THE SWĪRA LANGUAGE

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Introduction

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The Swīra were one of the so-called "Five Invading Tribes" (*Swikogu*), the others being Erkipa, Sɨhel, Noñoʃe, and Halan, as well as the language spoken by them. The first four comprised a group of largely mutually intelligible dialects. *Swīra* has been used collectively to refer to all of them, as well as to the particular dialect of the Swīra tribe, or Swīra Proper. Halan probably belonged to the same family but was much more distantly related. Halan is little-attested and poorly understood because its speakers were destroyed as a political entity before any of the invading languages were regularly written. Swīra *sensu stricto* is studied, in preference to the other languages or dialects, because (1) it is the most direct ancestor of the modern standard language, (2) it was the dialect spoken by the greatest part of the invading force, and the most politically successful one, and (3) it was the dialect in which *The National Epic* was composed, whereas most of the other varieties are attested mostly in short inscriptions, if at all.

Old Swīra refers to the language as it was presumably spoken before the conquest, when the tribe was still nomadic, and was much the same as the language of the other tribes. It is partly reconstructed, although preserved in some texts and in archaic speech used in ritual context. Proto-Swīra is used to refer to the entirely reconstructed mother language from which more distantly related languages also sprang. Classical Swīra refers to the language spoken by the Swīra tribe and the territory they conquered as a whole, from the time of the conquest for about four hundred years afterward. It was during this time that the heavy importation of learned words from Yuktepat began. New or Modern Swīra refers to the language as it is now, and has been spoken for the last few hundred years or so. Although the current language is clearly different from the Classical variety, there is not a clear dividing line between the two.

The Classical and even more so the New Swīra languages were essentially dialect groups or dialect continua. In the Classical period, the closely related languages were increasingly absorbed into Swīra, but left their mark on the criss-crossing dialectal isoglosses that developed. Classical Swīra was the first language of the ruling clans and the shared medium of communication among all the people of the empire, essentially a lingua franca of northern barbarian tribal languages with a heavy pedantic influence from Yuktepat.

Phonology

Classical Swīra Consonants

		Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar	Glottal
Stops	Voiceless	p	t		k		
	Voiced	b	(d)		g		
Fricatives	Voiceless	f	s		(x)		h
	Voiced	v	(z)		(ŋ)		
Nasal		m	n				

Tap	r		
Lateral	l		
Glide		j ‹y›	w

Vowels: a, e, i, o, u, ā, ē, ī, ō, ū
Diphthongs: ai, au, oi, ui, āi, āu, ūi

Syllable Structure: (C)(G)V(:)(C_2), where G is a glide and C_2 is any consonant except voiced stops
*[-sonorant] / _#
*[r] / #_

Phonological Rules

The following rules only apply within a morphological word.

1. C ・ [l] /_[l]
2. C ・ [r] /_[r]
3. Ø ・ [i] /[r]_[j]
4. Ø ・ [u] /[r]_[w]
5. Ø ・ [i] /C[w]_[j]
6. Ø ・ [u] /C[j]_[w]
7. Ø ・ [u] /[+consonant, +obstruent]_#
8. [+nas] ・ [αplace] / [+consonant, αplace]
9. [i] ・ [j] /_V
10. [u] ・ [w] /_V
11. A short non-high vowel disappears before a long non-high vowel.
12. A short vowel followed by another short vowel merges into the long version of the second vowel.
    a. /k^{w}o + l + te + ona/ ・ [k^{w}olto:na]
13. When two long non-high vowels are adjacent, a consonant (usually either [h] or [ʔ]) is inserted between them.

The rules stated above do not operate across word boundaries. Between words, there is another rule that operates.

14. A non-phonemic glottal stop is inserted between a vowel at the end of a word and a vowel at the beginning of a following word.

The voiced stops, with few exceptions, occurred only between vowels, or between a nasal and a vowel. At one point, they were probably allophones of the voiceless stops, but before the breakup of Proto-Swīra they had, marginally, aquired phonemic status. There was no voiced counterpart to /t/, although [d] occurred phonetically as an allophone of /r/, and later as a phoneme in some dialects. In some respects /r/ acted as a voiced counterpart to /t/. The frequency of /g/ increased rapidly during the early Classic Swīra period due to the influx of Tepat words, many including the

uvular phoneme /q/ which was rendered [g] in Swīra.

In Proto-Swīra a syllable could end in a vowel or any single consonant. However, oral obstruents were permitted in syllable-final position only word internally. Only sonorants and vowels were permitted word-finally. In cases where a form ended in a consonant underlyingly, a phonetic [u] appeared in surface representation. The accent in a word, fell, insofar as possible, on the first long vowel in the root. When there was no long vowel in the root, the first syllable was stressed. All kinds of CC combinations were permitted across syllable boundaries (except stop + nasal), although nasals assimilated to a following stop. Geminate consonants occurred intervocally, and a long vowel was not permitted to proceed a geminate consonant in the later language (such combinations that existed earlier were shortened).

In a sense Classical Swīra had a dual phonology. The word and syllable types described above for Old Swīra hold for Classical words of native origin. Native and borrowed words can often be distinguished by phonology, because Tepat phonology was extremely different from Swīra. Tepat had a CVC and CVCVC shape for words, with an optional glide or lateral following the first consonant (but not adjacent to any other consonants). Thus Tepat allowed initial clusters which were usually disallowed in Swīra, while forbidding the medial clusters that were common in Swīra. While Swīra words usually ended in vowels, Tepat words always ended in consonants, including stops. Tepat also did not distinguish vowel length. In Classical Swīra it is usually obvious which words are borrowings because they begin and end in consonants and sometimes have initial clusters with /l/. Consonant clusters in native words were found only between vowels and never initially. Words are certainly native when they contain [a:], [r], [k^w], or [g^w].

The Classical Swīra language had a limited range of diphthongs: /ai/, /au/, /ui/. Two diphthongs, /oi/ and /eu/, were shortlived; /oi/ is assumed to have merged with /ui/ shortly before the initial migrations, and /eu/ is believed to have changed to /jo/ shortly afterwards (since the change is also reflected in most Tepat loanwords). Prehistoric diphthongs /ei/ and /ou/ were nearly universally changed to /i:/ and /u:/ respectively among Swīra and its related languages. Classical Tepat [ej] and [ow] became the long vowels /e:/ and /o:/. The diphthong /oi/ was also reintroduced from Classical Tepat.

We have no direct evidence of the stress pattern of Classical Swīra, but we can presume that it was the same as all contemporary varieties. That would mean that words were stressed on the first syllable with a long vowel, or if there were no long vowels, on the first syllable.

Writing System

Classical Swīra is written in a mixed system of Tepatic characters, which represent whole words, regardless of pronunciation, and are usually used to write verb and noun roots; and phonetic symbols, which represent syllables (or sometimes individual sounds), and are usually used to write inflections and particles.

Because Tepatic did not have any rhotics, Swiric /r/ was represented by a modification of the grapheme ‹l›. Similarly, /f/ was represented by a modification of ‹p›.

Originally, Swiric writing did not distinguish voiced and voiceless plosives, except for /g/, which was represented by the grapheme ‹q›. Thus it would appear that there were only these initials:

p, f, t, k, g, m, n, r, l, w, y, h

…with /b/ unmarked. Only later was the voicing mark added, which was placed to the left of consonant signs to indicate that they were voiced.

Vowel length was dealt with in two ways. One was to ignore it. The other was to use two syllabic signs, e.g., *ta + a = tā*; *su + uk = sūk*.

Tiptumic languages had periods to mark the end of sentences, but no question or exclamation marks. This may be due to the fact that all such languages had explicit interrogative and exclamatory particles, which made special punctuation marks for them redundant.

Dialects

Northern Swīra dialects showed a loss or weakening of phonemic vowel length earliest, and they lost the distinction between short [i] and [u], collapsing them both into a high central vowel [ɨ]. This centralization began in Sɨhel early in the Old Swīra period and spread from there. Phonemic length was also weakened or lost in parts of the south where Swīra was learned as a second language by ethnic Tepat, who spoke a language without phonemic length. Following this, in some varieties the short central vowel merged with an adjacent glide. Thus *wi* became *u* and *ju* became *i*. This change began with medial sequences and in some varieties spread to even initial [ju] and [wi] clusters. For example Old Swīra *puju*, Modern *fui*, "winter."

In the east, a consonant shift began affecting intervocalic consonants, such that the voiced stops were fricated, voiceless stops voiced, and geminate stops simplified. This shift began in Noɦoʃe (<**nogosje*) and spread outwards to many other dialects.

In other regions, certain sounds were palatalized, and others labialized; labiovelar stops merged with either labials or velars; final vowels were lost; short vowels were centralized; [oi] merged with [ui], and intervocalic glides were lost. In a couple of the advanced urban centers of Kōswīra[1], final vowels after voiceless consonants are devoiced, and even dropped. Long vowels were typically shortened in these environments. E.g.,

- *putu* > *put*
- *tukī* > *tuk*

To this day there are a large number of words with alternate pronunciations of [p] or [k], or [p] or [f], as the dialects mixed after the changes distinguishing them had taken place.

talka
mapko > *mafko*
nok ʷti > *nopti* > *notti* > *notci*
nokk ʷi > *nokpi* > *noppi*

Sw. *tl* > *tr*
Tep *tlok* > *tloku* > *trok(u)*
"how to, way of": *-tukai* (> *tɨke*)

Swīra dialect:

[1] Kingdom of the Swīra

1. /si/ > [ʃi]
2. /suj/, /swi/ > [si]

t > ts / _{i, j}
tya > tsya

Some other dialectical differences:
In Erkipa, all inflectional morphemes beginning in /l/ or /r/ have allophones beginning with [d] and [t]. The /l/ of the underlying form becomes [d] after nasals and [t] after [r] or voiceless consonants. So, for example, the past-tense morpheme /li/ in Erkipa can appear as [li]~[di]~[ti].

Phonemic	Standard dialects	Erkipa
/ona + li/	*-onali*	*-onali*
/im + li/	*-imuli*, *-illi*	*-indi*
/nus + li/	*-nulli*	*-nusti*

In most forms of Swīra, when /r/ came at the beginning of a syllable after a consonant, the epenthetic vowel was inserted, but in one dialect, metathesis occurred, so that /r/ would come to end the previous syllable.

