A Grammar of Awjila Berber (Libya) : based on Umberto Paradisi's material

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Chapter 9

Quantifiers

9.1 Numerals

Most numerals in Awjila have an Arabic origin. We only have fragmental information on numerals, as Paradisi did not include Arabic loanwords in his word list. Therefore all attestations of numerals above 'one' are from the texts.

1	m. iwín, iwinàn, iwínan
	f. iwát, iwatàn
2	itnén
3	təláta
4	àrbəʕa
7	sə̀bəʕa
9	tə̀səʕa
90	təsʕìn
100	mə̀yət
1000	əlf

àrbəʕa, sə̀bəʕa and *tə̀səʕa* all have a antepenultimate accent. This position is very rare in Awjila. It is very well possible that the *ə* in front of *ʕ* is epenthetic in these forms.

A numeral is attached to the quantified noun by means of the preposition *n* 'of'. Only the numeral 'one' agrees in gender with the quantified noun, all other numerals have a fixed form. With 'one', the masculine and the feminine have two variants each: Masculine *iwìn, iwínan* and feminine *iwàt, iwatàn*. There appears to be no difference in meaning between these forms. Both forms can also be used to mark a noun phrase as indefinite.

(144) *Gan **iwínan** n=amə̀dən ašàl   n=awìlən.*
       there one:ms of=man   village of=Aujilan.people
       'There once was a man in the village of Aujila' [PT:II]

(145) *w=**iwìn**   n=išf i-llùm   aməẓẓìn=n-əs*
       and=one:sm of=day 3sm-gather:ˣpf. sons=of-3s
       'And one day he gathered his sons' [PT:I]

(146)   *Bəʕədèn i-n-ìs*   **iwìn**   *n=amə̀dən:*
        Then   3sm-say:ˣpf.=IO.3s one:sm of=man:
        'Then a man said to him:' [PT:XIII]

(147)   *t-əllumà-m*   *ká iman=nə-kìm a=tt-əqíma-m*   *am=**iwatàn***
        2pm-gather:ˣpf.-2pm neg. self=of-2pm   fut.=2pm-remain:fut.-2pm like=one:sf
        n=təɣarìt
        of=stick
        '(If) you do not gather yourself, you will remain like one stick:' [PT:I]

(148)   *nək n-à=k=a*   *s=àrbəʕa n=millìm*
        I   say:res.-1s=IO.2sm=res. with=four of=milliem
        'I've told you for four milliemes' [PT:III]

Some Arabic constructions have been taken over as such, and do not have the preposition *n* 'of'.

(149)   *ṣbər-àt*   *a=nn-a=kìm*   *nək d=awìl*   **tlàta marràt**
        wait:imp.-pm fut.=say:fut.-1s=IO.2pm I   pred.=Aujilan three times
        ìla yom əlqiyàma:
        until.the.day.of.resurrection
        'Wait! I will say to you that I will be a person from Aujila three times until the day of resurrection.' [PT:II]

(150)   *Žḥà y-ətəmə̀nna sɣar=ṛə̀bbi a=y-əfk=ìs*   **əlf žnì**
        Jha 3sm-wish:ˣpf. from=god   fut.=3sm-give:fut.=IO.3s 1,000 pound
        'Jha prayed God to give him 1,000 Pounds' [PT:V]

(151)   *Bəʕədèn u=bəʕə́d* **sə̀bəʕa ayyam** *y-əʕə̀dd*   *mərràt (mərràtət) aqùṭ-ət*
        then   and=after seven   days   3sm-go:ˣpf. time   another-sf
        'Then after seven days he went another time' [PT:IV]

9.2   Cryptic numerals

Zanon (1932: 264) describes a cryptic counting system that avoids the use of the Arabic numerals in order to discuss numbers without outsiders understanding them. He does not cite the terminology in Berber, but only gives an Italian translation. He gives an overview:

1	finger
2	two fingers
5	complete hand
7	a hand and two fingers, or two hands minus three fingers
10	two hands
15	two hands and a foot
20	two hands and two feet

Similar cryptic numeral systems are found in other Berber languages such as Siwa (Laoust 1931: 107, Souag 2010: 185), Nefusa (Beguinot 1942: 127) and El-Foqaha (Paradisi 1963a: s.v. quattro, cinque, sei, sette, otto, nove, dieci).

9.3 *kkull* 'all, whole'

The word *kkull* 'all' functions as a general quantifier that marks the entirety of a group. It is placed after the noun phrase it modifies. There is some variation between *kkull* and *kull* in these forms.

(152) *wènma slà-n=t   míddən n=ašàl   kùll, ušà-n=d*
       as.soon.as hear:ˣpf.-3pm=DO.3sm people of=village all   come:ˣpf.-3pm=come
       ɣəllìy-ən   a=mmudà-n   kull də́ffər-a
       want:ˣpf.-3pm fut.=pray:fut.-3pm all behind-3sm
       'As soon as all the people of the village heard it, they came and all wanted to pray behind him' [PT:II]

(153) *mag ì-nni   ənnùṣṣ ən=təmùrt kkùll?*
       where 3sm-be(loc.):ˣpf. middle of=earth   whole
       'Then he asked him and said: where is the middle of the whole earth?' [PT:VIII]

9.4 *kull* 'each'

The distributive quantifier *kull* 'each' marks each single instance of a group. It is always placed in front of the noun phrase it modifies.

(154) *u=y-əfká   kull iwìn   təɣarìt.*
       and=3sm-give:pf. each one:sm stick
       'and (he) gave each one a stick.' [PT:I]

(155) *u=i-tənn=ìs   i=kùll   amàdən*
       and=3sm-say:impf.=IO.3s dat.=each person
       'and (he started) saying to each person:' [PT:XIII]

9.5   *əggùt* 'much, many'

The indefinite quantifier *əggùt* 'much, many' is only attested once in the texts. In this one example it precedes the noun it modifies.

(156)   *W=i-žigàž*   ***ggùt*** *išfìwən*
         and=3sm-walk:impf.   many days

         'And he would walk many days' [PT:III]