

SEMITIC SUFFIX CONJUGATION AND EGYPTIAN STATIVE

A hypothetic morpho-syntactic scenario of its origin

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Résumé français. Il y a un détail morphologique signifiant qui sépare le statif Akkadien du parfait des autres langues sémitiques. Ici, une explication hypothétique est offerte qui est basée sur une analyse de l'afro-asiatique comme étant d'un alignement syntaxique du type nominatif-absolutif.

English Abstract. There is a significant morphological detail that distinguishes the Akkadian stative from the perfect of the other Semitic languages. A hypothetic explanation for this is offered, which is based on an analysis of Proto-Asiatic being of nominative-absolutive syntactic alignment.

In his competent and well-organised overview of the “situation of Egyptian in the languages of the world”, P. Vernus enumerates the essential correspondences between Egyptian and the Semitic family¹, among them, of course, the verb paradigm under consideration :

Un paradigme verbal entier, celui du pseudoparticipe, a des homologues manifestes en sémitique, sans compter les vestiges du berbère:

Désinences du singulier

1 ^{re} pers. commune	.kw [...] (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>ku</i>)
2 ^e pers. du masculin	.tj (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>t (+V)</i>)
2 ^e pers. du féminin	.tj (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>t (+V)</i>)
3 ^e pers. masculin	.w (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>u</i>)
3 ^e pers. féminin	.tj (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>t (+V)</i>)

Désinences du pluriel

1 ^{re} pers. commune	.wyn (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>wñ</i>)
2 ^e pers. commune	.twny (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>tñn</i>)
3 ^e pers. commune	.w (graphie « syllabique » pour <i>u</i>)...

¹ P. VERNUS, « Situation de l'égyptien dans les langues du monde », dans Fr.-X.

Ce paradigme est caractérisé par des désinences clairement apparantées à celles de l'accompli sémitique tel qu'il apparaît par exemple en akkadien...

Désinences du singulier

1 ^{re} pers. commune	.kū
2 ^e pers. du masculin	.ta
2 ^e pers. du féminin	.ti
3 ^e pers. masculin	∅
3 ^e pers. féminin	.at

Désinences du pluriel

1 ^{re} pers. commune	.nū
2 ^e pers.	.tunu, féminin .tina
3 ^e pers.	.ū, féminin .ā

Of all Semitic languages, the Egyptian stative (Polotsky), or old perfective (Gardiner), or pseudo-participle (Erman, who had discovered this paradigm) has more features in common with the Akkadian stative than with the corresponding suffix-conjugated paradigms of the other Semitic languages, called the perfect. There is a particular gap between Akkadian (East Semitic) and all the rest.

Features that Akkadian does not share with the other Semitic languages, include:

1. The absolute state of the noun.²
2. The stative, in respect to its semantic features which differ from those of the perfect of the other Semitic languages (both stative and perfect represent the Semitic suffix conjugation³);
3. The conjugation of the stative, which differs both from that of the South Semitic perfect, and that of the other Semitic languages.
4. The prefix-conjugated perfect *iprus* (though there are remnants of comparable forms, viz. the Arabic negative perfect *lam yaf'al*, and the Hebrew *waw* perfect, *wayyiqtol*)⁴;
5. The prefix-conjugated, *t*-inserting perfect *iptaras* (though Zaborski⁵ suggests to see remnants of it in several VIIIth stem verbs (*ifta'ala*) of Arabic).

² The absolute state of the Syriac noun is of similar functions, but it is the result of later development, in particular, of the morpheme *-a* losing its determinating function; cf. H. Satzinger, "Absolute state and absolute case in Afro-Asiatic," in M. Moriggi (ed.), *XII Incontro Italiano di Linguistica Camito-semitica (Afroasiatica)*. Atti (Medioevo Romano e Orientale. Colloqui 9.), 63–69, in particular, 64–65.

³ Note that the Egyptological use of "suffix conjugation" is a misnomer: it has neither suffixes nor is it a conjugation, in the strict morphological sense. The only true Egyptian "suffix conjugation" is the stative.

⁴ E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages. Outline of a Comparative Grammar*. 2nd edition, 343–344 (§ 38.1).