/tak + ro:/ • [takuro:] • [tarko:]

Grammar

The Swīra word classes or parts of speech are the verb, noun, numeral, and particle. Most verbs had a root of CVC(V) shape, to which various affixes were added, while nouns almost invariably ended in open syllables, and usually had a shape of CV(C)CV. Particles were usually short, with a CV(C) form. Each of the word classes, except particles, could be inflected, and verbs were obligatorily inflected. The minimal verb consisted of a root and a personal prefix, which could include the indefinite "placeholder" prefix *-a*. Since the verb is the dominant form of any utterance, and the most complex wordform in the language, it makes sense to start with the verb first. In this section we will be using mainly Old Swīra, as it was spoken before it diversified into the dialects spoken by the different invading tribes.

"Adverbial" elements are usually incorporated into the verb: numbers and "adjectives" are usually prefixed to or compounded with the noun.

The Verb

The verb is so dominant that in fact, sometimes it is the only part of the sentence, so far as we understand the concept of "sentence." (It might be said that Swīra "sentences" consisting of a main verb and dependent subordinate verbs are more on the level of our paragraphs.) The verb has several moods, which can be classified in the broad categories of superordinate or independent verb forms, and subordinate or dependent verb forms. The independent moods include the indicative and imperative, and the dependent include the subjunctive, gerund, and participle. All

forms inflect for person, tense, voice, and polarity.

There are three main kinds of verbal paradigms, with implications for how the verbs are inflected. Fully inflected verbs can be considered to be of three main kinds. There are independent verbs, subordinate verbs, and nominalized verbs.

The indicative, or superordinate or superjunctive verb, is the mode of the main verb of a sentence. Within a sentence, there may be only one main verb, which indicates the central action of the utterance, and which the speaker deems most important. All other verb forms in a sentence must be of one of the subordinate types.

Subordinate verbs corresponded to English circumstantial expressions with participles, or verb phrases used together with conjunctions. Nominalized verbs often corresponded to English adjectives, relative clauses, or agent nouns. E.g.,

- I like his singing.
- I like the girl that sang.
- A green dog. - *ken temigui*
- A shaman. - *tīmi*

There were two main semantic classes of verbs. Dynamic verbs described actions, performed by one actor, the agent, on someone or something else, or on himself. Stative verbs described states of being and were by nature intransitive.

Verbs and verb roots could be divided into several different classes depending on several factors, such as how they interacted with tense and other suffixes, whether they overlapped with nouns, and what kind of personal prefixes they could take.

The various voice and valence-related derivational verb suffixes gave rise to an array of "conjugational" forms in early Swīra. Thus the applicative suffix that allowed the objectification of the goals of motion verbs became the definitive stem of a conjugational class populated mostly by motion verbs. The same happened for stative suffixes. Meanwhile, the aspectual distinction became one of tense, with the imperfective becoming present tense and the perfective becoming past, with a new future tense created.

Prefixes					ROOTS			Suffixes			
Person marking			Applicatives								
Subject marker	Indirect object marker	Direct object marker	Applicative		NOUN ROOT	VERB ROOT 1	VERB ROOT 2 (3, 4…)	Voice	Mood	Tense	Polarity

Morphemes were added to the verb in the following order:

1. subject marker
2. indirect object marker
3. direct object marker
4. applicatives
5. incorporated noun stem
6. verb stem
7. voice
8. mood

9. aspect
10. polarity

In most of these slots, zero-marking is possible. In fact, only two slots must be obligatorily filled: the subject marker slot and the verb root root slot. Together, we will refer to the central part of this template - the part containing the verb root, or the compound of several roots - as the “stem.”

Path Verbs

- *emu-* around
- *ersu-* over, across
- *gai-* out(ward)
- *ilū-* past
- *mus-* forward
- *ni, nak-* in(to/ward)
- *nur-* through; pierce, puncture
- *per-* backward
- *sar-* down(ward)
- *tos-* out(ward)
- *wa-,wā-* up(ward)

Examples:

- *nisuk-* inhale - *sukni-*
- *tossuk-* exhale - *suktos-*
- *wāpik-* pull up - *pikwa-*
- *sarpik-* pull down - *piksar-*

1. *K^{w}ebrother pune woru suttāupiksarēli.*
   k^{w}e-brother pune woru su-t-te-au-pik-sar-ē-li
   My brother was pulling a cart up from the lake.

Person Markers

The arguments of a verb were indexed on the verb as prefixes.

	Subject	Indirect Object	Direct Object	Independent Pronoun
1sg	k^{w}o-	w-	k^{w}i-	k^{w}eja
1pl	mi-	n-	mi-	meja
1pl incl.	jo-	i-	jo-	ija
2sg	le-	l-	li-	leja
2pl	wa-	w-	wi-	uja
3a	su-	s-	si-	suja
3i	te-	t-	te-	teja

Interr.	na-	n-	na-/ni-	naja
Zero	a-	Ø-	Ø-	Ø

In addition, there is occasionally encountered an additional switch-reference person markers on subordinate verbs. This marker is *kyō-*

2. *Kʷoswiyonali*.
   kʷo•s•wi•ona•li
   1SG-3a-2PL-give-PF
   "I gave you (pl.) to him."

3. *Kʷiken ōtārmwe susikamuli*.
   kʷi•ken *ōto•ar•mu•e/ā* *su•si•kamu•li*
   1SG-dog father-exist-not-NOMINALIZER 1SG-3PL-bite-PERF
   "My dog bit that bastard."

Person markers can also form a basis for verb classification. Verbs may be grouped according to the kind of personal marker agreement that their arguments trigger. Transitive verbs are uncontroversial; they take subject markers to refer to their agents, and direct object markers to refer to their patients. If they are ditransitive, they take indirect object markers as well. Intransitive verbs are more complicated. All have a single argument, but what kind of marking that subject triggers differs. Most intransitve verbs take subject marking, but a few verbs take direct object or indirect object marking instead.

The existential verb, *-ar-*, "to exist / have / be there," takes a mixture of direct and indirect object prefixes to show possession.

u-	*ken*	*-ar*	"I have a dog."
mi-	*ken*	*-ar*	"We have a dog."
i-	*ken*	*-ar*	"We have a dog."
u-	*ken*	*-ar*	"You have a dog."
si-	*ken*	*-ar*	"Y'all have a dog."
ni-	*ken*	*-ar*	"Who has a dog?"

The reason for the mixture appears to be phonologically motivated: normally the indirect object prefixes are subsyllabic, and so would not be permitted to begin a word.

Occasionally (perhaps idiolectally) this verb occurs with possessive *noun*-marking prefixes.

The copular verb *-ase-* typically occurs with patient prefixes.

To express senses like, "I am his dog," a combination of patient and indirect object prefixes is used. The thing that exists takes patient prefixes. The thing that is the possessor triggers indirect object marking.

The "zero-subject" marker *a-* is a prefix that is attached at the very beginning of the verb whenever

there is no agent, or rather when explicit agent prefixes / markers are lacking.

Within Swīra, third-person arguments of the verb are classified for their salience to the conversation. More salient arguments are “proximate” and less salient arguments are “obviative.” Within a sentence, only one third-person argument may be considered proximate, and all others must be obviative. The proximate argument must be marked as such when it appears. The proximate argument represents a noun singled out for special focus. Commonly, a human will receive proximate focus, and non-humans will receive obviative focus, but there is no strict semantic or lexical basis for the choice, it depends entirely on the context of the conversation.

4. *Kʷonāgʷelli*.
   I was hit.

5. *Akʷinālī*.
   Someone hit me.

Applicatives

Applicatives form two groups based on their position and function. The benefactive applicative forms a group by itself, and all other applicatives belong to another group. We will deal with the larger group, the I Applicatives, first, because they come first. There are three of them:

- *au-* from (source)
- *kʷu-* with, by (instrumental)
- *re-* at, in, on (locative, temporal)

These three subjects add an indirect object to the verb. This is how they behave when added to verbs of different valencies:

Intransitive Verbs

When added to an intransitive verb: the raised argument is treated as the indirect object. The new verb form has two arguments, one which triggers agent marking and one which triggers indirect object marking.

6. *Orō* *sutkʷuseri*.
   orō *su•t•kʷu•seri*
   knife 3sg-3sg-with-cut
   “He cuts with a knife.”

Transitive Verbs

When added to a transitive verb: the raised argument is treated as the indirect object. Thereby, it becomes a ditransitive verb.

7. *Oru* *sutawargʷulāli*.
   oru *su•t•au•argʷ•lā•li*
   bone 3sg-3sg-from-arrowhead-make
   “He made an arrowhead from bone.”

Ditransitive Verbs

When added to a ditransitive verb: the raised argument displaces the indirect object, which then displaces the direct object, which either is not expressed, or must be incorporated into the verb.

The instrumental in particular is frequently used with the benefactive applicative and the causative and passive valence markers.

The II Applicatives consist of only one affix:

- *nē-* for (benefactive)

The first three applicatives are mutually exclusive; each verb can only have one of them. Any of them may occur with the benefactive though. This is possible because of the different ways that they promote arguments. The benefactive raises the beneficiary to direct object status and forces incorporation of any prior direct object into the verbal complex. The other applicatives raise a peripheral argument / adjunct to indirect object status. Because the benefactive creates a new direct object and the others create new indirect objects, they don't conflict by trying to squeeze two different noun phrases into the same place. For example:

8. *Suk ʷinēyarg ʷulāli.*
   su•k ʷi•nē•arg ʷ•lā•li
   from-arrowhead-make
   He made an arrowhead for me.

9. *(Suya) (k ʷeya) oru sutk ʷiyaunēyarg ʷulāli.*
   suya k ʷeya oru su•t•k ʷi•au•nē•arg ʷ•lā•li
   He made an arrowhead from bone for me.

The benefactive applicative is obligatory with the verb "help."

10. *Lekʷinēsulu!*
    le•kʷi•nē•sul•u
    2sg.1sg.BEN.help.IMPT
    "Help me!"

Voice

Like most languages on the Eastern Continent (Tiptum), Old Swīra did not require overt marking on word classes, or overt derivation to use roots in a new way. The number of arguments was evident in the number of pronominal prefixes on the verb, and it was perfectly acceptable to change valency simply by adding or removing a pronominal prefix. For example:

11. *k ʷo•soru•li* I sat down.
11.1. *k ʷo•soru•li* I sat down.
11.2. *k ʷo•si•soru•li* I had him sit down. / I set it down.
11.3. *k ʷo•s•te•soru•li* I had him set it down.

