

# Semitic and Afroasiatic: Challenges and Opportunities

Edited by Lutz Edzard

2012

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

ISSN 0554-7342  
ISBN 978-3-447-06695-2

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	14
Abbreviations.....	17
Preface .....	21

LUTZ EDZARD (University of Oslo):

<b>Introduction: Semitic and Afroasiatic</b> .....	<b>23</b>
1      Introductory remarks: internal classification.....	23
2      Phonology .....	26
2.1    Phoneme inventories: “emphatics”, laterals, gutturals.....	26
2.2    Cushitic substratum in the phonology of Ethio-Semitic .....	27
2.3    Co-occurrence restrictions within the stem and beyond.....	27
3      Morphology .....	29
3.1    Root-pattern system.....	29
3.2    Biradicalism vs. triradicalism.....	31
3.3    Pronouns and affixes in the Semitic diatheses / <i>binyanim</i> / stems .....	32
3.4    The D-stem and gemination of C <sub>2</sub> in the imperfect .....	37
3.5    The <i>t</i> -infix and the <i>n</i> -prefix in Semitic verbal paradigm.....	39
3.6    External masculine plural marking by <i>w</i> ( <i>ū</i> ).....	39
3.7    Broken plural (intraflexion).....	40
3.8    Case-systems: diptotic ergative systems.....	38
4      Syntax.....	42
4.1    A morpho-syntactic issue: gender polarity.....	42
4.2    Word order in Amharic.....	43
4.3    Verbal syntax and tense and/or aspect and mood semantics (TAM)....	46
5      Lexicon.....	47
6      Case study: logical and etymological commonalities between interrogation and negation markers.....	48
7      Conclusion .....	51
References .....	52

RUTH KRAMER (Georgetown University, Washington, DC):

<b>Egyptian</b> .....	<b>59</b>
1      Introduction .....	59
2      Earlier Egyptian.....	60
2.1    Overview and script .....	60
2.2    Phonology .....	61

2.3	Morphology .....	64
2.3.1	General remarks .....	64
2.3.2	Nominal and adjectival morphology .....	65
2.3.3	Verbal morphology: finite verbs .....	67
2.3.4	Verbal morphology: non-finite verbs .....	71
2.3.5	Pronouns, demonstratives and prepositions .....	72
2.4	Basic clause structure .....	74
2.5	The structure of nominal phrases .....	77
2.6	Subordination, coordination, negation, interrogatives .....	80
2.6.1	Subordination .....	80
2.6.2	Coordination .....	81
2.6.3	Negation .....	81
2.6.4	Interrogatives .....	83
3	Later Egyptian .....	84
3.1	Overview .....	84
3.2	Phonology .....	85
3.2.1	Phonology of Late Egyptian and Demotic .....	85
3.2.2	Coptic phonology .....	86
3.3	Morphology .....	88
3.3.1	General remarks .....	88
3.3.2	Nominal and adjectival morphology .....	90
3.3.3	Verbal morphology .....	92
3.3.4	Pronouns, demonstratives, and prepositions .....	94
3.4	Word order .....	96
3.5	The syntax of nominals .....	100
3.6	Subordination, coordination, negation, interrogatives .....	102
3.6.1	Subordination .....	102
3.6.2	Coordination .....	104
3.6.3	Negation .....	105
3.6.4	Interrogatives .....	106
4	The Egyptian and Semitic lexica in comparison .....	107
5	Conclusion .....	110
6	Text samples .....	111
6.1	Text sample 1: The Shipwrecked Sailor (Middle Egyptian) .....	111
6.2	Text sample 2: Amarna Boundary Stela U (Formal Late Egyptian) .....	115
6.3	Text sample 3: The Report of Wenamon (Vernacular Late Egyptian) ...	119
6.4	Text sample 4: Mark 16:1–7 (Coptic) .....	121
	References .....	125

MOHAMED ELMEDLAOUI (IURS/ Université Mohammed-V-Souissi, Rabat):