6. The dichotomy of disyllabic perfect *iprus* and trisyllabic “imperfect” *iparras*; South Semitic has at least the second of these forms, like Ge’ez *yesabber* “he breaks, is breaking” (cf. the jussive *yesber* “may he break”)⁶.

For most of these features, which are alien to North-West, Central, and South Semitic, parallels from other Afro-Asiatic languages can be adduced. On account of this, it may be assumed that they go back to a common ancestor language; the divergent features of the other Semitic languages would then have to be seen as innovations.

Ad 1: The absolute state of Akkadian is an absolute state and not a case: it stands in paradigmatic relation not to the individual cases, but rather to the whole block of cases.⁷

Absolute state	Cases		
	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
<i>šar</i> “king”	<i>šarrum</i>	<i>šarram</i>	<i>šarrim</i>

Nevertheless it may be compared with the absolutive case of both Berber and Cushitic.⁸ However, this absolutive case covers also the function of an accusative case.

Ad 2: The semantic features of the Akkadian stative may be compared with those of the Egyptian stative (in particular, its true stative variant, **satpāku*, * “he has been chosen”, cf. below), and the Kabyle

⁵ A. Zaborski, “Traces of *iptaras* in Arabic,” in G. Takács (ed.), *Egyptian and Semito-Hamitic (Afro-Asiatic) Studies in Memoriam W. Vycichl* (Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics, 39), 160–174 ; A. Zaborski, “Main and secondary functions of derived verbs in Arabic,” *Lingua Posnaniensis* 48 (2006) 165–189.

⁶ O. Röessler, „Verbalbau und Verbalflexion in den semitohamitischen Sprachen.“ Vorstudien zu einer vergleichenden semitohamitischen Grammatik, *ZDMG* 100 [25] (1950), 461–514 ; O. Röessler, “The structure and inflection of the verb in the Semito-Hamitic languages.” Preliminary studies for a Comparative Semito-Hamitic grammar. Translated by Yoël Arbeitman, in Y. Arbeitman & A. R. Bomhard, *Bono Homini Donum*. Essays in Historical Linguistics in Memory of J. Alexander Kerns (Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science. Series IV – Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 16.), Amsterdam 1981, 679–748.

⁷ H. Satzinger, “Some Remarks on the Afroasiatic Case System,” *WZKM* 94 (2004) 177–183, in particular p. 179.

⁸ H.-J. Sasse, “Case in Cushitic, Semitic and Berber,” in: J. Bynon (ed.), *Current Progress in Afro-asiatic Linguistics*. Papers of the Third International Hamito-Semitic Congress, 111–126 ; H. Satzinger, “Zero article, bare noun, absolutive case,” in a *Festschrift, printing*; H. Satzinger, “Absolute state and absolutive case in Afro-Asiatic,” in: M. Moriggi (ed.), *XII Incontro Italiano di Linguistica Camito-semitica (Afroasiatica)*. Atti. (Medioevo Romano e Orientale. Colloqui 9., 63–69; H. Satzinger, “Observations in the Field of the Afroasiatic Suffix Conjugation,” in M. Lamberti & L. Tonelli (eds.), *Afroasiatica Tergestina*. Papers of the 9th Italian Meeting of Afro-Asiatic (Hamito-Semitic) Linguistics. Trieste, April 23–24, 1998 / Contributi presentati al 9° Incontro di Linguistica Afroasiatica (Camito-Semita). Trieste, 23–24 Aprile 1998, 23–33.

suffix conjugation of the verbs of quality (*hnin-eḡ* “I’m compassionate”, *hnin-eḡ* “you are...”, etc.⁹; cf. below).

Elsa Oreal¹⁰ has plausibly argued that the two stative forms, of Egyptian and Akkadian, are anything but congruent in respect to semantic and syntactic characteristics: one being adverbial, the other nominal, etc. Nevertheless, they are of similar morphological appearance, of similar build, and they have many semantic features in common. For a structuralistic description of the Egyptian stative see my account at the Cambridge Conference¹¹.

Ad 3: The Akkadian stative conjugation differs from that of the Semitic perfect mainly in two respects: a) the endings of the 1st and 2nd persons; b) the (kind of) thematic vowel *-ā-* of these same forms¹², singular and plural, which is lacking elsewhere.

