

GERD CARLING

Tocharian

Morpho-syntactic structures – Part 1



Word classes: an overview

Open classes:

- **Nouns** and **verbs** are heavily synthetic (rich amount of forms).
- **Adjectives** are inflected, but a large group is uninflected, blurring boundaries between adverbs and adjectives.
- **Adverbs** have no specific marking.

Closed classes:

- **Demonstrative pronouns** have a three-way deixis system.
- **Personal pronouns** also have clitic forms.
- **Postpositions** most frequent, prepositions do occur.
- **Verbal particles** and **auxiliaries** occur, but they are not frequent.

Typological overview and distinctive features

- Basically left-branching (head-final).
- Distinction human and non-human in the Agent – Patient marking.
- Nominal paradigm is mixed synthetic – agglutinative.
- Group inflection and lack of concordance of head and modifier in NPs.
- Case-inflected adpositions and adverbials.

Nominal structure



Structural properties: Linearization

- LINEARIZATION. Preferred order of nominal structures: Quantifier – Adjective – Noun.

mämtne ālyäkyām *praṣṭ-am ālak* *saṃ*
just as other/OBL.SG.F time-LOC other/NOM.SG.M DEM.NOM.SG.M

pekant yaṃtrācāres *waṣṭ-ā* *lokit* *yeṣ*
Painter mechanic/GEN.SG house-PERL guest go/3SG.A.IPF

(TA, A5 a5, Puṇyavantajātaka)

Structural properties: Agreement

- AGREEMENT: inflected adjectives agree, but only in primary cases.

(orṣ)ṣ-āṃ

wooden-OBL.SG.FEM

(TA, A5 b1)

yantärṣi-nāṃ

mechanical-OBL.SG.FEM

śomin-āṃ

girl-OBL.SG

tām

DEM.OBL.SG.FEM

(TA, A5 b5)

orṣināṃ

wooden-OBL.SG.FEM

śomin-ān-aṃ

girl-OBL.SG-LOC

Gender

- GENDER DISTINCTION in nouns and adjectives: masculine – feminine.
- GENDER DISTINCTION in demonstrative pronouns: masculine – feminine – neuter.
- Gender detectable by adjective agreement.
- GENDER ASSIGNMENT: semantic or morphological.
- GENDER AND AGREEMENT CLASS: *genus alternans* agrees with masculine in singular and feminine in plural.

Number

- DUAL: used for occasional pairs.
- PARAL: used for natural pairs, such as feet, knees, or stable pairs, such as B *oksaine* 'a pair of oxen', B *ñaktene* 'the divine couple'.
- PLURATIVE: Tocharian B, individualizes parts of a collective, e.g. B *ostuw-aiwenta-ne* 'in each and every house' (B *ost* 'house', plural *ostuwa*, plurative *-aiwenta*, locative *-ne*).

<i>šamāni</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>masār</i>	<i>ostuw-aiwenta-ne</i>
monk/NOM.PL	now	in great number	house/OBL.PL-PLUR-LOC
<i>kakākaṣ</i>	<i>tākoṃ</i>	<i>šwātsi-śco</i>	
call/PRT.PTCP	be/3PL.A.OPT	eat/INF-ALL	

“Many monks should be invited to the meal in several different houses.”
 (TB, IOL Toch 248 b5, Vinayavibhaṅga)

Case – special features

- Difference between primary and secondary cases important, in agreement, as well as in functions. Core functions = primary cases, non-core functions = secondary.
- Secondary affixes are more independent, e.g., in TB stress: Nom.Sg. B *yákwe* 'horse', Gen.Sg. *yäkwéntse*, Perl.Sg. *yákwe-sa*, but Abl.Sg. *läkle-mem̄*, more frequent *läkle-mem̄*.

Case – special features

- GROUP INFLECTION: secondary cases can appear at the end of NPs:

<i>säs</i>	<i>wsāšī</i>	<i>ṣont :</i>	<i>yetuñcäs</i>
DEM.NOM.SG.M	golden/NOM.SG.M	street/NOM.SG	jeweled/OBL.PL
<i>kukl-as</i>	<i>y_vk-ass</i>	<i>oñkäl-m-ās-yo</i>	
chariot-OBL.PL	horse-OBL.PL	elephant-OBL.PL-INSTR	
<i>(bodhisattvā)p</i>	<i>warts</i>	<i>pälkets</i>	<i>triskäṣ</i>
Bodhisattva/GEN.SG	in abundance	shining/NOM.SG.M	boom/3SG.A.PRS

”The golden street is filled up, as it were, by adorned chariots, horses and elephants, illuminated by the entourages of the Bodhisattva.”

(TA, A 253 b2-3, Maitreyasamiti-Nāṭaka)

Case – special features

- Secondary cases can have a genitive between the noun and the case affix (in special cases, such as dates, TB):

<i>oktañce</i>	<i>piś</i>	<i>meñ-antse</i>	<i>-ne</i>		
eighth/OBL.SG	five	month-GEN.SG	LOC		
<i>ñuweñ</i>	<i>śaṅki</i>	<i>paiñentse</i>	<i>cāne</i>	<i>āyor</i>	<i>wsare</i>
new/NOM.PL	Śanke	?	coin	gift	give/3PL.A.IPF

(TB PK DA M 507.5 a5, Non-literary)

”On the 5th day of the 8th month, the New Śanke people donated coin [to the Buddha].”