<b>Berber</b> .....	<b>131</b>
1 Berber in its historical and sociolinguistic contexts.....	131
1.1 Overview.....	131
1.2 The historical linguistic situation.....	133
1.3 Previous descriptions of the Berber group.....	135
1.4 Is Berber a language or a family?.....	136
2 Writing.....	139
3 Berber typological features.....	141
3.1 Phonology.....	141
3.1.1 Phoneme inventory.....	141
3.1.2 Emphasis.....	142
3.1.3 Gemination.....	143
3.1.4 Labials and labialization.....	144
3.1.5 Harmony of sibilants ( <i>s, z, š, ž</i> ).....	145
3.1.6 Regressive devoicing.....	147
3.1.7 Syllabification.....	148
3.2. Morphology.....	150
3.2.1 Verbal Morphology.....	150
3.2.1.1 Tense, aspect, and mood.....	151
3.2.1.2 Transitive, intransitive, and middle verbs.....	155
3.2.2 Nominal morphology.....	157
3.2.2.1 Gender.....	157
3.2.2.2 State (case).....	159
3.2.2.3 Number.....	162
3.2.2.3.1 Overview.....	162
3.2.2.3.2 Technicalities of plural formation.....	164
3.2.2.3.3 Generalizations about plural suffixation.....	171
3.2.2.3.4 Plural formation as a parameter of Berber dialectal variation.....	172
3.2.2.4 Determination/indetermination.....	173
3.3 Syntax.....	174
3.3.1 Constituent ordering.....	174
3.3.2 Syntactic movement of constituents in the sentence.....	176
3.3.2.1 Full categories movement.....	176
3.3.2.2 Clitic movement and phonetically empty elements.....	178
3.4 Lexicon.....	180
3.4.1 Overview.....	180
3.4.2 The Berber lexicon, and Semitic, within an Afroasiatic perspective.....	182
3.4.3 Elements of Semitic-Berber comparison.....	185
3.4.3.1 Body parts and features.....	185
3.4.3.2 Features of nature.....	186

3.4.3.3	Basic activities and states.....	186
4	Tashlhiyt Berber texts.....	187
4.1	A prose sample.....	187
4.2	A poetry sample.....	190
	References.....	193

DAVID APPLEYARD (SOAS, London):

<b>Cushitic</b> .....		<b>199</b>
1	Overview.....	199
1.1	Introductory remarks.....	199
1.2	Internal classification.....	200
1.3	Typological characteristics of Cushitic.....	201
1.3.1	Phonology.....	202
1.3.2	Morphology.....	203
1.3.2.1	Nouns.....	203
1.3.2.1.1	Gender.....	203
1.3.2.1.2	Number.....	204
1.3.2.1.3	Case.....	205
1.3.2.2	Personal pronouns.....	206
1.3.2.3	Verbs.....	207
1.3.2.3.1	Person marking.....	207
1.3.2.3.2	Aspect marking.....	208
1.3.2.3.3	Negative marking.....	209
1.3.2.3.4	Verbal derivation.....	209
1.3.2.3.5	Copulas.....	210
1.3.3	Syntactic structures.....	210
2	Beja.....	212
2.1	Grammatical sketch.....	212
2.2	Beja texts.....	219
2.2.1	<i>ʔi-lhána</i> The milk vendor.....	219
2.2.2	<i>máhmud ʔuufaáš</i> Mahmud Uufash.....	222
3	Bilin.....	225
3.1	Grammatical sketch.....	225
3.2	Bilin texts.....	231
3.2.1	<i>k<sup>w</sup>enšele-di təx<sup>w</sup>le-di</i> The jackal and the wolf.....	231
3.2.2	<i>mentelera</i> The hare.....	233
3.2.3	<i>bən wərina yax<sup>w</sup></i> What does a lie mean?.....	234
4	Oromo.....	236
4.1	Grammatical sketch.....	236
4.2	Oromo texts.....	242
4.2.1	Standardised Oromo: <i>sangaa=fi bookee</i> Ox and mosquito.....	242