Akkadian	Ge'ez	Arabic	Hebrew	Aramaic
<i>pars-ā-ku</i>	<i>qatal-ku</i>	<i>fa'al-tu</i>	<i>qātal-tī</i> ¹³	<i>kitāb-ēt</i>
<i>pars-ā-ta</i>	<i>qatal-ka</i>	<i>fa'al-ta</i>	<i>qātal-tā</i>	<i>kətab-t(ā)</i>
<i>pars-ā-ti</i>	<i>qatal-ki</i>	<i>fa'al-ti</i>	<i>qātal-t</i>	<i>kətab-tī</i>
<i>paris</i>	<i>qatal-a</i>	<i>fa'al-a</i>	<i>qātal</i>	<i>kətab</i>
<i>pars-at</i>	<i>qatal-at</i>	<i>fa'al-at</i>	<i>qātl-ā</i>	<i>kitāb-at</i>
etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.

Ad 3a:¹⁴ On another occasion I commented,

The Semitic suffix conjugation, 1st and 2nd persons singular, has endings that display certain alternations in the individual languages and language groups, with the initial consonants *-k-* and *-t-* changing places. Traditional opinion has it that Akkadian, with *-ku* and *-t...*, possesses the original sounds; that South Semitic has generalised the consonant *k*, by making also the forms of the 2nd person commence with it (which hereby coincide with the respective suffix pronouns); that the others (Canaanite, Aramaic, Arabic, ...) on their part replace the *-ku* of the 1st person by *-tu*,

⁹ O. Rössler, *ZDMG* 100 [25] (1950), 481.

¹⁰ E. Oreal, “Same Source, Different Outcomes? A Reassessment of the Parallel between Ancient Egyptian and Akkadian ‘Stative’ Conjugations,” *LingAeg* 17, 2009, 183–200.

¹¹ H. Satzinger, “Varieties of the Old Perfective in Old Egyptian,” in C. J. Eyre (ed.), *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Egyptologists*, Cambridge, 3–9 September 1995 (*OLA* 82), 1021–1028.

¹² E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 368 (§ 40.3).

¹³ Hebrew vowel quantity is mostly secondary, like length in open syllables.

¹⁴ H. Satzinger, „Anmerkungen zur semitischen Suffixkonjugation,” in R. Voigt (ed.), “*From Beyond the Mediterranean*”. Akten des 7. Internationalen Semitohamitisten-Kongresses (VII. ISHaK), Berlin, 13. bis 15. September 2004 (*Semitica et Semitohamitica Berolinensia* 5.), 493–500.

letting thus all these endings begin with the same letter *-t-*. In recent times, however, this scenario was questioned. Thus, Lipiński¹⁵ inserts for the 2nd person both forms in his table of endings of the suffix conjugation: 2sm **-ka* / **-ta*, and so on for both genders and the three numbers. The initial *-t-* is said to be, not an innovation of West Semitic (here including Arabic), but rather already existent as a variant in the proto-language. On the other hand, Voigt suggests an „alternatives, ergativistisches Modell“¹⁶ which makes a distinction between transitive verbs and verbs of state; the first-mentioned, having the inflection **-tū*, **-tā*, **-tī* etc., are thought to be continued in the West Semitic perfect, whereas the others, having **-akū*, **-akā*, **-akī* etc., would be continued, in respect to the consonants, in South Semitic. In East Semitic [i.e., Akkadian], however, both conjugations would intermingle, hereby generalising the infix *-ak-* of the verbs of state: **-āku*, **-āta*, **-āti* etc. This would imply the existence of a proto-Semitic case paradigm of absolutive case (?)¹⁷ **-ku*, **-ka*, **-ki*, and ergative case **-tu*, **-ta*, **-ti*.¹⁸

However, the Akkadian and South Semitic ending **-ku* of the 1st person, as against **-tu*, is proven to be the original Semitic feature by the correspondences in Egyptian and Berber¹⁹.

Ad 3b: Results of recent research show that there are two paradigms of the Egyptian stative, of which one has obviously a vowel between the stem and the ending, like the Akkadian stative, 1st and 2nd persons, whereas the other has not, like the Semitic perfect. The first is seemingly a true stative, with most transitive verbs having passive present perfect character, while the second is active with transitive verbs²⁰.

