NubiaFEST 2020 Old Nubian Crash Course
Day 4 – All about the Verb

Vincent W.J. van Gerven Oei

September 17, 2020

The Verbal Complex

The Old Nubian verbal complex always starts with a verbal root, and further encodes aspect, tense, person, pluractionality, transitivity, negation, affirmation, mood, and sentence type by means of suffixes. Old Nubian is an SOV (Subject–Object–Verb) language, so usually (but not at all always) the verb can be found at the end of a sentence.

Table of Contents

Analysis of Tense–Aspect Morphemes

Tense marking indicates the objective moment in time when an event took place (neutral/non-past, past) with reference to the moment of elocution.

Aspect marking shows the internal temporal constituency of a situation (perfective, imperfective, intentional, habitual).

	Neutral -λ	**Past -ⳟ**
Imperfective ∅	PRS -λ	PST2 -ⳟ
Perfective -ⲉ	PFV.PRS -ⲉλ	PFV.PST2 -ⲉⳟ
Past(?) -o	PST1 -oλ	—

Present Imperfective

	Subj. Clitic	**Subj. Clitic** + PRED
—	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲗ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲡ-ⲁ
1SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲡ-ⲓ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲡ-ⲉ
2/3SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲛ-ⲁ
1/2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲡ-ⲟⲩ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲡ-ⲟ
3PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲡ-ⲁⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲡ-ⲁⲛ-ⲁ

Present Perfective

	Subj. Clitic	**Subj. Clitic** + PRED
—	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲗ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲡ-ⲁ
1SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲡ-ⲓ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲡ-ⲉ
2/3SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲛ-ⲁ
1/2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲡ-ⲟⲩ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲡ-ⲟ
3PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲡ-ⲁⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲉⲡ-ⲁⲛ-ⲁ

Disappearance of the Perfective -ⲉ

The distinction between perfective -ⲉC and imperfective -ⲓC weakened over the course of the development of Old Nubian.

(1) SC 16.14 ⲥ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲣⲟⲥ̄ⲗ ⲟⲇⲇⲉⲗⲅⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲅⲉⲛⲅⲣⲉⲣⲁⲗⲟ·

istauros-il-∅   *odd-el-gou-na*
cross-DET-NOM sick-PFV.PRS-PL-GEN

gen-grer-a-lo
good-CAUS.NMLZ-PRED-FOC

'The cross is the healer of the sick.'

(2) St 20.3–4 ⲥ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲣⲟⲥ̄ⲗ ⲟⲇⲇⲗ̄ⲅⲟ[ⲩⲛ]ⲁ̣ ⲓ̈ⲁ̄ⲧⲟⲣⲱⲥⲁⲗⲱ·

istauros-il-∅   *odd-il-gou-na*   *iatoros-a-lō*
cross-DET-NOM sick-PRS-PL-GEN doctor-PRED-FOC

'The cross is the doctor of the sick.'

Disappearance of the Perfective -ⲉ

But one context in which it remained frequent is 'divine actions', actions which by nature are 'perfect':

(3) St 11.3–10 ⲑⲣⲟ̄ⲛⲟⲥⲟⲩ ⲅⲟⲕⲛ̄ⲇⲱ ⲧⲓⲕⲁ ⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ ⲟⲩⲁⲧⲧⲟⲕⲁ
ⲡⲉϣϣⲁⲇⲉⲣⲓⲗⲟ ⲥ̄ⲧⲁⲩⲣⲟⲥⲟⲩ ⲅⲟⲕⲕⲟⲗⲗⲟⲛ ⲁⲛ ⲉⲓⲱ̄ⲛⲟ ⲉⲓⲱⲗⲟ ⲅⲟⲛⲟ̄ⲁ̄ⲛⲛⲁ·
ⲓ̈ⲥⲁⲫⲁⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲣⲕⲗⲁ̄

thironosou ŋok-in-dō   tik-a   kosmos ouatto-ka
throne   glory-GEN-SUPE sit-PRED world   whole-ACC

pešš-ad-er-i-lo   istaurosou
judge-INTEN-PFV.PRS-1SG-LOC cross

ŋok-ko-l-∅-lon   an   eiōno ei-ō-lo
glory-ADJ-DET-NOM-TOP 1SG.GEN right hand-LOC-FOC

ŋonj-an-n-a   iōsaphat-in   park-ila
stand-INTEN-PRS.2/3SG-PRED Josaphat-GEN valley-DAT

'When I, sitting upon the throne of glory, judge the whole word, the glorious cross will stand at my right hand in the valley of Josaphat.'

