

## ENERGICUS AND OTHER MODALS IN CUSHITIC

Andrzej Zaborski

'Afar<sup>1</sup> and Saho languages of the East Cushitic branch have preserved several important archaisms among which modal endings are of special importance here. E.g. in Saho (Banti and M. Vergari in Vergari & Vergari 2003: 160) there is -o ending of the "Subjunctive", e.g. a-arhag-o<sup>2</sup> 'the I know' which has a good cognate in 'Afar ending -u(h) in what Parker and Hayward (1985: 263) call "Purposive 1": a-duur-u(h) 'that I return', ta-duur-u(h) 'that you (sing.) return', ya-duur-u(h) 'the he returns' etc.; in "Imperfect probable" with takkeh 'perhaps, maybe, probably' (cf. Bliese 1981: 77–78): a-duur-u(h) takkeh 'I may return', ta-duur-u(h) takkeh 'you may return' etc.; in periphrastic "Intentive": a-duur-u waa 'I am intending/about to return', ta-duur-u wayta 'you (sing.) are intending/about to return' etc. This -u ending is probably related to the ending -u found in Arabic "Imperfect" and in Akkadian "Subordinative" (usually but with reservations called "Subjunctive"). This is most probably the case of a shift of a form originally used in main clauses to dependent clauses.<sup>3</sup>

These generally "Subjunctive" forms of 'Afar are related to Dasanach "Dependent" and "Jussive" -u (Tosco 2001: 117) and the Somali Subjunctive with -o, e.g. lp. n-all-o, ni-maad-o, ni-raah-o (Moreno 1955: 103–106). Moreover in 'Afar we have the ending -o which is used in "Requestive" (called "Consultative"

<sup>1</sup> According to the Djibouti spelling which has not been really implemented yet this original name is sometimes spelt "Qafar" with the initial letter q for the pharyngal fricative 'ayn like in Arabic and Somali – this spelling is quite misleading in texts about 'Afar in other languages and should be avoided outside Djibouti.

<sup>2</sup> Rh is an spelling convention for voiced retroflex flap!

<sup>3</sup> Usually Assyriologists and many Semitists claim that Akkadian "Subjunctive" use of forms with -u, viz. iprus-u is older and that its use in main clauses as "Imperfect" in Arabic is later but this is based on the preconceived idea that Akkadian must be more archaic in every respect which is wrong since Akkadian represents important archaisms but it also shows innovations. A shift of a verbal category from dependent clauses to main clauses is much, much less frequent than the shift from main clauses to dependent clauses in languages of different families. Although not universal, this process is very widely spread.

by Bliese 1981: 146, who transcribes final long -oo with stress as high to falling tone): a-duur-o ‘May I return?’, na-duur-o ‘May we return?’ (special interrogative paradigms being an Ethiopian areal feature!) in which, quite likely, the segmental shape of these forms has final -u, and the lowering to a mid vowel quality as well as lengthening are concomitant to the interrogative sentence prosody (Parker & Hayward 1985: 280, and especially Bliese 1981: 146), see also the length of the -oo of the Jussive in some dialects of Saho (Banti and Vergari in Vergari & Vergari 2003: 16). In ‘Afar this -u contrasts with the ending -e(h) that occurs both in the Perfect indicative, e.g. u-duur-e(h) ‘I returned’, and in the Imperfect indicative, e.g. a-duur-e(h) ‘I return’, and in several periphrastic paradigms (see also Vergari & Vergari 2003: 16). So far it has been impossible to find a cognate of this ending in Semitic languages. The ending -e of Rendille “Optative” (Pillinger & Galboran 1999: 43 found in a i-maat-e ‘let me come!’, a ti-maat-e ‘let her come!’, a ni-maat-e ‘let us come!’ etc. might have a connection with ‘Afar (although past tense forms can be used for jussive and optative, see ‘Afar -e in the Perfect!) but it may be connected with Subjunctive with -ee/e in Burunge, e.g. ana doosl-e, in German ‘ich soll anbauen’ (Kiessling 1994: 155).

Somali “Imperfect” ending -a, e.g. i-maad-a ‘I (usually) come’, i-raah-a ‘I say’, a-ll-a ‘I am/stay’ and Dhasanach “Imperfect” -a (with variants -e and -o conditioned by vowel harmony, see Tosco 2001: 116) versus “Perfect” forms in Somali ni-mid, ni-ri, n-aaley (Moreno 1955: 102–106) and Dhaasenech -i (Tosco 2001: 113). It is not clear whether there may be a genetic connection with Arabic and Ugaritic, probably also Old Akkadian “Subjunctive” -a.

