sprün
gliche Funktion der Postpositionen darin bestand, einen peripheren, dezentralen Agens in eine intransitive Konstruktion mit resultativ-stativer Bedeutung einzu-
führen“ (S. 225). Diese intransitiven Resultativ-Konstruk-
tionen hätten ursprünglich weder ein Auxiliar noch einen Prädikatsmarkierer aufgewiesen, ein Stadium, das gegen-
wärtig noch in der Nordwest-Mande Sprache Bozo belegt ist. Die Variation der transitiven Perfektiv-Prädikats-
markierer innerhalb des Manding (yé, dí, kà) wird damit erklärt, dass unterschiedliche Postpositionen die Quelle der Agensmarkierung waren: sie dienten der Instrument-, Ur-
sache- bzw. Komitativmarkierung.

Als möglichen Grammatikalisierungspfad der Subjunk-
tiv-Prädikatsmarkierer nimmt der Vf. wiederum eine Post-
positionalphrase zum Ausdruck des Agens + einen Infinitiv des Verbs, möglicherweise mit dessen Objekt als Genitiv.

Die formale Ähnlichkeit oder gar Homonymie in vielen Manding-Varietäten zwischen Prädikatsmarkierern in Sät-
zen mit statischen Verben und Perfekt-Prädikatsmarkier-
markierern transitiver Verben (affirmativ kà, kà; negativ mà, màn) erklärt der Vf. als einen „empirisch abgesicher-
ten Grammatikalisierungspfad […] von Perfektivität via Stativität bzw. Resultativität und Perfekt“ (S. 246). Diese Hypothese wird untermauert durch das Fehlen einer Katego-
rie von stativen Verben in einigen wenigen Manding-
Varietäten. Prädikative Zuschreibung von Eigenschaften wird in diesen Varietäten entweder mittels eines resultati-
ven Partizips oder mit Hilfe des intransitiven perfektiven Prädikatsmarkierers gekennzeichnet.

Die allgemeine sprachgeographische Beobachtung, wo-
nach auf der einen Seite Innovationen im Zentrum eines Dialektgebiets ihren Ursprung nehmen, ohne jemals bis an die Peripherie zu dringen, und auf der anderen Seite ältere Formen an der Peripherie beobachtet werden können, sind nicht für alle untersuchten Prädikatsmarkierer des Man-
ding hilfreich. Zwar trifft sie für die Prädikatsmarkierer in präsentierenden identifizierenden Sätzen zu: der Prädik-
atsmarkierer mú wird als der älteste angenommen, und er erscheint nur an der Peripherie des Dialektkontinuums. Bei dem Prädikatsmarkierer des Perfektivs ist die geographi-
sche Verteilung der Perfektiv-Markierer yé und kà nicht so eindeutig: einerseits sind die kognaten Formen beider Morpheme – also auch des innovativen yé – nur an der Peripherie des Dialektgebiets belegt, andererseits ist die vermutlich ältere Form kà nicht in allen peripheren Varie-
täten vorhanden.

In den letzten Kapiteln versucht der Vf., eine Erklärung für die Entstehung des Sprachtyps der „Split-Predicate“-
Sprachen zu geben. Das Manding weist nur im perfektiven Aspekt einen Transitivitätssplit auf; im Imperfektiv wer-
den transitive Konstruktionen genauso kodiert wie intrans-
itive. Die Konzepte, mit deren Hilfe diese Situation er-
klärt wird, sind Patiensorientierung und „Viewpoint“. Im Manding gibt es, wie in den Ergativsprachen, eine Patien-
torientierung im perfektiven Aspekt, während Konstruktionen im Imperfektiv Agens-orientiert sind.


Nicolas Quint’s investigation of Koalib phonology pre-

2 Quint takes a skeptical view on Katla-Tima, but withholds judgment for the time being on its exclusion.
Quint’s approach in the description is primarily pragmatic, and does not easily fit into any sort of established framework; it is readily apparent that he does not subscribe to any particular theory regarding language description, including using at times idiosyncratic terminology and methods. Most of his phonological description is based on the lexicon, and he does not deal with phrasal or clausal level phenomena. Quint also prefers a phonological over phonetic approach, and a great deal of the phonological section consists of evidence for phoneme contrasts by way of minimal and near minimal pairs.

Quint presents the phonology of Koalib in a familiar manner for phonological descriptions, beginning with an introduction to the language, its genealogical position, and current state of description. He continues with the main crux of the book, that of the phonology, with 5 separate chapters: Vowels, Consonants, Tonology, Syllabic Structure, and Orthographic Transcription.

The introduction focuses on introducing the language within its context, describing the family, previous work and historical development, as well as the aim of the study and its methods.

