South Cushitic links to East Cushitic

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The aim of this paper is to review Hetzron's arguments (1980: 70-78) to include Southern Cushitic within Eastern Cushitic, i.e. his Lowland Cushitic subgroup[1], on the basis of a growing corpus of Southern Cushitic morphological reconstructions and to discuss some more common candidates for diagnostic isomorphs.

The term Southern Cushitic is restricted here to four closely related languages - Iraqw, Gorwaa, Alagwa and Burunge - which constitute the West Rift branch (Ehret 1980: 132) that has to be regarded as the core of Southern Cushitic and probably its only indisputable branch. Dahalo has too many Eastern Cushitic features to be regarded as Southern Cushitic (Tosco 1989, Tosco 1990, Tosco 1991: xii; Tosco/Blažek 1994), Ma'a / Mbugu has too many admixtures from Bantu and Eastern Cushitic sources (Mous 1994, 1996), and Qwadza and Asax are not at all sufficiently described and probably never will be. The internal subgrouping of the remaining WR[2] languages according to Kießling (1998: 168) is as follows:

Proto West Rift

      I. North West Rift

            Iraqwoid: Iraqw, Gorwaa

            Alagwoid: Alagwa

      II. South West Rift

            Burunge

Hetzron (1980: 70ff.) mentions six isomorphs, four of which linking what he calls the "Iraqw cluster" to Cushitic in general, i.e. the gender markers, person marking verbal suffixes, "tense" suffixes, and verbal derivational suffixes; the remaining two

relating it to his LC group in particular, i.e. redundant subject marking (subject selector system)[3] and preverbal case marking. Rephrasing all of them here from an improved analytical point of view and on a sound comparative PWR basis, the general Cushitic features of PWR include:

1. the gender markers PWR *ta ~ *ti for feminine and PWR *ku for masculine which show up as linkers in nominal and pronominal possessive and in demonstrative constructions;

2. the causative PWR *-is and the mediopassive *-it (referred to as "passive" in Hetzron 1980: 72) of the verbal derivational system;

3. the person marking verbal suffixes: Cushitic parallels are not restricted to 2sg / 3sgf which is to be reconstructed as *-it in PWR (with reflexes -r and -t in modern Iraqw), but include 3sgm *-i and 1pl *-an as well (Kießling 1994, 1996). Besides this PWR displays the "orthodox" Cushitic "block" and "interlocking" patterns (Tucker 1967: 657);

4. "tense", or rather aspect: the PWR TAM system rests on two basic oppositions: indicative vs. subjunctive with the subjuncitve in *-`ee the marked category. In the indicative, an aspectual opposition operates with the perfective in *-i being the marked category vs. the non-perfective in *-a (Kießling 1996a, 1996b) which have developed into the tense suffixes -e ~ -i for past and -a for nonpast in modern Iraqw. Thus, PWR preserves a system which corresponds in form and function to the system which could be reconstructed for PC. The PWR subjunctive in *-`ee has parallels in some Somali paradigms (Kießling 1996: 69), but seems to be unaccounted for elsewhere. Besides we should not forget that it could also be an early transfer from East African Bantu languages, within a sociolinguistic scenario of widespread bilingualism and massive shift from local Bantu languages towards a dominating and more prestigious PWR language, a very likely historical setting in the light of Ehret's (1974) reconstructions and findings of early Southern Cushitic lexical loans into East Bantu languages.[4]

Hetzron's conclusion (1980: 72, 74) that the pre-negative position of person and tense/aspect markers (verb-subject+tense/aspect-negative) points to their former "pre-root position" is a misinterpretation that is due to a misconception of the historical origin of the verbal negative paradigm from nominal periphrasis. It is true that both negative morphemes of PWR, *-ká and *-bałi, are derived from independent verbs, PWR *kaħ "lack, not be there" and PWR *bał "lack, miss", respectively, but there is no hint, whatsoever, that they were inflected by prefixes originally, much more since both of them are recent innovations that don't seem to go beyond the PWR level. Instead both negative paradigms evolved from verbal periphrastic structures that consisted of suffix-conjugated main verbs plus a postponed negative verb or adjective, *kaħ or *bał, which was stripped off its inflectional suffixes in the course of grammaticalization, due to a process of terminal erosion (Kießling 1996a: 66). The markers for person and tense/aspect preserved in the negative paradigm are no remnants of putative *pre*fixes imported by a grammaticalized auxiliary, but remnants of the *suf*fixes on the main verb which were preserved more successfully here than in the affirmative, since they had been screened off from the terminal erosion process by the new negative suffixes.[5]

The features that Hetzron points out to be links of PWR to LC don't really stand up to closer examination, at least as Hetzron puts them, since both of them are mere typological parallels which are not sufficient to attest genetic relationship; but there is more in them than Hetzron could have realized in 1980.

