

# Ergativity and Other Alignment Types in Neo-Aramaic

*Investigating Morphosyntactic  
Microvariation*

Paul M. Noorlander



## Ergativity and Other Alignment Types in Neo-Aramaic

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*Investigating Morphosyntactic Microvariation*

*By*

Paul M. Noorlander



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*For my parents*





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## Preface

In the past few decades, the study of the Neo-Aramaic dialects underwent an explosion in descriptive research. The increasing documentation of Neo-Aramaic is arguably a milestone in Semitic philology. Given the decreasing number of speakers of individual dialects, the synchronic description of Neo-Aramaic has been repeatedly considered to be one of “the most urgent tasks of Semitic philology as a whole” (Hopkins 1989a, 414; similarly, Khan 2007c, 19). Strong appeals of this kind geared up a new field of not only Neo-Aramaic language and culture but also Neo-Aramaic linguistics. Under Geoffrey Khan’s direction, various research teams associated with the University of Cambridge carried out fieldwork to describe individual dialects. Khan himself has written seminal, voluminous grammars (1999, 2002a, 2004a, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2016) with more still forthcoming. Apart from individual projects and other synoptic descriptions in pertinent articles, the *Semitica Viva* monograph series edited by Otto Jastrow has made important contributions to the Neo-Aramaic corpus. These aforementioned projects have facilitated access to invaluable linguistic data without which this book could never have been written. Considering the dire state of many Neo-Aramaic dialects bordering extinction, the documentation of Neo-Aramaic remains imperative.

Collecting these data and documenting Neo-Aramaic languages would not have been possible without the patient informants willing to work with curious linguists out in the field. I am deeply indebted to all of them, especially those who gave me and/or the team from Cambridge such a warm welcome in their homes and villages. I wish to express my profound gratitude to all the participants of the workshops both in Europe (Enschede, Cambridge) and in Iraq (Erbil, Duhok). May all of you, as last representatives, consider this book a token of recognition of the value and importance of your Aramaic oral heritage and culture.

The lion’s share of this book is based on a revision of my doctoral dissertation defended at Leiden University on 31 October, 2018, the greater part of which was written before 2016. The additional fieldwork and preparation of this book over the past few years at Leiden University and the University of Cambridge was made possible by grants from NWO (the Dutch Research Council) and UK’s Global Challenges Research Fund. It is a pleasure to thank them for their generous support.

Colleagues and friends from Leiden, Cambridge, Frankfurt, Bamberg and elsewhere I would like to thank specifically are (in alphabetical order): Hiwa Asadpour, Naures Atto, Jenny Audring, Ivri Bunis, Ahmad Al-Jallad, Kate Bel-

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I express my utmost gratitude to my family, my beloved Dorota, my close friend Johan Rodenburg, my former office mate Benjamin Suchard and my mentors Don Stilo and Martin Baasten. I cannot thank you enough for your rich sense of humor, persistent encouragement, loyal friendship and continual support, without which this book would never have reached completion. Since no words in print could express my gratitude to my parents, for everything you have done to make this possible, I can only dedicate this work to you, with all my love.

*Paul Noorlander*

Cambridge January, 2020

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# Abbreviations and Symbols

A	agent of transitive construction
ABS	absolutive (case), absolute state
ACC	accusative
ACTZ	actualizer
ADD	additive
AGR	agreement
Akk.	Akkadian
ANT	anterior
ANTIP	antipassive
Ar.	Arabic
ART	article
ASP	verbal aspectual particle
AUX	auxiliary
CLF	classifier
CNA	Central Neo-Aramaic
COP	copula
DEF	definite
def.	definite
DEIX	deictic
DEM	demonstrative
DIR	direct
DOM	differential object marker/marking
DTR	detransitivizer
DU	dual
DUR	durative
DYN	dynamic
EMPH	emphatic state
ERG	ergative
EXST	existential
EZ	ezafe
F	feminine
FIN	finite
fNP	full noun phrase
FOC	focus (marker)
FPL	feminine plural
FS	feminine singular
G	goal

INC	inclusive
indef.	indefinite
INS	instigating
IPFV	imperfective
intr.	intransitive
K.	Kurdish
LK	linker
LOC	locative
M	masculine
Mn.	Midən (Mədwəyo)
MPL	masculine plural
MS	masculine singular
Mt.	Midyat (Mədyoyo)
N	noun
NENA	Northeastern Neo-Aramaic
NOM	nominative
NONFS	nonfeminine singular
NP	noun phrase
O	object of transitive construction
OBJ	object
OBL	(major) oblique (case)
P	patient of transitive construction
PASS	passive
PERF	perfect
PERS	person marker
PFPART	perfective particle
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
pl.	plural
POSS	possessive
POT	potential
PPT	perfect/past participle
PRED	predicate
PREP	preposition
PRET	preterit
PRN	proper noun
PRO	pronoun
PROG	progressive
pron.	pronominal
PRP	preposition

PRS	present
PRST	presentative
PSSM	possessum
PSSR	possessor
PST	past
PTCL	particle
PTCP	participle
PUNC	punctual
PVB	preverb
Q	question particle
R	recipient of a ditransitive construction
RECP	reciprocal
REM	remote past
RFL	reflexive
RPP	resultative participle
S	subject of intransitive construction
S <sub>A</sub>	s aligned with A
sb.	somebody
SBJ	subjunctive
SG	singular
sg.	singular
S <sub>p</sub>	s aligned with P
sth.	something
SUBJ	subject
SUBR	subordinator
T	theme of ditransitive construction
T.	Turkish
TEL	telic
tr.	transitive
Ṭur.	Ṭuroyo
Turk.	Turkish
U	undergoer
V	verb
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
*	reconstruction
**	incorrect, impossible, inextant
(**)	actual usage unclear

/x/	phonemic representation
[x]	phonetic representation
⟨x⟩	graphemic representation
+	suprasegmental pharyngealization
°	preverbal marking omitted
◌̤	unaspirated/glottalized articulation
>	develops into / ranks higher than
<	is derived from / ranks lower than
⊇	entails or is equal to
⊃	entails

<i>TSL</i>	<i>Typological Studies in Language</i>
<i>IOS</i>	<i>Israel Oriental Studies</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>CLS</i>	<i>Papers from the Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>ZDMG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>

# Introduction

## 1.1 Ergativity, an Enigma in Semitic Linguistics?

Although ergativity is a well-known cross-linguistic phenomenon attested in language families such as Austronesian, Basque, Caucasian and Eskimo-Aleut, it is unexpected to encounter it in a Semitic language. In traditional terms (e.g. Dixon 1994), ergativity is defined as the arrangement where the subject (s) of an intransitive clause, such as *I* in *I died*, and the patient/object (P/O) of a transitive clause, such as *me* in *He killed me*, are treated in the same way, yet different from the agent (A) in the transitive construction, such as *He* in *He killed me*.

An example of ergative inflection in a Semitic language can be found in the Aramaic dialect spoken by the Jews of Sulaymaniyah (known to Kurds as Silêmanî) in northeastern Iraq (Khan 2007a, 154). This is illustrated by (1) below, where the noun *baxtâké* ‘the woman’ is cross-referenced using the same suffixal person form *-a* in both clauses, but it does not have the same syntactic function. In (1a), *baxtâké* is the subject of the intransitive verb *m-y-l* ‘die’ (related to *m-y-t* in other dialects), while, in (1b), it is the object of the transitive verb *q-t-l* ‘kill’. Moreover, the subject of the transitive verb in (1b) is marked with an entirely different suffix, i.e. *-le*.

(1) Jewish dialect of Sulaymaniyah (NE Iraq; Khan 2007a, 154)

- a. *baxtâké mil-a*  
 the.woman die<sub>PFV</sub>-she  
 ‘The woman died.’
- b. *gorâké baxtâké qatl-a-le*  
 the.man the.woman kill<sub>PFV</sub>-her-he  
 ‘The man killed (lit. her) the woman.’

This ergative marking of subject and object contrasts with the better-known accusative systems found in the most widely studied European languages such as German and Latin, but also well-known Semitic languages such as Akkadian and Classical Arabic. In these languages, the verb agrees with the subject of both the transitive and intransitive and the noun is inflected by the nominative case, while the object is singled out using the accusative case.

The ergative alignment in this example from Aramaic is expressed by means of verbal agreement (*-a*, *-le*). Moreover, it is conditioned morphologically by the inflectional base, generally referred to as the Past base, that is historically a resultative participle, e.g. \**qṭil-* ‘killed’ (e.g. Khan 2007a). It is never manifested in the imperfective present (or past) constructions that do not have this historical basis.

Indeed, there is a particular transitive construction in the eastern varieties of Aramaic, known as the *qṭil-* or *šmi<sup>l</sup>-* construction, which has puzzled Semitists for a long time. The example below from the Aramaic dialect spoken by the Jews of ‘Amedia (Kurdish Amêdî, NW Iraq) may illustrate this. The first suffixal person index *-i* agrees with the object (*ʾanna gure* ‘these men’), while the suffixal index *-la* agrees with the subject.

- (2) ʾe            *baxta*            *šmi<sup>l</sup>-i-la*            ʾanna    *gure*  
 DEM:FS woman:FS hear<sub>IPFV</sub>-3PL-3FS DEM:PL man:PL  
 ‘The woman heard these men.’ (Hoberman 1983, 132)

At face value, this appears to be nothing special. And yet, the same suffixes occur in the corresponding clause in the present tense marking the opposite syntactic function:

- (3) ʾanna    *gure*            *k-šam<sup>l</sup>-i-la*            ʾe            *baxta*  
 DEM:PL man:PL IND-hear<sub>IPFV</sub>-3PL-3FS DEM:FS woman:FS  
 ‘These men hear the woman.’ (based on Hoberman 1983, 132)

Here, the first suffix *-i* expresses the agent (*ʾanna gure* ‘these men’) and the second suffix *-la* the object. It is striking that the functions of the morphologically identical suffixes are inverted. The construction in example (2) typically expresses the perfective past, while example (3) represents the syntax of imperfective constructions. The main morphological difference between the two is the inflectional base *šmi<sup>l</sup>-* (perfective of *šm* ‘hear’) versus *šam<sup>l</sup>-* (imperfective of *šm* ‘hear’).

This alternation and inversion of argument encoding are reminiscent of the active and passive voice. Early grammatical descriptions treat the perfective transitive construction as a passive form with an active sense (for example, Rhétoré 1912, 83; Polotsky 1979, 208). In a passive, the patient (or undergoer) becomes the subject, the verbal form is modified, and the agent (or actor) is not expressed as the subject. To quote Polotsky (*ibid.*):

Since the inverse function of the identical suffixes concerns the roles of actor and undergoer and is contingent upon a formal difference between

the bases ... it is in these that the cause must be sought. The interchange between the suffixes must be the effect of the bases themselves contrasting with one another in respect of their Voice ... we should have to infer that the bases ... express the contrast of Active vs. Passive. The passive character ... provides the key to the whole construction.

Despite this strong language (“we should have to infer”, “the passive character” “provides the key”), such explanations have recently been abandoned in favor of the so-called concept of split-ergativity.<sup>1</sup> In such a split, the subject (s) in an intransitive construction is treated the same as either the agent (A) or the patient (P) in the transitive construction depending on grammatical or semantic properties such as imperfective or perfective aspect. No other hitherto known Semitic language, however, has been convincingly shown to evince ergativity (Waltisberg 2002; Hasselbach 2013, 55–65), and most of Aramaic itself unmistakably records a nominative-accusative system for three millennia, like all other Semitic languages. If ergative(-like) properties are claimed to have found their way into one of the most unlikely places, this raises fundamental questions of how and why. First, however, we need to establish a coherent framework to properly identify ergative alignment alongside other alignment types in the dialectal microvariation of modern Aramaic.

## 1.2 Neo-Aramaic Dialects in the Land of Rivers

Aramaic is a subbranch of the Semitic language family, closely related to Hebrew and Arabic. People may know it as one of the languages of Jesus of Nazareth and parts of the Old Testament, e.g. sections in the books of Daniel and Ezra. The language was the official *lingua franca* of the ancient Near East, reaching at its height an area stretching from Egypt into modern-day Afghanistan. Aramaic is also enshrined as a literary vehicle of Judaism and Christianity. Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, for instance, is a principal language of the Talmud and closely related to modern Aramaic. Most Aramaic literature comes to us through Syriac, the liturgical language of several Christian churches in the Middle East and beyond. Early translations of the Gospels and the Old Testament were written in Syriac—the standard Syriac Bible version is known as the *Pšitta*.

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<sup>1</sup> See Section 2.3. on the methodology for determining alignment patterns and Chapter 3 for a definition and detailed discussion of so-called split ergativity.

The Aramaic spoken today, called Neo-Aramaic (also known as ‘Neo-Syriac’, ‘Sureth’, ‘Chaldean’, or ‘Assyrian’<sup>2</sup>), comprises pockets of an (extremely) endangered group of minority languages spoken by primarily Jewish and Christian communities originating in the Middle East. The vast majority of speakers are found dispersed around the globe.

Although the internal classification of Neo-Aramaic languages is far from problematic and presumably a dialect continuum (Kim 2008, 2010), certain clusters or subgroups can be discerned. The dialectology of Neo-Aramaic is further complicated by the speaker’s religious affiliation (Christian, Jewish, Mandaean, Muslim), partly by diglossia (higher literary vs. lower local code), and by contact with neighboring non-Aramaic languages (e.g. Noorlander 2014). Most speakers have left their traditional territory for political and economical reasons in this or the previous century. Many of these dialects are therefore endangered or have already gone extinct in the worldwide dispersion of speakers.

Scholars generally distinguish between two major groups of Neo-Aramaic languages (Hoberman 1989, 5), namely:

- **Western Neo-Aramaic** (Christian/Muslim, SW Syria)
- **Eastern Neo-Aramaic:**
  - *Central Neo-Aramaic* (Christian, SE Turkey, NW Syria)
  - *Northeastern Neo-Aramaic* (Jewish/Christian, SE Turkey, N Iraq, NW Iran)
  - *Southeastern Neo-Aramaic* or *Neo-Mandaic* (Mandaean, SW Iran)

This book concentrates on Central and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic which are typologically closest to one another. The Western group is confined to relatively small Christian and Muslim communities in Syria, of which Ma’lula in the anti-Lebanon mountain range is particularly known for its Christian Aramaic speakers. The Neo-Mandaic varieties are mainly confined to older speakers adhering to the Mandaean religion in or from the cities Ahvaz (provincial capital) and Khorramshahr in the Iranian province Khuzestan (Häberl 2009). While Western Neo-Aramaic does share certain properties with the Central varieties and Neo-Mandaic, in turn, with the Northeastern ones, both Western Neo-Aramaic and Neo-Mandaic are typologically closer to pre-modern Aramaic and, hence, will not be treated in this book.

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<sup>2</sup> This term is not to be confused with the ancient, extinct Assyrian dialect of Akkadian, a distinct Semitic language.