Past 1

	Subj. Clitic	**Subj. Clitic** + PRED
—	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲟⲗ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁⲣ-ⲁ
1SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁⲣ-ⲓ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁⲣ-ⲉ
2/3SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲟⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲟⲛ-ⲁ
1/2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁⲣ-ⲟⲩ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁⲣ-ⲟ
3PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲟⲩ-ⲁⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲟⲩ-ⲁⲛ-ⲁ

Past 2

	Subj. Clitic	**Subj. Clitic** + PRED
—	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲓⲗ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲁ
1SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲓ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲉ
2/3SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲓⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲓⲛ-ⲁ
1/2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲟⲩ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲟ
3PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲁⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲥ-ⲁⲛ-ⲁ

Syntactic Distribution between Past 1 and 2

A semantic distinction between past 1 and past 2 cannot be recovered. However, there is a distinction in terms of syntactic distribution.

– Only past 2 is used in negative contexts;

– Only past 2 is used with the intentional suffix;

– Past 1 is restricted to coreferential attributive relative clauses, past 2 in non-coreferential ones;

– Past 2 is always found with a subject clitic;

Innovative Perfective

The distinction between imperfective and perfective disappeared over time, with perfectives being reanalyzed as allomorphs of imperfectives. As a result, the innovative perfective suffixes **-oc** and **-ϭⲧ** were introduced.

Innovative Perfective

The appearance of the innovative perfective is clearly visible with the verb ⲁⲩⲗ 'to save', because its subject is often a divine figure:

(4) L 104.5–8 ⲕ[ⲙ̄]ⲙⲁ ⲥⲓⳝ̄ⲛⲓⲁ̄ⲕⲉⲧⲁⲗ ⲁⲩⲗⲉⲗ⳼ ⲅ̄ⲓ̄[ⲣ]ⲧⲉⲛⲓⲁ
ⲧⲗⲗⲓⲕⲓ̈ⲫⲕⲁⲛⲉⲕⲁ ⲓ̈ⲁ̄ⲕ⳽[ⲃⲓ⳦̄⳼

kim-m-a   *sioni-a-ketal*
come.AFF-PRS.3SG-PRED   Sion-DAT-also
aul-el-∅   *gipirt-eni-a*
save-PFV.PRS.DET-NOM   turn-SUBORD.SG-PRED
till-ikiñ-kane-ka   *iakōbi-o*
God-NEG.ADJ-NMLZ-ACC   Jakob-LOC

'There comes also from Sion the one who saves, to turn godlessness away from Jakob.' (Rom 11:26)

Innovative Perfective

(5) gr 2.8–9 ⲁⲓ ⲙⲉⲩⲇⲁ ⲅⲟⲇⲕⲁ ⲧⲟⲡⲁⲉⲓⲁⲣⲁ ⲅⲟⲇ ⲁⲛ̄ⲕ̄ ⲟⲩⲗⲅⲟⲩⳝ̄ⲗⲁ ⲁⲛ
ⲙⲁⲓ̣ⲕⲧⲟⲩ ⲟ̄ⲙ̄ⲙ̄ⲗⲟ ⲁⲩⲗⲟⲥⲉ̣ⲛⲁ ⲁ̣ⲓ̣ⲕ̣ⲁ̣

ai	meud-a	ŋod-ka	topaei-ar-a		ŋod
1SG	beg-PRED	Lord-ACC	rise.up(?)-PST1-PRED		Lord

an-ik		oulgou-j-il-a		an	maiktou
1SG.GEN-ACC		ear-PLACT-PRS-PRED		1SG.GEN	affliction

jimmil-lo	aul-*os-en*-a		ai-ka
all-LOC	save-PFV-PFV.PRS.2/3SG-PRED		1SG-ACC

'I rose up, begging to the Lord, the Lord heard my (prayer) and
he saved me from all my affliction.' (Ps 33:5)