12. *k ʷo•nak•li* I went in.

12.1.	*yupi*	*kʷo•te•nak•li*	I went into the house.
12.2.	*yupi*	*kʷo•s•te•nak•li*	I put it inside the house. / I took it inside the house.

The voice suffixes were primarily reserved for emphasis, or when a particular implication is wanted. For example, the causative suffix usually implies coercion.

- *-Ø*: active
- *-tā* causative
- *-os, -eu*: transitive verb suffixes
- *-i, -ar*: intransitive verb suffixes
- *-kʷel*: passive
- *-kuis*: causative by permission
- *-mi*: reflexive

Examples:
**sīn*- "die"; **sīnos*- "kill," **sīni*- "die"
**ot*- "fall"; **otos*- "drop," **oti*- "fall"
**pari*- "begin"; **parijar*- "begin (oneself)"
Sometimes if no suffix is added in the transitive, the root vowel is lengthened.

There are some cases where overt voice marking is obligatory. The most obvious case is with the verb **sīn*-, "die, kill," where the causative meaning "kill" requires a causative or active suffix.

The adjectival-stative form can be added to transitive or intransitive verbs, like so:
"I pick berries" + STAT = "I am a berry-picker, I am one who picks berries."
…because here picking berries is considered to be a quality of the speaker.

Mood

- *-Ø*: indicative
- *-u* (*-w-*): imperative or subjunctive
- *-tera*: Marks the conditional or hypothetical mood, and is also used in past-time counterfactuals.
- *-(a)nte*: marks the so-called gerund or gerundive form
- *-tak*: marks an optative or desiderative, when the desirer is the same as the agent or actor of the desired action.
- *-tagaru*: marks an optative or desiderative, when the desirer is different from the agent or actor of the desired action. The agent or actor is treated as an indirect object in these cases.
- *-keu* (> *-kyō*): indicates that the action of the verb is not a fact or actual occurrence, but a probability or possibility.
- *-pē*: potential

Tense

The tense system of Classical Swīra includes both so-called inflectional tenses and periphrastic or auxiliary tenses.

Inflectional Tense

If you want to be technical, the so-called inflectional tenses include affixes that really mark evidentialis.

- Imperfective: -Ø. Indicates:
  - Present or future action in general.
  - Stable truths.
  - Habitual action in any time.
- Perfective: -li
- *-ē-* adjectival/stative verb suffix. Also, marks ongoing action, or an ongoing condition that arose from a previous action.
- *-ga-* marks events which none of the discourse participants have personally experienced or witnessed. It is optional. It is not used in questions. It tends to be used for the past, but may be used for the present as well. Its import is to suggest that the speaker supposes or has heard about the event. In the later language, *-γə-* became a "distant" or "historic past" tense in contrast with the "recent past" tense *-l*. In some cases it seems to be used rhetorically, for a "distancing" effect.
- *-syu-* is sort of the counterpart to *-ga-*. This affix emphasizes the speaker's personal experience or witness to the event. Gradually, it shifted meaning from the speaker's experience to the subject's experience, and came to have a sort of aspectual meaning, along the lines of the English perfect tense in a question like, "Have you ever gone to China?" or the Chinese verb suffix *-guo*.

Comparison of some inflectional tenses:

13. *Swekʷuimuli.* *Swekʷuimē.*
    He read. He is reading.

14. *Supokili*. *Supokyē*.
    He stood up. He is standing.

15. *Susīnili*. *Susīnyē*.
    He died. He is dead.

16. *Mitolga*. *Mitolgali*. *Mitolgē*. *Mitolgēli*.
    We gather. We gathered. We have gathered. We had gathered.
    We will gather. We are gathered. We had been together.
    We are together. We were gathered.

In general, path verbs or change of state verbs form a perfect tense when the stative is added, while dynamic / activity verbs form a progressive when the stative is added.

17. *Tāi*. *Tāili*. *Tāyē*. *Tāyēli*.
    It opens. It opened. It is open. It was open.

	Positive	Negative

Past	*-li*	*-li*
Present	*-Ø*	*-li-mu*
Future	*-Ø*	*-mu*

Auxiliary / Periphrastic Tenses

Auxiliary tenses are created via the process of verb compounding, by compounding the meaningful verb with another verb root which indicates a change of state. Four verb roots are commonly used in this way. I'll list them in their original, phonemic form, with their mutated or reduced form following in parentheses.

- *-pol-* (> *-bol-*) - "become" - marks prospective or imminent action, usually in the future but also possibly in the past.
- *-pari-* (> *-bari-*, *-ba-*) - "begin" - marks inceptive or inchoative aspect.
- *-twē-* (> *-ruwē-*, *-rē-*, *-ru-*) - "end, finish, complete" - marks completed or perfect aspect.
- *-aki-* (*-ki-*) - "repeat, redo" - marks iterative aspect

Examples:
-sīn(u)li
-ot(u)li
-parili

18. *kʷo•pari•jal•li*
    1SG-begin-INTR-PF
    "I began"

19. *kʷo•sīn•i•li*
    1SG-die-INTR-PF
    "I died."

20. *Kʷōtiterali* *kʷosīnili.*
    kʷo•oti•tera•li *kʷo•sīn•i•li.*
    1SG-fall-COND-PF 1SG-die-INTR-PF
    "If I fell, I would have died"

21. *Kʷokomaweskeli* (> *pokoməweskəl*)
    kʷo•koma•wesk•li
    1SG-hair-wash-PF
    "I washed my hair"

22. *Mepgoi* *kʷostōnali.*
    Mepgoi *kʷo•s•te•ōna•li.*
    book 1SG-3a-3i-give-PF
    "I gave him the book."

Polarity

- -Ø: affirmative
- *-mu*: makes a verb negative. The question particle *-ka* was often added to this later, and merged with it to form the modern question ending, *-nka*.
- *-ka*: marks a question. This was later often added to the negative morpheme *–mu* to form the negative interrogative *–muka*, and merged with it to form the modern question ending, *-nka*.
- *-we*: marks a question which includes a content-question word / Wh-word / Wh-morpheme.

23. *Anapolante lērwāka?*

a•na•pol•nte le•ēr•wā•ka
zero.subject-what-become-ger 2sg-man-take-question
When will you get married? (said to a woman)

24. *Anapolante lewīpawāka?* > *X ləwifəwakə?* > *X ləwifwak?*
25. a•na•pol•nte le•wīpa•wā•ka
26. zero.subject-what-become-ger 2SG-woman-take-QUESTION
27. When will you get married? (said to a man)

Polarity and tense suffixes have some degree of scoping relative to each other. The following examples show the interaction of tense and polarity markers.

28. *Letawelimu*.
    He hasn't eaten (yet).

29. *Letawemuli*.
    You did not eat (it).

30. *-li•mu* I haven't …en yet.
31. *-mu•li* I don't …anymore

32. *Kʷēya.*
    kʷo•eya-
    I come

33. *Kʷēyagʷel.*
    kʷo•eya•kʷel-
    I am sent

34. *Kʷoyopu.*
    kʷo•yop-
    I send

35. *Kʷoyopti.*

kʷo•yop•li
I sent

36. *Kʷoyommi.*
kʷo•yop•mi
I haven't sent (yet)

Derivational Affixes (Forming Nouns)

- *-koro*: indicates the time when an action takes place. Often serves the purpose of a temporal clause, e.g. *Tawekoro*, "when I eat," "while eating"
- *-muti*: noun indicating the manner of action of a verb. In modern dialects, sometimes found as [ntɕi nɕi ntʃi nʃi].
seri•muti
cut-manner
"way of cutting"
- *-e*: general nominalizing suffix
- *-ā*: general nominalizing suffix
- "how to, way of": *-tukai* (> *tɨke*)

Other

- *-uti*: "although, despite, even though, no matter how much" *-auti*, *-euti*, *-outi* > -ɔ:č, -jɔč, -ouč, -ič
- *-tal*: limiting suffix: "until, to the extent that"

37. *Kʷōrku nasisīnosuptilin kʷotesīnostaku.*
kʷe•orku na•si•sīn•os•pti•li•n kʷo•te•sīn•os•tak.
1sg-friend interr-3prox-die-trans-conc-pf-relativizer 1sg-3obv-die-trans-vol
I will kill whoever killed my friend.

38. *Kʷōrku nasisīnosuptilin kʷotesīnostaku.*
kʷe•orku na•si•sīn•os•pti•li•n kʷo•te•sīn•os•tak.
1sg-friend interr-3prox-die-trans-conc-pf-relativizer 1sg-3obv-die-trans-vol
I will kill whoever killed my friend.

Legʷīmogipti kʷokībritakumu.
le•gʷī•mogi•pti kʷo•kī•pri•tak•mu
2sg-cry-forever-concess 1sg-do.it-take.back-VOL-NEG
Although you cry forever, I will not repent.

Kʷeyupi sunoyitalli teporusalli.
kʷe•yupi su•noyi•tal•li te•poru•sar•li.
It rained so much that my home got wet.

Notice that because *-uti* begins in a vowel, it causes changes in the preceding vowel.

/kembi/	+	/uti/	•	/kembyuti/	•	[kɛmbič]	Although it changes…
/kawe/	+	/uti/	•	/kawyoti/	•	[kɔ:yəč]	Although it blows…
/ona/	+	/uti/	•	/onauti/	•	[ɔnɔ:č]	Although it gives…
/migo/	+	/uti/	•	/migūti/	•	[muguč]	Although it is green…
/patu/	+	/uti/	•	/patūti/	•	[fatuč]	Although it comes off…

Person Markers

The arguments of a verb were indexed on the verb as prefixes.

	Subject	Indirect Object	Direct Object	Possession	Pronoun
1sg	kʷo-	w-	kʷi-	kʷe-	kʷeja
1pl	mi-	n-	mi-	mi-	meja
1pl incl.	jo-	i-	jo-	i-	ija
2sg	le-	l-	li-	le-/li-	leja
2pl	wa-	w-	wi-	u-	uja
3a	su-	s-	si-	su-/si-	suja
3i	te-	t-	te-	te-	teja

Compounding

The preceding sections on morphology dealt with affixes, or non-root bound morphemes. Those morphemes cannot form the center of a verbal complex by themselves. Rather, they must be attached to a bona-fide verb root. The present section deals with compounding, by which we mean the inclusion of two or more roots within the verbal complex, each of which could form a word by itself (with the addition of appropriate affixes where necessary). The additional roots can be roots that either normally form nouns or normally form verbs.