**satV'pku* 'I chose, have chosen' ~ Arabic *ʾaḥadtu* 'I took'

**satpāku* 'I have / having been chosen' ~ Akkadian *aḫzāku* 'I have been seized'

Ad 4/5: For the sake of completeness it should be added that there are not only remnants of perfective / preterite prefix conjugation paradigms in other Semitic languages (as mentioned above), but also that perfective

¹⁵ E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 368–369.

¹⁶ R. Voigt, "Die beiden Suffixkonjugationen des Semitischen (und Ägyptischen)," in *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 15/16 (2002/2003), 137–166, in particular 157.

¹⁷ There is, however, also an "object pronoun" **-nī*, **-kā*, **-kī* (R. Voigt, *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 15/16 (2002/2003), 158).

¹⁸ Translated from the German of H. Satzinger, „Anmerkungen zur semitischen Suffixkonjugation“, 493.

¹⁹ Aside from Akkadian and South Semitic, the *-k-* forms exist also in Arabic dialects of Yemen (E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 370 (§ 40.5), which is quite probably the result of areal effects of South Arabian idioms.

²⁰ A résumé of this discovery process — initially F. Kammerzell, important contributions by K. Jansen-Winkel and W. Schenkel — is given by H. Satzinger, in C. J. Eyre (ed.), *Proceedings*, Cambridge.

/ preterite prefix conjugations are normal in Cushitic; the Berber paradigms display in both aspects a mixed prefix / suffix conjugation (see below). The *iprus* : *iparras* dichotomy is reflected in the Berber and Cushitic tense systems, if not in Egyptian and Chadic reduplicated intensive / pluralic stem variants (called “imperfective” in traditional Egyptological terminology).

Here we will, in the main, be concerned with the stative and with the absolute state of Akkadian. The Berber and the East Cushitic languages teach us an important lesson on the Afro-Asiatic case system, namely that there is not only a nominative-accusative alignment (as in Semitic), as against an ergative-absolutive alignment (in proper ergative languages, such as Basque, and as is assumed by some for Proto Afro-Asiatic²¹), but also an intermediary structure: the nominative-accusative alignment.²²

Ergative-Absolutive:	Nominative-Absolutive:	Nominative-Accusative:
<i>Absolutive case (-a)</i> quotation, address, predicate, focus, topic, pre-genitive form, subject of intransitive verbs, object, adverbial form <i>Ergative case (-u)</i> agent (subject) of transitive verbs	<i>Absolutive case (-a)</i> quotation, address, predicate, focus, topic, pre-genitive form, object, adverbial form <i>Nominative case (-u)</i> subject of intransitive verbs, agent (subject) of transitive verbs	<i>Accusative case (-a)</i> object, adverbial form <i>Nominative case (-u)</i> quotation, address, predicate, focus, topic, pre-genitive form, subject of intransitive verbs, agent (subject) of transitive verbs
E.g., Basque	Berber, Cushitic ²³	

In fact, Akkadian stands somewhere between the Berber / Cushitic and the general Semitic type.

Nominative-Absolutive:	Transitory:	Nominative-Accusative:
<i>Absolutive case (-a)</i> quotation, address,	<i>Accusative case (-a)</i> object, adverbial form	<i>Accusative case (-a)</i> object, adverbial form

²¹ Cf. the discussion in H. Satzinger, “On ergativity in Egyptian,” in A. Zaborski (ed.), *New Data and New Methods in Afroasiatic Linguistics*. Robert Hetzron in Memoriam. Wiesbaden 2001, 173–182.

²² H. Satzinger, printing.