### 1.2.1 *Above the Tigris: Northeastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA) Dialect Bundle*

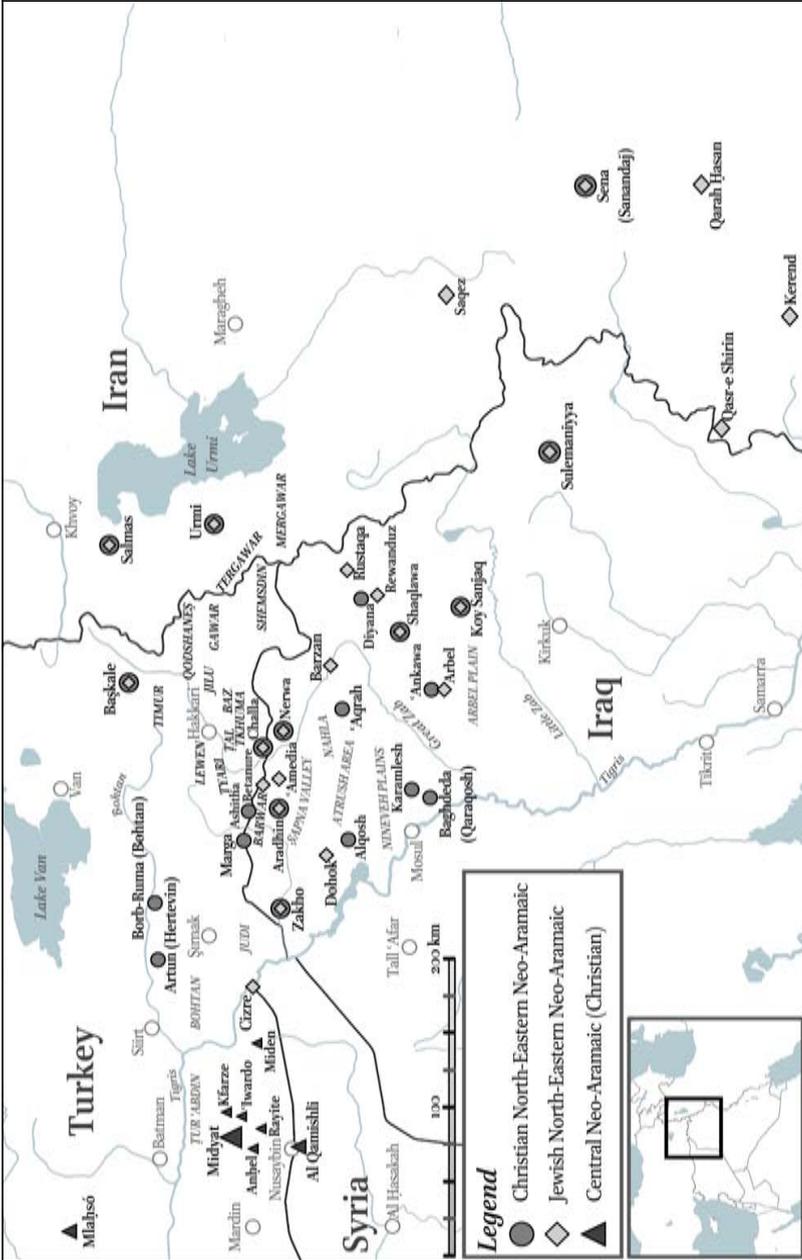
With about 150 dialects (Khan 2011), Northeastern Neo-Aramaic (NENA) is by far the largest subgroup. Although the internal differentiation of NENA is to some extent comparable to that of a language family and many dialects are not mutually intelligible, it is a common practice to speak of NENA in terms of dialects. NENA constitutes a notoriously complex dialect continuum, which itself is part of a larger continuum that also includes Neo-Aramaic dialects in Tur 'Abdin (see §1.2.2). These dialects are spoken by Jewish (J.) and Christian (C.) communities in West and Northwest Iran (Iranian Kurdistan and Iranian Azerbaijan), North Iraq (Dohuk, Arbel, Sulaymaniyyah) north of the river Tigris and in Southeast Turkey (Hakkari, Van, Bohtan), many of whom have fled the area in the previous century. They are primarily named after the town where they are or used to be spoken with the additional specification of the religious affiliations of the speakers, since the dialects of the Jewish and Christian communities from the same town could differ greatly. Map 1 below displays the locations of several towns known to have (had) NENA-speaking communities at least in the previous century, whose dialects will be discussed in this monograph. The names of the towns are generally Aramaic and do not necessarily reflect their equivalents in other regional languages.<sup>3</sup> The Christian varieties in Bohtan (Southeast Turkey) and the Jewish varieties east of the Greater Zab river (Northeast Iraq and Northwest Iran) reveal particularly complex alignment types not found in the core NENA area.

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the emergence of new nations such as Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey and the beginning of the Kurdish struggle for autonomy, the Aramaic speakers found themselves largely in the cross-fire between Kurds and central governments and left their traditional territory. Most of the Jewish community left the region in the 1950s and settled in the young state of Israel. During the First World War most Christians fled present-day Turkey, where an ethnic cleansing occurred in 1915. Since the 1960s the exodus of the Christian community began, taking refuge in Europe, the US, Canada, Australia and South America. Following the American invasion and occupation of Iraq, the instability in the area reached a catastrophic climax in the turmoil of the Syrian Civil War and Islamic State's (*Daesh's*) reign of terror in Syria and Iraq, until Islamic State was ultimately defeated in the battles of Mosul (July, 2017) and Raqqa (October, 2017). Many Christians chose to return and remain in Iraq, although the material damage alone is enormous.

Thus, due to ongoing displacement in the Middle East and beyond, the dialectology of NENA is for a large part a historical reconstruction of the once vibrant tapestry of variation before 1915.

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3 See Table 1 at the end of this chapter for an overview of the placenames relevant to this book.



MAP 1 The NENA-speaking area and the location of the main dialects discussed in this book

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NENA dialects display a staggering degree of diversity on every level. Certain major clusters along the dialect continuum can be distinguished. It is most convenient to approach this in terms of core and periphery. Christian dialects reach further into the west in southeastern Turkey, while Jewish varieties beyond the Greater Zab river scatter further into the east well into western Iran.

#### 1.2.1.1 Core and Peripheral Christian Varieties

The NENA-speaking Christian communities belong to several denominations, including the Chaldean Catholic Church (in communion with Rome) or the (Assyrian) Church of the East (independent), both East Syriac traditions of Christianity. Some of them, particularly on the Nineveh Plains, also belong to the West Syriac Church, mainly Catholic, but also Orthodox. There are also Protestant movements, especially among the migrant communities in the West. There have been numerous Protestant missions in the region since the 19th century.

The Christian Neo-Aramaic dialects are also known as Chaldean or Assyrian. Speakers themselves refer to their languages as *surəṭ* (< \**surāṭ* 'Syriac') and dialectal variants thereof, i.e. the language of the *suraye* '(Syrian) Christians'. Their language is an essential part of their ethnic-religious identity.

The NENA-speaking area encompasses roughly the area north of the Tigris in Northern Iraq, with the Greater Zab river flowing in between. It stretches into the Hakkari, Van, Siirt and Şırnak provinces of SE Turkey and West Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces of W Iran. This includes major towns in Iraq, such as Zakho, Dohok (Duhok), Alqosh and Arbel (Arbil/Erbil, Kurd. Hewlêr), in Iranian Azerbaijan, such as Urmi (or Urmia) and in Iranian Kurdistan, such as Sanandaj (or Sena/Sine). Each town, however, used to have its own dialect, often with a tribal association. There were many villages and clans in SE Turkey, most of which left the region after 1915, including tribes such as Țyari, Tkuma (Tkumnaye), Baz(naye), Jilu (Jilwaye), Gawar (Gawernaye), Timurnaye etc. Many of these Christian communities found refuge along the Khabur Valley in NW Syria (Talay 2008, 2009) or fled to Northern Iraq, the Caucasus or outside of West Asia. NENA used to be spoken in the Bohtan region, where Artun (Kurd. Hertevin, Turk. Ekindüzü) and Borb-Ruma alongside the Judi dialects (Sinha 2000) represent the most northwest dialects on the map. There is a southern periphery of Christian communities on the Nineveh Plains near Mosul, such as Alqosh and Baghdeda (Qaraqosh, Khan 2002a), while the city Başkale (Bashqala) constituted the northernmost outpost in Turkey.<sup>4</sup>

4 See also Maps 3–6 in Chapter 4 for further details.

### 1.2.1.2 Crossing The Greater Zab River: Trans-Zab Jewish

As far as we know, virtually all Jews have moved to Israel, where they identify as *kurdim* (lit. ‘Kurds’) speaking *kurdi* (lit. ‘Kurdish’) as Jews from the regions of the Kurds. Concerning the Jewish varieties, the Greater Zab river in Iraq functions as a natural border separating western dialects such as ‘Amedia (or ‘Amadiya in Arabic, Amêdî in Kurdish) Zakho and Dohok in the Duhok province of Iraq from the other dialects to the east.<sup>5</sup> These communities generally identify themselves as speakers of *lishana deni* ‘our language’. The Jewish community in Barzan north of the Great Zab also belongs to this group (Mutzafi 2002a), so that the dividing line continues to the northeast, even though the Great Zab flows in a curve to the northwest.<sup>6</sup>

The Jewish dialects to the east of the Greater Zab, including Arbel, Rustaqa and Rewanduz stretching up north to Urmi and Salmas, are accordingly known as *Trans-Zab Jewish* (Mutzafi 2008b) as opposed to Western Jewish communities (*lishana deni*) lying to the west of the Greater Zab as well as the settlement Barzan (*Barzani*). The Trans-Zab Jewish dialect bundle differs greatly from the Christian and other Jewish varieties and is also internally rather diverse.

### 1.2.2 Below the Tigris: Dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin

Further west one finds the dialects spoken by Syriac-Orthodox Christians from the region Ṭur ‘Abdin (Mardin province, Jastrow 1985; Ritter 1990; Waltisberg 2016), hence known as ‘Ṭuroyo’, literally ‘mountainous’ (after *ṭuro* ‘mountain’). Because of the close connection with Syriac Christianity, the language is also called *Suryoyo* or *Surayt* by speakers (lit. ‘Syriac Christian’). Ṭuroyo forms a larger subgroup called Central Neo-Aramaic together with Mlaḥsó (Lice, Diyarbakır province, Jastrow 1994), which is now extinct. Nowadays most speakers of Ṭuroyo are to be found in Northern Europe (e.g. Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands).

Mlaḥsó and Ṭuroyo share a few features that distinguish them from most of NENA.<sup>7</sup> A salient phonological feature, for example, is the vowel /o/ where most of NENA would normally have /a/, as in Ṭuroyo *ḥmoro*, Mlaḥsó *ḥmoró* ‘donkey’ against NENA *xmara*.<sup>8</sup> Within the dialectal variation of Ṭuroyo, the urban dialect of Midyat (*Mədyoyo*) is particularly divergent from the rural dialects,

5 Much like Northern and Central Kurdish (Noorlander 2014).

6 See Map 2 at the beginning of Chapter 3.

7 See Jastrow (1985, xvii–xviii, xxi–xxiii), Kim (2008, 507–508).

8 C. Borb-Ruma (Fox 2009) and Jinnet (Noorlander field notes) are interesting exceptions in NENA, e.g. Borb-Ruma *xmora*, Jinnet *ḥmora*.

the best known of which is the more archaic dialect of Miden (*Mədwoyo*) (Jastrow 1985, 1992). This may range from subtle differences in phonology to more drastic distinctions in morphology and morphosyntax.

### 1.2.3 *Writing a Spoken Language: Sociolinguistic Factors*

NENA dialects are mainly known to us through the documentation of spoken varieties. From the 16th century onwards, speakers across space and time have continually made efforts to commit Neo-Aramaic to writing. Both Jewish and Christian communities in Iraqi Kurdistan developed a written literary tradition during the Ottoman period. A manuscript culture emerged on the basis of oral literature. This involves Jewish literature written in Hebrew script in Nerwa dated to at least the 16th century (Sabar 1976) and Christian literature, mainly poetry, written in Syriac script in Alqosh dated to at least the 17th century and perhaps even earlier (Mengozzi 2002a–b, 2011). These early written traditions primarily concern Bible translations and commentaries and other types of religious works.

Since the 19th century other written literary Christian varieties have been passed down to us in different forms and under different circumstances. Literary Christian Urmi is a case in point. In the 19th century up to the First World War a written form based on the local dialect of Urmi flourished among Christians inspired by missionary activities from various Christian denominations, producing printed publications of all sorts: not only Bible translations, but also hagiography, folktales, school textbooks, periodicals etc. It became the basis for literary developments ever since in Urmi and other Christian communities (Odisho 1988; Murre-van den Berg 1999).

Literacy among speakers increased due to migrations to larger cities. A literary revival arose among educated Christian speakers in Iraqi cities such as Kirkuk, Baghdad and Baṣra, between the 1920s and 1960s. These factors contributed to the koineization of urban Christian varieties, so that an Iraqi *koine* based on literary Urmi emerged (Odisho 1988), which now predominates among Assyrian speakers as *lišana* <sup>+</sup>*sapraya* ‘literary language’, which in the eyes of many is more prestigious (<sup>+</sup>*səpya* ‘pure’).

Although publications among Iraqi and Iranian Jews were also to be found on a smaller scale during these periods (e.g. Rees 2008), such supradialectal phenomena or levelling of dialectal differences up to koineization are not known for Jewish communities.

In contrast to NENA, a literary tradition did not develop among Turoyo speakers, although missionary activities did inspire writing on a small scale in the early 19th century (Heinrichs 1990) and orientalist collectors collected sample texts in the Western Syriac alphabet in the last decades of the same century (Bellino

and Mengozzi 2016).<sup>9</sup> There have been only recent attempts to commit Ṭuroyo to writing on a larger scale using a Latin-based alphabet among communities in Sweden beginning in the 1980s. Recently, an online study program (surayt.com) has been launched under the coordination of Shabo Talay that uses both a Latin-based alphabet and the Western Syriac script.

Because of migrations, especially due to the havoc wreaked by *Daesh*, considerable dialect mixing has taken place among Christian communities in the cities. Moreover, the spread of literary varieties, increasing standardization and rising nationalistic sentiments have led to the levelling of dialectal differences. This levelling is partly inspired by a growing incentive to unify and purify the language of foreign influence. Most conspicuous is the arbitrary relexification of the language, where more authentic Aramaic lexemes from the Syriac language of the church are felt to be needed to replace those of ultimately non-Aramaic origin.

#### 1.2.4 *Converging Neighbors: Areal Factors*

Neo-Aramaic cannot be completely disentangled from neighboring languages in the area. As a minority speech community, Neo-Aramaic speakers have faced the daily need of multilingualism. They are at least bilingual and thus, alongside their local Aramaic dialects, some of them speak not only local varieties of Arabic (including Syria and Iranian Khuzestan) and Kurdish (e.g. Kurmanji, Badini, Sorani, Mukri) but also Armenian and Azeri Turkish (e.g. Garbell 1965; Khan 2016). Also, influence from official languages can be expected, such as Persian in the east, Turkish in the west along with Arabic, permeating the area either indirectly as the cultural vehicle of Islam or more directly as the spoken language in the south (cf. Noorlander 2014) and, indirectly, also Russian and English. In particular, Kurdish-Aramaic bilingualism has been prevalent among Eastern Neo-Aramaic speakers, facilitating the recruitment and deep and lasting integration of local Kurdish elements into their Neo-Aramaic speech (Chyet 1995; Noorlander 2014). There has also been considerable influence from Arabic-Aramaic bilingualism, particularly in the cities of Iraq and Ṭur ‘Abdin as well as Syria and the Nineveh Plains nearby Mosul—also referred to as the Mosul Plain.