Noun Incorporation

The object of a verb can be incorporated into the verbal matrix. This often interacts with the use of applicatives, allowing an unimportant direct object to be buried in the verb and drawing attention to an indirect argument or oblique phrase raised to that position. The incorporated noun is inserted in the verb matrix directly in front of the verb stem, triggering certain changes. If the verb stem begins in an unvoiced stop, it is voiced, in the manner:

/p/ > [b], /t/ > [r], /k/ > [g], /kʷ/ > [gʷ]

ware- + *pari-*
travel begin
warebari
“set out on a journey”

This change to verb roots is just one instance of a widespread phenomenon of voicing alternations in initial consonants. It does not affect the consonants /b g g^w s m n r l w y/, at least in the early language (although very few verb stems begin with voiced stops anyway). In later Swīra, the process was extended to all voiceless obstruents, and so /s/ > [z] in such positions. However, this change is blocked when the resulting consonant would be identical to the previous consonant.

Noun incorporation has three primary uses:

- Backgrounding the direct object, and distinguishing old and new, or definite and indefinite information.
- Increasing the number of arguments or adjuncts that can be associated with the verb.
- Creating new verbs with new meanings.

Incorporation sometimes has the effect of backgrounding the direct object, marking it as old information, replacing the function of an article like "the" in English. A newly-introduced noun phrase is rarely ever incorporated; if it is, it indicates that the information is some kind of presupposition.

It can be used to suggest middle voice or reflexive voice, as in the following example:

Kʷokelikurgēli.
Kʷo•keli•kurga•ē•li
1sg-leg-break-STAT-PF
"I've broken my leg."

Here, the noun *keli*, "leg," is incorporated. Incorporation usually forces the most automatic, neutral interpretation. The assumption here is that the speaker broke his own leg. Had he broken someone else's leg, it would warrant more attention, and *keli* would stand outside the verbal complex with an appropriate pronominal prefix.

Uratoske, kʷekeli lekʷikurgēli!
Ura•toske, kʷe•keli le•kʷi•kurga•ē•li!
horse•buttock, 1sg•leg 2sg•1sg•break•STAT•PF
"You asshole, you've broken my leg!"

Sometimes, it is used to get one argument of the verb out of the way for another one. The verb can only index three arguments. If a causative or applicative would result in a verb having four arguments, then the direct object can be incorporated, the indirect object moved into the direct object slot, and the peripheral phrase promoted to indirect object.

Other times, incorporation can have the effect of lexical coining, as some verb•object pairs become idiomatic. Thus it is like compounding to create new vocabulary. Many such compounds have become lexicalized. For example:

jene•nom•os•
wine-drink-TRANS
"to get drunk"

K^{w}*ojenenomolli* (> Modern *Pojenemolli*)
“I got drunk.”

Verbs of motion can agree with (or incorporate) the area of movement as the direct object, and the point moved toward as the indirect object.

3SG-3SG-foot-hurry-enter-PF
“He ran into the room.”

Verb Compounding

Verb roots can be added directly to each other – and inflections on either side of them – with no special derivational affixes. The verb root that is considered “auxiliary,” or the head verb, comes last.

In verb compounding, two (or more) verb roots are combined in the same verbal complex. Unlike noun incorporation, which allows one noun root to be incorporated into the verb, there is theoretically no limit to the number of verb roots which can be compounded. Usually, the main or lexical verb root, which contributes the most semantically to the overall meaning, is first, and the less semantically salient verb roots follow it. In the common instance of two motion verb roots combining, the one indicating manner comes first, then the one indicating path.

Verb Compounding’s Role in Developing Polysynthesis

Verb compounding has played an important diachronic role in building Swīric polysynthesis. As certain verbs appear more and more in compounds, they have been worn down both phonetically and semantically, diverging from their forebears and resulting in new affixes. Some of the affixes we’ve examined above probably arose from compounding. For example, *-pē-* may have arised from *-pēya-*, “to be powerful, capable,” and *-tar-* from *-tāra-*, “to push, press.” A common way for new suffixes to arise seems to be by contraction or shortening, taking the first CV-sequence of a verb that has come to be commonly used in a modal or aspectual function in serial verb constructions. In historical times, this happened with *-pari-*, “begin,” which soon after the conquest begins to appear alternating with a shortened form *-pa-*, which formed inceptive verbs. A later example is the verb *-meru-*, which originally meant realize, perceive, or know. It began to be used after sensory verbs to indicate the successful perception of a sensory phenomenon, e.g., turning “watch” into “see.” It also got shortened to *-me-*. Gradually it began to be applied to various other non-sensory verbs to imply success of the intended action. This occurred along with meaning shifts in some of the verbs.

Before	After
-ol- “look for”	
-k^{w}ora- “look at, watch”	-k^{w}ora- “look for”
	-k^{w}orame- “find”

-im- “see”	-im- “look at, watch”
	-im(m)e- “see”
-kigu- “listen, hear”	-kigu- “listen (to)”
	-kigume- “hear”
-nambu- “study, learn”	-nambu- “study”
	-nam(bum)e- “learn”
-tawa- “touch, feel”	-tawa- “touch”
	-tawame- “feel”
-nus- “leave (behind)”	-nus- “leave (behind)”
	-nusme- “get rid of, forget”

Copula

There is no copula per se. The function of the copula is performed by a verbalizing suffix, *-ase*. This suffix is attached after a noun stem which represents one half of the identity equation. The other half, the one which is topical, appears as an independent noun, and its agreement prefix is attached to the beginning of the predicate. Formally, the topic is like the agent / agent agreement prefix, and the complement is an incorporated noun.

“I am a dog.”
kʷo•kʷon•ase
1SG-dog-be

“Tito is a dog.”
Tito su•kʷon•ase
Tito 3a-dog-be

kʷo•igeste•se
1SG-fish-be
“I am a fish.”

te•jāk•ase
3i-frog-be
“It’s a frog.”

Markers of Phase and Scope on the Verb

-lta- all, altogether, the entirety / totality
-rō- all, altogether, together, universally, every, each
collective action
distributive action
almost
for the first time
again
already - not anymore
still - not yet
only
just
simply

In some of these the functions overlap with extra-verbal particles, reinforce them, and replace or may be replaced by them.

The Noun

Nouns refer to people, things, ideas, etc. and can serve as the arguments of verbs. Nouns consist of a stem, and also optionally

1. a pronominal prefix in the case of inalienable possession
2. a vowel suffix serving mainly to mark the word as a noun
3. a suffix identifying the noun as proximal or obviative (greater or lesser interest to the conversation)

Nouns belong to three broad classes: inalienably possessed, alienably possessed and unpossessed nouns. To a degree, there may be some ambiguity of classification regarding certain nouns. But most cases are clearer. Parts of the body, inherent aspects or qualities of a person, kinsmen, a spouse, and a man = s dog and horse are considered inalienable possessions. An inalienable noun takes a pronominal prefix.

Most other small objects are alienable. (A man may lose his wife, but so long as she is there, she is “inalienable.”) Some of these possessions could, however, be considered inalienable and take possession prefixes if the possessor also made them. Alienable nouns may be possessed via a periphrastic expression with an indirect object. (There was no verb “have” either, instead using a “There is X with Y” construction.) This was taken to mean the Swīra did not have the pettily materialistic, capitalistic worldviews of advanced civilizations which were obsessed with possession. As further evidence they took the similarity of the possessive prefixes to the *indirect object* verb markers.

Unpossessed nouns, usually abstract entities or materials, cannot be possessed at all. To express the equivalent of possession for something like “land,” a paraphrase must be used like “the land I live on.”

New nouns were also formed by compounding. Like the incorporation of an object into the verb, compounded nouns followed the rule whereby the initial segment of the second element was voiced if it was a voiceless stop. Thus,

p ・ b, t ・ r, k ・ g, k^w ・ g^w

Notice that here [t] becomes [r], not [d]. The same condition whereby identical consonants in successive syllables was prohibited also worked here.

In compounding, the head noun is last. Both nouns and verbs may be incorporated into a compounding noun.

New nouns could also be formed by means of affixes. Some of these are:

- *-nesa*: a characterizer suffix on nouns, e.g. *swīranesa*, "The Swīra way," (sometimes) "the Swīra language."
- *-kwa*: augmentative
- *-ōwe*: typicalizer, "genuine," e.g. *ērōwe*, "a genuine man, a Swīra man."
- *-ke*: locative, goal, instrument; general oblique-case suffix/clitic
- *-sjoko*: distributive suffix

Some nouns appear to have been formed from verb roots by various derivational processes, e.g., an infix *-n-* that indicates a concrete noun related to, or the result of the action, of a verb. Gemination of the second consonant of the root can have this effect, as well as serving as a diminutive. Suffixation of a vowel to the verb root, which often ends in a consonant, is one process, as is inverting the final consonant-vowel pair.

*sanra > sarna; sanda

	Possession	Independent Pronoun
1sg	k^we-	k^weja
1pl	mi-	meja
1pl incl.	i-	ija
2sg	le-/li-	leja
2pl	u-	uja
3a	su-/si-	suja
3i	te-	teja
Interr.	na-/ni-	naja
Zero	Ø-	Ø

Bound nouns

BOUND NOUNS: kinship terms, body parts, "home," "king," "friend," "soul," "name"
AMBIVALENT NOUNS: domestic animals, human-made artifacts
UNBOUND: wild animals, abstract notions, natural phenomena, substances

-ā/-ē: absolutive

kʷeke kaye: “gold to me,” “my money”

u•ar•i kaye
1sg-exist gold
war kaye

u•kaye•ar•i
1sg-gold-exist-NOM
ukayāri = my gold, my having gold

kʷāsī
kʷo•ase•i, “that which is me,” > first person pronoun

For some nouns which are ambivalent with regard to possession, the translation of the word may differ depending on whether it is possessed or unpossessed.

Swīra	Unpossessed	Possessed
ēr	man	husband
wīpa	woman	wife
kaye	gold	money
kawe	wind	breath
āuri	silver	money

Locational and Temporal Words

Compound Nouns

Noun-Noun Compounds

Noun-noun compounds can be coordinate (*ērwīpa*, ‘husband and wife, man and woman’) or subordinate. Subordinate compounds are head-final. The first root is taken to be describing the second one.