4.2.2	Eastern Oromo: <i>dírreé dawá</i> Dirree Dawa .....	243
4.2.3	Southern Oromo (Boorana Dialect) .....	245
5	Somali .....	249
5.1	Grammatical sketch .....	249
5.2	Somali texts .....	256
5.2.1	Standard (Northern) Somali .....	256
5.2.2	Karre dialect .....	259
KJELL MAGNE YRI (University of Oslo):		
6	Sidaama .....	262
6.1	Grammatical sketch .....	262
6.2	Sidaama texts .....	270
6.2.1	<i>ráacca=nna beecce?nááma</i> The toad and the frog .....	270
6.2.2	<i>ʔiláála</i> The mountain .....	272
DAVID APPLEYARD (SOAS, London):		
7	Iraqw .....	278
7.1	Grammatical sketch .....	278
7.2	Iraqw text: <i>k<sup>w</sup>aʕaŋ<sup>w</sup> nee hooiki</i> Hare and pigeon .....	286
	References .....	292
HERRMANN JUNGRAITHMAYR (University of Frankfurt a.M.):		
<b>Chadic</b>	.....	<b>296</b>
1	Overview .....	296
1.1	Introduction .....	296
1.2	“Chadic” as a classificatory term .....	298
1.3	Chadic, Berber, and Cushitic versus Semitic and Egyptian .....	298
1.4	Principal features of Chadic languages .....	299
1.4.1	Phonology .....	299
1.4.2	Morphology .....	301
1.4.2.1	Morphology of the noun .....	301
1.4.2.1.1	Gender .....	301
1.4.2.1.2	Number .....	301
1.4.2.2	Morphology of the pronoun .....	302
1.4.2.3	Morphology of the verb .....	305
1.4.2.3.1	Verbal inflection .....	306
1.4.2.3.2	Verbal conjugation .....	307
1.4.3	Syntax .....	309
1.4.4	Lexicon .....	310
1.5	A relative chronology of the development of the Chadic languages .....	311
1.6	Conclusion: A typological overview .....	313
2	Kulere ( <i>rùn</i> ) .....	314
	Introduction .....	314

2.1	Phonology .....	314
2.1.1	Consonants .....	314
2.1.2	Vowels .....	314
2.1.3	Tone.....	314
2.2	Morphology .....	314
2.2.1	The noun.....	315
2.2.1.1	Root and stem system.....	316
2.2.1.2	Gender .....	316
2.2.1.3	Plural.....	316
2.2.1.4	Genitival construction .....	317
2.2.2	Personal pronouns .....	318
2.2.2.1	The absolute pronouns (AP).....	318
2.2.2.2	The subject pronouns (SP) .....	318
2.2.2.3	The object pronouns (OP) .....	319
2.2.2.4	The possessive pronouns (PP) .....	320
2.2.3	The verb .....	320
2.2.3.1	The verbal root/base .....	320
2.2.3.2	The basic verb stems (BVS) .....	321
2.2.3.2.1	The past passive participle (PPP).....	321
2.2.3.2.2	The deverbal noun in <i>-ân</i> .....	322
2.2.3.3	Verb classes (VC).....	322
2.2.3.4	The binary aspect system.....	322
2.2.3.5	The tense system .....	323
2.2.3.5.1	Grundaspekt (GA) or aorist (AOR).....	323
2.2.3.5.2	Perfect (PF).....	323
2.2.3.5.3	Relative perfect (RP) .....	323
2.2.3.5.4	Past perfect (PPF) .....	324
2.2.3.5.5	Future-ingressive (FI) .....	324
2.2.3.5.6	Future-progressive (FP) .....	324
2.2.3.5.7	Habitual (HAB) and progressive (PROG).....	324
2.3	Example sentences .....	325
3	Mubi ( <i>mónjúl</i> ).....	327
	Introduction .....	327
3.1	Phonology .....	328
3.1.1	Consonants.....	328
3.1.2	Vowels .....	328
3.1.3	Tone.....	328
3.2	Morphology .....	329
3.2.1	Root system.....	329
3.2.1.1	Nouns.....	329
3.2.1.2	Verbs .....	330