The preverbal subject marking clitics PWR *{*ha*} S.1/2 vs. *{*hi*} S.3 are paralleled by clitics that display the same pattern of vocalization *a* for participants vs. *i* for referents in various Eastern Cushitic languages. e.g. in Dasenech (Sasse 1976), Elmolo (Heine 1976), Dullay (Amborn/Minker/Sasse 1980), Arbore (Hayward 1984). The situation is, however, not as simple as that, since in the Eastern Cushitic languages this vocalization mostly extends to the singular only, the plural forms, especially 1pl and 2pl showing up with special forms.[6] This suggests that the common ancestor of PWR and EC had a more complex system of preverbal subject

marking that was simplified in PWR by analogous levelling in a way that the vocalization pattern of the singular was extended to the plural.

Above that, within PWR, PIRQ retains a dependent subject marking series comprising of *{ni} for 1st person subjects and *{ta} for 2nd person subjects[7], derived from pre-WR pronominals *ʔani 1sg and *ʔata 2sg which are within Cushitic most closely related to the Eastern Cushitic subject pronouns *ʔani 1sg and *ʔati 2sg (Sasse 1981: 144, Ehret 1987: 28).

The parallels in preverbal case marking are, apart from their typological analogy, not really convincing, since all of the SC candidates for SC-LC cognates could also go back to independent innovations as argued in Kießling (1990, in prep.).

PWR *ra for the instrumental and comitative, compared to Oromo irraa "on, from" by Hetzron (1980: 78), most probably is a recent grammaticalization of the preposition PWR *hara "with" (from a Pre-WR verbal noun *hada "accompanying", cf. Kießling 1990: 76f.).

PIRQ *ʔal- for the comitative and posterior, compared to Oromo wal and Dasenech ʔol (Hetzron 1980: 76f., 112), is a recent innovation, the source of which is the noun PWR *ʔalu "back side", whereas PWR *ʔila- for the comitative is probably derived from PWR *ʔila "eye".

The preverbal case clitic with the most convincing LC etymology (Hetzron 1980: 76) is the benefactive *{sa} of PWR which is clearly linked to the PWR preposition *sa "for, on behalf of"[8], but the inflectionalization of some independent benefactive marker *sV possibly harks back to a historical period that includes PWR and Yaaku, since Yaaku also comes up with a related preverbal case marker si- for indirect objects, especially benefactives (Heine 1974/75: 44).

There is, however, some further evidence which could be added to Hetzron's list of diagnostic isomorphs: the nominal derivational system for number with its plural and singulative suffixes, adpositions, the imperative, the participle, the interrogative, and the negative.

Hayward's reconstruction of Proto Omo-Tana nominal plural suffixes in Corbett/Hayward 1987 matches remarkably closely some of the PWR nominal plural suffixes: POT *-oo (PS *-o, cf. Heine 1978: 46ff.), *-e, *-u and *-C_za(a) (PS *-aC, cf. Heine 1978: 46ff.) correspond to PWR *-oo, *-ee, *-u, and *-aC_za, respectively. And POT *-aani is reflected in the PWR adjectival plural suffix *-an. There seem to be no parallels, neither in Agaw (Appleyard 1988: 585ff., Hetzron 1976: 45f.) nor in Beja (Hudson 1974: 120); the crucial point here, however, is that it has not been proved so far, if this plural system is a POT / PEC innovation or a retention from PC times.

The fossilized singulative marker *-it of PWR, as in the PWR compound suffixes *-itaʔoo (f) and *-itu (m), harks back to the AA feminine formative *t with its singulative specialization. So this feature only confirms the Cushitic membership of PWR, but no closer historical link to the PEC singulative *-it (Corbett/Hayward 1987: 16)[9]. The fossilized singulative suffix *-inoo (m) of PWR contains a masculine formative *n which developed a singulative meaning at least in some Eastern Cushitic languages. There is a masculine suffix -n for the singulative in Arbore (Hayward 1984: 180f.). Sasse (Amborn/Minker/Sasse 1980: 86) describes a masculine suffix -no for deriving verbal nouns and infinitives. Dahalo comes up with a suffix -´ne for the singulative (Tosco 1991: 34). And in Oromo, there is a marginal suffix -Nóo that derives the noun of agent (in Harar-Oromo, see Owens 1985: 250) and a verbal noun (in Waata-Oromo, see Heine 1981: 42).

Some adpositions of PWR show remarkable parallels to Eastern Cushitic preverbal case clitics, to those of the Omo-Tana group in particular. Thus the allative postposition *i of PWR is clearly related to the dative/benefactive i of Tunni (Tosco 1997: 101), to the goal case clitic i of Bayso (Hayward 1979: 108) and the benefactive i- of Rendille (Heine 1975/76: 209). And the postposition PWR *koo for background and range functions could be seen as cognate to the Omo-Tana case clitics containing k which cover a wide semantic array of ablative, locative and instrumental functions (Tosco 1993: 174ff., Andrzejewski 1960, Biber 1984).

