

---

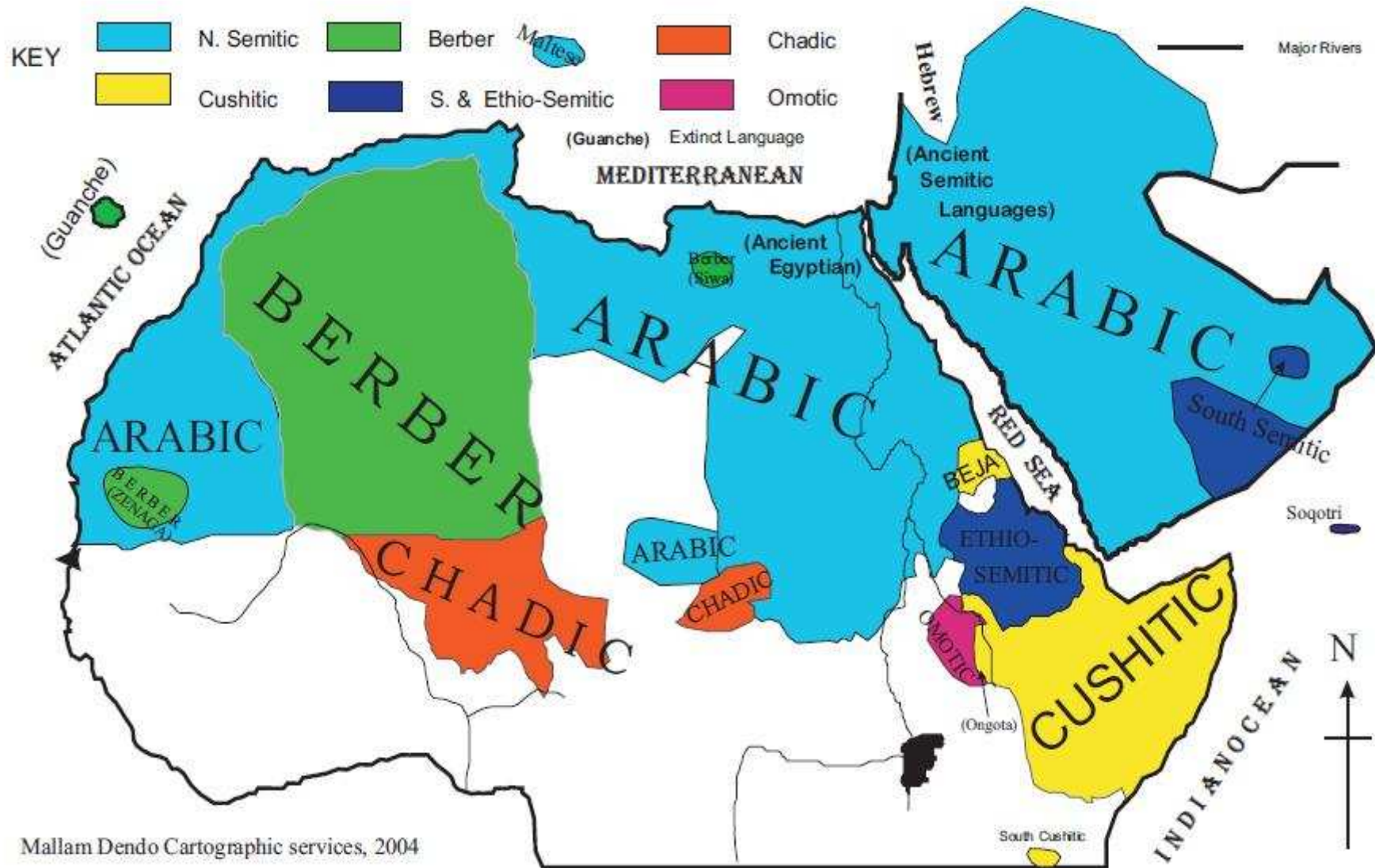
# Afroasiatic languages

---

Nina Valtavirta

7.10.2009

# OUTLINE MAP OF THE AFRO-ASIATIC LANGUAGE PHYLUM: PRESENT-DAY



---

# Multitree: Composite 2008

- <http://multitree.linguistlist.org/trees/14902@598206>
    - Ehret, Christopher. 1995. *Reconstructing Proto-Afroasiatic: Vowels, Tone, Consonants, and Vocabulary*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
    - Fleming, Harold C. 1981. Chadic external relations. In Hilke Meyer-Bahlburg & Ekkehard Wolff (eds.), *Studies in Chadic and Afroasiatic Linguistics*, 17-31. Hamburg: Helmut Buske.
    - Gignac, Francis Thomas. 1991. Old Coptic, *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 169-188. Toronto: Macmillan .
    - Gordon, Raymond G. (ed.). 2005. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 15 edn. <http://www.ethnologue.com/>. (09 July, 2008.)
    - Gutt, Ernst-August. 1997. The Silte Languages (East Gurage). In Robert Hetzron (ed.), *The Semitic languages*, 509-534. London: Routledge. ISBN 0415057671, 9780415057677
    - Hetzron, Robert. 1972. *Ethiopian Semitic: Studies in Classification*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
    - Kasser, Radolphe. 1991. Dialects, *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 87-96. Toronto: Macmillan .
    - Kaufman, Stephen A. 1997. The Aramaic languages. In Robert Hetzron (ed.), *The Semitic languages*, 114-130. London: Routledge. ISBN 0415057671, 9780415057677
    - Loprieno, Antonio. 1995. *Ancient Egyptian: A Linguistic Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
    - Newman, Paul. 1990. *Nominal and Verbal Plurality in Chadic*. Dordrecht: Foris.
    - Newman, Paul. 2008. Chadic and Hausa. In Bernard Comrie (ed.), *The World's Major Languages*, 2nd edn. London: Routledge.
    - Rubin, Aaron D. 2007. *The Subgrouping of the Semitic Languages*, *Language and Linguistics Compass*, vol. 1.
    - The LINGUIST List.
-

---

## Six branches of AA

- Berber
  - Chadic
  - Egyptian
  - Semitic
  - Cushitic
  - Omotic
-

---

# Chadic

- Newman: approx. 140 Chadic languages