Innovative Perfective

(6) P.QI 1 10.A.i.12–15 ⲉⲓⲅⲁⲣⲓⲅⲣⲁⲗⲟ ⲟⲩⲉⲗⲉⲛⲇⲉ ⲇⲣⲟⲕⲁ ⲉⲓⲣⲓⲙⲉⲛⲧⲁⲗⲟ·
ⲅ̄ⲥⲥⲉⲅⲟⲩⲉⲥⲛ̄ ⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲟⲥⲛ̄ ⲁⲩⲗⲟⲥⲓⲇ̄ⲓⲥⲓⲛⲛⲁ ⲇ̄ⲣ̄ⲧⲓⲕⲁ·

eigarigira-lo ouel-∅-ende   *dir-j-ika*
thus-LOC   one-NOM-NEG.CONJ   count-PLACT-ACC

eir-imen-ta-lo   *ŋiss-e-goue-sin*   *aggelos-na*
can-NEG-NEG-FOC   holy-PL.PRED-PL.PRED-EMP   angel-GEN

aul-os-ij-is-in-na   *dir-t-ika*
save-PFV-PLACT-PST2-2/3SG-GEN   count-NMLZ-ACC

'Thus no one can count the number of the holy ones whom the angel has saved.'

Innovative Perfective

The selection of **-ⲟⲥ** or **-ⲉⲧ** appears to be lexically determined. In one case, with the verb ⲟ̅ⲁ̅ⲛ 'to exchange (for money)', there is also a semantic distinction:

(7) P.QI 3 46.1–2 ⲉⲓ̅ⲅⲓ ⲙⲓⲣⲓⲉⲓⲕⲁⲇⲉ ⲡⲓⲉ̅ⲉ̅ⲥⲟ ⲗ̅ⲍ̅ ⲧⲁⲛ ⲡⲁⲣⲓⲕⲟⲛ ⲟ̅ⲁ̅ⲛⲟⲥⲁⲛⲁⲥⲱ

> *eiwi   miri-eika-de   pi-e-e-so   47 tan   par-ik-on*
> grain new-ACC-CONJ remain-TR(?)-IMP.2/3SG.PRED-COMM 47 3SG.GEN old-ACC-TOP
> *jan-**os**-an-a-so*
> exchange-PFV-IMP.2/3SG.PRED-COMM

'Keep the new grain but let them sell 47 (artabs of) his old (grain)!'

(8) P.QI 3 44.2–4 ⲡⲁⲕⲕⲁⲧⲧⲓ ⲧⲁⲛⲛⲓⲕⲁ ⲥⲉⲅⲁⲉⲓ ⲧⲁⲛⲛⲓⲅⲟⲩⲗ ⲟ̅ⲁ̅ⲛⲉ̅ⲥ̅ⲥⲁⲛⲁⲗⲟ

> *pakk-atti   tann-ika   sewaei tann-igou-l-∅*
> share-NMLZ 3SG.GEN-ACC   heir.PL 3SG.GEN-PL-DET-NOM
> *jan-**eis**-s-an-a-lo*
> exchange-PFV-PST2-3PL-PRED-FOC

'Her heirs bought her share.'

Perfective Particle

Old Nubian furthermore has a rare perfective particle ⲧⲁ, perhaps archaic. It only appears in translations where the Greek has an aorist/perfect tense verb:

(9) DP 2.7 ⲁⲓ ⲧⲁ ⲉⳝⲓⲥⲉ ⲁ̣[ⲛ] ⲉ̣ⲯⲧⲧⲓⲗⲁ

ai-∅   *ta*   *eil-is-e*   *an*
1SG-NOM PTC.PFV say-PST 2-1SG.PRED 1SG.GEN

eñ(i)tt-ila
wealth.NMLZ-DAT

'I said in my prosperity.' (Ps 29:7)

Intentional

The intentional **-ⲁⲁ** indicates an action in the future.