Another complicating factor is that due to migrations to major cities in West Asia, Israel, the Caucasus or the West, Neo-Aramaic speakers, especially heritage speakers, regularly find themselves in situations where the dominant language may be entirely different from their original homeland. Jewish speakers

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9 I hereby thank the anonymous reviewer for referring me to this publication.

(*kurdim*) in Israel, for example, are rapidly undergoing language attrition and shifting to Israeli Hebrew. Even migrations within the Middle East can result in mixing of dialects or interaction with dialects not contiguous to their original home town.

Despite these complicating factors of language endangerment and areal convergence, we will approach Neo-Aramaic somewhat artificially in isolation and mainly from an internal perspective, while leaving a complete systematic overview of the morphosyntactic parallels between Aramaic and its neighbors a future endeavor. Since contact with non-Aramaic speakers has been a daily practice for Neo-Aramaic speakers, all variation is presumed also to be potentially relevant for the relationship between Neo-Aramaic and neighboring languages, for which further documentation of especially Kurdish is required.

## 1.5 Previous Approaches to Alignment in Eastern Neo-Aramaic

### 1.5.1 *Early Scholarship: Passive or Possessive*

Previous synchronic approaches to Eastern Neo-Aramaic alignment have been enveloped in origin debates.<sup>10</sup> Scholars have approached the *qtil l-* or *šmi' l-* construction as illustrated in (2) at the beginning of this chapter from the perspective of voice, i.e. a passive<sup>11</sup> ('These men were heard by the woman'), or the perspective of possession, i.e. predicative possessors ('The woman has these men heard'). The development was considered parallel to the so-called *manā kartam* construction in Old Persian (e.g. Kutscher 1969) and the auxiliary HAVE combined with a perfect participle in well-known European languages such as Germanic and Romance.<sup>12</sup> While this book is not intended to be a diachronic study of Aramaic syntax, it is evident the typology of alignment in Neo-Aramaic is a problem that is entrenched in the evolution of the Aramaic verbal system. The historical situation for which we have indirect evidence through Late Antique Aramaic languages like Syriac, Classical Mandaic and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic was considerably complex (Noorlander forthcoming). The following examples serve to illustrate the historical background and to help understand the early approaches to Neo-Aramaic clause structure. Historical hallmarks of the original constructions arguably linger on in modern

10 Cf. Doron and Khan (2010).

11 See, for example, Nöldeke (1868, 220, 317), Polotsky (1979, 1996), Khan (1999, 94–95, 2002a, 92), Mengozzi (2002b, 43). Cf. Bar-Asher (2008, 2011), Loesov (2012).

12 See, for example, Kutscher (1969), Hopkins (1989a), Goldenberg (1992), Rubin (2005, 30–31); cf. Kirtchuk (2016).

dialects.<sup>13</sup> The inflection of the modern Aramaic verb as given in the beginning of this chapter has no diachronic basis in the prefix- or suffix-conjugation (e.g. *ta-ktob* ‘She writes’ or *katab-at* ‘She wrote’) as in closely related Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Arabic. Indeed, these essential components of the West Semitic verbal system have been completely replaced by originally non-finite constructions with a concomitant constructional shift at least historically conditioned by aspect and argument orientation (or diathesis). This pervasive, rigorous restructuring is without parallel among the modern Semitic languages (Hopkins 2005; Gzella 2015, 45). Periphrastic constructions already undergoing increasing grammaticalization in pre-modern Aramaic gave rise to entirely new inflectional paradigms.<sup>14</sup>

Historically, verbal inflection comprises the direct reflexes of active and resultative participial predicates of the apophonic pattern *\*CāCiC*, such as *\*kātib-* ‘writing’ and *\*C(a)CīC* such as *\*k(a)tīb-* ‘written’ in pre-modern Aramaic, which served as the basis for the imperfective and perfective verbal forms in Neo-Aramaic respectively. The variation in alignment is first and foremost morphologically conditioned by this particular verbal inflectional base<sup>15</sup>—which we can refer to as *qṭil-* after the verb *q-ṭ-l* ‘kill’—that is historically a resultative participle—e.g. *\*qṭil-* ‘killed’. The distinct morphosyntax in a given dialect is ultimately a reflex of the diachronic development of this resultative participle.

There are two sets of person markers that are crucial in Neo-Aramaic morphosyntax. They occur at least in perfective past constructions similarly to the imperfective present. Their usage differs significantly across Neo-Aramaic languages. These two sets of person affixes that provide the finite morphology for these historically verbal adjectives have distinct origins. The first set will be referred to by the term ‘E-suffixes’ in the present study. It continues diachronically both participial agreement in number and gender (e.g. fsg. *-ā* and mpl. *-īn*) and enclitic personal pronouns (e.g. 1sg. *-nā*, 1pl. *-ḥnan*). We can still observe, to some extent, in Neo-Aramaic that person markers were added to declined participles through enclitic pronouns (cp. Mlaḥso *domx-o-no* ‘I (f.) sleep, am sleeping’ and Syriac *dāmḵ-ā-nā* ‘id.’), which are ultimately phonetically reduced forms of post-predicate independent pronouns (Syriac *dāmḵ-ā-nā* < *\*dāmik-ā*

13 See Coghill (2016) and Noorlander (forthcoming) for more detailed discussions regarding the diachronic development of alignment in Neo-Aramaic. Cf. Fassberg (2018).

14 Cf. Noorlander and Stilo (2015).

15 On this point, see already Polotsky (1979, 208). Haig (2008, 9) makes a similar remark regarding Iranian.

*ʿanā* a variant of *\*ʿanā dāmīk-ā*). Being verbal adjectives, the participles used to inflect for gender and number like predicative adjectives (e.g. *šappīr-* ‘beautiful, pleasant’, fsg. *šappīr-ā*, mpl. *šappīr-īn* etc.). Synchronically, however, such participles have lost all characteristics of adjectives in Eastern Neo-Aramaic.

The second set, generally designated ‘L-suffixes’, continues diachronically enclitic dative person markers characterized by the originally dative preposition *l-* denoting recipients, beneficiaries, possessors, experiencers and other indirectly affected participants as well as subject coreferential arguments. A historically stronger link between the preposition *l-* and the L-suffixes as well as its usage as a dative may also be observed in Neo-Aramaic. Synchronically, the L-suffixes are not prepositional in nature and behave like verbal affixes, but they may still interact with the preposition.<sup>16</sup>

By way of illustration, the active participles *ʿazel* ‘going’ of *ʿzl* ‘go’ in (4a) and *ʿākel-* ‘eating’ of *ʿkl* ‘eat’ in the Syriac example (4b) below inflect like predicative adjectives and take agreement with the subject and agent. The ending *-īn* in (4b), for instance, expresses masculine plural agreement with the agent *kalbē* ‘dogs’. It is the precursor of the E-suffix *-i* in Neo-Aramaic. The dative person form *l-hōn* ‘them’ in (4b) expresses the pronominal object, related to the L-suffixes in Neo-Aramaic. Full nominal objects could also be differentially marked by this preposition *l-*.

(4) Syriac (Aramaic, Northwest Semitic)<sup>17</sup>

a. *l-aykā ʿazel-∅-way-t mār-∅*  
 to-where going-MS-were-2SG master.of:MS-my  
 ‘Where were you<sub>SG</sub> going to, my lord?’ (3rd c. Wright 1871, 289.23)

b. *ʿākl-īn l-hōn kalbē*  
 eating-3MPL DAT-MPL dogs:MPL  
 ‘Dogs eat them.’ (3rd c. Drijvers 1964, 50.24–25)

Intransitive subject-oriented resultative constructions are treated indistinctly from this. The resultative participle *ʿazil-* of the verb *ʿzl* ‘go’ in example (4c) below takes feminine singular agreement *-ā* with the subject.

16 See Noorlander (2021) for a detailed discussion of the use of L-suffixes and the preposition *l-* in Neo-Aramaic to mark possessors and experiencers.

17 For the sake of a uniform transcription of Syriac, I follow Beyer’s transcription of the *Odes of Solomon* in Lattke (2005, XIII–XXXVII).

- c. *l-aykā ʿazīl-ā mārāt-kōn*  
 to-where gone-FS mistress.of:FS-your<sub>MPL</sub>  
 ‘Where is your<sub>MPL</sub> mistress gone to?’ (3rd c. Wright 1871, 262.16)

Several agent-oriented resultative constructions are found in Syriac and other Late Aramaic languages (Noorlander forthcoming). Although scholars<sup>18</sup> widely recognize the primary resultative function of verbal adjectives of belonging to the pattern of *qīl-*, the traditional notion of ‘passive participles with an active sense’ persists in the literature. In Noorlander (forthcoming), I argue that such paradoxical circumlocutions ‘active passive participles?’ rather show the participle is, in fact, not a passive participle, but properly a *resultative* participle conforming to linguistic typology of resultatives, including the typology of agent-oriented resultatives in Nedjalkov and Jaxontov (1988, 23) and Nedjalkov (2001, 932). In typology, they are also known as possessive resultatives because these verbs often have a connotation of someone holding an item near themselves, a semantic property of predicative possession (Stassen 2009, 15, cf. Heine 1997, 38–39). The verbs like *ʿhd* ‘hold’, *šql* ‘take’, *ṭʿn* ‘carry’, *lbš* ‘wear, put on’, *ʿsr* ‘gird’ and so forth are cross-linguistically common in agent-oriented resultatives. The Latin verb *habere* was originally combined with resultative of such verbs that typically have a possessive connotation. These verbs follow the same morphosyntax as the active participle in pre-modern Aramaic, where the pronominal object is prepositional. One finds examples like

- šqīl -īn l-eh kalbē*  
 taken -PL DAT-3ms dog:PL  
 ‘Dogs are carrying it.’

which effectively means literally ‘They keep it taken on’. This is the agent-oriented resultative that developed into the perfect in Western Neo-Aramaic,<sup>19</sup> as illustrated below:

- (5) **Western Neo-Aramaic** (Maʿlula; Arnold 1990)  
 a. *mōn šqīl-∅ l-ann dahb-ō*  
 who taken-3MS DOM-DEM:MPL gold-DEF:MPL  
 ‘Who has taken the money?’ (Bergsträsser 1915, 13.31)

18 Cf. Nöldeke (1904, 220, § 280), Nöldeke (1875, 379–380, § 262), Goldenberg (1992, 118). See also Kirtchuk (2016) who emphasizes that aspect is primary, not voice.

19 But also in other varieties, see in particular § 4.3.1. and § 4.4.3.2.; Noorlander (forthcoming) discusses the development of resultatives in Neo-Aramaic.

- b. *šqil-il-le* (\* < *šqil-in-le*)  
 taken-3MPL-3MS  
 ‘They<sub>M</sub> have taken it<sub>M</sub>.’

The original dative agent resultative construction found in Eastern Aramaic seems similar to these constructions, and yet with inverted role marking. Its emergence ultimately inaugurated completely new constructional splits within Aramaic. The possible breakthrough of non-accusative alignment in the Neo-Aramaic perfective hinges on the development of this new type of perfect (later preterit), based on the resultative participle together with the preposition *l-* in pre-modern Aramaic, for example:

- (6) **Jewish Babylonian Aramaic** (Talmud, *Eruvin* 66b(3); Sokoloff 2002, 1159a)
- a. ⟨l̄ šmy° ly h' šm'ṭ'⟩  
*lā šmī-ā l-ī hā šma'tā*  
 NEG heard-FS DAT-1SG DEM:FS hearing:FS  
 ‘I have not received<sup>20</sup> (lit. Me is not heard) this legal tradition.’

The resultative participle *šmī* of the verb *šm'* takes feminine singular agreement with the patient-like argument, but while the prepositional person marker *l-eh* denotes the agent-like argument. Since its first manifestations typically involve experiencer predicates, such as *šm'* ‘hear’,<sup>21</sup> it seems that it did not mark typical agents from the outset, but indirect affectees of which the coding was extended to unaffected agents<sup>22</sup> and intransitive verbs.<sup>23</sup> Vestiges of such *šmī* *l-*constructions already surface in Imperial Aramaic in the 5th century BC and its development into alignment splits is considered by most scholars to be ultimately due to convergence with Iranian.<sup>24</sup> *l-* can also mark possessors, beneficiaries, goals and recipients, such as *l-rā'ayā* ‘for the shepherd’ below:

20 *šmī* *l-* typically expresses orally imparted information and, thus, what someone has rumors about, knows by report or understands from an authoritative religious tradition (cf. *šem'ā* ‘hearing; sound, report’, Sokoloff 2009, 1574).

21 Cf. Schlesinger (1928, 45, § 30); Sokoloff (2002, 327b).

22 See Noorlander (2012); Bar-Asher (2014); Coghill (2016). Cf. Haig (2008) on Iranian.

23 See Van Rompay (1999) for examples.

24 See among others Friedrich (1957), Kutscher (1969), Mengozzi (2002b, 37–49), Gzella (2004, 184–194, 2015, 348), Khan (2004b).

- b. ⟨'yzy dmsyrn lrw'h⟩  
 'izz-ē      di-msīr-īn      l-rā'ayā  
 goat(F)-PL SUBR-handed.over-3MPL DAT-shepherd:MS  
 'Goats which are handed over to a shepherd.' (BB 36a(33); Sokoloff 2002, 692a–b)

Early grammatical descriptions of Neo-Aramaic can be taken as an example of the original passive analysis of the *šmi'-l*-construction. Nöldeke (1868, 317; tr. mine), for instance, indicates that the “preterit is actually a passive expression whose grammatical subject is the apparent object”. Maclean (1895, 85) states

When the object, as it would be in English, (which is really the subject), is feminine, we should expect the participle to agree with it.

The patient-like argument *baxta* ‘women’ in Jewish ‘Amedia clauses like *šmi'-a-li baxta* ‘The woman was heard by me’, they argue, is only apparently an object in a logical sense, not in a grammatical sense. On this view, the E-set *-a* marks the agreement with the subject and L-suffix *-li* an agent complement. Although the sense is indistinct from the active, the grammatical structure is said to be that of a passive. The viewpoints of these early scholars indicates they analyzed the L-suffixes as the agent complement of an originally passive construction. Similarly, while they differ as to the exact interpretation, both Bar-Asher (2014, 78) and Coghill (2016, 181–197) argue that the initial lexical distribution of the *šmi'-l*-construction in Late Aramaic, particularly two-argument experiencer state verbs like ‘hear’ and ‘see’, indicates that the dative complement (‘It was heard to me’) was reanalyzed as an agent (‘It was heard by me’).