  - Spoken in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, CAR and Niger
  - Hausa best known and biggest
  - Most Chadic languages are fairly or very small
  - 4 subbranches
-

---

# 1. West Chadic

- Nigeria, subbranches A and B

A: 4 groups

- Hausa
- Bole
- Angas
- Ron

B: 3 groups

- Bade, Ngizim
  - Warji
  - Boghom
-

---

## 2. Biu-Mandara

- N. Cameroon, n-e. Nigeria and Chad,  
3 subbranches

A: Tera, Bura, Kamwe, Lamang, Mafa, Sukur,  
Daba, Bachama-Bata

B: Buduma, Musgu

C: Gidar

---

---

## 3. East Chadic

- Southern Chad, Cameroon and CAR,  
2 subbranches

A: 3 groups: Tumak/Somrai, Nancere, Kera

B: Dangaleat, Mokulu, Sokoro

---



---

## 4. Masa

- s-w Chad, n. Cameroon
  - Independent branch
  - 9 varieties
    - Masana
    - Musey
    - Zumana
    - ...
-

---

# Egyptian

- long written history
    - Old Egyptian (3100 BC – 2000 BC)
    - Middle Egyptian (2000 BC – 1300 BC)
    - Late Egyptian, Hieratic, Demotic, Coptic
-

---

# Semitic

- The most studied branch of AA
  - Some fifty different varieties
  - 3 subfamilies:
    - North-east Semitic
    - North-west Semitic
    - South Semitic
-

---

# 1. North-east Semitic

- Akkadian group
- Eblaite (language of northern Mesopotamia 2000 BC)



---

## 2. North-west Semitic

- 2 branches:
    - Central Semitic: Aramaic: Old and modern
    - South central Semitic
      - Canaanite: Phoenician (Punic when spread to Carthage), biblical Hebrew, modern Hebrew and possibly Ugaritic
      - Arabic: Several regional varieties spoken in Middle East and North Africa, Modern Standard/Literary Arabic
-

---

## 3. South Semitic

- South Arabian: dead varieties: Hadrami, Minaean, Qatabanian, Sabaean only known from scriptures
  - Ethio-Semitic:
    - North Ethiopic: Gi'iz, Tigre, Tigrinya
    - South Ethiopic:
      - Transversal: Amharic, Harari
      - Outer: Gafat,
-

---

# Cushitic

- Unity debated
  - below Richard Hayward's view of six subgroups
    1. Northern Cushitic
    2. Central Cushitic
    3. Highland East Cushitic
    4. Lowland East Cushitic
    5. Dullay
    6. Southern Cushitic
-