In many such noun-noun compounds, the first noun root is the name of some kind of material, like so:

telgu	stone	*telgwargʷu*, ‘stone (flint) arrowhead’
kolle	bronze	*kollesuke*, ‘bronze ax’
termu	iron	*termukata*, ‘iron sword’
kaye	gold	
āuri	silver	

Prefix-Noun Compounds

Aside from the stative-verb adjectives, which convey meanings translated by adjectives in English, but which are lexically verbs and are conjugated as such, there are adjectival prefixes. This consists of a closed class of morphemes which have modifying meanings and which occur as prefixes on nouns. The resulting morphologically complex noun may be translated as a noun phrase containing a noun and adjective. These are *not* root morphemes; they cannot stand alone as nouns, and they cannot be conjugated. Sometimes there may be an adjectival prefix and a stative verb which have the same, or overlapping meanings; nevertheless, they are functionally distinct, and usually neither one is derived from the other, either synchronically or diachronically. Despite this, adjectival prefixes *can* occur inside a verbal complex, either incorporated along with their noun, or serving an adverbial function. Adjectival prefixes often express basic antonymic pairs, although not all possible meanings may be expressed, and there may be gaps. Adjectival prefixes are especially common in names.

uigu-	wise
mogi-	eternal, everlasting
alta-	famous, respected, esteemed
tō-	big, large, great
peuge-	strong, firm, indestructible

Some prefixes are simultaneously nouns:

alta-	famous, respected, esteemed; as a noun, ‘fame’

Example:

Mogyalta	‘eternal fame’

Nominalized Verbs

Numerals + Adjectives

Like ‘adjectives,’ numerals also occurred primarily as prefixes on nouns. Like numerals, adjectives could take the suffix *-ki*, which formed a kind of noun with a meaning like *altakki*, ‘the famous one.’ They could even take the numeral suffix *-re*: *altare*, ‘famously.’

In Old Swīra the plain numerals were little used. They were effectively collective nouns. They bore a suffix *-ki*, and the *k* was geminated after short vowels.

	Old Swīra	Later Swīra		
1		bitki	>	biski
2		k^{w}utki	>	puski
3		mikki	>	mikki

4	jonki	>	jonki	
5	sukki	>	sukki	
6	muiki	>	muiki, mukki	
7	njotki	>	njoski	
8	jakki	>	jakki	
9	gokki	>	gokki	
10	sūki	>	sūki	
~100	maniki	>	manki	

In later Swīra, this *-ki* became a generalized counter suffix, used for things when there was no particular counter suffix, or when the proper counter was unkown. This occurred after the practice of using numeral counters was adopted from Yuktepat. For the most part when indicating the quantity of a particular noun, the numeral root was prefixed to the noun being counted. The numeral prefixes are:

1	bit-
2	k^{w}ut-
3	mi-
4	jon-
5	su-
6	mui-, muy-
7	njot-
8	ja-
9	go-
10	sū-
~100	mani-

The practice of prefixing numerical roots to nouns became non-productive early in the Swīra period, and remains in only a few fixed forms. It is occasionally used to suggest deliberately archaic style. For example, a man mocking liturgical conventions may say:

mj•ēru
three-men
“three men”

instead of the standard,

ēru *tam•kal*
man three-thing
“three men”

Another set of numbers was taken over from Tepat. This set contains higher numbers such as 10,000 for which no native Swīra words are known. Furthermore, these numbers were quite specific, whereas the Swīra *mani(ki)* “a hundred” was vague and could apply to any very large group of things. In fact in the modern language it simply means “very many.”

0	ljom, lum
1	ug
2	nju, nui
3	tam
4	sē
5	on, wō
6	lug
7	set
8	(h)ot
9	gō
10	tjep, uglum
100	jok, uglumlum
1000	tjen
10,000	tjeptjen
1,000,000	min, mun

There are also so-called adverbial numerals which are used to modify verbs, since numerals themselves cannot be incorporated into a verb. These numerals end in *-re* or *-te*.

1	bitte
2	kʷutte
3	mire
4	jonde
5	sure
6	muire
7	njotte
8	jare
9	gore
10	sūre
~100	manire

Kʷutte sunakakili.
Kʷut•te su•nak•aki•li.
He came in twice.

Mire su•igeste•tawe•li.
Mire swigestetaweli.
She ate three fish.

Torul yonde tenekar.
Torul yon•de te•nek•ar.
square four.ADV 3.side.exist
A square has four sides.

Swīra took from Yuktepat the use of classifiers or measure words, which appear in Swīra attached to the numeral (usually of Yuktepat origin) as a compound. In almost all cases, numerals were

required to be followed by a classifier or counter. Which counter was appropriate was usually determined by the physical properties of the thing counted. For example, the counter *lop* was used to count long, thin, flexible objects. Counters themselves overlapped with nouns, and many could be used alone as nouns, and serve as counters for themselves. Commonly used counters include:

hon	long stiff objects
pē	cup, bottle, indefinite measure of liquid
wa	animals
kal	people
mai	thin flat objects
sut	volumes, member of a series
toi	machines, tools
kai	buildings, monuments

Some counters were added to numbers to perform adverbial functions.

tō	times, repetitions of an action

Some counters referred to specific units of measurement.

mik	smallest unit of time measurement (a little less than 1 second)
nan	small unit of time measurement (about 8 seconds)
sok	medium unit of time measurement (about 84 seconds)
pon	unit of time measurement (about 14 minutes)
wol	largest unit of time within a day (about 2 hours 24 minutes)
li	day
kit	month (cycle of the moon)
sik	season, one-quarter division of the year
tik	year (cycle of the sun)
si	year (referring to the age of something)

k ʷut•wīpa > *putwīfa*
sūkito = ten people
sūpune > *sūfune* = ten carts

Particles

Particles are short words which are not inflected.

Adverbial Particles

Adverbial particles usually occur sentence-internally, usually before a verb, although almost any order is possible. These may coordinate with verb-internal phasal suffixes, strengthening or modifying their meaning.

yā - now
ilbe, ikelbe - usually, generally
mō - soon

kū - ū - mū- mou - already, not anymore
orma - arma - mada - still, not yet

Focus Particles

Focus particles follow the word(s) over which they have scope. This is usually a noun or noun phrase, or sometimes a subordinate verb phrase. They never follow an independent verb.

Restrictive Focus Particle

The restrictive focus particle is *tyu*.

Additive Focus Particle

The additive focus particle is *tem*.

Double usage of the particle
Su ura thief tem tesiwāmu kaye suk^{w}u.cover.k^{w}elēnte tem yo!

su	*ura*	*pīku•wā•i*	*tem*	*te•si•wā•mu*	*kaye*	*su•k^{w}u•cover•k^{w}el•ē•nte*	*tem*	*yo*
this	horse	property-take-NOML	even	3M-3P-take-NEG	gold	3P-APPL-cover-STAT-GER	even	ASSERT

Even a thief wouldn't take this horse even if it was plated in gold!

Other Focus Particles

-ai = just, exactly, precisely, no more nor less, *yag*

Discourse Particles (Enclitic)

For the most part, these indicate illocutionary acts. Unlike mood suffixes, which are bound to the verb's subject and reflect the subject's attitudes and such, the discourse particles reflect the speaker's attitude. They can be translated in English by adverbs, interjections, or sometimes have no straightforward equivalent. They always come at the end of the sentence, regardless of which kind of word or phrase comes before them. In this way, they may be distinguished from simply another kind of verbal suffix: if for some reason another constituent than the main verb is shifted to the end of the sentence, say for emphasis, then the discourse particles follow than instead of the main verb. In addition, they tend to have the phonological shape CV.

The discourse particles are:

- *yō*: assertion
- *ān*: confirmation, agreement
- *wā*: surprise, emotion
- *sē*: dare, bet
- *k^{w}ū*: fancy, wonder, imagination, hypothesizing

Assertion

Yo is usually used when the assertion is contrary to what the listener is assumed to believe. It is only added to declarative sentences. The use of The use of *yo* is supposed to alert the hearer to new information. Underlying it is the assumption that the listener does not know what they speaker says.

Makkə sîtənarval yo.
Matko sutenarwali yō.
matko su•te•narwa•li yō
bear 3sg-3sg-shoot-PF PART
Yes, he *did* shoot that bear.

Frequently, but not necessarily, it is used to contradict someone.

He did *too* do it.

Confirmation

he 3p•toske•nuga *ān*?
he 3p-tail-ride PART
He sure can't ride, can he? (He rides the tail, doesn't he?)

This particle is often found when something seems to have slipped the speaker's mind, and she wants to be reminded.

her name what-is *ān*?
What's her name again?

Surprise

Wā is often like the counterpart to *yō*. While *yō* is often used to challenge the listener's assumptions, *wā* is for when the speaker finds his / her assumptions challenged. It often suggests that the information expressed has just been realized.

2sg-goat-HAVE-QUEST PART
Well, do you have a goat then?

Swērsē wā!
su•ēr•sē wā
3sg-men-love PART
So he *is* gay!

Dare

Tō temura letiwāpē sē! > To təmɨr ləčvaape se!
te•ō te•mura le•ti•wā•pē sē
I bet you can't steal the chief's hat. / I dare you to steal the chief's hat.

Wonderment, Fancy

Suppose he did X.
Why don't we just cut loose and run off to those hills.
I wonder if she'll like my cock. / I wonder if she'd ride my horse.
What if he finds out?

Sarcasm / Scorn / Dismissal
Like hell he did that.

This one is not attested in the classical literary sources, however it can confidently be assumed based on its occurrence throughout the modern dialects.

Mutational Processes

In primitive Swīra, at least five productive processes caused mutations in the form of words:

1. Final vowel alternation
2. Root vowel ablaut
3. Initial consonant voicing
4. Nasal insertion
5. Gemination

(1) The final vowel of a noun alternated between one form when the word was isolated, and another when the first element of a compound. This alternation applied to some vowels and thus did not affect all words, and in some cases there is an idiosyncratic alternation. In general, the two major alternations were as follows:

-a / -e
-u / -i

Thus, a noun ending in *-a* would change the *-a* to *-e* when joined to a following noun root, and in the same situation a final *-u* would change to *-i*. (This process did not affect the long counterparts of these vowels.) The same process is sometimes seen operating in verbs before a few verbal endings.There are a few words which lose the final vowel in compounds:

jāka, jāku, “frog”; *jāk-* in compounds

These are usually stems that ended in a consonant and had a euphonic vowel added to avoid ending the word in a consonant.