CASE SYSTEM: OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY CASE FUNCTIONS

Case	Core functions	Non-core functions	With verbs
Nominative	Subject/Agent		
Oblique	Direct Object	DIRECTIONAL EXTENSIONAL DISTRIBUTIONAL	
Genitive	Indirect Object Indirect Subject Agent in Passive constructions Possessive Genitive Subjective Genitive Objective Genitive		AB pärsk- 'fear'

CASE SYSTEM: OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY CASE FUNCTIONS

Case	Core functions	Non-core functions	With verbs
Perlative	Agent in Passive constructions	PERLATIVE ALLATIVE ADESSIVE Time (EXTENSION) INSTRUMENTAL CAUSAL MODAL	<i>AB pärsk-</i> 'fear' <i>A mrosk-</i> <i>B mrausk-</i> 'feel aversion' <i>AB kāṭk-</i> 'rejoice'
Locative		LOCATIVE/INESSIVE ILLATIVE TIME (LIMITATION)	<i>A ritw-</i> <i>B ritt-</i> 'be connected to' <i>AB mänt-</i> 'be angry with'

CASE SYSTEM: OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY CASE FUNCTIONS

Case	Core functions	Non-core functions	With verbs
Allative	Indirect Object	DIRECTIONAL	<i>A pot-</i> B <i>paut-</i> 'flatter' <i>A spänt-</i> 'trust'
Ablative		ABLATIVE TIME (DEPARTURE)	<i>A pās-</i> B <i>pāsk-</i> 'protect (against)' <i>A pros-</i> 'be ashamed' <i>A pärsk-</i> 'fear'
Comitative		COMITATIVE	
Instrumental	Agent in PC	INSTRUMENTAL	
Causal		CAUSAL	

Referentiality

- Tocharian does not have definite markers.
- Both TA and TB distinguish three-way deixis on pronouns, by adding a distinctive *-m*, *-s*, *-ṃ* (see Morphology section).
- Indefiniteness is marked by the forms TB Nom. *ksa*, Obl. *kca*, Gen. *ketara*, and TA Nom. *saṃ*, Obl. *caṃ*, Gen. *ke*.

TEXT SAMPLE (A5 A5-B2, PUṆYAVANTAJĀTAKA)

<i>māṃtne</i>	<i>ālyäkyāṃ</i>	<i>praṣṭ-aṃ</i>	<i>ālak</i>	<i>saṃ</i>	<i>pekant</i>
just as	other/OBL.SG.F	time-LOC	other/NOM.SG.M	DEM.NOM.SG.M	painter
<i>yaṃtrācāres</i>	<i>waṣṭ-ā</i>	<i>lokit</i>	<i>yeṣ</i>		
mechanic/GEN.SG	house-PERL	guest	go/3SG.A.IPF		
<i>tmäṣ</i>	<i>säm</i>	<i>yaṃtrā(cāre)</i>	<i>(pe)kāntāṃ</i>	<i>puk</i>	
thereupon	DEM.M.NOM.SG	mechanic	painter/OBL.SG	all	
<i>wäkn-ā</i>	<i>yärk-ā</i>	<i>yāmur-äṣ</i>	<i>oṣeñi</i>		
manner-PERL	honor-PERL	do/VN-ABL	for the night		

‘Just like at another time some other painter went as a guest to the house of a mechanic. The mechanic for the night treated the painter in every way with reverence.’

TEXT SAMPLE (A5 A5-B2, PUṆYAVANTAJĀTAKA)

<i>pkäntäk</i> separately	<i>wašt-aṃ</i> house-LOC	<i>lake</i> bed/OBL	<i>raksā=ṃ</i> cover/3SG.A.PRT=3SG
<i>kuñci{t}ṣiṃ</i> of sesame/OBL.SG	<i>ṣä(lyp-aśśäl)</i> oil-COMIT	<i>(orṣ)ṣāṃ</i> wooden/OBL.SG.F	
<i>yantärṣināṃ</i> mechanical/OBL.SG.F	<i>śomināṃ</i> girl/OBL.SG	<i>śkaṃ</i> also	<i>la{p}-äṣ</i> head-ABL
<i>lyalymā=ṃ</i> make sit down/3SG.A.PRT=3SG		<i>sām</i> DEM.F.OBL.SG	

‘He covered a bed for him in a separate place in his house, (gave) him sesame oil and set an artificial girl at the head [of his bed].’

TEXT SAMPLE (A5 A5-B2, PUṆYAVANTAJĀTAKA)

<i>cami</i> DEM.M.GEN.SG	<i>śla</i> with	<i>wāktasurñe</i> reverence/OBL.SG	<i>oki</i> like	<i>kāwält(une</i> beauty	<i>yärk-ā)</i> honour-PERL
<i>yāmäl</i> do/VN.NOM.SG	<i>yo</i> and	<i>tsar-aṃ</i> hand-LOC	<i>eṃtsus</i> seize/PPRT.NOM.SG.F	<i>paṃ</i> EMPH (?)	
<i>ypā=ṃ</i> do/3SG.A.IPF=3SG	<i>tām</i> DEM.N.OBL	<i>nu</i> and	<i>mānt</i> like	<i>wākn-ā</i> manner-PERL	

‘She, as if with reverence to him [the painter] holding in her hand, as it were, with beauty and honour served him. In which manner?’