3.2.1.2.1	Triradical verbs.....	330
3.2.1.2.2	Biradical verbs .....	330
3.2.2	Gender .....	331
3.2.3	Plural.....	331
3.2.4	Genitival construction .....	332
3.2.5	Personal pronouns .....	332
3.2.5.1	The subject pronoun series (SP).....	332
3.2.5.2	The object pronouns (OP) .....	333
3.2.5.3	The possessive pronouns (PP).....	334
3.2.6	Verbal morphology.....	335
3.2.6.1	Presentation of the verb stems .....	336
3.2.6.2	The role of consonants and vowels in the verb stems .....	336
3.2.6.2.1	The triradical verb stem .....	336
3.2.6.2.2	The biradical verb stems .....	337
3.2.6.2.2.1	The biradical <i>I</i> -class.....	337
3.2.6.2.2.2	The biradical <i>U</i> -class .....	337
3.2.6.2.2.3	The CVY verb stems ( <i>verba secundae infirmae</i> ).....	337
3.2.6.3	Plural verb stems.....	338
3.2.6.3.1	Triradical stems .....	338
3.2.6.3.2	Biradical stems.....	339
3.2.6.4	Intensive verb stems .....	339
3.2.6.5	Derivation by <i>-t</i> .....	339
3.2.6.6	Conjugations.....	340
3.2.6.6.1	The prefix conjugations.....	340
3.2.6.6.2	The suffix conjugations.....	340
3.3	Text.....	341
4	Mushere ( <i>mùshere</i> ) .....	343
	Introduction .....	343
4.1	Phonology .....	343
4.1.1	Consonants.....	343
4.1.2	Vowels .....	343
4.1.3	Tone.....	343
4.2	Morphology .....	345
4.2.1	Root system.....	345
4.2.1.1	Nominal root structure .....	345
4.2.1.2	Verbal root structure and deverbal nouns .....	346
4.2.2	Personal pronouns.....	347
4.2.3	Verbal morphology.....	347
4.2.3.1	The verbal base.....	347
4.2.3.2	The tonal binary aspect system.....	348
4.2.3.3	Conjugations and tenses .....	348



4.3	Example sentences .....	348
5	Tangale ( <i>tànlè</i> ).....	351
	Introduction .....	351
5.1	Phonology .....	351
5.1.1	Consonants .....	351
5.1.2	Vowels .....	352
5.1.3	Apocopation .....	352
5.1.4	Tone.....	352
5.2	Morphology .....	353
5.2.1	The noun.....	353
5.2.1.1	Root and stem system.....	353
5.2.1.2	Gender .....	353
5.2.1.3	Plurality .....	353
5.2.1.4	Genitival construction .....	354
5.2.2	Personal pronouns .....	354
5.2.2.1	The absolute pronouns (AP).....	354
5.2.2.2	The subject pronouns (SP) .....	355
5.2.2.3	The object pronouns (OP) .....	355
5.2.2.4	The possessive pronouns (PP).....	356
5.2.3	The verb .....	357
5.2.3.1	The verbal root/base .....	357
5.2.3.2	Verb classes (VC).....	357
5.2.3.3	Plural verb stems.....	357
5.2.3.4	The altrilocal-ventive (AV) or distance stem .....	358
5.2.3.5	Passive stems .....	358
5.2.3.5.1	Glottalization of the finite stem.....	358
5.2.3.5.2	Passive verbal nouns in -O.....	359
5.2.3.5.3	The passive past participle in -s/z/jI (PPP).....	359
5.2.3.6	The extension of the verbal base by tense-marking suffixes .....	359
5.2.3.6.1	The aorist stem (AOR).....	359
5.2.3.6.2	The perfect stem I in -gO/-kO (PF I).....	360
5.2.3.6.3	The perfect stem II in -nU (PF II) .....	360
5.2.3.6.4	The subjunctive stem in -U.....	360
5.2.3.7	The verbal noun stem .....	361
5.2.3.8	Conjugations .....	361
5.2.3.8.1	The perfective aspect conjugations .....	361
5.2.3.8.2	The imperfective aspect conjugations .....	361
5.2.3.8.3	The suffix conjugation.....	362
5.3	Text.....	362
	References .....	365

ROLF THEIL (University of Oslo):