(10) Ⲙ 4.6–10 ⲇⲟⲩⲗ` ⲫⲓⲗⲟⲝⲉⲛⲓⲧⲏⲅⲗ̄ ⲇⲟⲇⲣⲁ ⲙⲉⲇⲁⲗ ⲅⲟⲗ` ⲟⲩⲉⲕⲕⲟⲛ ⲉ̄ⲗⲁ·
ⲡⲉⲥⲥⲛⲁ ⲉ̄ⲧⲧⲗ̄ ⲁ̄ⲅⲟⲡⲡⲓ[ⲗⲁ]ⲅⲗ̄ⲉ·

aoul philoxenitē-gil   jo-**d**-r-a   medd-(i)l
boat Philoxenite-ALL   go-INTEN-PRS-PRED ready-PRS
η-ol   ouek-k-on   el-a
become-PST1.DET one-ACC-TOP   find-PRED
pes-s-n-a   eitt-il-∅
speak-PST2-2/3SG-PRED   woman-DET-NOM
agopp-ila-gille
boatsman-DAT-ALL

'The woman found a boat ready to go to Philoxenite and said to
the boatsman.'

Habitual

The habitual -ⲕ indicates a habitual action and usually occurs with the present tense.

(11) SC 8.14–15 ⲉⲛ̄ ⲇⲓⲙⲙⲗ̄ⲅⲟⲩⲕⲁⲗⲱ ⲟⲩⲉⲣⲗ̄ⲇⲱ ⲁⲕⲗ̄ ⲅⲛ̄ⲕⲓⲇ̄ⲕⲉⲛⲁ·

       ein   *jimm-il-gou-ka-lō*   *ouer-il-dō*
       DEM.PROX all-DET-PL-ACC-FOC mountain-DET-SUPE
       ak-il   *ŋik-k-ij-ken-a*
       sit-PRS.DET see-HAB-PLACT-HAB.PRS.2/3SG-PRED

       'All these things he sees sitting upon the mountain.'

Table of Contents

Affirmative 1st–3rd Person

Affirmative verb forms for 1st/3rd persons are formed with the suffix -ⲙ:

	Present
1 SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙ-ⲙ-ⲉ
3 SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙ-ⲙ-ⲁ
1 PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙ-ⲙ-ⲟ
3 PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙ-ⲙ-ⲁⲛ-ⲁ

Affirmative 1st–3rd Person

Affirmative verbs usually appear in verb-second (V2) position in the sentence. It's not always clear why they are used, but they appear frequently in formulaic language such as greetings, in the apodosis of conditional clauses, and to facilitate the imitation of Greek word order.

(12) L 101.13–14 ⲡⲓⲥⲥⲓⲙⲙⲉ ⲟⲩⲣ ⲇ̄ⲙⲙⲓⲗ[ⲅⲟⲩⲗⲇⲁⲗⲗⲟ]ⲛ ⲡⲓⲥⲥⲣⲉ̄

piss-im-m-e   *our jimmil-gou-l-dal-lon*
rejoice-AFF-PRS-1SG.PRED   2PL all-PL-DET-COM-TOP

piss-ir-e
rejoice-PRS-1SG.PRED

'I rejoice, and with all of you I rejoice.' (Phil 2:17)

Affirmative 2nd Person

Affirmative verb forms for 2nd persons employ the old subject clitics.
Note that their position is at the very end of the verb.