²³ Properly, a vast East African *sprachbund*, apart from Berber: partly Afro-Asiatic, viz. Cushitic (Sidamo, Ometo, Oromo, Somali, Rendille, Dasenech, Qemant, Gidole etc.), partly Nilo-Saharan, viz. South Nilotic (Kalenjin) and Central-Nilotic (Maasai, Teso, Turkana, Surma: Didinga, Murle). Cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominative-absolutive_language.

predicate, focus, topic, pre- genitive form, object, adverbial form	<i>Absolute State</i> (-zero) quotation, address, predicate, focus, topic, pre-genitive form,	<i>Nominative case</i> (- <i>u</i>) quotation, address, predicate, focus, topic, pre- genitive form,
<i>Nominative case</i> (- <i>u</i>) subject of intransitive verbs, agent (subject) of transitive verbs	<i>Nominative case</i> (- <i>u</i>) subject of intransitive verbs, agent (subject) of transitive verbs	subject of intransitive verbs, agent (subject) of transitive verbs
Berber, Cushitic	Akkadian	General Semitic

The origin of the Semitic variants of the suffix conjugation can be assumed to be dating back to an early stage. The emergence and grammaticalisation of the suffix conjugation can be seen as the result of the transition from the nominative-absolutive to the nominative accusative alignment, partially performed by Akkadian, and (almost²⁴) completely by the other Semitic languages.

The proto-language had nominative-absolutive alignment, disposing of a nominative case (probably in *u*), and an absolutive case, presumedly in *a* (as in Cushitic). The prototype of the stative is composed of an infinite verb form that is neutral to diathesis, and to which the subject is added (except pronominal subjects of the 3rd person). The verb, being the nucleus of the predicative phrase, bears the mark of the absolutive case (*a*):

1.1 **ʔahid+a tupp-u* “the tablet has been seized”.

NB. Here, a VSO word order is assumed, as corresponds to Arabic, Hebrew, Egyptian, Berber²⁵, rather than to Akkadian. It is generally thought that the latter’s SOV order is due to Sumerian influence²⁶.

If the subject is a personal pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person, it is of a paradigm that does not exist anymore in historical times, but that has left traces also in the absolute personal pronoun; singular forms, namely **ku*, **ta*, **ti* (cf. the pronouns *ʔanā-ku*, **ʔan-ta*, **ʔan-ti*).

1.2 **ʔahid+a ku* “I have been seized”, **ʔahid+a ta* “you (m.)...”,
**ʔahid+a ti* “you (f.)...”.

²⁴ Why “almost completely”? The Arabic and the Ethiopian accusatives have still a few functions that are domains of an absolutive, like the predicative noun of verbs of being (“daughters of *kāna*”), and adverbial uses. Cf. H.-J. Sasse in J. Bynon (ed.), *Current Progress in Afro-asiatic Linguistics*, 119–120.

²⁵ E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 498 (§ 50.13).

²⁶ E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 499 (§ 50.14).

If it is a pronoun of the 3rd person it need not be expressed; the pronominal notion is implied in the gender / number morpheme of the verb.

- 1.3 **ʾaḥiḏ+a* “he has been seized”, **ʾaḥiḏat+a* “she has been seized”, **ʾaḥiḏū +a* “they (m.) have been seized”, etc.

These forms would yield in Akkadian:

- 1.1 *ṭuppu aḥiḏ* “the tablet has been seized”.
 1.2 *aḥiḏāku* “I have been seized”, *aḥiḏāta* “you (m.)...”, *aḥiḏāti* “you (f.)...”.
 1.3 *aḥiḏ* “he has been seized”, **aḥiḏat* “she has been seized”, **aḥiḏū* “they (m.) have been seized”, etc. (for the loss of final *-a* see below).

If the verb has two actants, the diathesis is active. In this case the predicative phrase comprises both a verb and a noun. The scenario presented here only works on the assumption that the absolutive case morpheme is a free one, that is, not a morphological ending of the verb, but is freely added to the phrase in question. In our case it is joined to the complement noun, the apical element of the predicative phrase, rather than to the verb²⁷.

- 2.1 **aḥiḏ zikar-u ṭupp+a* “the man has seized the tablet”

With pronominal subject:

- 2.2 **aḥiḏ ku ṭupp+a* “I have seized the tablet”, etc.

3rd person pronominal subject:

- 2.3 **aḥiḏ ṭupp+a* “he has seized the tablet”, etc.