Others have compared the L-suffixes to their use in predicative possession, such as *l-kōn* in (7) below, which continues in Neo-Aramaic.

- (7) **Syriac**  
*kmā      laḥm-īn      'ūt      l-kōn?*  
 how.many bread-MPL EXST DAT-2MPL  
 ‘How many loaves do you<sub>PL</sub> have?’ (5th c. Matthew 15:34, *Pšitta*)

Advocates of the possessive view<sup>25</sup> have argued that the L-suffixes function similarly to the auxiliary HAVE in Romance and Germanic languages.

In Noorlander (forthcoming), I show that the situation is more complex. Late Antique Aramaic had two types of agent-oriented resultatives at its disposal,

<sup>25</sup> See Kutscher (1969), Cohen (1984, 515), Hopkins (1989), Goldenberg (1992).

which both could be characterized as ‘possessive’. One that is morphosyntactically like the active participial construction (and reminiscent of the BE-perfect in Indo-European), the other patient-oriented that is morphosyntactically like the predicative possessor (and reminiscent of the HAVE-perfect):

<i>ʿasīr-∅ -nā b-ḥaṣṣay hemyānā</i>	(direct affectee)
<i>ʿasīr-∅ l-ī b-ḥaṣṣay hemyānā</i>	(dative affectee)
<b>‘I have a belt girt around my loins.’</b>	

Noorlander (forthcoming) demonstrates how these two types of ‘possessive’ resultatives were involved in the diachronic development of perfects in Aramaic. They are only characterized by possession in so far as that they occur with a verb that has a possessive connotation. Locative-existential possessive constructions have been repeatedly connected with the development of so-called tense-aspect-sensitive types of splits between accusative and ergative alignment, such as the one found in Indo-Iranian languages where the ergative pattern is confined to what can be traced back to patient-oriented resultatives with an oblique agent.<sup>26</sup>

This does not rule out interaction with the passive voice or with experiencer predicates. The various source constructions, ranging from passive, possessor to experiencer have all been contended for individually. While there is no space to go into details here, Noorlander (forthcoming) provides further arguments why they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The historical situation was more mixed and complex due to the versatile nature of resultative constructions (e.g. Nedjalkov 1988, 2001) and the preposition *l-* encroaching on other prepositions. Both experiencers and possessors can ultimately be subsumed under the expression of A in the typology of non-canonical subjects from historical datives (e.g. Noorlander 2021).

In conclusion, Neo-Aramaic alignment has most likely been unstable from the very beginning due to the inherent versatile orientations of the resultative participle that all alignment splits are based on. Prepositional affectees denoting possessors and experiencers had syntactic properties of the subject in Syriac (Noorlander 2018). It is plausible such non-canonical subject marking influenced the grammaticalization of other prepositional subject-like arguments such as the *šmī* *l-* construction. In the end, there has been a strong emphasis on the diachronic origins of the preterit in analyzing the synchronic modern Aramaic data in relation to Syriac, the better known literary Aramaic language. Later approaches to Neo-Aramaic alignment are more synchronic, grounded in contemporary verbal person and nominal marking typology.

26 See Benveniste (1966), Trask (1979), Bynon (2005), Haig (2008), Jügel (2015).

### 1.5.2 *Recent Typological Approaches*

More recent typological approaches consider the Neo-Aramaic verbal system an instance of ‘split-ergativity’, albeit from diverging perspectives. Some question the validity of typological terminology like ‘ergative’ (Hemmauer and Waltisberg 2006) or adopt it only for practical reasons (Jastrow 1996, 52–53). Mengozzi (2002b, 37–49), Khan (2007a; 2017), Doron and Khan (2012), Barotto (2015) and Coghill (2016) all compare ergative and accusative alignment properties typologically, but have different approaches and hence diverging conclusions. Several other scholars have also taken generative approaches, such as Hoberman (1989, 95–122) and Kalin and van Ur (2015). The differences among these various approaches as well as the one adopted in this book would require too much detail to fully appreciate here. As will be made clear in the following chapters, they stem from different viewpoints as to how one identifies an alignment pattern. Nonetheless, the following common threads can be discerned in the literature.

Khan (2007a) discusses the ergativity in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties and Doron and Khan (2010, 2012) are the first to present an alignment typology of NENA data from recent documentation projects aimed to counter generalizations made in transformational generative grammar. In light of the morphosyntax of the perfective past in the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, they distinguish three types of Neo-Aramaic dialects (see further below) based on their major morphological alignment pattern in the perfective past: split-s dialects, dynamic-stative dialects and extended ergative dialects. Recently, Khan (2017) expanded on this, adopting a similar typology. Following a view introduced by Khan (2008, 72–75) and later summarized in Khan (2013), Doron and Khan (2010, 2012)’s, main argumentation is that the morphosyntax in these dialects represents different diachronic stages in which the ‘ergative L-suffixes’ were gradually extended to all intransitive verbs. Thus in taking the expression of the A as the ergative subject by means of L-suffixes to be the defining characteristic of ergativity in NENA, Doron and Khan (2012) consider all NENA dialects to display a type of ergativity.

A few classes of intransitive verbs take ‘ergative L-suffixes’ instead of ‘absolute E-suffixes’ (e.g. *nwəx-la* ‘It<sub>F</sub> barked’ vs. *twir-a* ‘It<sub>F</sub> broke’) in the Jewish dialects such as Sulemaniyya that display the ergative pattern exemplified in (1) at the beginning of this chapter. Since the variation in intransitive subject marking is conditioned by lexical verbal semantics,<sup>27</sup> they refer to this as split-s dialects.

27 More details will be given in Section 3.5; see also Khan (2007a) and Coghill (2016, 71f.).

In what they call the dynamic-stative type, illustrated by example (8) from Jewish Urmi below, the intransitive subject marking differs depending on grammatical aspect: resultative (stative) or present perfect, marked by the ‘absolute E-suffixes’, as opposed to perfective past (dynamic), marked by the ‘ergative L-suffixes’. Example (8) below illustrates how the Jewish dialect of Urmi distinguishes between the E-set and L-set in the marking of the subject for the same verb:  $+dmix-a$  ‘She has gone to sleep’ (stative) as opposed to  $+dm\acute{a}x-la$  ‘She went to sleep’ (dynamic).

- (8) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; Khan 2008b)<sup>28</sup>
- a.  $x\acute{a}zy-a-le$  (transitive perfective)  
 see<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He saw her.’
- b.  $+dmix-a$  (intransitive ‘stative’)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
 ‘She has gone to sleep.’
- c.  $x\acute{a}zy-a-le$  (transitive perfective)  
 see<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He saw her.’
- d.  $+dm\acute{a}x-le$  (intransitive ‘dynamic’)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He went to sleep.’

Khan (2008b, 74, 2013) argues that this dynamic-stative variation is ultimately derived from the lexical semantic variation displayed by the aforementioned split-s dialects. He presupposes the increasing extension of the L-suffixes to intransitives is already manifested in the split-s dialects ( $nw\acute{a}x-la$  ‘It<sub>F</sub> barked’,  $bde-la$  ‘She began’). He maintains this extension resulted in a shift from preterit to present perfect or resultative of the original form expressing the subject by the E-suffixes ( $qim-a$  ‘She rose’ > ‘She has/is risen’), yielding the basis for the dynamic-stative opposition exemplified in (8) above ( $+dm\acute{a}x-la$  ‘She rose’ vs.  $+dmix-a$  ‘She has gone to sleep’).

The extension is completed in the dialects they refer to as ‘extended ergative’ where the L-suffixes are used to express the subject for all intransitive

28 The symbol + indicates suprasegmental pharyngealization of the following word.

verbs, such as the *s* of ‘sleep’ in (9a) just like the *A* of ‘kill’ (9b) below. Following Dixon (1994), Doron and Khan’s (2012) use the term ‘extended ergative’ to describe this pattern, primarily because they believe the ‘ergative L-suffixes’ have been extended to all intransitive verbs and replaced the original ‘absolutive E-suffixes’ (Khan 2008b, 74).

- (9) J. **Amedia** (NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989, Greenblatt 2011)
- a. *dmix-le* (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
 ‘He went to sleep.’
- b. *qtil-a-le* (transitive)  
 kill<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He killed her.’

Recently, Khan (2017) reached a different conclusion regarding the historical relationship of the dialectal microvariation that is similar to my own.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, his synchronic treatment of the dialects continues the typology he set forth with Doron and he does not explicitly abandon his earlier views. Since the L-suffixes are treated as ‘ergative markers’, presumably because of their prepositional origin, Doron and Khan (2012) subsume all dialects under ergativity.

A similar viewpoint is explored by Mengozzi (2002b, 49, 2005, 2011) and partly also Barotto (2014, 2015) who concentrate on relevant variation in early written sources. They study the phenomena in Neo-Aramaic in light of a so-called “decay of ergativity” in the spirit of a comparable loss of ergativity in Kurdish (Dorleijn 1996). This decay of ergativity is viewed as a symptom and the deviations from the ergative type represented by the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties as “antidotes”; cf. “repair mechanisms” in Khan (2017, 897). Barotto considers the ‘extended ergative’ type to be a transition phase towards accusative alignment, under which she subsumes the strategies serving as alternatives to the inverted *šmi²-a-le*-forms (Barotto 2014, 91; 2015, 239–244). The ‘extended ergative’ is viewed as post-ergative by Mengozzi (2002b, 45, fn. 144) and ‘marked nominative’ by Barotto (2015).<sup>30</sup> The so-called ‘absolutive E-suffixes’ are gradually replaced by ‘accusative L-suffixes’.

29 This view is further discussed in Subsection 6.1.2. See Noorlander (forthcoming) for more details.

30 See Section 4.2. for a definition and discussion of marked nominative systems.

The views represented by Mengozzi (2005, 2011), Doron and Khan (2010), Barotto (2014, 2015) have in common that the synchronic variation points to a gradual departure from an originally coherent ergative prototype to various constructions that are less typically ergative and/or accusative through the intermediary stage of the dynamic-stative split. The *šmiʿ-a-le*-form is taken as an ergative construction by definition, and wherever this form is lost, also ergativity is said to be lost.

A general fall of ergativity and rise of accusativity also features in Coghill (2016)'s recent, impressive monograph, where her main focus is on the emergence of ergativity and its gradual loss. Her synchronic approach to the data in both Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic is comparable to the one adopted here, but there are notable differences. She provides a detailed study of split subject marking from both a typological and areal perspective. Her main argumentation (Coghill 2016, 250–286), however, is similar to the aforementioned authors in that the synchronic variation represents a development away from the ergative alongside an ergative-accusative continuum via the type that corresponds with dynamic-stative in Doron and Khan's (2012) typology. Coghill, however, makes some additional nuances. She (*ibid.* 61–62) subsumes the 'extended ergative' under accusative alignment, because of the identical marking of the S and A. She (*ibid.* 55, 250) emphasizes the ergative marking, while apparent, is rather restricted, and while the historical situation betrays "some kind of ergative alignment", she maintains it was not ergative "in the most precise sense" (*ibid.* 293).

By contrast, although Jastrow (1996, 52–53) believes no ergative inflection is found in Neo-Aramaic languages, he (1985, 120) uses "ergative Flexion" for the L-set against "prädikative Flexion" for the E-set in describing Ṭuroyo and Mlaḥsó. Talay (2008, 2011) applies the same terminology to his description of NENA dialects from the Khabur valley. Hemmauer and Waltisberg (2006) argue that the perfective past in Ṭuroyo is only superficially ergative, since they believe certain constructional splits point to an underlying accusative pattern similar to the (imperfective) present. Waltisberg (2016)'s recent detailed study of the syntax of Ṭuroyo, marking an impressive advance in research, denies (pp. 20, 176)) any manifestation of ergativity whatsoever in Ṭuroyo.<sup>31</sup>

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31 See Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of ergativity in Ṭuroyo.

## 1.6 Aims and Scope of This Book

Despite the aforementioned literature on alignment in Eastern Neo-Aramaic, a detailed, systematic overview that takes into account more fine-grained morphosyntactic microvariation is still needed. Moreover, the characterization of this dialectal microvariation in the literature requires a thorough revision. A comprehensive typological approach also includes alignment patterns that are less common, without presupposing they are inherently instable and in the progress of developing along an ergative-accusative continuum. The main aim of this book, therefore, is to compare the typological microvariation in subject, agent and object coding in intransitive and transitive constructions within and across Northeastern Neo-Aramaic and Central Neo-Aramaic.

In addressing this central issue within a Semitic language, a more general goal is to contribute to the typology of argument marking across languages of the world and make Neo-Aramaic not only accessible to Aramaicists or Semitists, but also linguists in general. By the same token, this book aims to highlight the value of linguistic typology for the study of Semitic languages and thereby bridge a gap between traditional Semitistic and general descriptive approaches. Hence, this book provides detailed glossing of examples and refers to comparative data in non-Semitic languages.

Chapter 2 is a general introduction to Neo-Aramaic and its overall typology. It not only presents an overview of the main morphosyntactic features common to the respective languages, but also the primary tools that come with the typological approach taken in this book and how it differs from that found in previous literature. Some scholars take the ergativity of the *šmi' l*-construction simply for granted. Nevertheless, when do we speak of ergativity and when not? And what other types of alignment occur, even beyond the accusative alternative? In what respect are the alignment types different and similar from one another within Eastern Neo-Aramaic? Two chapters are devoted to NENA divided dialectologically and one to Central Neo-Aramaic. Chapter 3 discusses the alignment typology in the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, focusing on ergativity in particular. Chapter 4 concentrates on the Christian and other Jewish varieties of NENA. Chapter 5 compares these findings with the alignment variation in Turoyo and Mlaḥsó.

Secondly, in what way do different coding strategies interact and what would we expect typologically? Chapter 2 presents the main verbal morphology, the pronominal inventory and prepositional marking of arguments in Neo-Aramaic from a typological perspective. Chapter 3 to 5 include sections on the interaction between prepositional marking and verbal person marking. Chapter 3 in particular relates the general expectations for ergativity found in

the functionalist typological literature. To what extent is the ergativity found in Neo-Aramaic typical? Related to this are the conditions for when arguments, if any, are expressed prepositionally and/or expressed by verbal person marking. What conditioning factors can be identified relating to grammatical categories, such as tense, aspect, mood and referential properties, such as animacy, definiteness and person? These observations contribute to the cross-linguistic study of such phenomena and our understanding of argument encoding in general.

Indeed, a more general question is to what extent alignment matters at all to the constructions and their properties that have been conventionalized in these dialects. Can we establish correlations between the properties of the constructions and their occurrence in a particular alignment type? The present study argues that much of the variation is independent of ergativity, or alignment in general, and that the alignment patterns in Eastern Neo-Aramaic need not have sprung from a coherently ergative source construction, contrary to what has been widely accepted.<sup>32</sup> It analyzes recent documentation of both Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic in a typological perspective to reveal important dialectal microvariation.