The PWR imperative suffixes *-*i* for the singular and *-*a* for the plural has neither Agaw (Hetzron 1976: 58) nor Beja paralles (Hudson 1974: 134), but plenty in Eastern Cushitic, e.g. in Oromo -*i* sg. vs. -*aa* pl. (Stroomer 1995: 72; Gragg 1976: 188), Bayso -*ín* sg. vs. -*á* pl. (Hayward 1978: 563) and Dullay -*i* sg. vs. -*a* pl. (Amborn/Minker/Sasse 1980: 114f.). Widespread is a suffix -*a* for the imperative plural, e.g. Rendille (Heine 1975/76: 206), Bayso (Hayward 1978: 563), Boni (Heine 1977: 266), Elmolo (Heine 1976: 293), Arbore (Hayward 1984: 265), Dasenech (Sasse 1976: 211). With regard to general AA reconstructions, the opposition of *-*i* for the imperative singular and *-*a* for the imperative plural seems to be at least a neat common retention of Southern and Eastern Cushitic.

The participle of PWR (Kießling in prep.) relates typologically very roughly to the so-called "impoverished" paradigms of EC (Andrzejewski 1978, Hetzron 1974). The parallel does not extend beyond the phenomenon of the "impoverishment", however, since the reduced paradigm obeys different patterns in WR and in EC.

The PWR interrogative morpheme *ma* is an inheritance from Afroasiatic. And the PNWR / PIRQ negative proclitic *{ma} in the prohibitive could be linked to the PEC negative particle *ma(ʔ) (Sasse 1979: 63), but it could also be viewed as a recent PNWR grammaticalization of the verb PWR *maw* "let, leave, abstain from" in verbal periphrasis.

By and large, the evidence for the inclusion of Southern Cushitic, i.e. West Rift, within Cushitic in general is convincing beyond doubt, but its closer affiliation to EC rests on typological criteria mostly. If the nominal plural suffixes and the preverbal clitic clusters could be demonstrated to be distinctive and exclusive Eastern Cushitic innovations within Cushitic, then Southern Cushitic, i.e. West Rift, would definitely go with it according to Hetzron's LC-hypothesis, but as long as there is no reliable reconstruction of EC and PC grammar, we also have to keep in mind Fleming's (1983: 22) hypothesis of Old East African Cushitic which sees SC plus Yaaku as descendents from the very first split of Cushitic.

[1] A view also proposed in Ehret (1995: 490) on the basis of a lexical reconstruction

[2] Abbreviations: AA Afro-Asiatic, EC East Cushitic, LC Lowland Cushitic, N homorganic nasal, PC Proto Cushitic, PEC Proto East Cushitic, PIRQ Proto Iraqwoid, PNWR Proto North West Rift, POT Proto Omo-Tana, PS Proto Sam, PWR Proto West Rift, S subject, SC Southern Cushitic, TAM tense/aspect/mood, WR West Rift

[3] an isomorph already recognzied by Zaborski (1975: 164)

[4] Another convincing etymology of a TAM morpheme is PWR *{*ing*} for the completive and anterior and the Elmolo past in *Vn*- (Hetzron 1980: 78).

[5] Sorry, folks and archaists, for disrupting your prefix-conjugating fata-morganas! However, nothing like prefix inflection is involved here.

[6] Dasenech (Sasse 1976: 209): (*h*)*a* S.1sg/2sg, (*h*)*a i* S.3sg (and pl?) and S.2pl, (*h*)*a ki* S.1pl.incl, (*h*)*a nyi* S.1pl.excl; Arbore (Hayward 1984: 108): -*N* ~ *ʔam*- S.1sg, 0 ~ *ʔam*- S.2sg, -*y* ~ 0 S.3sg, -*na* S.1pl, -*N* ~ *ʔim*- S.2pl, -*so* S.3pl; Dullay (Amborn/Minker/Sasse 1980: 81): *an*-, *aC*- S.1sg/1pl, *aC*- S.2sg/2pl, *a*-, *i*- S.3sg, *i*- S.3pl; Elmolo (Heine 1976: 296f.): *ang*- S.1sg, *á*- S.2sg, *í*- S.3sg, *innó*- S.1pl, ? S.2pl, *i(só)*- S.3pl.

[7] Hetzron (1980: 74) seems to mistake them as reflexes of archaic subject prefixes again, since he interprets the temporal proclitic *{*waa*} "when" of PIRQ in the Iraqw temporal selectors *niwaa* 1sg and *tawaa* 2sg as a verb, which is incorrect, both synchronically and diachronically. Comparative evidence points towards the origin of PIRQ *{*waa*} from the PWR ablative postposition *wa which was drawn into the preverbal clitic cluster by the force of verbal attraction that operated similarly on a number of different adpositions and conjunctions.

[8] There is also a plausible alternative etymology from PWR *saga "head".

[9] For more Eastern Cushitic parallels see Kießling (1994: 64f.).

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