(2) Root vowel ablaut occurs in some roots which serve as the base of a noun and a verb. The noun typically has a stem vowel *o* which becomes *e* when the root is used as the root of a verb.

(3) Voicing of the initial consonant when a root becomes the second element of a compound has been discussed above.

(4) Nasal insertion, also discussed previously, is one common way of forming a noun from a verbal root or stem.

(5) Gemination has several functions. Sometimes it is a process that forms nouns from verbs, although not nearly as common as nasal insertion. Secondly, it commonly occurs in nouns to form a diminutive. The third case of gemination is in so-called expressive gemination that is found in some adverbial forms, interjections, and onomatopeia. Geminate consonants are also found in most of the stand-alone numerals. And of course, there are also a few words that have doubled consonants simply as part of their underlying form. In most cases the last consonant of a root is usually affected, because geminate consonants are not permitted word-initially, only intervocally. However, gemination of the initial consonant of the stem in a conjugated verb often indicates intensification. This is possible because verbs nearly always have prefixes, which places the initial consonant of the *stem* inside the *word*, and between two vowels. Gemination does not affect all consonants – neither glides (w, j) nor voiced stops (b, g, g^{w}) can be geminated.

Syntax and Pragmatics

Word order is often completely scrambled due to pragmatic influences, but the basic word order appears to be SOV. At the beginning of extended stretches of utterances, such as at the beginning of a chapter or speech, the position of the verb is often inverted so it comes first. This became standardized as a stylistic convention in later Swīra literature, with the initial verb marking the beginning of a division of text, such as a stanza or canto of a poem. The verb usually came later in the sentence though. The position of noun phrases, adverbial phrases, and of subordinate clauses relative to each other, and the main verb, was determined mostly by pragmatic considerations, especially the newness of the information. Old information generally preceded new information, although any number of stylistic factors could affect the arrangement of items in particular utterances.

Permission / Agreement

K^{w}o•yupi lenakante saka?
k^{w}o•yupi le•nak•(a)nte saka?
Come visit my place, OK?
Won't you come visit me?

Conjoining / Coordinating Noun Phrases

There are two chief ways to coordinate nouns, one using particles, and one using numerals. In both cases, the items being coordinate are listed, with the conjunctive word, whether a determiner or numeral, follows.

Using determiners, the list of coordinated items is followed by the additive focus particle *tem*.

> *Ura kilmu tem sitār*.
> He has horses and sheep. (He has horses, even sheep.)

For greater emphasis, the focus particle may be added after each noun in the list.

> *Ura tem kilmu tem sitār*.
> He has both horses and sheep.

Sometimes the restrictive focus particle is used, to indicate that the list is exhaustive. The items listed, and nothing more, are intended.

> *Ura kilmu tyu sitār*.
> He has horses and sheep (and that's it - no goats, no cows).

Using numerals, the list of coordinated items is followed by a numeral, whose quantity corresponds to the quantity of items in the list. This also includes the quantifier *nolo*, "many." The numerals must occur in the independent numeral form. This is somewhat like the English expression "we two."

Yāsī kʷutki… / Iya kʷutki…
We two…

Ura kilmu kʷutki…
A horse and a sheep

Ura kilmu kʷutki teyaraullai tekīlnakli. (*Îrə kîlmu pukkî təyaroollee təkilnəklî*.)
ura kilmu kʷutki te•yara•ulda•i te•kīl•nak•li
horse sheep two it-alcohol-sell-NOM 3-walk-enter-PAST
A horse and a sheep walked into a bar…

There is no straightforward way to express two alternatives in the manner of English "or."

Tesokweyaka, tenīmēyaka? (Təsokvəyakə, tənimeiyakə?)
te•soku•eya•ka te•nīma•eya•ka
Will he go north? Will he go south?
Will he go north or south?

Relative Clauses

Relative clauses - and here we include what translates into English as a noun preceded by an adjective - are essentially all internally-headed relative clauses. The complete noun phrase is represented by a verb phrase with nominal marking added as necessary. Unlike the considerable mutability of matrix-clause word order, word order in a relative clause tends to much more strictly follow the SOV pattern. The verb in the relative clause may be considered "nominalized" to the extent that it takes nominal possession prefixes in place of verbal agent prefixes, and may be followed by determiner clitics.

Kʷeya yāla tekīrrakēlī kʷuimli.
kʷeya yāla te•kīl•rak•ē•li•i kʷo•im•li
I goat 3sg-ran-away-STAT-PF-NOM 1sg-see-PF
I saw the goat that has ran away.
I saw that the goat has run away.
I saw the goat run away.

"It displeases me that they always fight."
"They always fight, and it displeases me"

This can lead to ambiguity in some cases, such as the following sentence:

Kʷeya unkya kʷer sutekʷelli tekʷigur.
"I like the song that the girl sang." *or* "I like the girl that sang the song."

There may optionally be a clitic *-ā* which is used to mark the argument of the relative clause to indicate which part is the head of the relative clause, but it is unnecessary and usually not used.

"I like the song that the girl sang."

"I like the girl that sang the song."
K^{w}eya unkya k^{w}erā sutek^{w}elli tek^{w}igur.
K^{w}eya unkyā k^{w}er sutek^{w}elli tek^{w}igur.

As you can see, an internally-headed relative clause and a clausal complement to a verb may be expressed in the same way, and may be interpreted ambiguously in the absence of any contextual information.

"I like the girl who sang the song. Bring her to me."

Even though / Too much

tendal "too much" (< *teme•tal*, "until it is too much")

tendal …-uti, "no matter how much" ("Even though you cry too much, I will not give your paper back."

Swīra through the Years: A Diachronic Perspective / Swīra through Space and Time

Genetic Affiliation of Swīra

Swīra's prehistory and genetic history is not wholly clear, despite the efforts of National Studies scholars. While Swīra is certainly related to some other languages of nomadic tribes in Northern Swidira, the full extent and membership of the Macro-Swīric family is unknown. In part its resolution has been bogged by political issues. Enthusiastic romanticizers of the "free" pastoral life wanted to demonstrate the brotherhood of all the northern tribes and assigned all their languages to the Macro-Swīric family without reservation. Their fanciful reasons for making the assignations has sometimes confused serious searches for genetic affiliations, and many of the similarities are clearly due to areal influence or coincidence. There is also the question of whether or not the language of the Koreli-nas is related to the family. Despite its divergent phonology, its early stages show very similar grammatical patterns, and there are resemblances in basic vocabulary. (These are sometimes obscured now by the heavy influence exerted by its participation in the East Coast Sprachbund.) But the desire of many nationalists to differentiate themselves from East Coast countries and their urban commercialism discouraged research in this direction.

Proto-Swīra

Phonology

Consonants

	Labia	Corona	Palata	Vela	Labiovela	Glottal

	l	l	l	r	r	
Stops	p	t		k	k^w	ʔ
Fricative		s				h
Nasal	m	n		(ŋ)[2]		
Lateral		l				
Glide			(j)		(w)	

Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e	ə	o
Low		a	

Proto-Swīric to Old Swīra

1. Post-nasal voicing
   mp > mb
   nt > nd
   ŋk > ŋg
   $ŋk^w$ > $ŋg^w$
2. ə > Ø
3. Germanic voicing law: whenever a stop occurs between two vowels and is **not** followed by the accent (primary or secondary), then it voices.
   p > b
   t > d
   k > g
   k^w > g^w
4. Nasal assimilation
5. voiceless stop > voiced stop / in short-voweled unstressed open syllables
6. d > r
7. Ø > u / #_r
8. Birth of long vowels
   $V_1ʔV_2$ ・ V_2:
   V_1hV_2 ・ V_2:
9. ei > i:, ou > u:
   *sweida > Swīra
10. oi > ui, o:i > u:i

The voiced stops in other positions, such as intervocalic, are believed to have arisen from voiceless stops through the interaction of complex conditions, such as the stress pattern of the word.

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[2] Phonetic symbols in parentheses probably existed as allophones of other phonemes. E.g., [ŋ] was an allophone of /n/ in certain positions, and [j] and [w] may have been allophones of the vowels /i/ and /u/.

Old Swīra

		Labial	Coronal	Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar
Stops	Voiceless	p	t		k	k^w
	Voiced	b	(d)		g	g^w
Fricative			s			
Nasal		m	n			
Tap			r			
Lateral			l			
Glide				j ‹y›		w

Vowels: a, e, i, o, u, ā, ē, ī, ō, ū[3]
Diphthongs: ai, au, eu, ui, āi, āu, ēu, ūi

Dialectal Changes (before the Invasion?)

Swīra dialect

1. p > f /{#_, V_V, _t, _k, _l, l_}
   *k^wewīpa > pewīfa, “my wife”
   *epte > efte
   Yuktepat *mepgoi > *mefgoi > mevgoi
2. k^w > p
   *k^wewīpa > pewīfa
   *k^woltōnali > poltounali
3. g^w > w
4. [-cont, -voi] > [αplace] / _[-cont, -voi, αplace]
   *nek^{w}ti > netti
5. eu > jo, e:u > jo:

Noɦoʃe

1. s > ʃ
2. voiced stops > fricatives and glides
   a. {b, g, g^w} > {β, ɦ, w} / V_V
   b. ɦ > j / _(i, e)
   c. ɦ > w / _(o, u)
3. voiceless stops > voiced stops
   {p, t, k, kw} > {b, d, g, gw} / {V_V, r_V, l_V, N_V}
   **kerunte* > **keronde*
4. C: > C
5. high vowels > mid vowels / _NC

[3] The macron is traditionally used to transcribe long vowels – therefore, [a:], [e:], [i:], [o:], [u:].

