rangegangenen Vers zunächst einmal plausibel erscheint und als *lectio difficilior* eine gewisse Attraktivität ausstrahlt, die den ein oder anderen Leser durchaus verführen könnte, ihr auf den vielzitierten Holzweg zu folgen. Groteske Züge nimmt die Editionspraxis in den *Liedern der alten Afrikaner* jedoch dann an, wenn das vorliegende Gedicht mit identischer Autoren- und Quellenangabe einige Seiten später erneut abgedruckt wird – und zwar mit den (korrekten) Lesarten »Pflug« und »vorwärts« (356).

Abschließend ist also ein durchaus gemischtes Fazit zu ziehen: Djomos Textauswahl überzeugt vor dem Hintergrund der Fragestellung, mit der er sich 1992 dem Thema genähert hat; vielleicht hätten ein Verweis auf die Schnittmengen von kolonialem und pangermanistischem Diskurs im Titel auch der Anthologie von 2017 und dazu ein etwas ausführlicheres Vorwort die Stärken dieser Textsammlung noch deutlicher hervorheben können. So verschafft eine Lektüre der Texte einen guten Überblick über die Verflechtung der beiden genannten Diskurse, bleibt aber aufgrund der fehlenden Kommentierung, zu der man die Ergebnisse der Studie von 1992 durchaus hätte umarbeiten können, zumindest für den nicht tiefer in das Thema eingearbeiteten Leser eine mühsame Aufgabe. Besonders bedauerlich aber ist der Umstand, dass Djomos Anthologie aufgrund ihrer zahlreichen Fehler und ihrer letztlich wissenschaftlichen Standards nicht entsprechenden Editionsprinzipien dem interessierten Wissenschaftler den Gang zu den Quellen dann eben doch nicht ersparen kann – und damit letztlich ihren Sinn und Zweck in einem wesentlichen Punkt verfehlt.

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Constanze Weth / Kasper Juffermans (Hg.): The Tyranny of Writing. Ideologies of the written word

Writing has been largely ignored, and even denied, as an object of study in sociolinguistics (see for instance discussions in Sebba/Mahootian/Jonsson 2012; Lillis/McKinney 2013). *The Tyranny of Writing. Ideologies of the written word* is therefore a welcome input to the recent sociolinguistic investigation of written language, ironically departing from Saussure's metaphorical argument against writing as an object of linguistic research, *la tyrannie de la lettre*. In this edited volume the metaphor is however used in the sense put forward by Florian Coulmas: »the ›tyranny‹ of writing is a social reality that ought to be studied as such« (2013: 8). The editors Constanze Weth

and Kasper Juffermans present their goal as »to make sense of the written word and its powerful role in society« through tyranny as a critical metaphor for sociolinguistics, »exploring ideologies of language and literacy in culture and society« (1).

In the preface, Weth and Juffermans take a playful stance towards the tyranny metaphor. They move from Plato's worries about writing, i.e. accessing information from outside ourselves, making us lazy, to the »googling« of our time, thereby predicting the historical lines that are drawn in the volume, from Antiquity, Middle Age and Renaissance to contemporary practices. The metaphor, or the notion, of tyranny is discussed in each of the chapters, and serves as a starting point to talk about not only the tyranny of writing (Coulmas, Li, Wang), but also the tyranny of (the standard) orthography (Bunčić, van der Horst, Böhm, Rambukwella), the old and new tyrannies of writing (Mehlem), the tyranny of experts (Abdelhay, Makoni and Makoni), the tyranny of standard language (Rambukwella, Duane), the tyranny of ideologies (Swanenberg) and the escape from the tyranny of writing (Lüpke). The use of the metaphor is successful, as it brings coherence to the different cases discussed.

Weth and Juffermans explicitly relate to the ideological model of literacy (Street 1984) in their introduction, but they also refer to Goody and Watt's (1963) *The Consequences of Literacy*, which the New Literacy Studies (NLS) criticises for viewing writing as a neutral technology (cf. e.g. Barton 2007: 119f.). The editors thus signal a willingness to draw on both »old« and New Literacy Studies, but a coherent

theoretical perspective uniting the two is not clearly formulated in the introduction. However, the opening chapter by Coulmas sets out a number of elements for a theoretical (and methodological) framework for writing as crucially important for linguistic analysis. In addition, chapter 3 by Joop van der Horst, based on his earlier book-length discussion in Dutch, is also pointed towards a more theoretical level, as it relates Renaissance ideas to contemporary ideologies of language, and even looks into the future, envisaging »The end of the standard language«.

