

## **Sound change convergence (areas)**

Henning Schreiber

Goethe University, Frankfurt - Germany

*The issue of linguistic convergence areas is generally raised in conjunction with lexical borrowing and synchronic linguistic characteristics possibly induced by language contact. However, the coincidence of areal phenomenon is not limited to typological or lexical features. The spread and diffusion of sound changes and probably phonological processes are a known issue but rarely used for a localization of linguistic areas. In the paper the attempt to determine a possible ancient area on the basis of convergent sound changes in Gurunsi (Gur) and Niger-Volta (Mande) groups is made. It will be shown, for example, that the regular sound change of /ŋ/-> /h/ in Gurunsi languages is an areal phenomenon since it is also found in one dialect of the Bissa continuum, Tjenga and Shenga.*

*The paper examines possible contact induced phonological changes in the outer fringe of the Volta Basin and neighbouring areas in West Africa and attempts to relate the results to current research on principles of diffusion of phonological change.*