Sɨhel

1. ŭ, ĭ > ɨ
2. ă, ĕ, ŏ > ə / [-stress]
3. C > [FRICATIVE] / V_V

Unsorted

1. r > C / _C
   *arte > atte
2. r > l / _C
   *arte > alte
3. u, ū > o, ō
4. high vowel + N > syllabic nasal

In different dialects:
pr, tr, kr, k^wr ・ pur, tur, kur, k^wur
pr, tr, kr, k^wr ・ pt, tt, kt, k^wt
bC, gC, g^wC ・ buC, guC/giC, g^wuC
bC, gC, g^wC ・ pC, kC, k^wC

Sound Changes in Borrowings from Yuktepat to Swīra

1. C^h > C
2. C > [+voice] / V_V (only words that entered via the Eastern Dialects)
3. q > g
4. ts > s
5. ŋ > g /#_
6. ŋ > un /_#
7. ɯ, ɨ > u, i
8. ɤ > a, o
9. ə > a
10. ej > ē
11. ɤj > ai
12. iw > ju
13. ew > eu, jo
14. aw > au
15. əw, ow > ō
16. ɯj > ī
17. ɨw > ū

Later (Post-Classical) Sound Changes

1. Consonant Gemination
   a. C > [PLACE]/_C
2. First Palatalization
   a. tj > tʃ
   b. sj > ʃ

    c. t > tʃ/_i
    d. s > ʃ/_i
3. Vowel Devoicing
    a. i > u ([-stress]; [-voiced]_[-voiced])
    b. u > Ø/(_#; [-voiced]_[-voiced])
4. m > Ø/_w, u (sometimes)
5. Glide Deletion
    a. w > Ø/{_u, u_}
    b. j > Ø/{_i, i_}
6. Monophthongization
    a. a(:) > e(:) / j_
    b. au > o:, ou
7. Glide + High Vowel Monophthongization
    a. ju > i
    yuki > *iki*
    puyu 'winter' > Modern *fui*
    b. wi > u
    awi 'gnat' > *au*
8. Short Vowel Centralization
    a. i, u > ɨ
    b. a, e, o > ə (except in the first syllable of a root)
9. ru > l /_[+stop, -voiced]
    iruka > *ilka*
10. Central vowels are deleted in these environments:
    a. / VC_#
    b. / VC_CV
11. Second Palatalization
    a. kj > tʃ or kʃ
    b. gj > dʒ or gʒ
    c. k > tʃ or kʃ/_i
    d. g > dʒ or gʒ/_i
12. Third Palatalization
    a. ks > kʃ
    b. gs > gʒ
13. g > h / V_V
14. ə, ɨ > o, u / p, b, m, w

This produces a phonological system like the following:

		Labial	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar	Glottal
Stop	Voiceless	p	t			k		
	Voiced	b	(d)			g		
Affricate	Voiceless			tʃ	kʃ			
	Voiced							

Fricative	Voiceless	f	s	ʃ		(x)		h
	Voiced	v	(z)	(ʒ)		(ŋ)		ɦ
Nasal		m	n					
Tap			r					
Lateral			l					
Glide					j ‹y›		w	

The prosody of Modern Swira underwent restructuring, whereby accent shifted to the first heavy (long-vowel) syllable in the word, or else the first syllable of the root. Subsequently, all short vowels in non-accented syllables were reduced or even dropped, and long vowels in such syllables were shortened.

Modern Swīra

The most characteristic tendency of Modern Swīra has been the tendency toward greater use of analytic expressions where previously synthetic constructions were not only possible, but easier and preferred. A major reason for this, is imitation of, and especially, translation from, Yuktepat, which was an analytic language and had very few synthetic expressions at all. When translating from Yuktepat, its analytic phrases corresponded more closely to the analytic phrases of Classical Swīra - which originally were mostly emphatic paraphrases from single-word polysynthetic verbs. Thus analytic expressions came to abound in the literary language. Similarly, as speakers of Yuktepat adopted Swīra, they found the analytic expressions easier to understand. This general trend has interacted with some other grammatical changes. One is the reduction and loss of the indirect object verbal prefixes. This has led to Modern Swīra losing indirect objects almost completely, becoming a language with maximally two nominal arguments to the verb, like Yuktepat. Indirect objects and adjuncts have come to be obligatorily marked by coverbs. Word order has become less flexible, at least in the standard language, which strictly requires all dependent verbs to precede the main verb. Both verb and noun compounding have become much less productive. Verb compounding now is restricted almost only to compounds of manner-of-motion verb and path verb roots. Noun incorporation is used occasionally in a derivative function, but has lost its powers of backgrounding information and changing argument structure. Finally, the tense system has been reformed, with the aspectual distinctions of the old system becoming purely time-related, and a new future tense has been added.

Here I'll overview the grammar of Modern Swīra. Rather than repeat everything I did for classical Swīra for Old Swīra, I'll simply draw attention to certain areas where Modern Swīra has changed significantly since Classical times.

Orthography

Literary Swīra stands in the middle between the modern spoken language and the Classical language. While admitting new changes in morphology and syntax, it still preserves certain usages that are archaic in the spoken language. One of the ways it is most conservative is the spelling system. Even nowadays, written texts spell words in almost the same way they did in classical Swīra times. The only change that has become standard is that writers no longer write vowels that have been deleted in Modern Swīra. But there is no indication, for example, that Modern Swīra has a completely different vowel system than Classical Swīra.

Phonology

		Labial	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar	Glottal
Stops	Voiceless	p	t	tʃ		k		
	Voiced	b				g		
Fricatives	Voiceless	f	s (~z)	ʃ		x (~h)		
	Voiced	v						
Nasal		m	n					
Tap			r (~d)					
Lateral			l					
Glide					j ‹y›		w	

	i	ɨ	u
	əi	ə	əu
		a	

	i	ɨ	u
	ei	ə	eu
	ɛ, ɛː		ɔ, ɔː
		a, aː	

Pronominal Prefixes

There are two personal prefix systems in modern Swīra. In one system, all the prefixes - whether agent, patient, or possessive - have been reduced to one set.

	Prefixes	Pronoun
1sg	po-	pei
1pl	mo-	mei
2sg	lə-	lei
2pl	u-	ui
3a	ši-	sui
3i	tə-	tei
Interr.	nə-	nai

In the other system, there is one set for subjects and nominal possession, and another set for direct object marking. The prefixes have been regularized, so that each pair of prefixes has the same consonant but differs in the vowel. All of the subject prefixes have a non-high vowel and all the object prefixes have a high vowel.

	Subject / Possession	Direct Object	Pronoun
1sg	po-	pu-	pei
1pl	mo-	mu-	mei
2sg	lə-	li-	lei
2pl	ə-	i-	ui
3a	šə-	ši-	sui
3i	tə-	ti-	tei
Interr.	nə-	ni-	nai

In both systems, indirect object prefixes have been eliminated, and the inclusive-exclusive distinction in the first person plural has been eliminated, leaving only the exclusive prefixes.

Tense System

In modern times, the tense system has been retooled:

- Future -bəl -e-bəl / -ble
- Present — -e
- Past -l -e-l / -ly-e / -ye
- Distant Past -ɣə -e-ɣə / -ɣe

Language and Culture / Other Topics in Old Swīra Language and Culture

Names

Old Swīra names were generally transparent, comprised of easily recognizable words. They took the form of noun compounds, or even descriptive phrases, which attributed positive qualities to the name-bearer. While just about any fixed descriptive phrase could be used as a name, there were two main types in general, syntactically / morphologically speaking. They could exist as nominalized verbs, usually containing a stative verb, or else as nouns with an adjectival prefix. The fossilized-relative-clause type is more typical of ancient names, and in historic times the pattern Adjectival Prefix + Noun increased and eventually dominated names. Also later in history, noun-noun compounds, and compounds of Tepatic elements, combined according to Tepatic grammatical rules, also became important.

Yāku temworī
Yākmworī - “The frog is ugly” - “Ugly Frog,” name of an historical figure - *Yākwori*
Mogikeru - “Everlasting Brightness” - *Moikerɨ*
Mogyalta - “Everlasting Fame” - *Moyaltə*
Uigusyē - “Wise Serpent” - *Iguše*
Yupilorai - “The home is warm” - *Iflore*

Words for substances are common in names:

telgu	stone
kolle	bronze
termu	iron
kaye	gold
āuri	silver

A few animal names also appear in human names:

ung^{w}a	stallion
yosi	ram
kuni	wolf
matko	bear
syē	serpent
nisku	eagle

In male names, words for weapons are common:

orō	knife
keldi	arrow
arg^{w}-, *yeb-*	arrowhead
arte	shield
sike	ax

Female names commonly use the names of plants, especially flowers:

setti > *sečči*	flower
uruta	flower of a hallucinogrenic plant
	lily
	datura flower
	berry

uigu-	wise
mogi-	eternal, everlasting
alta-	famous, respected, esteemed
tō-	big, large, great
peuge-	strong, firm, indestructible

Some prefixes are simultaneously nouns:

alta- famous, respected, esteemed

Altakulde ‘Famous Hero’
Altakuni ‘Famous Wolf’

Phrasal (Verbal) names:

Asmu and *Astimu* ‘He is not burned’

Sulsurtamu ‘He never asks for help’
Tekunikīli ‘He runs with wolves’
Tīrukawīgai (*Chirîkavihe*)

Some more complex phrasal names occur which cannot usually be subsumed within a single word.

Bire Matyari ‘The One-Eyed One’ (but also *Bitmatyari*)

Kollekata
Kunikulde ‘Wolf Hero’
Kunyō ‘Wolfking’
Mogitelgu
Niskukulde (Niskulde)
Pyogekuni
Pyogetermu
Settelgu

Numbers (as prefixes) are also featured:

Sūkeldi ‘Ten Arrows’

Telgukulde > Telhikilda
Telgusetti > Telhisečči
Termukulde > Terimkilda
Peugesike - Batsüh > Fyušîkə

Poetics and Stylistics

Quite unlike Mwentepat, early Swiric literature is almost wholly poetry. Swiric poetry depends neither on rhyme nor alliteration per se. Since most words are inflected, with prefixes, suffixes, and clitics fore and aft, and because these morphemes are a rather small set which tend to repeat anyway, harmonizing them is too easy. Instead, the focus is on root words. Swiric poets tended to construct sentences with similar-sounding roots. So, the verbs in adjacent lines, or multiple verbs within a line, would often share a vowel, or share an initial consonant, or so on. Parallelism in grammar or syntax was also important.

The most complex form employed in classical poetry was a so-called ‘cross’ or ‘double-cross’ where all the verbs in a couplet would be crosslinked. The roots within each line would rhyme; then the first roots in each line would alliterate; and finally the last roots in each line would alliterate.

Philology and National Studies

Swīra linguistics is strongly associated with political ideology and particularly the nationalist programme known as *Hokkō* or *Kogunambu*. Both loosely mean “National Studies”: the first name is based on Yuktepat roots, according to academic convention and Yuktepat syntax; the second is based on Proto-Swīra roots and preferred by National Studies scholars themselves

because of their emphasis on Swīra authenticity.