Finally, while this study of microvariation is not intended to investigate linguistic universals or areal language features, it contributes to wider cross-linguistic research projects and can offer a starting point for further areal and diachronic studies. A split between accusative and ergative alignment conditioned by tense and/or aspect is not altogether uncommon in languages of the world. In fact, a similar tense-sensitive alignment split occurs in Iranian languages with which Aramaic has been in contact for at least two millennia,<sup>33</sup> and similar constructional splits occur in languages of the Caucasus (e.g. Stilo 1981, Meyer 2016) and Indo-Aryan (Verbeke 2013b). In addition, this synchronic study is to serve as a fruitful starting point for further diachronic studies. Aramaic has been documented for a remarkably long period, while little is known about spoken Aramaic before the 16th century. Thus, the modern vernaculars are indispensable for the study of the linguistic evolution of Aramaic.<sup>34</sup> As we will see, each dialect (group) may 'do its own thing' and sometimes even in opposite ways. This is a fascinating fact about a language where alignment has otherwise been stable for millennia.

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32 See Noorlander (forthcoming) for the debate of the possible source constructions with references.

33 See, for instance, Stilo (1981, 2004a), Haig (2001, 2008), Kapeliuk (2004), Khan (2004b, 2007b), Noorlander (2014, 2017), Noorlander and Stilo (2015), Stilo and Noorlander (2015).

34 See Beyer (1986, 54), Hopkins (1989a, 413), Jastrow (2008, 1).

## 1.7 Sources and Transcription Conventions

The various existing grammars, texts and studies serve as a basis for the data cited in this book. Table 1 at the end of this chapter shows which sources were consulted for the relevant dialect. Apart from the sources mentioned in the table, Talay (2008; 2009) includes a vast amount of data on a densely populated dialect bundle in SE Turkey (and NW Iraq), whose speakers took up residence along the Khabur Valley in Syria after WWI. In his extensive grammatical description of these dialects, it is not always clear when he makes general statements about dialects whether this applies to all of them and to what extent this has also been attested in his corpus. Khan's grammars and especially his comparative excursuses<sup>35</sup> offer valuable data and cross-dialectal comparisons. When the source of the data is left uncited, the data have been personally collected in the field often in together with G. Khan and/or D. Molin in Northern Iraq as well as among migrant communities in Israel, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. Khan (2011) estimates there are about 150 NENA dialects, some, of which several are still undocumented or only poorly documented. A large number of them are listed on the website of the NENA Database<sup>36</sup> at the University of Cambridge, currently under the coordination of G. Khan, D. Molin and the present author. This online website was consulted in 2016 and 2018 for unpublished data collected by G. Khan, R. Borghero, E. Coghill and L. Napierkowska over the past two decades. Several recordings can also be found in the Semitic Sound Archive (SemArch)<sup>37</sup> hosted by the University of Heidelberg.

A methodological issue of fieldwork practice that one should be aware of is that grammatical descriptions and especially data entries in the NENA database often rely on elicited data that do not occur in narrative texts. Elicitation via questionnaires and text collection can show radically different aspects of language usage. When a particular paradigm can or cannot be elicited, this does not always reveal whether a speaker uses this or not. A linguist may well not be able to elicit a particular form, but then it suddenly pops up in a text, or *vice versa*. Moreover, when speakers become puzzled during elicitation, this does not always mean they cannot deal with such forms in a context in a more routine-driven fashion of speaking. Language attrition may also affect comprehension and production. In addition, since data collection also serves to

35 Khan (2008b, 2–7, 73–75, 146–148; 2009, 5–9, 77–78, 327–329). But also, occasionally, Hopkins (1989a), Israeli (1998), Golbenberg (1992), Pennacchietti (1994) and Mengozzi (2002b, 36–49).

36 [nena.ames.cam.ac.uk](http://nena.ames.cam.ac.uk).

37 [semarch.uni-hd.de](http://semarch.uni-hd.de).

preserve the speakers' heritage, most of the narratives deal with life in the town in the past, customs, anecdotes and folklore. Unfortunately, its use in everyday conversations without interviewers being present has generally not been recorded. Furthermore, some of the grammar sketches published in articles do not contain texts at all. Thus when a particular construction is mentioned as (im)possible, this does not always provide us with the complete picture. Moreover, grammars do not always completely discuss all morphology and syntax in detail, not to mention alignment typology. Grammatical descriptions may contain general statements about object marking without giving actual examples and without making clear what types of objects are in view.

The sources also have different conventions for transcriptions and sometimes authors change them over time. For convenience sake, examples from Neo-Aramaic dialects are made uniform as follows. The variable practice of representing the reduced centralized vowel by means of the letters ⟨i⟩, ⟨i̇⟩, ⟨ī⟩, ⟨e⟩ or ⟨ə⟩ are all unified in the single grapheme ⟨ə̇⟩ ranging in pronunciation between [ɪ] ~ [ə̇] (~ [u]). Consistent with practices in Semitics, the voiceless and voiced interdental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ are marked by ⟨ṭ⟩ and ⟨ḍ⟩, respectively, and the pharyngeal /ʕ/ and glottal stop /ʔ/ by the half rings ⟨'⟩ and ⟨'̣⟩ respectively. Long vowels, if indicated, are distinguished by a macron, e.g. *ā* instead of a colon /a:/. Moreover, I have taken the liberty to adjust Ritter's (1967–1971; 1979; 1990) detailed phonetic transcription of Ṭuroyo to a phonological transcription, comparable to Jastrow (1992).

The symbol + indicates suprasegmental pharyngealization of the following word or syllable. I have simplified the detailed transcription of Younansardaroud (2001). Following Khan (2016), the threeway system of emphasis is reduced to a binary one with the symbol + indicating the pharyngealization and a circumflex ◌̆ below or above the segment indicating unaspirated/glottalized articulation, but for ease of comparison the post-velar unvoiced stop (ḳ) will be transcribed as the uvular one in other dialects, thus

ṭ	[ṭ]	t	[t <sup>h</sup> ]
p̣	[p̣]	p	[p <sup>h</sup> ]
q	[ḳ]	k	[k <sup>h</sup> ]

Front rounded vowels will also be indicated using the umlaut diacritic, thus J. Urmi *bróna* and *xalınta* in Khan (2008b) correspond to:

<i>bröná</i>	/brø'na/
<i>xalıntá</i>	/xalyn'ta/

Unless otherwise specified, stress is on the penultimate syllable. Intonation group boundaries and secondary stress are omitted in citation.

Using these sources, the alignment patterns are identified, compared and analyzed in this book according to the principles outlined in Chapter 2. The material from the respective source will be presented with morpheme-by-morpheme glossing following the Leipzig Glossing Rules.<sup>38</sup> The glossing in examples cited from non-Semitic languages is taken from the respective source, unless indicated otherwise. Finally, throughout this book, when a word or phrase is emphasized in quoted examples, the emphasis is always mine unless indicated otherwise.

## 1.8 Outline

This book is a journey through the Neo-Aramaic landscape from East to West, from Jewish into Christian communities, investigating the morphosyntactic alignment in their dialects. Chapter 2 starts off with a brief overview of the coding strategies in NENA and Central Neo-Aramaic. It explains the theoretical preliminaries of clause structure and how alignment types can be identified from different angles. A considerable part is devoted to the expression of pronouns and verbal inflection in the imperfective aspect based on the so-called *qaṭal*-base common to all of Neo-Aramaic. This can be taken as a frame of reference for the study of argument marking in other more complex and cross-dialectally diverse constructions.

Chapter 3, 4 and 5 examine the basic morphosyntax of a particular dialect group. The typological background is introduced directly where and when they are of immediate relevance to core issues in the relevant chapter. Chapter 3 concentrates on ergativity and its typology within the Trans-Zab Jewish subgroup. This is not to say that ergativity plays no role in subsequent chapters, but it is part of the two main questions addressed in this chapter, namely to what extent are the properties found for ergativity in this dialect group unexpected typologically, and secondly, to what extent is there a direct correlation between these properties and ergativity in one such group of dialects?

This discussion continues in Chapter 4 with an examination of the remainder of NENA dialects, namely the Jewish varieties west of the Great-Zab river

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38 The glossing deviates from the Leipzig rules in the following ways: (a) I adopt subscript PFV and IPFV as labels for the different inflectional bases perfective (e.g. *qtil-*) and imperfective (e.g. *qaṭal-*) respectively and (b) I employ a colon instead of a period to separate abbreviations.

and all the Christian dialects of NENA. The focus here, however, is on the relationship between the verbal person marking in the perfective past and the rest of the system. These dialects may have several transitive perfective past constructions at their disposal that are in competition. Each construction seems to converge to an increasing extent with the dominant morphosyntax of *qaṭəl-*.

Chapter 5 deals with Central Neo-Aramaic, the Neo-Aramaic varieties of Ṭur ‘Abdin in particular. There are notable differences between NENA and Ṭuroyo, including the richer system of verbal derivation as well as the special verbal base *CaCiC-*. In other respects, our findings for NENA do have parallels in Ṭuroyo and Mlaḥsó, and similar constructions end up differently in each group.

Finally, Chapter 6 brings all these threads together in a cross-dialectal synopsis with the major conclusions for alignment typology, and Chapter 7 provides a general conclusion and an outlook towards future areal and historical studies with a taxonomy of main alignment types and their properties in Central and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic languages.

TABLE 1 Table containing most of the dialects investigated for this book and their sources

J./C.	Dialect	Location	Other names	Sources
C.	Alqosh	NW Iraq		Coghill 2003
J.	‘Amedia	NW Iraq	‘Amidyā, ‘Amadiya, Amêdî	Hoberman 1989; Greenblatt 2011
C.	‘Ankawa	NE Iraq		Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	‘Aqrah	NE Iraq	Akre	Al-Zebari 2018; Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	Aradhin	NW Iraq		Krotkoff 1982
J.	Aradhin	NW Iraq		Mutzafi 2002b
J.	Arbel	NE Iraq	Arbil, Erbil, Hewlêr	Khan 1999
C.	Artun	SE Turkey	Hertevin, Ekindüzü	Jastrow 1988; Noorlander field notes
C.	Ashitha	SE Turkey	Aşute, Çiğli	Borghero 2006
C.	Azakh	NW Iraq	Aḏeh	Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
J.	Başqale	SE Turkey	Başqala	Garbell 1965
C.	Baṛeṭla	NW Iraq	Baṛṭella	Al-Saka 2018

TABLE 1 Table containing most of the dialects investigated for this book and their sources (*cont.*)

J./C.	Dialect	Location	Other names	Sources
C.	<b>Barwar</b>	NW Iraq	Barwari (Berwari) Bala, incl. En-Nune, Dure, Dereške, Besh- miyaye, Iyyet, Maye	Khan 2008a
J.	<b>Barzan</b>	NW Iraq		Mutzafi 2002a, 2004c
C.	<b>Baz</b>	SE Turkey	Maha khtaya, Doğan	Mutzafi 2000
C.	<b>Bebede</b>	NW Iraq	Bebadi	Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Bedyal</b>	NE Iraq		Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Beşpen</b>	SE Turkey	Bêşpən, Bespina, Görümlü	Sinha 2000
J.	<b>Betanure</b>	NW Iraq		Mutzafi 2008a
C.	<b>Billin</b>	SE Turkey		Borghero field notes (NENA Database)
C.	<b>Bne-Lagippa</b>	SE Turkey	Țyari	Borghero field notes (NENA Database)
C.	<b>Borb-Ruma</b>	SE Turkey	Bohtan (Ruma, Borb, Shwata)	Fox 2009
J.	<b>Challa</b>	SE Turkey	Çukurca	Fassberg 2011
C.	<b>Challa</b>	SE Turkey		Talay 2008, 2009
J.	<b>Cizre</b>	SE Turkey	Gzira	Nakano 1973
C.	<b>Dehe</b>	NW Iraq	Dehi	Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Derabun</b>	NW Iraq	Dayr Abuna	Borghero field notes (NENA Database); Coghill 2009
C.	<b>Dere</b>	NW Iraq		Borghero field notes (NENA Database)
C.	<b>Diyana-Zariwaw</b>	NE Iraq	Soran	Napiorkowska 2015
J.	<b>Dobe</b>	NE Iraq		Mutzafi 2004b
J.	<b>Dohok</b>	NW Iraq	Duhok	Molin 2021; Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Gawar</b>	SE Turkey	Yüksekova	Talay 2008, 2009
J.	<b>Gawar</b>	SE Turkey		Garbell 1965
C.	<b>Gaznakh</b>	SE Turkey	Geznex, Cevizağacı	Gutman 2015

TABLE 1 Table containing most of the dialects investigated for this book and their sources (*cont.*)

J./C.	Dialect	Location	Other names	Sources
J.	<b>Ḥalabja</b>	NE Iraq		Khan 2004a
C.	<b>Hamziye</b>	NW Iraq	Hamzik	Coghill field notes (NENA Database); Coghill 2009
C.	<b>Harmashe</b>	NW Iraq		Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Haşşan</b>	SE Turkey	Hassane, Köşreli	Damsma forthcoming
C.	<b>Hawdiyan</b>	NE Iraq		Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Harbole</b>	SE Turkey	Aksu, Şırnak	Khan field notes
C.	<b>Jinnet</b>	SE Turkey	Cinet, Bağpınar	Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Jilu</b>	SE Turkey	Ğilu, Yeşiltaş (Hakkari)	Fox 1997; Talay 2008, 2009
C.	<b>Karamlesh</b>	NW Iraq	Karemlesh	Borghero 2008
J.	<b>Kerend</b>	W Iran		Hopkins 1989a, 2002
C.	<b>Koy Sanjak</b>	NW Iraq	Koy Sanjak	Mutzafi 2004b
J.	<b>Koy Sanjak</b>	NE Iraq	Koy Sanjak	Mutzafi 2004a
C.	<b>Lewen</b>	SE Turkey		Talay 2008, 2009
C.	<b>Mangesh</b>	NW Iraq		Sara 1974
C.	<b>Mar Yaqo</b>	NW Iraq	Mar Ya'qob	Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Marga</b>	SE Turkey	Yemişli, Uludere	Khan and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Mlaḥsó</b>	SE Turkey	Lice (Diyarbak.)	Jastrow 1994, 1996
C.	<b>Bne-Matha</b>	SE Turkey	Mne-Matha, T̄yari	Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	<b>Kharjawa</b>	NW Iraq	Nargezine-Kharjawa	Coghill field notes (NENA Database)
J.	<b>Naghada</b>	NW Iran	Solduz	Garbell 1965; Hopkins 1989b
C.	<b>Nerwa</b>	NW Iraq	Narwa	Talay 2001; Noorlander field notes
J.	<b>Nerwa</b>	NW Iraq	Narwa	Sabar 1976
C.	<b>Peshabur</b>	NW Iraq	Faysh Khabur	Coghill 2013
J.	<b>Qarah Ḥasan</b>	W Iran		Khan 2009
C.	<b>Baghdeda</b>	NW Iraq	Qaraqosh	Khan 2002a
C.	<b>Qodchaneş</b>	SE Turkey	Koçanis/Konak, Hakkari	Talay 2008, 2009
C.	<b>Rekan</b>	NW Iraq		Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
J.	<b>Rewanduz</b>	NE Iraq	Ruwanduz	Khan 2002b; Mutzafi 2004b

TABLE 1 Table containing most of the dialects investigated for this book and their sources (*cont.*)

