

Dymitr Ibriszimow, *Topics in Chadic Linguistics X. Papers from the 8th Biennial International Colloquium on the Chadic Languages (Bayreuth, February 4–5, 2016)*, (Topics in Chadic Linguistics IX), Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, 2018, 84 pp.
ISBN 978-389645-529-1.

The proceedings of the 8th Biennial International Colloquium on the Chadic Languages consist of a brief preface by the editor of the volume, Dymitr Ibriszimow, and of seven papers (out of nineteen presentations delivered at the conference). Notwithstanding its limited length, the volume follows in line with the spirit and aims of the Chadic Linguistics' series and offers a well-balanced picture of the current research on the Chadic family: almost all the branches of the family are represented, and Hausa (by far of the most researched languages of West Africa) is not over-represented. A quantitative glance at the proceedings allows us to observe that one paper deals with Hausa, two with West Chadic languages other than Hausa (mainly Bole-Tangale), one paper with an East Chadic language, two with languages of the Biu-Mandara branch, while a sole contribution is pan-Chadic. As is often the case with proceedings, a variety of theoretical approaches functional to different scopes are used. It should be highlighted, however, that out of seven papers only two are descriptive in nature. This does not tell much about the volume itself, but, if it is true that the proceedings reflect the on-going investigation, one could fall under the impression that the description of single Chadic languages has not been set by the *tchadisants* as an imperative priority. "Pronouns of address in Sakkwatanci dialect of Hausa: An exploratory study" by Umar Ahmed (pp. 9–17) deals with the alternation of singular/plural pronouns used by speakers with different addressees. The Author considers the variety of Hausa spoken in Sokoto and highlights some instances where the use of pronouns is not reciprocal, e.g. when the plural pronoun *ku* 'you' encodes politeness and is used by speakers to mark an acknowledged respect. "Ethnonyms and proper names in West Chadic languages" by Sergio Baldi and Rudolf Leger (pp. 19–30) focuses on Bade, Nigizim, Bole, Karekare and Ngamo, and relies heavily on Russell Schuh's lexical descriptions published within the frame of the Yobe Language Research Project, carried out in the years 2001–2009. The paper may be considered as a first step towards a more comprehensive understanding of anthroponyms in northern Nigerian societies. "The numerals of West Chadic" by Václav Blažek (pp. 31–46) summarises the numeral systems of West Chadic. Extensive tables illustrate and compare the numerals from 1 to 10 in Hausa-Gwandara, Angas-Ankwe, Bole-Tangale, Ron, Northern Bauchi, Southern Bauchi, and Bade-Ngizim. James Roberts' contribution, "Oblique nominals in Mawa" (pp. 47–55), describes the uses of the suffix *-o* in Mawa, an East Chadic language. The suffix

is used primarily in the associative construction; without the genitive linker, it has a locative meaning. It is obligatorily used with nouns that are object of prepositions derived from body part nouns. “Elements of Chadic diachronic morphology” by Olga Stolbova (pp. 57–62) hypothesises the existence of an old and widespread verbaliser [ʔV-], i.e. a prefix used to form verbs from nouns. Therefore, the verbaliser [ʔV-] would be very similar in function to the Hausa [-ta] and, more generally, to the suffix [-t-] found in West Chadic. The Author builds the case for the existence of such a prefix drawing data from all the branches of the family and presenting entries for the following lexical items: ‘field’, ‘knee’, ‘hand’, ‘fire’, ‘skin’, ‘stone’, ‘sun’, and ‘weak (from hunger)’. In a few cases the verbal form has a causative semantics, e.g. ‘fire’ > ‘to burn’ (p. 58–59), ‘weak (from hunger)’ > ‘to make weak’ (p. 59). We could speculate about the possibility that the verbaliser [ʔV-] served different functions, the formation of a morphological causative being one of them. Henry Tourneux’s paper, “Le syntagme de détermination nominale dans le parler ‘kotoko’ de Mazéra (Cameroun)” (pp. 63–71), describes the function and syntactical behaviour of the definite marker in Mazera along with some aspects of nominal morphology (i.e. plural formation). The paper by H. Ekkehard Wolff, “The documentation of Central Chadic Lamang” (pp. 73–84), diverges from the others in that it deals with the professional (and human) relationship between the Lamang language and the Author. The paper retraces step by step the 50-year-long Author’s involvement in the description and documentation of the language, illustrating its goals (the so-called Boasian trilogy: grammar-dictionary-texts) and how the research had been progressing over the decades until satisfactory outcomes have been produced. Overall, this volume is a valuable contribution to the field of West African and Chadic linguistics.

Gian Claudio Batic

Università degli studi di Napoli “L’Orientale”

gcbatic@unior.it