During the long peace of the Mogyalta[4] period, Kōswīra turned to introspection, figuring out what it meant to be Swīra within a society that was developed largely by the incorporation of foreign Tepat elements, and often looking to the past for answers. The so-called National Studies movement initiated by Uigusyē believed that the Swīra were alienated from their true spirit by shamelessly adopting Tepat culture, and that by studying the native elements of their culture this spirit could be restored and the existential question answered. These scholars reconstructed as much of pre-civilized Swīra culture as they could by comparing records of the earliest Swīra history with the culture of contemporary nomadic tribes to the north. Swīra linguistics developed as a handmaiden to National Studies, although it took its technique from Tepat grammars (and indeed the whole National Studies movement would not have existed without the example of the Tepat scholastic tradition). Though perhaps scientifically unsound, aspects of the early Swīra language became the basis of countless inferences concerning the culture and even psychology of the nation's forefathers.

Swīra national studies scholars of the later age took the late development of tenses as an indication the early Swīra had no concept of linear time, which was instead imposed by over-enthusiastic appropriation of Tepat philosophy. Instead of having access to all of nature and humanity past and present, which was believed to have been the experience of the primitive Swīra, the Swīra had inherited from the Tepat an illusory division of past, present, and future which alienated man from his origins and his hopes and dreams, confining his experience to "the moment." Nationalist philologers decried this "Tyranny of Time." Unlike Yuktepat, Old Swīra had no word meaning "time" specifically – the closest was a noun derived from the verb "to pass." The seminal scholar Mūtol Tokunara justified this belief metaphysically by describing time as a continuous flow, like movement through space, with no clear "boundary" between "present" and other times. Imperfective aspect was unmarked – continuous action, being dynamic, is the fundamental, natural condition.

In Old Swīra only inalienable possession was marked. If necessary to indicate, alienable possession was indicated by a construction with an indirect object. In general only a few things like body parts and relationships (and interestingly, some other things – one's horse and dog, for example, were treated like kinship terms) could be inalienably possessed. Generally one could not possess abstract, immobile, and inanimate things – like water or land, unsurprisingly for a nomadic people. There was no verb "have" either, instead using a "There is X with (or at) Y" construction. The possessive prefixes were also most similar to the *indirect object* verb markers. This was taken to mean the Swīra did not have the petty materialistic worldviews of advanced civilizations which were obsessed with possession and preoccupied with economics above all else.

Some nouns have been formed from verb roots by various derivational processes. For example, an infix *-n-* that indicates a concrete noun related to, or result of action, of a verb. Gemination of the second consonant of the root can have this effect, as well as serving as a diminutive. Suffixation of a vowel to the verb root, which often ends in a consonant, is one process, as is inverting the final consonant-vowel pair. This mutability of the shape of the morpheme, which is recognizable in various forms by a certain non-linear "similarity," was taken by scholars as a manifestation of the "intuitive" nature of the Swīra spirit, in contrast to the overly-rationalistic, categorizing nature of the Tepat.

Some of the inferences drawn from this historical study were completely sound. The

[4] The second dynasty of the Swīra, which established order in the realm after two hundred years of civil war among the feudal aristocracy

importance of livestock to pastoral life is borne out by the ancient term for "herd," **peiku*, which gave Classical *fīku*, "wealth, possession."

One of the movements - taken seriously by some but treated more as a game by others - is *Swireip* or *Epouvə*[5] using native morphemes. Similar to the "Anglish" of English speakers or the *Yamatokotoba* of Japanese speakers, the goal of this movement is to replace borrowed Yuktepat vocabulary with native vocabulary. Those who practice this seriously hope to educate the public and convince them that Yuktepatic words are not more prestigious, intelligent, precise, or otherwise superior to native morphemes.

An important thing to note, though, is that even in the preclassical, "barbarian" era, the Swīra were influenced by surrounding nations, and especially Tepat. This can be observed in one of the things most central to the archetypal Swīra lifestyle, the sheep. The Classical Swīra word is *kilmu*, which was a preclassical borrowing from Yuktepat *kliŋ*, just as herding was a cultural borrowing from Tepat.

Communication Culture: Greetings

What does the sky do today?

Are your animals fattening up well?[6]

Texts

A Riddle

Tōmoke kʷosorasente kʷoyekīlūti, tenarwai sukankailūnte tem sukʷināpēmu. Kʷoniseka?

tōmo.ke	*kʷo.sor.ase.nte*	*kʷo.yeki.ilū.uti*
world.in	1SG.target.be.PTC	I.big.surpass.although

te.narwa.i	*su.kanka.ilū.nte*	*tem*	*su.kʷi.nā.pē.mu*
3SG.shoot. NOM	3SG.great.surpass	even	3SG.1SG.hit.possible.NEG

kʷo.ni.se.ka
1SG.who.be.INTERROGATIVE

I have the biggest target in the world, but the greatest archer in the world cannot hit me. Who am I?

The answer is:

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[5] *Swireip* (<*Swīrēkʷu*) "Swīra language" or *Epouvə* (<*Ekʷwōwe*) "The True Language"

[6] Swīra traditionally greet each other with the "armshake," made by grasping the other person's forearm near the elbow.

Lepīse.
le.pī.se
2SG.sun.be
You are the sun/heaven.

then 3sg.tooth 3sg.take.ptc 3sg.hip 3sg.cut.open.ptc 3sg.tooth 3sg.enter.ptc 3sg.close.past
so-that next life 3sg.enter.can

X *su.tandi.wā.nde* *su.koga.tai.nte* *su.tandi.nī.nte* *su.koga.mī.li*
then 3SG.tooth.take.PTC 3SG.hip.open.PTC 3SG.tooth.enter.PTC 3SG.hip.close.PAST
so-that next life 3SG.enter.can

X *su.tandi.wā.nde* *su.koga.tai.nte* *su.te.nī.nte* *su.te.mī.li*
then 3SG.tooth.take.PTC 3SG.hip.open.PTC 3SG.tooth.enter.PTC 3SG.hip.close.PAST
so-that next life 3SG.enter.can

su.tandi.wā.nde *su.koga.tai.nte* *su.nī.nte* *su.mī.li*
3SG.tooth.take.PTC 3SG.hip.open.PTC 3SG.tooth.enter.PTC 3SG.hip.close.PAST
so-that next life 3SG.enter.can

Then he took his tooth, and he cut open his hip, and put the tooth inside, and closed the cut, that he may pass whole into the next life.

Detritus

Akkai! pikki pikki

PPSwi **ə* > Ø; **matəko* > **matko*
**matko*, “bear” > *măsko*, *măkko*

Subordinating suffixes
Terminating suffixes
    Verb-terminating suffixes
    Sentence-terminating suffixes

Tepatic loanwords in Old Swīra (pre-Invasion):

- *kilmu* “sheep” < Tpt **kliŋ*
- *kata* “sword” <
- *putu* “grain” < Tpt **phut*

Old loanwords tended to add a replica of the root vowel at the end of the word after a consonant.

a(:)w > ɔ:

a(:)y > ɛ:
e > ɛ
o > ɔ
ew > jo > jɔ
e:w > jo: > jo(u)

Length only contrasts in the first syllable of roots

-naa-
-kiiv-
-tɔləg-
-kɨrəg-

-muk-kǘw- > -mɨkkívə- “chop wood”

Pɔˈnaavəlʒɨ

i > u after labiovelars

-s(u) marks proximal argument
-t(u)/-r marks distal argument
-n marks extra-distal argument

-ā marks the internal head of the relative clause
-i marks a nominalized verb
-nte participial verb
-tal / -alli terminative / “until”

te•ona•i ・ tōnai, “his giving” or “a giver” > toune
su•ona•i ・ swonai, “his giving” or “a giver” > svone

kʷo•ona ・ kʷōna
wi•ona ・ uyona
i•ona ・ yona
le•ona ・ lōna
mi•ona ・ myona
su•ona ・ swona
te•ona ・ tōna
na•ona ・ nōna
an•ona ・ anona

Oskulde - avenging hero > *Ↄskɨ́ldə* (in the capital dialect, simply *Ↄskɨ́ld*, without the final vowel); also Romanized as *Oskîld*. Also known in Hamtum as Osklot.

I fucking *love* it.
-kīr-

-teldu- thing, object
-īm- kind, type, species
-nīm- what kind of
-sīm- this kind of
-tīm- that kind of

su•puk•i > supuki > s’fuk warrior

**yur*- self

Swírakogu > Svirakovu > Firakovu
The nation is also known as Kōsul.

Appendix I: Summary of Swīra Morphology

Independent Verb

Prefixes					ROOTS			Suffixes				
1	2	3	4	5				1	2	3	4	5
Person marking			Applicatives		NOMINAL	VERBAL						
Subject marker	Indirect object marker	Direct object marker	Indirect-object applicatives	Direct-object applicatives	NOUN ROOT	VERB ROOT 1	VERB ROOT 2 (3, 4…)	Adverbial, Phase	Voice	Mood	Tense	Polarity
a- k^wo- mi- jo- le- wa- su- te- na-	Ø- w- n- i- l- w- s- t- n-	Ø- k^wi- mi- jo- li- wi- si- te- na-/ni	Ø- au- k^wu- re-	Ø- nē-	-Ø-		-Ø- -pa(ri)- -pol- -me(ru)- -twē- -aki- …etc.	-lta -rō -kū	-Ø -tā -ar -i -k^wel	-Ø -u -tak -keu -pē -pti -tal -tera -nte -i	-Ø -ē -li -ga -syu	-Ø -mu -ka -we

Dependent Verb

Prefixes					ROOTS			Suffixes			
Person marking			Applicatives		NOMINAL	VERBAL					
Subject marker	Indirect object marker	Direct object marker	Indirect-object applicatives	Direct-object applicatives	NOUN ROOT	VERB ROOT 1	VERB ROOT 2 (3, 4…)	Voice	Mood	Tense	Polarity
a- k^wo- mi- jo- le- wa-	Ø- w- n- i- l- w-	Ø- k^wi- mi- jo- li- wi-	Ø- au- k^wu- re-	Ø- nē-	-Ø-						

su- te- na-	s- t- n-	si- te- na-/ni									

Noun

Prefixes				Suffixes				
Possession	Number	Modifying prefixes	ROOT	Modifying suffixes	Demonstrative	Determiner	Oblique marker	Head marker
							-ke	-ā

Deverbal Noun

Prefixes					Suffixes			
Possession	Number	Modifying prefixes	ROOT	Modifying suffixes	Demonstrative	Determiner	Oblique marker	Head marker
							-ke	-ā