---

# Different view

<http://multitree.linguistlist.org/trees/14395@547154>

## East Cushitic branch:

- ❑ Yaaku
  - ❑ Dullay
  - ❑ Somali
  - ❑ Saho-Afar
  - ❑ Western Omo-Tana
  - ❑ Highland
  - ❑ Rendille-Boni
  - ❑ Konso-Gidole
  - ❑ Oromo
  - ❑ Boon
-



---

# 1. Northern Cushitic

- Bedawi/Beja spoken in an area overlapping Sudan, Egypt and Eritrea



---

## 2. Central Cushitic

- Agaw languages, n-w Ethiopia and Eritrea
    - Bilin
    - Kemant
    - Kwara
    - Xamtanga
    - Awngi
-

---

## 3. Highland East Cushitic

- Burji
  - Sidamo
  - Kambata
  - Hadiyya
-

---

## 4. Lowland East Cushitic

### 3 subgroups

- Northern: Afar and Saho
  - Oromoid group
    - Oromo varieties spoken from the Tana River in Kenya to Sudan borders and Tigray in Ethiopia
    - Konsoid dialect chain
  - Omo-Tana
    - Eastern: Rendille, Boni, Somali and its many varieties
    - Western: Daasenech, Arbore, Elmolo \*-\*
    - Isolated Bayso, that has features from Eastern and Western divisions.
-

---

## 5. Dullay

- Linguistic chain near Wäyt'o valley
    - Tsamay
    - Gawwada
    - Bussa
-

---

## 6. Southern Cushitic

- Mostly in Tanzania
    - Iraqw cluster: Iraqw, Gorowa, Burunge, Mbugu/Ma'a (a fine mixed language), Asax \* \_\* and possibly \* \_\* Kw'adza
    - Outside of Tanzania is spoken the Dahalo
-

---

# Omotic

- Probably the most debated subfamily within Afroasiatic
  - Omotic hypothesis: two subgroups
    - North Omotic: Aari, Hamer-Banna, Karo and Dime
    - South Omotic: At least 2 main divisions:
      - s-w Ethiopia, Kafa region: **Dizoid**: Dizi, Nayi, Sheko,
      - **Gonga-Gimojan**:
        - Gonga proper (Kaficho, Shakacho, Boro)
        - Gimojan: Yemsa, Gimira-Ometo
-

---

# Ehret 1995

## **I Omotic**

- A. North Omotic
- B. South Omotic

## **II Erythraean**

### **A. Cushitic**

- 1. Beja
- 2. Agaw
- 3. East-south Cushitic
  - a) Eastern Cushitic
  - b) Southern Cushitic

### **B. North Erythraean**

- 1) **Chadic**
  - 2) **Boreafrasian**: Egyptian, Berber, Semitic
-



---

# Boreafrasian subgroup: Egyptian, Berber, Semitic

- Two classes of phonological innovation shared by Berber, Egyptian and Semitic, but not found from Cushitic, Chadic or Omotic branches

## 1. Two laws:

- A) A co-occurrence constraint disallowing all sequences of PAA \*t followed by any dental/alveolar obstruent in C1 or C2 positions on the root

PAA \*t → ?/#\_VC (C=dental obstruent)

- B) A co-occurrence constraint disallowing any sequences of sibilants in the same environment

PAA \*z → \*d/C [+sibilant] in the same word

---

---

# Boreafrasian subgroup

2. Sequence of 2 sound shifts:

#1 PAA \*s', \*s → PBA \*s

#2 PAA \*h → PBA \*ħ (?)

---

---

# Proto-Afroasiatic (PAA)

- Ehret 1995
  - Rich consonant inventory:
    - Obstruents organized as triads contrasting glottalized with plain voiced and voiced series
    - Guttural series including laryngeals and pharyngeals
-

Table 9: Consonants of Proto-Afroasiatic (Proto-Afrasian)

