

## Some remarks on the “South Semitic” k-suffix conjugation

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The realization of the first (singular) and the second personal endings of the suffix conjugation as -k-, rather than -t-, is a well-known feature of South Semitic languages (e.g. Modern South Arabian, ancient and modern languages of Afro-Semitic, by way of sporadic attestations Epigraphic South Arabian) as well as of some Yemenite Arabic dialects.

This feature is generally explained as an analogical extension from the first singular suffix. As a consequence, it cannot be regarded as an inherited trait, the levelling process being a typical common development. The geographical distribution may thus constitute an evidence of an areal diffusion.

The noteworthy parallel in the neo-Assyrian stative (-t- of the second person is replaced by -k-), although attractive, has been adduced by most scholars as a strong argument against a genealogical connection. This two-resembling developments are said to come about independently.

Within this frame in mind, I will try to shed light on some controversial aspects often glossed over: i.e. from which source did the South Semitic take the -k first personal ending if its neighbouring West Semitic is not a plausible candidate? Could analogies involving the possessive suffixes (-ka/-ki for 2nd sg. Pers.) be a likely solution?

Finally, I will refer to Garbini's hypothesis on the formation of South Semitic in Mesopotamia (during the II millennium B.C.) as an original interpretation of the k-perfects development.

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