<b>Omotic</b> .....	<b>369</b>
1 Introduction .....	369
2 The interior and exterior classification of Omotic.....	371
2.1 Introduction .....	371
2.2 The branches of Omotic .....	372
2.2.1 The Dizoid languages.....	373
2.2.2 The Aroid languages .....	374
2.2.3 Conclusion.....	376
2.3 Omotic and Afroasiatic .....	376
2.3.1 A short history of the exterior classification of Omotic.....	376
2.3.2 Criticism.....	378
References.....	383

BINYAM SISAY MENDISU (Addis Ababa University):

<b>Sketch Grammar of an Omotic Language: Koorete</b> .....	<b>385</b>
1 Introduction .....	385
2 Phonology .....	385
2.1 Consonant phonemes .....	385
2.2 Vowel phonemes.....	386
2.3 Supra-segmentals.....	386
3 Morphology .....	387
3.1 Noun .....	387
3.1.1 Number.....	387
3.1.2 Definiteness.....	387
3.1.3 Case .....	388
3.2 Personal pronoun.....	389
3.3 Verb.....	389
3.3.1 Person.....	389
3.3.2 Tense and aspect .....	392
4 Syntax.....	393
4.1 Sentence .....	393
4.2 Noun phrases.....	395
5 Text.....	396
References .....	398

<b>Indices</b> .....	<b>399</b>
Index of Subjects .....	399
Index of Authors.....	411

## Preface

The idea for this volume and its format was inspired by Gotthelf Bergsträsser's famous *Einführung in die semitischen Sprachen* (1928) and its English adaptation *Introduction to the Semitic Languages. Text Specimens and Grammatical Sketches* (1983) by Peter T. Daniels. The goal of this volume is different from Bergsträsser's, though. While Bergsträsser provided a picture of the Semitic languages that was as comprehensive as possible at his time, giving equal justice to all the branches of Semitic, we do not attempt to deliver a comparative "Handbook" of Afroasiatic. Our aim is rather to supply the Semiticist with thorough sketches and text specimens of the Afroasiatic branches Egyptian, Berber, Cushitic, Chadic, and Omotic, i.e. we always have the Semiticist in mind as the primary addressee of this volume, and not the seasoned specialist in any of the other branches. The order of the contributions in this volume reflects no prejudice on the internal classification of Afroasiatic.

On September 21, 2009, David Appleyard (SOAS) and Kjell Magne Yri (Oslo) presented drafts of their contributions at a joint workshop in Oslo. We were also joined by Rolf Theil (Oslo) and his doctoral student Binyam Sisay Mendisu, now professor at Addis Ababa University, who presented their opinion on whether Omotic belongs to Afroasiatic macro-phylum and a sketch of Koorete grammar, respectively. Mohamed Elmedlaoui (Institut Universitaire de la Recherche Scientifique, Rabat) presented an outline of his contribution on October 5, 2009 in Oslo. Herrmann Jungraithmayr (Frankfurt a.M.) and Ruth Kramer (Georgetown University, Washington D.C.) were not able to join us on these occasions, but sent in their written contributions later.

Within this volume, we shall present some of the challenges and opportunities that present themselves for scholars who want to gain a better understanding of certain notorious problems in Semitic linguistics. Some of these problems deserve and need to be investigated in their wider Afroasiatic context. At least it may turn out to be rewarding to investigate parallels to peculiar phenomena in Semitic in (some of the) other branches of Afroasiatic. The reader will also have an opportunity to work with larger text specimens of selected representative languages belonging to the different branches of Afroasiatic. In that respect we endeavor to go beyond a purely paradigmatic representation of the languages and branches involved.

It is our pleasure to thank the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages of the University of Oslo for generous support of the above-mentioned workshops in the framework of the project “Den afroasiatiske horisont”, as well as for funding of stylistic editing. In this context, we are deeply indebted to Michael G. Carter, now at the University of Sidney. Øyvind Bjøru provided the index of names and made a number of valuable suggestions. Special thanks are due to Werner Diem and Theo Vennemann for a number of helpful comments. Matthew Monger helped as well with some matters of English style. Last but not least we wish to thank Dr. Barbara Krauß from Harrassowitz Verlag for accepting this volume in the series *Porta Linguarum Orientalium*.

Oslo, January 2012

Lutz Edzard