

apical nasal sonant in the Tamil examples of M. PFEIFFER's book is traditionally represented by /*n*/ and in Kuṛux examples by /*n*/ (in Tamil examples /*n*/ is a dental sonant). As regards the meaning of /*n*/ in other languages, the reader may guess it himself. The same can be said about /*w*/ (a labio-dental sonant in Gondi), /*v*/ (a bilabial sonant in Pengo and a labio-dental sonant in other languages), and some other designations. The basic requirement made of any scientific transcription is that one and the same sound always be denoted by one and the same sign and that one and the same sign always denotes one and the same sound. The neglect of this requirement in the book, the basic content of which consists in describing sound correspondences, creates unjustified difficulties for the reader. The transcription used in the reviewed book can serve as an example of a tradition in Dravidology which should not be adhered to.

M. PFEIFFER considers the historic phonology of Kuṛux the topic of his research. But Kuṛux is not a written language and consequently lacks history. Therefore it is equally impossible to write a historical phonology of this language as it is to write its historical grammar. In reality, the author of the book operates not with historically documented forms of the Kuṛux language but mainly with sound correspondences between the present state of the Kuṛux language and other Dravidian languages, including the reconstructed Proto-Dravidian state. The author's principal achievement just consists in having established a maximal number of regular sound correspondences between Kuṛux and the Proto-Dravidian state. The two main chapters of the book are dedicated to this problem; the second chapter ("Kuṛux Phonemes and Their Correspondences in Other Dravidian Languages", pp. 13-141) and the third chapter ("The Development of Kuṛux Phonemes out of Those of Proto-Dravidian", pp. 142-166). The author has conducted a great work and systematically, phoneme after phoneme, analyzed the whole language material he had at his disposal. As a result, he has received such a comprehensive picture of sound correspondences for the Kuṛux language which is not available at present for any other Dravidian language. In particular he has established a considerable number of positionally conditioned regular correspondences (various types of compensatory elongation of short vowels, nasalization of short vowels following a labial consonant and preceding the sonant *y*, numerous variants of reflecting Proto-Dravidian consonants, etc.). Furthermore, he has determined the correspondence of the Proto-Dravidian **k*-: Kuṛ. *k*[*ī*, *ū*] / *x*[*ā*, *ē*, *ō*] (pp. 149-150), disproved M. B. EMENEAU's rule which says that the Proto-Dravidian **c*- preceding the vowels *ū* and *ē* is reflected in Kuṛux, Malto, and Brahui as *k*- (pp. 66-67, 119); he is the first one to have reconstructed a considerable number of Proto-Dravidian roots.

One of M. PFEIFFER's undoubted achievements is his outline of the emergence of the Kuṛux phoneme /*o*/ from /*a*/ (under the assimilating influence of the following *ī*, *ū*, *y*) and based on this thesis his very convincing reconstruction of the past tense formative **-i*- in forms like *ərgkan* 'I climbed' (**ərgikan* from *arg*- 'to climb' (pp. 142-144). One can add here his reconstruction of the present tense formative **-d*- in forms like *urkhṇar* (**urkhṇar* 'they go out' in analogy to *urkhḍan* 'I go out' (p. 109), as well as other more specialized observations and reconstructions.

For the first time in Dravidology, M. PFEIFFER presents a large-scale investigation of the alternation of vowels (**a*/**e*/**i*, **a*/**ā*, **e*/**i*, **ā*/**ē*, **ā*/**ō*, **ē*/**ī*, **i*/**ī*, **o*/**u*) and consonants (**k*-/**c*-, **c*-/**t*-, **v*-/**p*-, **v*-/**m*-, **m*-/**n*-, **k*-/**v*-/**m*-, **c*-/**t*-/**y*-, **c*-/**ṣ*-/**l*-, **n*-/**l*-/**ṣ*-, etc.) in reconstructed forms of Proto-Dravidian roots (like **kay*/**key* 'hand', where **a*/**e* alternate in the position before **y*). Unfortunately, it remains unclear if he understands such reconstructed variants as always coexisting synchronically (like the forms *br*-/**ber*-/**bir*-/**bor*- in the Russian *brat* 'to take', *beru* 'I take' *otbirai* 'to select', *otbor* 'selection') or - at least in certain cases - as a definite limit beyond which, at the present level of knowledge, the reconstruction cannot go (like, e. g., in many cases with root **i*/**e*, **u*/**o* and a following **a* in the suffix syllable). In any case, in a number of examples one can establish a diachronical connection between the suggested root variants. Thus, e. g., among the forms **vat*-/**ot*-/**ut*- (p. 54), the oldest one is **ot*- (as in Kuṛux *odx*- 'to release'); **ut*- (as in Tamil *utatu*- 'to shake off') appears in the lan-