	Present	Past
2SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲣ-ⲁ-ⲗ-ⲏ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁⲣ-ⲁ-ⲥ-ⲓ
2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲣ-ⲁ-ⲗ-ⲕⲉ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁⲣ-ⲁ-ⲥ-ⲕⲉ

Affirmative 2nd Person

(13) CE 160.B.11–13 ⲉⲡ̄ⲥⲛ̄ ⲅⲉⲉⲓⲟⲩ ⲉⲓ⳿ⲥⲁⲕⲕ ⲁⲩⲁ̄ⲣⲁⲥⲓ⳿

eir-sin   *geeiou ei-ŋak-k*
2SG-EMP thing   2SG.POSS-son-ACC

au-ar-a-si
do-PST1-PRED-AFF.PST.2SG

'You have done the deed of your son!'

Negative

Negation is usually indicated with the negative suffix **-ⲙ̄ⲛ/ⲙⲉⲛ**:

	Subj. Clitic	**Subj. Clitic** + PRED
—	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲓⲗ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲁ
1SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲓ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲉ
2/3SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲓⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲁ
1/2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲟⲩ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲟ
3PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲁⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲛ-ⲛ-ⲁⲛ-ⲁ

The negative suffix can only co-occur with past 2:

	Subj. Clitic	**Subj. Clitic** + PRED
—	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲓⲗ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲁ
1SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲓ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲉ
2/3SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲓⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲓⲛ-ⲁ
1/2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲟⲩ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲟ
3PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲁⲛ	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲓⲙⲓⲥ-ⲥ-ⲁⲛ-ⲁ

Constraints on Negative Suffix

- For past tense, verbs with the negative suffix **-ⲙⲓⲛ/ⲙⲉⲛ** can only co-occur with the past 2 suffix **-ⲥ**;
- In declarative main clauses, verbs with the negative suffix **-ⲙⲓⲛ/ⲙⲉⲛ** are obligatorily marked with a focus marker **-ⲗⲟ**;
- Verb forms with the negative suffix **-ⲙⲓⲛ/ⲙⲉⲛ** are always marked with a subject clitic.

(14) St 5.12–6.3 ⲥⲁⲗⲟⲩ ⲁⲓ̈ⲕⲁ ⲉ̅ⲅⲓⲇⲓⲥⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲉⲕⲕⲉⲛⲇⲉ ⲟⲩⲣⲟⲩⲉⲓⲟ̅
    ⲇⲉⲕⲕⲓⲅⲣ̅ⲙⲥ̅ⲥⲉⲗⲟ·

> *salou ai-ka   egid-is-ou   ouek-k-ende   ourou-eio*
> word 1SG-ACC ask-PST2-1/2PL one-ACC-NEG.CONJ 2PL-LOC
> *dekk-igir-mis-s-e-lo*
> conceal-CAUS-NEG-PST2-1SG.PRED-FOC

> 'I did not conceal from you any word which you asked me.'

Jussive

Jussives are usually translated with "Let's…." They use the old subject clitics.

2SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁ-ⲙ-ⲏ
2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁ-ⲛ-ⲕⲉ

Vetitive

Vetitives are usually translated with "Don't…." They use the old subject clitics.

2SG	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁ-ⲧⲁ-ⲙ-ⲏ
2PL	ⲁⲛⲕ-ⲁ-ⲧⲁ-ⲛ-ⲕⲉ

Table of Contents

Pluractionality

The pluractional suffix **-δ** has the following functions:

– On intransitive verbs: Plural subject

– On transitive verbs: Plural direct object

– On ditransitive verbs: Plural indirect object (if it is accusative-marked)

– Rarely: Plural event

Pluractionality

With a dative-marked indirect object, the pluractional suffix always refers to the accusative-marked object.

(15) ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ̅ⲗⲗⲟⲛ ϣⲟⲕⲕⲁ ⲕ̅ⲥ̅ⲥⲉⲗⲁ ⲧ̅ⲛ̅ⲛⲁ·

apogg-il-∅-lon   *šok-ka*   *kisse-la*
boatsman-DET-NOM-TOP book-ACC church-DAT

tin-n-a
give>2/3-PRS.2/3SG-PRED

'The boatsman gives the book to the church.'