On the other hand there is a high probability that there is a cognate to Semitic -an functioning in Arabic *Energicus I*, in Epigraphic South Arabian Sabaic and Minean, in Ugaritic *Energicus*, in Modern South Arabian, e.g. Mehri “Conditional” and in Accadian *verba movendi* forms traditionally called “Ventive”.<sup>4</sup> There is the ending -en in the following categories of ‘Afar:

<sup>4</sup> Assyriologists seem to have been immensely influenced by the authority of B. Landsberger who introduced the notion of “Ventive” into Akkadian grammar and almost nobody dares to question it. In my opinion *Energicus* survived in Akkadian mainly with motion verbs and it is rather natural that allative and dative functions, originally secondary, could have acquired a primary status with some of such verbs and in some contexts also under some Sumerian influence as suggested by Streck. But the fact that Akkadian *illik-am* and *išpuram* mean both “he came to me” and “he came to you”, “he wrote to me” and “he wrote to you” indicates that that “direction” as such is the inherent feature of the verbs and not of the ending -am; it is only natural that *tallikam* means “you came to me” and not “you came to yourself”, *ašpuram* “I wrote to you” and not “I wrote to myself”. It must be also emphasized that there are many instances of forms with -am of non-motion verbs where “allative” or “dative” interpretation does not make sense at all (see Kouwenberg 2002: 231–233). Cf. Also Zevi 1999.

## “Purposive”

1s. a-duur-en keh ‘that I return’	1p. na-duur-en keh
2s. ta-duur-en keh	2p. ta-duur-en keh
3ms. ya-duur-en keh	3p. ya-duur-en keh
3fs. ta-duur-en keh	

Parker and Hayward (1985: 263) spell these forms as aduurenkeh, taduurenkeh etc. but the final -keh is most probably related to akah/kah ‘for which, for whom’ and can be separated as a morph.

There seems to be an -em variant of this -en in which the final -m may be due to a dissimilation caused by the initial dental t- of takkeh ‘perhaps’ following these forms in “Perfect probable” where the prefix has -u- morph of the Perfect:

1s. u-duur-em takkeh ‘I may/might have returned’	1p. nu-duur-em takkeh
2s. tu-duur-em takkeh	2p. tu-duur-een-im takkeh
3ms. yu-duur-em takkeh	3p. yu-duur-een-im takkeh
3fs. tu-duur-em takkeh	

while in “Imperfect Probable” the prefixes have -a- morph of the imperfect: a-duur-em takkeh ‘I may return’, ta-duur-em takkeh ‘you may return’, etc. It must be emphasized that both -en and -em variants are stressed!

It is very interesting that in Dhaasanach there are two variant endings -m- and -nn- which appear in the “Imperfective extension” and have “a basic non-punctual meaning, implying repeated, continuous, still-on-going or yet-to-be-completed action” (Tosco 2001: 141, 143–154), e.g. from raf ‘to sleep’ there is rafama and rafananna, from kuf ‘to die’ there is kufuma and kufunanna with “dependent” kuf-u-nan; in one of the prefix-conjugated verbs, viz. ali ‘to stand, to be’ (a cognate of Somali al. ‘to stay, remain’) there is Perfect yiegel-mi, Imperfect yegel-me and “Dependent” yegel-en/tegel-en. Tosco (2001: 141, 143–154) explains them as going back to the \*-am suffix of the passive derived verbs (it occurs also in Berber!) which has allegedly lost its original meaning altogether. The problem needs further research but the connection with energicus cannot be excluded.

Perhaps there is a trace of an old Energic in Arbore “infinitive” endings -um and -me which, in case of “strong” or prefix-conjugated verbs are added to the 3 masc. sing. Perfect stem (Hayward 1984: 301, 263, 302), e.g. yenBete ‘he stepped’ and “Infinitive” yenBet-um. But the fact that -um is masculine and -me is feminine makes this hypothesis quite dubious.

There is also -na which is added to common Cushitic -o Jussive in Hadiyya (G. Hudson 1976: 268) which might be taken into consideration.

It is quite unclear whether there may be a connection with “the expectational -n” of Iraqw in which it “serves to express expectation or obligation, to express that the action is an automatic result or that there can be no doubt” (Mous 1993: 144).