J./C.	Dialect	Location	Other names	Sources
J.	Rustaqa	NE Iraq		Khan 2002b
C.	Salmas	NW Iran	Salamas	Polotsky 1991; Mutzafi 2015; Khan 2016
J.	Salmas			Duval 1883; Mutzafi 2015
C.	Sanandaj	W Iran	Sena, Sina	Panoussi 1990; Khan 2009; Kalin 2014
J.	Sanandaj	W Iran		Khan 2009
C.	Shaqlawā	NE Iraq		Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
J.	Shaqlawā	NE Iraq		Mutzafi 2004b
J.	Saqez	W Iran	Saqqiz, Saqiz	Israeli 1998
C.	Sardarid	NW Iran	Sardrud	Younansardaroud 2001
C.	Sat	SE Turkey	İliyaka	Mutzafi 2008c; Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	Shemsdin	SE Turkey	Şemdinli; Bne Şammesdin, a.o. Azran Gargarnaye, Nochiya, Iyyəl, Mar-bisho	Napiorkowska and Borghero field notes (NENA Database)
C.	Sulemaniyya	W Iran	Sulaymaniyya, Silê-manî	Khan 2004a
J.	Sulemaniyya	NE Iraq		Khan 2004a; including Ḥalabja
C.	Ṭal	SE Turkey		Talay 2008, 2009
C.	Telkepe	NW Iraq	Tall Kayf	Coghill 2010, 2014
C.	Ten	NW Iraq		Coghill field notes (NENA Database)
C.	Tella	NW Iraq		Khan, Molin and Noorlander field notes
C.	Tisqopa	NW Iraq	Tall Asqaf	Rubba 1993
C.	Ṭyari	SE Turkey	Upper and Lower Ṭyari	Talay 2008, 2009
C.	Tkhuma	SE Turkey	Tḫuma, incl. Mazṛa, Matha, Gudektha, Gessa, Berejnaye, Gawaye	Talay 2008, 2009

TABLE 1 Table containing most of the dialects investigated for this book and their sources (*cont.*)

J./C.	Dialect	Location	Other names	Sources
C.	Ṭuroyo	SE Turkey	Surayt, Suryoyo	Jastrow 1985, 1992; Ritter 1967–1971, 1990
C.	Umṛa	SE Turkey	Dera, Dereköy	Hobrack 2000; Noorlander field notes
C.	Umra d-Shish	NW Iraq		Borghero field notes (NENA Database)
C.	Urmi	NW Iran	Urmia, Ārumiye	Murre-van den Berg 1999; Khan 2016
J.	Urmi	NW Iran		Garbell 1965; Khan 2008b
C.	Zakho	NW Iraq		Hoberman 1993
J.	Zakho	NW Iraq		Sabar 2002; Cohen 2012

## Who Did What to Whom in the Context of Neo-Aramaic

This chapter introduces the main principles of Neo-Aramaic morphosyntax and the theoretical preliminaries for subsequent chapters. The prefix and suffix conjugation so well known to Semitists that they could be taken for granted as a component of any Semitic language simply do not occur in Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic. Instead, a major distinction is made between clauses where verbal inflection is based on *qaṭəl-* and clauses based on *qṭil-*, the two main inflectional bases of the Neo-Aramaic verbal system. Both are reflexes of pre-modern Aramaic participles, the active and the resultative participle respectively. Apart from that, several dialects make use of compound verbal constructions based on nominal forms of the verb, notably the verbal adjective (viz. resultative participle) and the infinitive (viz. action noun). Moreover, such constructions often involve person marking through (originally) pronominal copulas much more verb-like than found in most Semitic languages. Overviews of the pronominal inventory and verbal inflection are given at the end of this chapter. Tables 8 and 9 provide examples of full paradigms of the pronouns, discussed in Section 2.2. Table 10 is a simplified overview of the inflectional categories of main verb types. Table 11 displays the template for the main forms and functions of the so-called *qaṭəl-*conjugation, discussed in Section 2.1.

Since the same or similar terminology can be used differently in debates in the literature on Neo-Aramaic, an outline of the basic assumptions and methodology is required. Alignment involves much more than the case systems well known to Semitists through Akkadian and Classical Arabic. Case terminology such as accusative or ergative should not be conflated with the functions of the arguments in the clause, i.e. speaking of accusative or ergative functions should be avoided, nor with verbal person marker sets, i.e. terms like ‘accusative L-suffixes’ or ‘ergative L-suffixes’ are to be avoided, and semantic roles, i.e. agent or patient, should not be confused with syntactic functions, i.e. S, A and P, and so forth. Confusing terms like ‘accusative L-suffix’ or ‘ergative case role’ will not be used in this book. Instead more fine-grained categories of the functions of arguments in the clause structure will be used in the application of the models developed by Comrie (1989) and Andrews (2007) for alignment typology.

Moreover, ergativity should not be mistaken for a property of a particular (historically) passive-like transitive construction in which the agent is marked

in a (historically) prepositional phrase. Rather it embodies the similar treatment of a particular set of core grammatical functions, namely S and P, which could be manifested in multiple ways, case morphology being only one factor among many.

Indeed, alignment typology seeks to capture variation by comparing the way arguments are treated in core grammatical functions in the clause structure, ergative-absolutive being one among several alternatives to nominative-accusative. In this regard, a major distinction is made between transitive and intransitive clauses depending on the number as well as functions of arguments, i.e. any of the arguments with which primary transitive verbs combine to express the main participants of the event denoted by the construction. The way such arguments are marked similarly or differently across transitive and intransitive clauses establishes particular types of groupings in which languages vary and change. Adopting a language and construction-specific typological approach to such variation will inevitably have a different theoretical basis and purpose than approaches based on universal grammar in generative syntax.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, taking clause structure to be ultimately construction-specific also leads to different outcomes, namely that alignment types can be identified from different perspectives by examining the morphological properties of the construction in closer detail.

## 2.1 Main Components of Verbal Inflection in Neo-Aramaic

As in other Semitic languages, the Neo-Aramaic verb is presupposed to have three primary levels of morphological abstraction, discussed further below:

- 1) *root*, mainly consisting of three radical consonants, with an associated meaning, such as

<i>d-m-x</i>	<i>q-ṭ-l</i>	<i>n-š-q</i>	<i>g-r-š</i>	<i>š-q-l</i>	<i>s-m-q</i>	<i>p-l-ṭ</i>
‘sleep’	‘kill’	‘kiss’	‘pull’	‘take’	‘be(come) red’	‘move out’

- 2) *derivational stem*, a verbal derivation consisting of this root and possibly additional affixes/augments to distinguish verb classes and different voices such as causative and mediopassive, e.g.

stem I <i>damax</i>	stem II <i>ma-dmāx</i>
‘fall asleep’	‘put asleep’

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Hoberman (1989, 95–122) for a generative morphological account, Doron and Khan (2010, 2012) and Kalin and van Urk (2015) for alignment typology from a generative syntactic perspective.

- 3) *inflectional base*, which consists of a vowel template with slots for the radicals and selects a paradigm of verbal endings that jointly determine how the verb is conjugated and together convey a particular state of affairs, e.g. *damx -ən* ‘I<sub>MS</sub> sleep’ < *daməx-* + E-suffixes  
 sleep -1MS  
 – *preverbs* are added to mark tense, aspect and/or mood, e.g.  
*b-* *damx-ən* ‘I<sub>MS</sub> will sleep’  
 FUT- sleep-1MS  
 – a past or anterior *-wa-* suffix denoting past tense or “one step back” (Cohen 2012, 459) in time, e.g.  
*b-* *damx-ən -wa* ‘I<sub>MS</sub> used to sleep’  
 FUT- sleep-1MS -PST

A fully conjugated form of a verb like *šm* ‘hear’ belonging to stem 1 such as *k-šam’-á-wa-li* ‘She used to hear me’ follows the following template:

<b>TAM + BASE</b>	<b>+ E-set</b>	<b>+ PAST</b>	<b>+ L-set</b>
<i>k- šam’</i>	<i>-á</i>	<i>-wa</i>	<i>-li</i>
IND- hear <sub>IPFV</sub>	-3FS	-PST	-1SG
‘She used to hear me.’			

This basic template begins with a marker of clause-level grammatical information in which the categories of tense, aspect and mood are fused, such as the indicative-habitual *k-*. What follows such TAM-markers is a verbal stem derived from the root *šm*’ that encodes the core meaning of the verbal construction (e.g. *šame*’- hear<sub>IPFV</sub>), to which the person markers of a particular set (the E-suffixes) are added. After the E-suffix and before the L-suffix, the affix *-wa-* is added expressing one step back in time (i.e. anteriority). We will review each of these levels accordingly in the following sections, starting with verbal roots.

### 2.1.1 Verbal Roots

Verbal roots are generally composed of three radicals, at least one of which may be lost in the inflection of so-called weak verbs.

First of all, Neo-Aramaic languages are generally described within the traditional mold of a Semitic language that is characterized by verbal roots composed of a particular set of so-called radical consonants. While inflectional stems are still analyzable as vowel templates, it is ambiguous to what extent these roots are still productive or identifiable on the synchronic level.<sup>2</sup> This

<sup>2</sup> See Molin (2021) for a discussion, in particular the verb ‘by’ ‘want’. Consider, for instance, the

notwithstanding, verbal roots are at least identifiable on a diachronic basis, and these are referred to as such in the grammatical description throughout this monograph for ease of cross-dialectal comparison.

There are mainly three—but sometimes four—radicals per verbal root, indicated as C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>3</sub>—where C stands for the slot taken by the respective radical consonant. The roots for ‘kiss’, ‘pull’ and ‘kill’, for example, are, respectively, *n-š-q*, *g-r-š* and *q-t-l* in Aramaic. They are generally used as ‘dummy’ verbs, i.e. the default descriptive example from which we can deduce how other verbs are inflected. Whereas most verbs are **triradical**, quite a number of them can also contain more than three radicals, being, for instance, **quadriradical**, such as *d-l-g-n* ‘tell a lie’ and *g-n-d-r* ‘roll’.

Furthermore, the position and quality of a radical in a particular consonant-vowel template that constitutes a verbal form can affect the way the verb is inflected. Semitists generally distinguish between *sound* verbs, which regularly retain all radicals in inflection (such as *g-r-š* ‘pull’), and *weak* verbs, which contain a radical that is somehow lost, primarily the semi-vowels *y* and *w*;<sup>3</sup> though usually leaving behind some trace in the phonology.<sup>4</sup> Table 2 below represents how they are differentiated further by the position of their weakness: first, second (or hollow), and final weak verbs, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

The type of radical is usually specified. For example, *q-y-m* ‘rise’ belongs to the hollow verbs, more specifically the second-/y/ verbs, *k-t-w* to the final weak verbs, more specifically the final-/w/ and so forth. Verbal roots containing a final resonant are also subsumed under weak verbs in certain Neo-Aramaic languages. Final-/r/ verbs, for example, can constitute a special class. In principle weak verbs are as systematic or predictable as sound verbs. The fact that their triradicalism is partially or completely weakened in their inflectional system is what sets them apart. They should not to be mistaken for irregular verbs *per se*,

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verbal forms *k-e* ‘he comes’ and *k-en* ‘they come’ in Trans-Zab Jewish varieties like J. Sanandaj (Khan 2009), where *k-* is a TAM modifying prefix. Since the historical root ‘*ty* ‘come’ is no longer identifiable at all, it is questionable whether one wants to postulate a root here at all on a synchronic level.

- 3 Historically, *w* is the reflex of the spirantized allophone of /b/ in pre-modern Aramaic. The shift from \**b* to *w* (e.g. \**ktobo* > Turoyo *ktowo*) gave rise to new weak roots, such as *g-n-w* ‘steal’ (< \**g-n-b*), *k-t-w* ‘write’ (< \**k-t-b*), *l-w-š* ‘dress’ (< \**l-b-š*), *g-w-r* ‘marry’ (< \**g-b-r*). The stop allophone may still be found elsewhere, compare *mzabən* ‘He sells’ (< \**mzabbən-*) and *zowən* ‘He buys’ (< \**zobən*), both originally formed to the root *z-b-n*.
- 4 Sometimes this can involve two (or more) weak radicals (i.e. *doubly* weak verbs).
- 5 These correspond with the traditional Latin terminology of *verba infirmae radicalis* in Semitics, and thus *verba prima*, *mediae* or *tertia* *infirmae* (*radicalis*), respectively.

TABLE 2 Major types of weak verbs

Initial, first	Second, middle, hollow	Third, final
R <sub>1</sub> = y y- <i>d-</i> ‘know’	R <sub>2</sub> = y q- <i>y-m</i> ‘rise’	R <sub>3</sub> = y š- <i>t-y</i> ‘drink’
R <sub>1</sub> = ’ ’- <i>x-l</i> ‘eat’	R <sub>2</sub> = w l- <i>w-š</i> ‘wear’	R <sub>3</sub> = w k- <i>t-w</i> ‘write’

which are inflected differently from both sound and weak verbs. The verb ’-*z-l* ‘go’, for instance, is often highly irregular in Neo-Aramaic languages, sometimes even showing unique verbal person markers not used with any other verb.

Thus, in a nutshell, verbal roots generally consist of three radical consonants. Regular verbs are either sound or weak. All radicals are retained in the inflection of sound verbs such as *n-š-q* ‘kiss’. At least one radical is lost in the inflection of weak verbs such as *q-y-m* ‘rise’, usually leaving a trace behind. Irregular verbs are inflected differently from both of these.

### 2.1.2 Basic Stems *qaṭəl-/qoṭəl*–vs. *qṭil*–and Their Derivations

Both the Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic verbal system mainly distinguish three conjugations, of which *qaṭəl-* (or *qoṭəl*) and *qṭil-* (and/or *qaṭil-* < \**qaṭṭil-*) are inflectional bases for the basic verbs.

Verbal inflection mainly consists of the following bases:

		NENA	Ṭuroyo
FINITE (suffixal inflection)	imperative	<i>qṭol</i> <sub>SG</sub> , <i>qṭulun</i> <sub>PL</sub>	<i>qṭal</i> <sub>SG</sub> , <i>qṭalu</i> <sub>PL</sub>
	‘imperfective’	<i>qaṭəl-</i>	<i>qoṭəl-</i>
	‘perfective’	<i>qṭil-</i>	<i>qṭil-</i> or <i>qaṭil-</i>
NON-FINITE	infinitive	<i>qṭala</i>	<i>qṭolo</i>
	resultative	<i>qṭila</i>	<i>qṭilo</i> or <i>qaṭilo</i>
	agent noun	<i>qaṭala</i> , <i>qaṭola</i>	<i>qaṭolo</i> , <i>qoṭulo</i>

The basic verbal system primarily distinguishes three conjugations the imperative (NENA *qṭol*, CNA *qṭal* ‘kill!’), the ‘imperfective’ (NENA *qaṭəl-*, CNA *qoṭəl-*) and the ‘perfective’ (*qṭil-*) characterized by suffixal person indexes. The Central Neo-Aramaic ‘perfective’ has two bases: *qṭil-* and *qaṭil-* (< \**qaṭṭil-*). Nominal forms of the verb include at least an action noun or infinitive (*qṭala* ‘killing’) and verbal adjective or resultative participle (*qṭila* ‘killed’). Like the ‘perfective’, the latter encompasses two consonantal templates in Central Neo-Aramaic: *qṭilo* and *qaṭilo* (< \**qaṭṭilā*). In addition, there are agent nominalizations (e.g.