The rest of the chapters present cases, both historical and contemporary; different scripts and languages are discussed, and the scope is global, with examples from Asia, Africa and Europe. Together, they lead to reflections across one another, as they all combine the descriptions of forms of language, script or orthography or choice of variants, with the analysis of political aspects of writing. This duality is a force of the volume. Lines are drawn from the macro political-level of the nation-state to the micro-level of spelling and back. Daniel Bunčić, for instance, makes a fine-grained analysis of orthography on vernacular birch-bark messages in Russia in the 11th – 15th centuries, showing how it is just as political as slang spelling in our (digital) time. This is echoed in the studies of spelling in online discussion forums (Duane) and Twitter posts (Swanenberg) and of the script used for street signs in a Chinese town (Wang). Top-down oppressive use of written language and standardization is particularly striking in Manuela Böhm's chapter on the Frenchification in France from the Revolution and onwards. Ul-

rich Mehlem's chapter on pedagogy in Germany in the 19th century starts in time where Böhm stops, showing parallels in the German educational policy with the Frenchification described by Böhm. These chapters display the ambiguity of the tyranny of writing: even if monolingualism was imposed upon France's and Germany's population, and later upon the population of the French colonies, the aim was not necessarily tyrannical; literacy was supposed to be emancipatory. The contributions of Ashraf Abdelay, Busi Makoni and Sinfree Makoni, Harshana Rambukwella, and Friederike Lüpke show the consequences of the Renaissance thinking, polished during the French Revolution and its following Frenchification and colonialism, for three distinct cases: Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Senegal. Abdelhay, Makoni and Makoni investigate how missionary linguists and colonial authorities imposed language policy and language standardization to divide and rule in Sudan, looking into the discussions and ideas behind this policy, while the long term consequences of colonialism and colonial language policy are demonstrated by Rambukwella's contribution. The latter analyses how two cricket players are valued differently in the Sri Lankan media, not for their player qualities, but for the extent to which they master Standard English: the tyranny of writing is not only about writing, but also the influence it has on the spoken norm. The politically formed discrepancies between spoken language and the written standard is also at the core of David S.C Li's chapter on the difficulties in writing Chinese for Mandarin second language speakers in Hong

Kong, while Lüpke's investigation of literacy in highly multilingual Southern Senegal suggests parts of a solution to the problems posed by these chapters. Whereas Bloomfield (1933) saw the stability of written language as a handicap, Lüpke shows how this stability can actually capture the diversity of languages. Lead-language writing is presented as a model to teach and practice multilingual literacies in densely multilingual areas, thereby liberating the writers from the monolingual standard culture.

The three final chapters also present contemporary cases of opposition to dominant language policies through the use of non-standard writing. In China, vernacular *Fangyan* is used in the publicly visible linguistic landscape, something that Wang sees as a »chance to rearticulate a suppressed ethnolinguistic authenticity« (179), while twittering in the Dutch shibboleth Brabantish is used as opposed to standard Dutch by the comedian Braboneger (Swanenberg). Lucas Duane reports from Facebook discussions of how to distinguish the Balearic vernacular from Castilian, to support Balearic divergence. However, even these vernacular literacies respond to the demands of norms, standardization and unification, as Duane concludes the last chapter of the book: »Thus, the recursions of language standardization fractally and endlessly reproduce centres, peripheries and tyrannies.« (211) This quote illustrates the profound ambiguity expressed throughout the book. When tyranny is challenged and liberation is sought, new layers of oppression are created. Still, a more optimistic perspective is found in Lüpke's chapter on language-inde-

pendent literacy. Moreover, despite all the efforts of standardization and unification from the political actors, the chapters in this book reveal vernacular, diverse, informal literacy practices, indicating that the tyranny of writing in terms of oppression of non-standard writing has not succeeded – and will probably not do so either.

Without explicitly referring to it, *The Tyranny of Writing* responds to Lillis and McKinney's (2013) three key challenges in their special issue introduction on the sociolinguistics of writing. First, they »move beyond a default position on writing in terms of ›error‹ and ›standard‹«, the volume looks »beyond a monomodal orientation towards writing« and the chapters »avoid the privileging of single moments and sites of production« (415), as they look at the different cases as part of a broader political setting. The authors do this through detailed and informed empirically based studies. In an efficient way, they show how we can use traditional concepts like ›language‹ and ›multilingualism‹ and still study language, written language and spelling, as fluid in nature and ideologically constructed. Towards the end of their introduction to the special issue, Lillis and McKinney (2013: 430) call for research »to pay some serious theoretical and empirical attention to what is meant by writing and where and how it figures in complex communicative practices«. *The Tyranny of Writing* does this, first and foremost on the empirical side, but still taking a theoretical stance towards written language, as forming a continuum with speech, which should be studied as both form and practice. Readers interested in sociolinguistics will enjoy this book, as it leads to reflections on how writing and power are intertwined in similar ways across contexts and it constitutes an important contribution to a field that is still sparse.

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