<u>PAA</u>	<u>PS</u>	<u>Eg.</u>	<u>PCh</u>	<u>PC</u>	<u>PO</u>
*b	*b	b	*b	*b	*b
*c	*θ (*tʰ?)	s	*s	*ts	*š <sub>3</sub>
*c'	*θ (*tʰ'?)	s	*š' (S: *s')	*c'	*č'
*d	*d	d	*d	*d	*d
*dl	*ḏ (*ḏ?)	ḏ	*ḏ	*dl	*d'
*dz	*ḏ (*dʰ?)	z	*z	*dz	*ž
*f	*p	f	*f	*f	*p
*g	*g	g	*g	*g	*g
*g <sup>w</sup>	*g	g	*g <sup>w</sup>	*g <sup>w</sup>	*g
*ɣ	*ɣ	ḡ	*ɣ ? (Ng. g)	*ɣ	*x <sub>1</sub>
*ɣ <sup>w</sup>	*ɣ	ḡ	*ɣ <sup>w</sup> ? (Ng. gw)	*ɣ <sup>w</sup>	*x <sub>1</sub>
*h	*h	h	*h	*h	*h <sub>1</sub>
*ḥ	*ḥ	ḥ	*h	*ḥ	∅, *h <sub>1</sub> /#_;
*j	*ḏ (*dʰ?)	z	*z	*dz	*h <sub>1</sub> /V_
*k	*k	k	*k	*k	*š <sub>1</sub> /#_;
*k <sup>w</sup>	*k	k	*k <sup>w</sup>	*k <sup>w</sup>	*č/V_
*k'	*ḳ (*k')	ḳ	*k'	*k'	*k
*k <sup>w</sup> '	*ḳ (*k')	ḳ	*k <sup>w</sup> '	*k <sup>w</sup> '	*k'
*l	*l	n (i/#_i; r/_#)	*l	*l	*k <sup>w</sup> '
*ɫ	*ɫ	š	*ɫ	*ɫ	*l
*m	*m	m	*m	*m	*m
*n	*n	n	*n	*n	*n

Table 9: Consonants of Proto-Afroasiatic (Afrasian) (continued)

<u>PAA</u>	<u>PS</u>	<u>Eg.</u>	<u>PCh</u>	<u>PC</u>	<u>PO</u>
*ŋ	*n	n	*ŋ (Ng. n)	*ŋ	*n /#_ ; *ng /V_V ; *g /V_-#
*ŋ <sup>w</sup> ?	*n	n	(?)	*ŋ <sup>w</sup>	(?)
*ɲ (?)	*n	n	(*ɲ?) (Ng. n)	*ɲ	*ɲ /#_
*p	*p	p	*p	*p	*p
*p'	*b	p	*b	*p'	*p'
*r	*r	r	*r	*r	*d /#_ ; *r /V_-
		(ʒ /_#)			
*s	*s	s	*s <sub>3</sub> (N: *š)	*s	*s
*s'	*s	s	*s'	*ts'	*s'
*š	*c	s	*s (*s <sub>1</sub> )	*š	*š <sub>1</sub> (*š <sub>2</sub> /i_)
*t	*t	t	*t	*t	*t
*t'	*t̥ (*t')	s	*s'	*t'	*ts'
*tl'	*š (*s')	t̥	*tl (*t <sub>1</sub> )	*tl [tl']	*d'
*ts	*θ (*tʃ?)	s	*s	*ts	*ts
*w	*w	w	*w	*w	*w
*x	*x	ħ	*x? (Ng. k)	*x	*x <sub>2</sub>
*x <sup>w</sup>	*x	ħ	*x <sup>w</sup> ? (Ng. kw)	*x <sup>w</sup>	*x <sub>1</sub> ?
*y	*y	i, y	*y	*y	*y
*z	*z	z	*d	*z	*z
*ʔ	*ʔ	ʒ [ʔ]	*ʔ, Ø	*ʔ	*ʔ, Ø
*ʕ	*ʕ	c [ʕ]	*ʔ, Ø	*ʕ	*ʔ, Ø

**Table 4: Afroasiatic (Afrasian) Vowel Correspondences**

<u>PAA</u>	<u>PC</u>	<u>PCh</u>	<u>North Omotic</u>
*a	*a	*a	*a
*aa	*aa	*a	*a:
*e	*e	*a	*e (> *i in several environments)
*ee	*ee	*ə	*e:
*i	*i	*ə	*e (> *i in several environments)
*ii	*ii	*i	*i:
*o	*o	*a	*o (> *u /_[+labial])
*oo	*oo	*ə	*o:
*u	*u	*ə	*o (> *u /_[+labial])
*uu	*uu	*u	*u:

---

## Typology:

AA languages have things in common

- Personal pronouns
  - Case markers
  - Conjugational features of the verb
  - Plural formatives
  - Other morphological evidence
    - Verb derivation
    - Further case markers
    - Lexicon and phonology
-