(16) ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ̅ⲗⲗⲟⲛ ϣⲟⲕ(ⲅⲟⲩ)ⲕⲁ ⲕ̅ⲥ̅ⲥⲉⲗⲁ ⲧ̅ⲇ̅ⲇⲓⲛⲁ·

apogg-il-∅-lon   *šok(-gou)-ka*   *kisse-la*
boatsman-DET-NOM-TOP book-PL-ACC church-DAT

tij-j-in-a
give>2/3-PLACT-PRS.2/3SG-PRED

'The boatsman gives the books to the church.' / *'The boatsman gives the books to the churches.'

Pluractionality

(17) ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ̅ⲗⲗⲟⲛ ϣⲟⲕⲕⲁ ⲕⲓ̄ⲥⲥⲉⲅⲟⲩⲗⲁ ⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁ·

apogg-il-∅-lon   *šok-ka*   *kisse-gou-la*
boatsman-DET-NOM-TOP book-ACC church-PL-DAT

tin-n-a
give>2/3-PRS.2/3SG-PRED

'The boatsman gives the book to the churches.'

(18) ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ̅ⲗⲗⲟⲛ ϣⲟⲕ(ⲅⲟⲩ)ⲕⲁ ⲕⲓ̄ⲥⲥⲉⲅⲟⲩⲗⲁ ⲧⲟ̄ⲇⲓⲛⲁ·

apogg-il-∅-lon   *šok(-gou)-ka* *kisse-gou-la*
boatsman-DET-NOM-TOP book-ACC   church-PL-DAT

tij-j-in-a
give>2/3-PRS.2/3SG-PRED

'The boatsman gives the books to the churches.' / *'The boatsman gives the book to the churches.'

Pluractionality

With an accusative-marked indirect object and direct object, the pluractional suffix always refers to the accusative-marked indirect object.

(19) ⲁⲡⲟⲅⲅ̄ⲗⲟⲛ ϣⲟⲕⲕⲁ ⲧⲁⲛ ⲡⲓⲇⲧⲓⲅⲟⲩⲕⲁ ⲧ̄ⲇⲇ̄ⲓⲛⲁ·

apogg-il-∅-lon   *šok-ka*   *tan*   *pidt-igou-ka*
boatsman-DET-NOM-TOP book-ACC 3SG.GEN friend-PL-ACC
tij-j-in-a
give>2/3-PLACT-PRS.2/3SG-PRED

'The boatsman gives the book to his friends.' / *'The boatsman gives the books to his friends.'

Valency

There are three suffixes affecting the valency of the verbal root

Transitive -(ⲓ)ⲡ/**-**ⲁⲡ Adds a patient;

Causative -ⲅ(ⲓ)ⲡ/**-**ⲅⲁⲡ Adds a causee;

Passive -ⲧⲁⲕ Promotes the patient to subject.

Transitive

The transitive suffix is in fact an old causative and has a variety of uses, including adding a patient:

(20) SC 16.8–9 c̄]ṭ̣ạүрос̄ тондегоүκạ оүрпарр[ал]о·

    istauros-il-∅   *tonde-gou-ka ourp-ar-r-a-lo*

    cross-DET-NOM altar-PL-ACC fall-TR-PRS-PRED-FOC

    'The cross overthrows the altars.'

Causative

The causative suffix adds a causee but also sometimes changes the interpretation of the verb to passive:

(21)　K 33.2–4 ⲧⲓ̄ⲗⲗⲟⲛ ⲧⲁⲛ ⲁⲉⲓ̄ⲕⲁⲗⲟ· ⲉ̄ⲙⲉⲛⲧⲉⲗⲁ ⲡⲁⲇ̄ⲉⲓⲡⲁⲇ̄ⲓⲅⲓ̄ⲁ̣ⲁ̣ⲛⲁ·

till-il-∅-lon　　　　*tan*　　*aeil-ka-lo*　　　*emente-la*
God-DET-NOM-TOP　3SG.GEN　heart-ACC-FOC　Hell-DAT

pajei~paj-igid-d-n-a
examine~INT-CAUS-INTEN-PRS.2/3SG-PRED

'God will cause his soul to be thoroughly examined in Hell.'

