

Verbal morphology in intra-Dogon subclassification and extra-Dogon connections

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While noun-class morphology has dominated diachronic study of Niger-Congo grammar, it is of little or no use for Dogon and for other putative high-level branches of NC (Mande, Pere, Ijoid, Tusian, Tiefs, ...). Here I consider what light the reconstruction of verbal morphology, including derivation (causative, mediopassive) and inflection (aspect, negation, tense, mood), sheds on the internal subclassification of Dogon languages, and how it might provide clues to extra-Dogon relationships. Of particular interest is vocalic ablaut of verb stems, including an E-stem in (part of) the reconstructed perfective positive paradigm.