What happened next is that an accusative case emerged from the absolutive case, or rather, that the absolutive case (in **-a*) split into an accusative case (in *-a*) for the direct object, etc., and — at least in Proto-Akkadian — an absolute state (in *zero*) for quotation, address, predicate, focus, topic, etc.: kind of a *bare noun*.²⁸

- In Proto-Akkadian, this also affected the stative forms, insofar as they ended in *-a*: **parisa* became *paris*, **parisata* became *par(i)sat*, etc.
- It did not affect the forms where the *-a* ending had come to be between the stem and the personal morph and was thus not anymore felt to be the absolutive ending, like **paris-a-ku* becoming *par(i)sāku*, etc.
- Generally speaking, Proto-Akkadian generalized the passive / intransitive-stative paradigm, extending its forms also to active use (*aḥiḏ* “he has seized”).

²⁷ H. Satzinger, in M. Lamberti & L. Tonelli (eds.), *Afroasiatica Tergestina*, 30–32.

²⁸ H. Satzinger, printing.

The other Semitic languages, on the other hand,

- grammaticalised the active forms, hereby giving up the forms with inserted *-a-*. (This *-a* now marked the direct complement, as accusative.)

In abandoning the absolutive case in the course of transforming it into the new accusative case, they went farther than Akkadian.

- For some reason or other, the 3sm forms in *-a* were selected or retained in South Semitic and Arabic : *qatala* ²⁹.
- The consonant of endings 1sc, 2sm ad 2sf was generalized in *-k-* in South Semitic, in *-t-* elsewhere.
- Stem vocalization was completely reorganized; cf. Arabic with *CaCaC-*, *CaCiC-* and *CaCuC-*: *ʾaḥadtu*, *-ta*, *-ti*, *ʾaḥada*, *ʾaḥadat* etc., “I / you / he / she took”; *ʿalimtu* “I learned” etc.; *ḥasuna* “he has become good” etc. The internal passive is probably another innovation: *ʾuḥida* “he has been taken”.

None of the other Afro-Asiatic sub-families has internal passives³⁰.

Chadic does not seem to have unequivocal remnants of the suffix conjugation at all. The normal Berber conjugation has for both aspects a mixed paradigm, partly prefixes, partly suffixes, partly both:

Kabyle (*Taqbaylit*)³¹ :

	“I enter, am entering”			“I entered”		
1sc	<i>keččem</i>	<i>-eḡ</i>		Ø	<i>kešm</i>	<i>-eḡ</i>
2sc	<i>te-</i>	<i>keččem</i>	<i>-eḡ</i>	<i>te-</i>	<i>kešm</i>	<i>-eḡ</i>
3sm	<i>i-</i>	<i>keččem</i>	—	<i>i-</i>	<i>kešm</i>	—
3sf	<i>te-</i>	<i>keččem</i>	—	<i>te</i>	<i>kešm</i>	—
Etc.						

In several idioms there exists, however, a stative paradigm which is a pure suffix conjugation:³² *les adjectifs conjugués* (Taine-Cheikh³³).

1sc	<i>hnin-eḡ</i>	“I am pitiful”	1pc	<i>hnin-it</i>
2sm	<i>hnin-eḡ</i>		2pc	<i>hnin-it</i>

²⁹ According to E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 369 (§ 40.3), this is not an original feature of Arabic, but rather due to South Arabian influence.

³⁰ Cf. E. Lipiński, *Semitic Languages*, 416 (§ 41.43) : “... they are probably to be regarded as a secondary development of West Semitic, that spread to South Arabia”.

³¹ O. Rössler, *ZDMG* 100 [25] (1950), 483.

³² O. Rössler, *ZDMG* 100 [25] (1950), 481.

³³ C. Taine-Cheikh, « Les marques de 1ère personne en berbère: réflexions à partir du zénaga », in A. Mengozzi (ed.), *Studi Afroasiatici / XI Incontro Italiano di Linguistica Camitosemitica – Afro-Asiatic Studies / 11th Italian Meeting Of Afro-Asiatic Linguistics*, 2005, 97–112, in particular 98-100.

2sf	<i>hnin-eḍ</i>		
3sm	<i>hnin</i>	3pc	<i>hnin-it</i> ³⁴
3sf	<i>hnin-et</i>		

Other idioms with relevant features are East Cushitic and Egyptian.