Passive

The passive suffix promotes the patient into subject. The agent is usually marked as an adjunct by a postposition.

(22) SC 19.13–15 ⲉⲓⲉ︤ⲛ︥ ⲕⲁⲩⲉⲓⲅⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲇⲓⲁⲃⲟⲗⲟⲥ︤ⲛ︥ ⲙⲉⲉⲣⲧⲗⲟ ⲇ̄ⲟⲩ︤ⲛ︥
    ⲉⲥⲕⲓⲧⲁⲕⲥ︤ⲕ̄︥ⲕⲁ ⲅⲁⲗⲉⲛⲛⲟⲛ

    eie-in   kauei-gou-na   diabolos-in meert-lo
    man.PL-GEN first.born.PL-GEN devil-GEN baseness.NMLZ-LOC
    joun esk-itak-sik-ka   ŋal-en-non
    by   conquer-PASS-PST2-ACC see-PFV.PRS.2/3SG-TOP

    'But when he saw the offspring of man conquered by the
    baseness of the devil . . . '

Table of Contents

Auxiliary Verbs

The main difference between a converb and an auxiliary verb construction is that in the latter both the main verb and the auxiliary are marked for tense. In auxiliary verb constructions, the predicate marker on the main verb is often dropped. Auxiliary and main verb form a single phonological word and are often written together in text editions.

- Causative auxiliary ⲅⲁⲣ 'to cause'
- Negative auxiliary ⲙⲓⲛ 'to not be'
- Inchoative auxiliary ⲁⲅ 'to become'
- Progressive auxiliary ⲇⲟⲩⲣ 'to exist'
- Copular auxiliary ⲉⲓⲛ 'to be'

Auxiliary Verbs

(23) P.QI 1 9.ii.3–5 ● ⲧⲉⲛ ⲁⲣⲙⲓⲥ̄ⲕ̄ⲇⲉⲛ ⲁⲣⲡⲁⲉⲗⲗⲟⲛ ⲉⲗⲗⲉⲛⲅⲟⲩⲗⲱ
ⲕ̄ⲥ̄ⲕⲗⲗⲉⲗⲟ ⲕⲉⲇⲓⲗ ⲇⲟⲩⲟ̄ⲛⲁ·

ten	*armis-kd-en*	*arpae-l-∅-lon*
3PL.GEN	judge-NMLZ-GEN	temple-DET-NOM-TOP
ellen-gou-lō	*kiskillelo*	*ked-il* *dou-on-a*
eternity-PL-LOC	until.LOC	ascend-PRS exist-PST1.2/3SG-PRED

'The temple of their judgment was ascending up to eternity.'
(Rev 14:11)

Modal Verbs

Modal verbs either take a verbal complement ending in infinitive **-ⲓ** or a complement clause marked with the accusative **-ⲕⲁ**.

- – ⲉⲓⲣ 'can'
- – ⲇⲟⲗⲗ 'want'
- – ⲇⲟⲗⲗⲓⲧⲁⲕ 'need'
- – ⲙⲟ(ⲩ)ⲛ 'not want'

Modal Verbs

(24)   P.QI 1 10.A.i.12–15 ⲉⲓⲅⲁⲣⲓⲅⲣⲁ̅ⲗⲟ ⲟⲩⲉⲗⲉⲛⲇⲉ

eigarigira-lo ouel-∅-ende   *dir-j-ika*
thus-LOC   one-NOM-NEG.CONJ count-PLACT-ACC

eir-imen-ta-lo   *ŋiss-e-goue-sin*   *aggelos-na*
can-NEG-NEG-FOC holy-PL.PRED-PL.PRED-EMP angel-GEN

aul-os-ij-is-in-na   *dir-t-ika*
save-PFV-PLACT-PST2-2/3SG-GEN count-NMLZ-ACC

'Thus no one can count the number of the holy ones whom the angel has saved.'

Table of Contents

Contact

Email

vincent@vangervenoei.com

Support

https://ko-fi.com/ontakragoueke

Follow

http://www.twitter.com/ontakragoueke