There is another ‘Afar paradigm which may be connected with *Energicus*, namely “Jussive” which has unstressed (the stress is on the stem vowel) -ay (Parker & Hayward 1985, cf. Bliese 1981: 141–144), in other dialect of ‘Afar -oy and -uy (Colizza 1887: 29 where the vowels are transcribed as phonetically long and stressed and there is -ay in the second and the third person plural):

1s. a- duur-ay ‘let me return’	1p. na-duur-ay
2s. ta-duur-ay	2p. ta-duur-ay
3ms. ya-duur-ay	3p. ya-duur-ay
3fs. ta-duur-ay	

There is a possibility that this -ay goes back to -an although this cannot be proven now. What is important, this “Jussive” has a good cognate in stressed -ay of the Beja Negative Optative of the weak verbs (R. A. Hudson 1976: 121; see also Roper 1928: 52; cf. 62, 67) which is a very old form since in this paradigm weak verbs elsewhere no longer conjugated with Afroasiatic verbal prefixes are conjugated with these prefixes like “strong” verbs:

#### Negative Optative

1s. b-aa-tam-ay ‘don’t let me eat!’	1p. bi-n-tam-ay
2ms. bi-t-tam-ay	2p. bi-t-tam-ay-n
2fs. bi-t-tam-ay-a	
3ms. bi-i-tam-ay	3p. bi-i-tam-ay-na
3fs. bi-t-tam-ay	

It is remarkable that in the second and in the third person plural the plural -n(a) occurs after -ay but this may be due either to a metathesis in \*bi-t-tam-na-ay, \*bi-i-tam-na-ay and/or analogical pressure of other paradigms where -na/n is always final. Also feminine -a of the second person singular may have been reintroduced to preserve the gender and person contrast.

On the other hand it is not clear at all whether there may be a genetic connection with stressed -eey of Rendille “Concessive” (Pilinger & Galboran 1999: 44) but such a link cannot be excluded:

1s. i-miy-eeey 'even if I come'	1p. ni-miy-eeey
2s. ti-miy-eeey	2p. ti-maat-eeen-eeey
3ms. yi-miy-eeey	3p. yi-maat-eeen-eeey

At least the evidence of 'Afar -en shows that Energicus as a grammatical category, whatever its origin may be (see Zaborski 1996; cf. Zewi 1999) is not limited to Semitic but it is a Semitic-Cushitic isogloss. Whether it could be identified also with -n-e in -n-e-t occurring in the Injunctive of the Ghadamsi dialect of Berber (cf. Kossmann 2000: 32–35; Berber seems to have lost modal endings altogether), e.g. n-aknef-(n)et in French 'que nous rotiissions' is a very difficult question.

## REFERENCES

- BLIESE L. 1981. *A Generative Grammar of Afar*. Dallas: SIL.
- COLIZZA, G. 1887. *Lingua 'Afar*. Vienna: A. Hoelder.
- HAYWARD, D. 1984. *The Arbore Language*. Hamburg: Buske Verlag.
- HUDSON, G. 1976. Highland East Cushitic. In: M. L. Bender (ed.), *The Non-semitic Languages of Ethiopia*: 232–277. East Lansing: African Studies Center.
- HUDSON, R. A. 1976. Beja. In: M. L. Bender (ed.), *The Non-semitic Languages of Ethiopia*: 97–132. East Lansing: African Studies Center.
- KIESSLING, R. 1994. *Eine Grammatik des Burunge*. Hamburg: Research and Progress Verlag.
- KOSSMANN, M. 2000. Les desinences modales en berbère. *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 74: 25–39.
- KOUWENBERG, N. J. C. 2002. Ventive, dative and allative in Old Babylonian. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 92: 200–240.
- MORENO, M. M. 1955. *Il somalo della Somalia*. Roma: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato.
- MOUS, M. 1993. *A Grammar of Iraqw*. Hamburg: Buske Verlag.
- PARKER, E. M. & R. J. HAYWARD 1985. *An Afar-English-French Dictionary*. London: SOAS.
- PILLINGER, S. & L. GALBORAN 1999. *A Rendille Dictionary*. Köln: Rudiger Koppe.
- ROPER, E. M. 1928. *Tu Bedawie. An Elementary Handbook*. Hertford: S. Austin and Sons.
- TOSCO, M. 2001. *The Dhaasanac Language*. Koeln: R. Koeppel Verlag.
- VERGARI, M. & R. VERGARI 2003. *A Basic Saho-English-Italian Dictionary*. Asmara.
- ZABORSKI, A. 1996. On the origin of subjunctive and energicus in semitic. *Incontri Linguistici* 19: 69–76.
- ZEWI, T. 1999. *A Syntactical Study of Verbal Forms Affixed by -n(n) Endings in Classical Arabic, Biblical Hebrew, El-Amarna Akkadian and Ugaritic*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

