine de h touareg (tahaggart)*. In: *Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Historisk-filosofiske Meddelelser* 43/3 (1969), pp. 1–96.

phologisch-alphabetische Anordnung” as he formulated it arguing that “im Blick auf die vorliegenden Twareg-Wörterbücher ... zeigt sich, daß die Frage der Kategorisierung und Anordnung der Vokabulareinträge zu den unterschiedlichsten Lösungen geführt hat und von einem allgemeinen Standardverfahren oder ein anerkannten Norm keine Rede sein kann”, which I have to firmly object. On the contrary, Berber lexicography has long adopted the root principle, i.e. accumulating the vocalised finite forms in an alphabetic order of the root consonants, as it is perfectly natural for all the Afro-Asiatic daughter languages with strongly apophonic morphologies, mostly formed from tri- or biconsoantal roots, notably, the Semitic or the Berber languages. It is hardly possible to list all the Berber dictionaries from the second half of the past century based on consonantal roots, let alone Ch. de Foucauld’s monumental Ahaggar dictionary (from 1951–52), the most outstanding work in Tuareg lexicography, which also adopted this system. To choose, instead, a long outdated tradition in 2009, is surprising to say the least us and represents a huge step backwards, for which Ritter’s (p. 60) arguments hardly convince us:

(1) “Bei polydialektalen Wörterbüchern ... sind zusätzlich die ... dialektalen Veränderungen auch formal besonders zu berücksichtigen, woraus weitere Zuordnungsfragen ... entstehen können ...”. But this problem had been successfully solved in the exemplary Tuareg lexicon compiled by Prasse’s and his co-authors (1998 and 2003), which includes several dialects, and where the various forms of phonetically diverse dialectal roots are listed both individually and via cross-references.

(2) The circumstance that “Weiter verwässern die zahlreichen Fremd- und Lehnwörter ... das Prinzip der Radikalanordnung, da der Einfügung entlehnter Termini in das Schema der Radikalwurzeln keine strukturelle Relevanz zukommt” is true to a certain degree, but since the apophonic mechanism may also have affected loanwords in the language itself, their quite usual incorporation in Berber root dictionaries cannot necessarily be considered as artificial.

(3) The alphabetic order of vocalised finite forms is presumably a great advantage primarily for non-linguistically oriented readers unable to identify the consonantal roots in their texts. On the other hand, even this segment for those only interested in the Tuareg lexicon requires some familiarity with the Berber grammar and its root mechanisms.

The second volume, which resulted from an apparently fruitful collaboration with Prof. K.-G. Prasse, makes a substantially better impression. First of all, it is very hard to overestimate the ethnographical treasures of the

German-Tuareg lexicon, which is the greatest merit of this work. It is in this second volume that, in fact, we enter the fascinating Tuareg world, with its entire material and spiritual culture. Prasse, in turn, is to be praised for providing the much more precise transcription of vowels (e.g. length, schwa) in this second part of the lexicon as compared to the simplified system of the first volume. It is also due to Prasse’s efforts that the various dialectal varieties are indicated with clear abbreviations of the dialects (instead of the reference numbers that are rather difficult to decipher). The enormous German-Tuareg thesaurus is followed by Prasse’s magnificent grammar of the Tuareg dialects. It is easy to use and, although brief and sketchy, it has chapters on both descriptive and comparative phonology, nominal and verbal morphology (including tables of conjugational patterns). The second volume closes with an annotated bibliography and a chronological index of works relating to North Africa, the Sahara and Sahel.

All in all, the monumental German-Tuareg thesaurus has made a significant contribution to Tuareg ethnography. The first volume, however, is somewhat disappointing because its lengthy general introduction does not reflect an up-to-date attitude to a couple of questions and the lexicon, which is not intended for those focusing on linguistic analysis, does not have the same quality as the second part.