---

# Personal pronouns

- Providing strong support for the AA "hypothesis"
    - Omotic languages not showing so strong evidence, but enough
  - Possessive determiners and object complement functions rather than subject function
  - Except of Chadic and Omotic there also is another group of independent pronouns with nom. marking
-



---

# Personal pronouns...

Semitic    Egyptian    Cushitic    Chadic    Omotic

1011. *i or *yi "me, my" (bound 1st- person sing. pronoun)	*-i "me, my" (suff.)	<i>i</i> "I, me, my" (suffixed 1st- person pron.)	*i or *yi "my" (PSC *-i, *ayi; 2nd form: *a- attrib. pref. + stem; EC: Afar <i>yi</i> ; etc.)	*i "me, my" (bound pron.)	SOm: Ari <i>i</i> "I, me, my"
--	----------------------------	--	--	---------------------------------	----------------------------------



	<u>SEMITIC</u>	<u>EGYPTIAN</u>	<u>CUSHITIC</u>	<u>CHADIC</u>	<u>OMOTIC</u>
311. *ku, *ka "you" (masc. sing. bound pron.) (*ka as Eg., Sem., Ch. innovation ?)	A. <i>-ka</i> 2nd person masc. sing. suff. (PS *-ka)	<i>k</i> 2nd person masc. sing. suff. (C. <i>-k</i> ); <i>ntk</i> "you (masc. sing.)" (indep. pron. base <i>nt-</i> + root)	PSC *ku "your (masc. sing.)"	*kV (*ka, *ku) "you (masc. sing.)" (Ng. <i>ka</i> , <i>cì</i> )	

323. *kuuna "you (pl. bound)" (root #311 + old Afro-asiatic pl. in *n, as also in #210)	MSA *-kn "you; your (fem. pl. suff.)" (PS *kəna)	<i>tn</i> "you" (pl. suff.; C. <i>-tēnε</i> ); <i>nttn</i> "you (pl.)" (indep. pron. base <i>nt-</i> + root)	PSC *kuna "your (pl.)" (V-shortening is as yet unexplained, but may well be to old morphological rules)	*kun "you (pl.)" (Ng. <i>kùn</i> )	
--	---	---	--	---------------------------------------	--

727. *ʔânt-/*ʔînt- or *ânt-/*înt- "you (sing.)"	*ʔnt "you (sing.)"		*ʔânt- "you (sing.)"		*int- "you (sing.)" ? (according to Fleming 1974; Bench <i>yint</i> <sup>2</sup> "you (polite)")
---	-----------------------	--	-------------------------	--	---

---

# Case markers

- Proto AA system

## **Absolutive \*-a**

least marked, basic form on the basis on distribution

## **Nominative \*-u**

unfocused NP subjects

- Semitic, Cushitic, Berber, Egyptian not found in Chadic, in Omotic only some possible traces (and most likely an Acc. system originally)

BUT

- Distinct nominative in masculine declension
  - In Cushitic nominative marker -i is much more widespreadn than -u (possible innovation)
-

---

# Conjugational features of the verb

Prefix-conjugation: subject agreement, forms not related to pronoun forms discussed earlier

- Semitic
  - Berber
  - Certain verbs in Cushitic
  - Chadic? Preverbal pronominal elements, but they seem to relate to primary pronoun forms
  - Omotic -?
-

---

# Plural formatives

- Multiple plural formatives common in AA languages
    - ablaut to *a* (Semitic, Berber, Cushitic, Chadic)
      - S. Akkadian: sg. *malk* pl. *malak*
    - pl-suffix with labio-velar glide *w* (Semitic, Berber, Cushitic, Chadic)
    - "Almost certainly" also *-t* which can be found also from Omotic, that has none of the others
-

---

## Other morphological evidence

- Verb derivation
    - Transivitazing/causative affix s- ~ -s in all 6 families
  - Further case markers (at least in three families)
    - Locative terminative, dative -Vš, - šV
    - Directive -/
    - Ablative-comparative -kV
  - Gender and gender markers (fem. -(a)t )
  - Lexicon and phonology
-

---

## Sources:

- Ehret, Christopher 1995: *Reconstructing Proto-Afroasiatic (Proto-Afrasian)*. Berkeley, University of California Press.
  - Heine, B. & Nurse, D. 2000: *African languages. An Introduction*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
-