For long time it was thought that Cushitic has not any traces of the ancient Afro-Asiatic suffix conjugation³⁵. Where its verb forms were conjugated by endings, these were obviously the relics of an ancient prefix-conjugated auxiliary verb (comparable to Reinisch' *verbum substantivum*³⁶).

Suffix Conjugation in Ts'amakko.³⁷

	'to drink'	'to eat'	Scheme:
1sc	ʿúg-í	ǰí-ì	verb *ʾ V-aux
2sc	ʿúg-dí	ǰí-tì	verb *t V-aux
3sm	ʿúg-í	ǰí-ì	verb *y V-aux
3sf	ʿúg-dí	ǰí-tì	verb *t V-aux
1pc	ʿúg-ní	ǰí-nì	verb *n V-aux
2pc	ʿúg-dè	ǰí-tè	verb *t V-aux-...
3pc	ʿúg-è	ǰí-e	verb *y V-aux-...

However, Giorgio Banti has made plausible that there is in East Cushitic languages another paradigm of suffix conjugation that goes back to the common origin of the Afro-Asiatic suffix conjugation:³⁸

	Saho <i>ʿusuba</i>	Somali <i>cusub</i> /ʿusúb/, “new”.
	(with tense marker, -ó/-á)	
1sc	ʿusubiy-ó	<i>cúsbí</i> ³⁹ “I'm new”
2sc	ʿusubit-ó	<i>cúsbid</i>
3sm	ʿusub-á	<i>cusúb</i>

³⁴ Other idioms, like e.g. Zenaga, differentiate between the persons ; cf. C. Taine-Cheikh, in A. Mengozzi (ed.), *Studi Afroasiatici*, 98-100.

³⁵ Except Bedawye, with its conjugated adjectives ; cf. O. Rössler, *ZDMG* 100 [25] (1950), 483-484.

³⁶ L. Reinisch, *Das persönliche fürwort und die verbalflexion in den chamito-semitischen sprachen*, Wien 1909, in particular, e.g., 308.

³⁷ M. Mous, “Cushitic,” from [www.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/.../African%20\(Cushitic\)%20topics%20...%20Mous/CushiticTypology.pdf](http://www.ddl.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/.../African%20(Cushitic)%20topics%20...%20Mous/CushiticTypology.pdf) after G. Savà, *A grammar of Ts'amakko*, (Kuschitische Sprachstudien, 22), 146.

³⁸ G. Banti, “Evidence for a Second Type of Suffix Conjugation in Cushitic,” in *Proceedings of the Fourth International Hamito-Semitic Congress* (Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 44), 123-168; G. Banti, “New perspectives on the Cushitic Verbal System,” in *Proceedings of the twenty-seventh annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, March 22-25, 2001: A. Simpson (ed.), *Special Session on Afroasiatic Languages*, 1-48, in particular p. 6.

³⁹ The ending of the 1st person is *-ī, like the suffix pronoun. Note that no Cushitic language has an absolute pronoun in *-k, like Egyptian *ink*, Akkadian *anāku*, Biblical Hebrew *ʿanōkī*, Berber *nekk*.

2sf *ʿusub-á* *cusúb* Etc.

Banti reconstructs the personal morphs of this paradigm in this way:

1sc **-i-yi* (~ *-i-yu*)

2sc **-i-tu*

1pc **-i-nu*

2pc **-i-tin*

As for the use of this conjugation, he says,

In Saho-Afar and in Somali the reduced paradigm is characteristic of a lexically defined group of verb roots including ‘to be’ or copula, ‘to have’ and ‘to lack’, emotion-cognitive verbs such as ‘hate’, ‘love’, ‘know’, and adjectival concepts such as ‘white’, ‘red’, ‘new’, ‘long’, ‘bad’.⁴⁰

All these Afro-Asiatic suffix conjugations have in common that they are stative, and are mostly used of verbs of quality. This is in agreement with typical employment of the Akkadian stative. However, we do not find in the Cushitic and Berber forms an insertion of *-a-* before the personal endings of the 1st and 2nd persons, as in the Akkadian stative, and seemingly also in that variant of the Egyptian stative that is used for a similar type of verbs. But then — the ending *-a* of the absolutive case is never found with verb forms in Cushitic (as also not in Berber).

⁴⁰ M. Mous, “Cushitic,” 45.