NENA *ganawa* ‘thief’, Ṭur. *ganowo* ‘thief’ < \**gannābā*) that may serve as an active participle or proximative in some varieties.<sup>6</sup>

Verbal stem formation involves several possible derivational classes. These classes are typical of Aramaic and share cognates with other Semitic languages. Semitists often distinguish a G(round) or B(asic) stem (German *Grundstamm*), D(oubling) stem (German *Doppelungsstamm*) and C(ausative) stem.<sup>7</sup> Q(uadri-radical) verbs usually follow the patterns of the D-stem. Their equivalent mediopassive or reflexive counterpart are known as the ‘T-stems’, i.e. Gt-stem, Dt-stem, Ct-stem, Qt-stem.<sup>8</sup> Table 3 lists such formations in Ṭuroyo using the imperfective base of the derivation as citation form.

In accordance with the table above, these formations are consistently referred as stems I, II, III and IV and their corresponding mediopassives as I<sub>M</sub>, II<sub>M</sub>, III<sub>M</sub> and IV<sub>M</sub>. There is no common practice in Neo-Aramaic Studies to refer to these verbal derivations, but the traditional comparative Semitic terminology is not suitable for comparing Neo-Aramaic languages.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to Central Neo-Aramaic, NENA dialects do not have mediopassive derivations. The Central Neo-Aramaic classes in Table 3 correspond with the following active forms in NENA dialects (if they are all present):

- I: *qaṭəl-* ‘kill’  
 II: (*m*)*zabən-* ‘sell’  
 III: *madmāx-* ‘put to sleep’  
 IV: (*m*)*barbəz-* ‘scatter’

Several NENA dialects only have stem III where others make a distinction between II and III.<sup>10</sup> Notwithstanding the various derivational patterns among the stem formations within a single dialect, it is safe to say that, in general, the verbal derivations referred to as stem II and, most productively, stem III are causatives of the basic stem I, adding an agent to the valence pattern of the basic stem. The verb *dmx*, for example, means ‘go to sleep’ in stem I, e.g. Ṭuroyo *domāx*, and ‘put to sleep’ in stem III, e.g. Ṭuroyo *madmāx*.

6 See Noorlander (2017) for an overview of proximative constructions.

7 The first three are traditionally known in Aramaic Studies as (*Neo-*)*P’al*, (*Neo-*)*Pa’el* and (*Neo-*)*Aḫ’el*, respectively.

8 Traditionally ‘*Etp’al*’, ‘*Etpa’al*’ and ‘*Ettaḫ’al*’ respectively.

9 D-stem, for instance, is derived from German *Doppelungsstamm* ‘doubling stem’ due to the gemination, i.e. lengthening, of the second radical (\**mzabban-*), but gemination is no longer a characteristic of this formation in all Neo-Aramaic languages.

10 See also Kapeliuk (2005) for a discussion of these derivations.

TABLE 3 The Aramaic stem formations in ʿuroyo

Active		Mediopassive	
I (B)	<i>qoʿal-</i> 'kill'	I <sub>M</sub> (Bt)	<i>mə-qʿal-</i> 'be killed'
II (D)	<i>m-zabən-</i> 'sell'	II <sub>M</sub> (Dt)	<i>mi-zabən-</i> 'be sold'
III (C)	<i>m-a-dmāx-</i> 'put to sleep'	III <sub>M</sub> (Ct)	<i>mi-ta-dmāx-</i> 'be put to sleep'
IV (Q)	<i>m-farqāʿ-</i> 'burst' (tr.)	IV <sub>M</sub> (Qt)	<i>mi-farqāʿ-</i> 'burst' (intr.)

A primary distinction will be made between the two 'perfective' and 'imperfective' inflectional bases. No standard terminology exists in Neo-Aramaic Studies, but 'Present', 'Jussive', 'Subjunctive' and 'Imperfective' Base are used for *qʿal-* and, conversely, 'Past', 'Preterit' or 'Perfective' for *qʿil-*. Since the difference is principally inflectional in nature, a purely morphological designation is preferred here. The neutral terms *qʿil-* and *qʿal-*, respectively, will be used to designate these bases throughout this book. The terminology 'perfective' and 'imperfective' is functionally motivated, as *qʿal-* is the preferred form in modal complements to express the imperfective present (i.e. subjunctive) and *qʿil-* typically expresses the perfective past (i.e. preterit). Nevertheless, these terms should be taken loosely, since verbal forms based on *qʿal-* can also express perfective aspect as a narrative past (e.g. Christian Barwar, Khan 2008a, 570), and *qʿil-* can also express imperfective aspect when denoting a continuous result state in the present (Kapeliuk 2015) or proximative (Noorlander 2017), e.g. C. Barwar (Khan 2008a, 615)

*hadiya di -li ʿana*  
 now know<sub>PFV</sub> -1SG I  
 'Now I know.'

*mit -le*  
 know<sub>PFV</sub> -1SG  
 'He is about to die.'

These inflectional bases are the direct reflexes of the active and resultative<sup>11</sup> participial predicates in pre-modern Aramaic. The verbal predication is traced

11 This is generally known as a *passive* participle in traditional Semitics. Since this form is in usage typologically closer to resultative constructions (Nedjalkov 1988, 2001), *resultative* participle will be used instead, especially in order to avoid cumbersome descriptions of

back to the historically short, indefinite form. The longer, historically definite, counterpart continues as a verbal adjective termed *resultative participle* here, elsewhere sometimes called ‘stative participle’. This resultative participle is derived from the originally definite form of the pre-modern resultative participle (\**q̄tilā* ‘killed’ > Ṭuroyo *q̄tilo* ~ NENA *q̄tila* ‘killed’). It properly joined in the levelling of the original distinction in determination between so-called *absolute* (\**malk-∅* ‘a king’) and *emphatic/determined state* (\**malkā* ‘the king’). The absolute state was the default, short form of adjectives and participles in predication (\**qaṭəl-∅* ‘He kills’), which have become completely verbal in Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic. The longer, definite form, the emphatic state, became the regular expression of nouns and adjectives throughout. Although the resultative participle derived from the longer form typically expresses result states from an implicit prior action,<sup>12</sup> it has in some cases undergone grammaticalization to a perfect (i.e. anterior/retrospective aspect) or even a full-fledged preterit in several NENA dialects. The term ‘resultative participle’, therefore, is maintained here purely for comparative purposes.

### 2.1.3 Sets of Person Markers: E-suffixes and L-suffixes

#### (1) Sets of person markers

	Ṭuroyo		NENA (J. ‘Amedia; Greenblatt 2011, 88, 91)	
	SET 1	SET 2	SET 1	SET 2
	E-SERIES	L-SERIES	E-SERIES	L-SERIES
1MS	<i>-no</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>-na, -ena</i>	<i>-li</i>
1FS	<i>-ono</i>		<i>-an, -ana</i>	
1PL	<i>-ina</i>	<i>-lan</i>	<i>-ax, -axni</i>	<i>-lan, -leni</i>
2MS	<i>-ət, -at</i>	<i>-lūx, -lox</i>	<i>-ət</i>	<i>-lux</i>
2FS	<i>-at</i>	<i>-lax, -ləx</i>	<i>-at</i>	<i>-lax</i>
2PL	<i>-utu, -itu</i>	<i>-lxu</i>	<i>-etun</i>	<i>-loxun</i>
3MS	<i>-∅</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-∅</i>	<i>-le</i>
3FS	<i>-o</i>	<i>-la</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>-la</i>
3PL	<i>-i, -ən<sup>13</sup></i>	<i>-lle, -lən</i>	<i>-i</i>	<i>-lu, -lohun</i>

Two main sets of person markers are distinguished in verbal constructions, one of which goes back to enclitic personal pronouns and the other to prepositional

“active passive participles”, i.e. passive in form, but active in meaning (Noorlander forthcoming).

12 See Kapeliuk (2008) for a discussion; cf. Noorlander (forthcoming).

13 Final-y verbs, e.g. *°hoz-ən* ‘They see’.

pronouns. The distinct usage of these sets with *qtil-* is pertinent to the discussion in the following chapters. They form the basis for diverse verbal person marking alignment patterns.

Set 1 consists of the ‘E-suffixes’ and Set 2 of the ‘L-suffixes’.<sup>14</sup> The sets are illustrated in (1) above for ʤuoryo (Central Neo-Aramaic) and J. ‘Amedia (NENA).

Thus, E-suffixes and L-suffixes are the main sets of verbal person markers. Set 1, the E-suffixes—where E stands for enclitic due to their origin as enclitic pendants of independent pronouns<sup>15</sup>—, can be decomposed into gender and number coding (m. -∅, f. -*a* and pl. -*i*) and person and number coding (2sg. -*et*, 2pl. -*tun*, 1sg. -*no*, 1pl. -*na*). Arguably, the first and second E-suffixes are morphologically slightly more complex than the third person, which lack special person morphemes, e.g. 3fs. *domx-o* ‘She sleeps’ and *domx-i* ‘They sleep’. Similarly, we can observe, to some extent, the prepositional origin of the L-suffixes, which can be decomposed into the characteristic *l-* and an additional possessive suffix, e.g. -*l-i* = *l-* + 1sg. -*i*, -*l-an* = *l-* + 1pl. -*an* like *bab-i* ‘my father’, *bab-an* ‘our father’ etc. This will not be done here, unless there is a clear warrant to do so; for example, for closer analysis or comparative purposes. Moreover, the L-suffixes and possessive suffixes are not morphologically identical in every relevant language (see § 3.1.2.2. and § 4.1.1.3). In Jewish Saqqiz, for example, 3fs. possessive suffix is -*av* while the corresponding L-suffix is -*la* (Israeli 1998).

The terms S-suffix (in Khan’s early works and similar works by other authors such as Coghill 2016) and *a*-suffix in Sinha (2001) instead of E-suffixes are unhelpful, because the S-suffixes may be confounded with the grammatical function ‘subject’ often abbreviated to *s* in linguistics (which they need not express at all). E-set and L-set are meant as purely neutral morphological designations for comparative purposes without the precarious implications of any systematic relationship to the grammatical functions. Because of parallelism with Iranian, one also finds ‘direct’ for E-suffixes<sup>16</sup> and ‘oblique’ for L-suffixes,<sup>17</sup> which is a common practice of referring to argument marking in Iranian studies. These will not be used here either, because they may be confused with direct vs. oblique arguments, while the L-suffixes are verbal person markers and do not express an oblique argument. Finally, Jastrow (1985, 120) introduced

14 For this choice of terminology, cf. Mutzafi (2004a, 2008a) and Fassberg (2010).

15 Synchronically, the E-suffixes are not enclitics and should not be confused for the separate set called the enclitic copula discussed in § 2.2.4.

16 Cf. ‘D-suffixes’ for ‘direct suffixes’ in more recent work by Khan, e.g. Khan (2017).

17 Cf. Ritter (1990), Pennacchetti (1994), Murre-van den Berg (1999), Mengozzi (2002b, 2005), Noorlander (2017).

“ergative Flexion” for the L-set against “prädikative Flexion” for the E-set in describing Țuroyo and Mlaḥsó. As these terms are already connected with a type of alignment (i.e. ergative)<sup>18</sup> or a type of syntactic function of parts of speech (i.e. predicative), they may lead to confusion and are therefore avoided altogether.

(2) **Paradigm of *qaṭəl-* for *grš* ‘pull’**

Țuroyo (Miden, SE Turkey, cf. Jastrow 1985; Ritter 1990)	NENA (J. ‘Amedia, NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989; Greenblatt 2011)
1MS <i>-no</i> <i>ḡoraš-no</i>	<i>-ən, -ena</i> <i>ḡarš-ən, ḡarš-ena</i>
1FS <i>-ono</i> <i>ḡürš-ono</i>	<i>-an(a)</i> <i>ḡarš-an(a)</i>
1PL <i>-ina</i> <i>ḡürš-ina</i>	<i>-ax(ni)</i> <i>ḡarš-ax(ni)</i>
2MS <i>-ət</i> <i>ḡürš-ət</i>	<i>-ət</i> <i>ḡarš-ət</i>
2FS <i>-at</i> <i>ḡürš-at</i>	<i>-at</i> <i>ḡarš-at</i>
2PL <i>-utu</i> <i>ḡürš-utu</i>	<i>-etun</i> <i>ḡarš-etun</i>
3MS <i>-Ø</i> <i>ḡoraš-Ø</i>	<i>-Ø</i> <i>ḡarš-Ø</i>
3FS <i>-o</i> <i>ḡürš-o</i>	<i>-a</i> <i>ḡarš-a</i>
3PL <i>-i</i> <i>ḡürš-i</i>	<i>-i</i> <i>ḡarš-i</i>

(3) **Paradigm of *qṭil-* for *grš* ‘pull’**

Țuroyo (Miden, SE Turkey, cf. Jastrow 1985)	NENA (J. ‘Amedia, NW Iraq; based on Greenblatt 2011)
1SG <i>-li</i> <i>grəš-li</i>	<i>-li</i> <i>grəš-li</i>
1PL <i>-lan</i> <i>grəš-lan</i>	<i>-lan</i> <i>grəš-lan</i>
2MS <i>-lūx</i> <i>grəš-lūx</i>	<i>-lox</i> <i>grəš-lox</i>
2FS <i>-lax</i> <i>grəš-lax</i>	<i>-lax</i> <i>grəš-lax</i>
2PL <i>-lxu</i> <i>grəš-xu</i>	<i>-loxun</i> <i>grəš-loxun</i>
3MS <i>-le</i> <i>grəš-le</i>	<i>-le</i> <i>grəš-le</i>
3FS <i>-la</i> <i>grəš-la</i>	<i>-la</i> <i>grəš-la</i>
3PL <i>-Ce</i> <i>grəš-še</i>	<i>-lu</i> <i>grəš-lu</i>

Examples (2) and (3) above illustrate the paradigms for *qaṭəl-* and *qṭil-*, respectively, in the Midən dialect of Țuroyo and Jewish ‘Amedia dialect of NENA. The *qaṭəl-*-base loses the vowel ə [ɪ] before suffixes beginning with a vowel, yielding *qaṭl-* in NENA. Due to vowel reduction, this yields *qṭl-* < \**qoṭl-* in Țuroyo and, through partial merger of /ū/ with /ə/, also *qəṭl-* in rural Țuroyo dialects.

18 Jastrow (1996, 52–53) himself believes that no ergative inflection is found in Neo-Aramaic languages; he adopted the term for practical reasons.

The inflection of the *q̄til*-base allows for considerable variation across dialects. In one respect, however, all dialects behave alike: the 2nd series (L-set) regularly expresses A in the perfective past, i.e. the preterit. The L-suffixes attach to the inflectional base *q̄til*-, often with reduction on the part of the *i* [i] to ə [ɪ] or [i] ~ [u], depending on dialect and/or phonetic context.

