DER ARABISCHE DIALEKT DER HOUWĀRA DES WĀD SŪS
IN MAROKKO, von A. SOCIN und Dr. H. STUMME.
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The Houwāra (هَوَّارَة) are a tribe scattered through many places in North Africa: whether they are genuine Arabs, as they claim to be, or Arabic-speaking Berbers, is still an unascertained fact. Physically, they rather appear to be of Berber descent; but the fact that, although they live in the middle of Berber populations, they speak Arabic, is very perplexing, and I will not attempt to settle this question. The Houwāra, whose peculiar dialect is here illustrated, inhabit the tract of land known as Wād Sūs, in South Morocco: they form a linguistic island surrounded by Shilha populations, thus preserving their Arabic in the middle of Berber-speaking people; they enjoy a very bad reputation, so bad that a poet has said: "With all Moslems there is something good, only with the Houwāra there is nothing." The learned compilers of the texts now published intend to give a complete grammatical account of the dialect spoken by these Houwāra: their vocabulary is very interesting, as it contains many words little known or even quite unknown; as a phonetical peculiarity, I may note here the very frequent vanishing of the short vowels. The texts, which consist chiefly of popular tales, have been obtained from a young Houwāra, who had just come from his native country to perform in a Moorish troupe of acrobats at Dresden. It appears that it was not an easy task to extract any linguistic information from this young rascal: when asked to translate into his vernacular the sentence "Mustapha has done this and that," he invariably answered: "I do not know any Mustapha"; when asked to translate "I am dead," he answered: "No, I am not dead." But the more difficult the task, the more we must commend the skill and sagacity of the compilers, who have succeeded in giving to linguists and folklorists a most interesting collection of tales with an accurate translation.

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