After the introduction, the first part of the phonological description is that of vowel description. Quint uses a phonemic chart to summarize Koalib’s vowels, then uses contrasting lexemes and minimal pairs phoneme by phoneme to demonstrate that each vowel is distinctive. Quint then goes on to discuss Koalib’s vowel harmony, which he views as a height-based system. This was one area I found problematic; his description of vowels sounded more like that of an 8-vowel type ATR system with a contrast in high vowels (e.g. +ATR i, u, ə, –ATR ɪ, ɔ, ɛ, ʊ, a), which is commonly found in the region, and in fact how it was initially described by Schadeberg. Furthermore, Tira, a Heiban language spoken in the vicinity of Koalib, has been analyzed to have a vowel system of +ATR i, u, ə, –ATR ɪ, ɔ, ɛ, ʊ, a. Other evidence for ATR being involved includes the fact that vowel harmony shifts from Low into High functions grammatically to increase the valency of verbs. If one were to take an autosegmental approach with ATR, then a floating +ATR would make the grammatical change, a plausible theory considering the historical aspects of +ATR causatives in Niger–Congo. Quint does mention that other linguists have suggested, at times quite strongly, that ATR could play a role in Koalib’s system, but his own interpretation is strictly that of height differences. As the issue appears controversial, future detailed acoustic and articulatory data could be worth looking into, to clear up some of the problems regarding the vowel system. Quint’s analysis in terms of vowel height also invites an interesting path towards the diachronic aspects of how ATR and vowel height systems may be historically connected.

After discussing vowel harmony, Quint moves on to length, as well as some aspects of phonological restrictions regarding length. He also discusses phonetic aspects of vowel pronunciation, such as centralization in certain situations, or velarization in labialized or labio-velar contexts. He ends the section with a discussion on vowel sequences.

After discussing the vowels, Quint moves on to discuss an unusual type of consonant system, in which individual phonemes have numerous allophones depending on their position in the word, and overlap significantly with each other. His description tends towards being idiosyncratic with labels such as ‘plain’, ‘strong’, and ‘weak’, but he also does present convincing evidence that Koalib has a consonant system challenging to describe with canonical categories. For instance, Quint’s strong /t/ is realized word-initially and word-finally as [t], inter-vocally as [tt]. Weak /t/ on the other hand is realized word initially and finally as [t], but inter-vocally as [ð]. Other languages in the area have also been described with similar variations, e.g. Dagik, as well as most languages in the Heiban group, and other researchers have also run into similar problems in describing the consonant systems.

The majority of the consonant section consists of example lexemes of minimal and near-minimal pairs. This is followed by a discussion on gemination, and then on some problematic phonemes. He parallels his vowel section with continuing on phonetic comments of certain consonants, and then on positional constraints and consonant sequences.

For the most part, his segmental analysis seems sound, although more explicit phonetic descriptions would be useful regarding individual phonemes. In certain cases, not being explicit about the articulation makes it difficult to assess whether a given phoneme is characterized in the most adequate way. An example illustrating this problem is Quint’s description of what he calls a labiovelar plosive, /kw/. The use of the term labiovelar implosive evokes /kp/, rather than a labialized velar /kw/ or the phoneme sequence /kw/. In fact, a phoneme sequence is the original analysis Schadeberg took in his analysis of Koalib, due to the fact that kw can alternate with ku (e.g. kwáyu vs. kumay ‘He is

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8 E.g., Hyman, Larry, 2003: Sound Change, Misanalysis, and Analogy in the Bantu Causative. JALL 24, 55–90.
also could have helped with misunderstandings; occlusive
is regularly used throughout the book in place of plosive,
for instance, despite the fact that the word is not used in
English.

Regarding the editing, fonts are unfortunately regularly
mixed within the same word throughout the text. More
attention to editing and typesetting could have taken care
of this, to improve the overall visual impression.

Providing a translation of this work which first appeared
in French is laudable, and will certainly help in disseminat-
ing Quint’s insights, particularly in Sudan and among Su-
danese scholars. However, the translation does suffer from
minor drawbacks; many small words scattered throughout
the book were left untranslated. While words like et ‘and’
and ou ‘or’ are not difficult to grasp, after a certain amount
it does detract from the book as a whole. Furthermore, the
maps of Sudan are left untranslated, a strange choice con-
considering English maps of the area should not have been
difficult to find.

The merits of the book are numerous; Koalib is a heav-
ily underdescribed language, and its phonological system
in consonants is rare enough that it could be of interest also
for descriptive linguists and typologists outside the area of
the Nuba mountains. Quint presents much of the data and
his analysis in a clear manner, and extracting data from his
description would not be difficult. However, his analysis
rarely connects to existing literature on similar phenom-
ena, making it at times difficult to follow; his decision not
to include phonetic evidence for much of his approach
further compounds the problem. Furthermore, his method-
ology and theoretical frameworks are not stated clearly
enough, and many of the sections appear like they are
presented in a haphazard manner. Adding glossing and
segmentation also would have improved readability, as
would fixing minor details such as mixed fonts and un-
translated words. Quint’s The Phonology of Koalib offers a
promising start to Kordofanian language description, but
one hopes that in the forthcoming volumes on syntax and
morphology, more contextualization and evidence are used
to highlight phenomena within Koalib.