#### 2.1.4 Preverbal TAM-marking and the -wa-affix

The verbal conjugation of *qaṭəl*- primarily consists of a specific template that serves as the basis of several TAM distinctions.<sup>19</sup> This is illustrated in (4) below. These distinctions are considerably complex and dialect-dependent. Table 11 at the end of this chapter offers a simplified overview.

#### (4) Pattern of *qaṭəl*-

	TAM	BASE	SUBJ	OBJ		
	IND	IPV	-E	-L		
J. 'Amedia	<i>g-</i>	<i>damx-</i>	<i>-a</i>		'She sleeps'	
		<i>k-</i>	<i>qaṭl-</i>	<i>-a-</i>	<i>-le</i>	'She kills him'
Ṭuroyo	<i>ko-</i>	<i>kürx-</i>	<i>-o</i>		'She goes around'	
		<i>ko-</i>	<i>qūṭl-</i>	<i>-o-</i>	<i>-le</i>	'She kills him'

This basic template begins with a marker of clause-level grammatical information in which the categories of tense, aspect and mood are fused. The characteristically velar preverbal element (*k(o)-*, *k/g-*, *ki-*) or the (semi-)vowel *i-/y-* encodes the indicative habitual and/or progressive. Other TAM-markers in NENA are, for example, the prefix *bd-*, which generally encodes the future, and *qam-*, which is marked for the transitive perfective past. The preverb *k-* may change to *g-* in NENA under certain (phonetic) conditions, while in Ṭuroyo the preverb *g-* is also a reduced variant of the future prefix *gəd-*. When preverbal TAM-markers are found for the indicative in a given dialect, the absence of preverb (i.e. Ø-) is grammatically significant in expressing a modality. It may by itself express cohortative and expresses the subjunctive form used in modal complements, for example Ṭuroyo

19 Some preverbal TAM-encoding is also found for other inflectional bases; see Section 3.4. for a comparison in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA, Subsection 4.1.2.2. in other NENA dialects and § 5.3.3. in Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur 'Abdin.

*k- ǔxl -ina*  
 IND eat<sub>IPFV</sub> -1PL  
 'We are eating.'

∅- *ǔxl -ina*  
 SBJV eat<sub>IPFV</sub> -1PL  
 'Let us eat!'

*k-ǔb'-o*                      ∅-*ǔxl-o*                      *'af-farxe*  
 IND-want<sub>IPFV</sub>-3FS SBJV-eat<sub>IPFV</sub>-3FS the-birds  
 'It<sub>F</sub> (i.e. a snake) wants to eat the birds.' (Ritter 1967–1971, 115/259)

Furthermore, the additional 2nd set, the L-suffixes, may be added to transitive verbal forms as object suffixes, e.g. NENA *ǧǔrš-a-le* or ʤuroyo *ǧǔrš-o-le* 'She pulls him'. The L-suffixes usually freely assimilate to an immediately preceding resonant, often with compensatory lengthening, e.g. NENA /b-garš-ən-lax/ 'I<sub>M</sub> will pull you<sub>FS</sub>' yields *b-garš-ən-nax*, and frequently also after the second person E-suffixes ending in /t/, e.g. /k-xaz-ət-li/ yields *k-xaz-ət-ti* 'You<sub>MS</sub> see me'.

Relative anteriority and past tense may be further marked by the suffix *-wa*,<sup>20</sup> which is added immediately after the E-suffixes, but before these L-suffixes, e.g. ʤuroyo *k-ǔxl-ó-wa-le* 'She used to eat it<sub>M</sub>'. Nevertheless, in some ʤuroyo dialects the past convertor shifts to *-way-* before L-suffixes and is added for the first persons before the element of the E-suffix beginning with a consonant, e.g. *ko-dəmx-ono* 'I<sub>F</sub> sleep' but *dəmx-ó-way-no* 'I<sub>F</sub> used to sleep'. The affix *-wa* is generally referred to as a 'past convertor' in Neo-Aramaic Studies, because the *qaṭal*-base is called the 'Present base' and its addition converts it to the past tense. Since what applies to the forms without *-wa* generally also applies to those with it, I will not refer to the constructions containing *-wa* in describing the morphosyntactic alignment, unless there are notable differences.

TAM-marking is by no means uniform across dialects.<sup>21</sup> The indicative marker, for example, is not always compatible with the anterior, i.e. 'past convertor', *-wa*-suffix. Typically, the future form cannot be negated in NENA dialects found in Iraq; instead the negative indicative conveys both present and future tense, e.g. J. Dohok *la-g-ezel-∅* 'He does not go' or 'He will not go'. The distinction between the indicative marker and non-indicative zero is absent or

20 This is historically, *\*hwā-∅* 'He/it was', the 3ms. suffix conjugation of the verb *hwy* 'be' denoting the past.

21 See Khan (2007d) for an overview.

marginalized to initial weak verbs in several NENA dialects.<sup>22</sup> The indicative preverb *y-* can even become fused with the inflectional base of originally initial weak verbs and give rise to a new stem formation. Whereas C. Barwar (NW Iraq) contrasts indicative *i-*, e.g. *y-axəl-∅* 'He eats', subjunctive *∅-*, e.g. *∅-axəl-∅* 'He may eat', future *b-*, e.g. *bḏ-axəl-∅* 'He will eat', the original indicative became the basis for the both indicative and subjunctive imperfective base of original initial /ʔ/ verbs in C. Marga (SE Turkey): *yaxəl-∅* 'He eats/He may eat', to which the future preverb *b-*, for instance, can be added, yielding *b-yaxəl-∅* FUT-eat<sub>1PFV-3MS</sub> 'He will eat'.

Consequently, a ring symbol ⟨ ° ⟩ will be used to refer to *qaṭəl*-forms without specifying its preverbal TAM-marking, but reminding the reader that such forms might be incomplete in this dialect; the present tense will be used for translation for convenience sake. A form like °*damxa* 'She sleeps' thus represents all other possible forms with a preverb in the relevant dialect ranging from *ʔ-damxa* 'She sleeps, is sleeping' (present indicative), *b-damxa* 'She will sleep' (future), *∅-damxa* '(that) she may sleep' (subjunctive), if such forms exist in the dialect.

Thus, while TAM-marking is preverbal without affecting the order of person markers, the E-set generally precedes the *-wa*-affix and always precedes the L-set.

## 2.2 (Pro)nominals and Verbal Constructions Derived from (Pro)nominals

The nominals and independent pronouns, examines further below, represent the full expression of arguments in a clause. Unlike Western and pre-modern Aramaic, the Eastern Neo-Aramaic varieties generally no longer make a distinction between three noun states, respectively known as the *absolute*, *construct* and *emphatic* state in the literature. What historically corresponds with the emphatic state represented by a longer, determined nominal form, e.g. \**malk-ā* 'the king', \**malk-ṭā* 'the queen', is the basis of all nominal and adjectival inflection, while the historically absolute state represented by a shorter, undetermined form, e.g. \**malk-∅* '(a) king', \**malk-ā* '(a) queen', used in predication, e.g. \**malkā ṭāb-∅* 'The king is good', is the basis of all verbal inflection. The construct state has been largely replaced by constructions based on the linker *d-* (Gutman 2018).

22 This also includes the Central Neo-Aramaic dialect of Mlaḥsú (Jastrow 1994).

Like Semitic languages in general, Neo-Aramaic distinguishes between dependent and independent pronouns, i.e. person markers, respectively. Dependent person markers are attached to a verbal or non-verbal host through affixation (or cliticization) in contrast to their independent counterparts. All dependent person markers follow their host as suffixes (or enclitics) in Eastern Neo-Aramaic.<sup>23</sup> Nouns and prepositional pronouns are inflected through a set of suffixal indexes that attach to non-verbal hosts, traditionally termed ‘possessive’ or pronominal suffixes. The L-suffixes can also be added to a non-verbal host, namely the existential marker, to express predicative possession. Neo-Aramaic varieties also have sets of often enclitic post-predicate copulas with a pronominal basis<sup>24</sup> but closely interacting with the verb *hwy* ‘be’ in the predication of non-verbal elements. Originally nominal forms of the verb such as the verbal adjective (*q̄ṭila* ‘killed’) and infinitive (*q̄ṭala* ‘killing’) can occur in most of these constructions and have grammaticalized into new, compound verbal constructions.

### 2.2.1 *Nominal Inflection*

#### 2.2.1.1 Gender and Number

Nouns are generally declined according to number (singular or plural) and gender (masculine or feminine), as illustrated below for Ṭuroyo and J. ‘Amedia representing Central and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic, respectively.<sup>25</sup> Nouns are sometimes also inflected for adnominal possession (see below) and definiteness. Prefixal definite articles occur at least in Central Neo-Aramaic, e.g. *ú-ḥmoro* ‘the ass’, and some NENA dialects may have similar determiners.

#### 2.2.1.2 Pronominal Suffixes

Pronominal suffixes typically indicate possessor complements of noun phrases (e.g. *bab-i* ‘my father’) as well as the complement of prepositional phrases. Their forms are considerably diverse both in Neo-Aramaic at large and within dialect groups. Table 6 below displays illustrative examples.

The two primary prepositions *l-* ‘to, for; on’ and *b-* ‘in, at; with; through’ that consist of only a single consonant are generally considered prefixal. Prefixal

23 See the previous section for the verbal person markers. This is a major morphological typological difference between Eastern Neo-Aramaic and its Western Neo-Aramaic kin (e.g. Arnold 1990) as well as its Semitic relatives, where prefixal person markers do occur.

24 Post-predicate copulas are an areal phenomenon (Haig 2001, 2014) and the pronominal basis is shared with Mesopotamian *q̄altu*-Arabic varieties (Retsö 1987). In some NENA varieties especially in NW Iraq, however, the copula typically precedes the predicate.

25 What other languages mark through case declension is expressed through prepositions in Aramaic (see § 2.3.2.1).

TABLE 4 Declension of nouns and adjectives in ʤuroyo (Midyat)

	<i>ħmor-</i> ‘ass’	<i>ħmar-</i> ‘jenny ass’	<i>ħəwor-</i> ‘white’	
	MASCULINE	FEMININE	MASCULINE	FEMININE
SG	<i>ħmor-o</i>	<i>ħmar-to</i>	<i>ħəwor-o</i>	<i>ħəwar-to</i>
PL	<i>ħmor-e</i>	<i>ħmar-yo<sub>to</sub></i>	<i>ħəwor-e</i>	<i>ħəwor-e</i>

TABLE 5 Declension of nouns and adjectives in NENA (J. ‘Amedia’)

	<i>xmar-</i> ‘ass’	<i>xmar-</i> ‘jenny ass’	<i>xwar-</i> ‘white’	
	MASCULINE	FEMININE	MASCULINE	FEMININE
SG	<i>xmar-a</i>	<i>xmar-ta</i>	<i>xwar-a</i>	<i>xwar-ta</i>
PL	<i>xmar-e</i>	<i>xmar-yata</i>	<i>xwar-e</i>	<i>xwar-e</i>

TABLE 6 Inflection of nouns and prepositions in Neo-Aramaic

	ʤuroyo (Miden, SE Turkey)			NENA (J. ‘Amedia, NW Iraq)		
	<i>baba</i> ‘father’	<i>l-</i> ‘to’	<i>b-</i> ‘in; at’	<i>baba</i> ‘father’	<i>l-</i> ‘to’	<i>b-</i> ‘in; at’
1SG	<i>bab-i</i>	<i>el-i</i>	<i>eb-i</i>	<i>bab-i</i>	<i>ʔall-i</i>	<i>ʔabb-i</i>
PL	<i>bab-an</i>	<i>el-an</i>	<i>eb-an</i>	<i>bab-an</i>	<i>ʔall-an</i>	<i>ʔabb-an</i>
2MS	<i>bab-ux</i>	<i>el-ux</i>	<i>eb-ux</i>	<i>bab-ox</i>	<i>ʔall-ox</i>	<i>ʔabb-ox</i>
FS	<i>bab-ax</i>	<i>el-ax</i>	<i>eb-ax</i>	<i>bab-ax</i>	<i>ʔall-ax</i>	<i>ʔabb-ax</i>
PL	<i>bab-ayxu</i>	<i>al-xu</i>	<i>ap-xu</i>	<i>bab-oxun</i>	<i>ʔall-oxun</i>	<i>ʔabb-oxun</i>
3MS	<i>bab-e</i>	<i>el-e</i>	<i>eb-e</i>	<i>bab-e</i>	<i>ʔall-e</i>	<i>ʔabb-e</i>
FS	<i>bab-a</i>	<i>el-a</i>	<i>eb-a</i>	<i>bab-a</i>	<i>ʔall-a</i>	<i>ʔabb-a</i>
PL	<i>bab-ayye</i>	<i>al-le</i>	<i>ap-pe</i>	<i>bab-ohun</i>	<i>ʔall-ohun</i>	<i>ʔabb-ohun</i>

prepositions can be augmented with an inserted vowel in consonantal clusters either after the preposition or before it, giving rise to allomorphs like *ʔl-* and *ʔb-* in varieties of NENA and *el-* and *eb-* in for example ʤuroyo. These prepositions are referred to with their allomorph in parenthesis, e.g. (*ʔl*)/*l-* or (*e*)/*l-*.<sup>26</sup>

26 Historical *\*l-* ‘to, for’ and *\*al-* ‘upon’ merged in *ʔl-* in most NENA dialects. The initial /ə/

The reduplicated allomorph *lal-* and dialectal variants thereof is found in some NENA dialects exclusively for pronouns.

There are intransitive verbs that specifically take a prepositional complement, such as (*ʔal*)- or (*ʔab*)-, in all Neo-Aramaic languages. The preposition is not always fixed, even within a single dialect. In J. Zakho, for example, a verb can variably combine with another preposition, compare (1a–b) below, without a noticeable semantic difference. Such complements can convey a less affected object, i.e. a target, goal or source.

- (1) **J. Zakho** (NW Iraq; Cohen 2012, 159–160)

a. *rʔəš-la*      *ʔall-a*    *ʔəstāz-a*  
 feel<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub> to-3FS master-her  
 ‘Her master noticed **her**.’

b. *rʔəš-le*      *ʔabb-i*  
 feel<sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub> at-1SG  
 ‘He noticed **me**.’

Similarly, the recipient or addressee of ditransitive verbs will generally be marked through prepositions. The addressee of the verb *mr* ‘say, tell’, for example, is typically prepositional in Aramaic, for example:

- (2) **Ṭuroyo** (Miden, SE Turkey; Ritter 1967–1971, 81/16)

*ʔat-tarʔone*      *mər-re*      *l-ú-malko*  
 the-doorkeepers say<sub>PFV-A:3PL</sub> DAT-the-king:MS  
 ‘The doorkeepers said **to the king**.’

- (3) **C. Ashitha** (SE Turkey; Borghero 2006, 372)

*mər-ri*      *ʔall-a*  
 say<sub>PFV-A:1SG</sub> DAT-3FS  
 ‘I told **her**.’

The respective preposition that marks such recipients will vary significantly across as well as within dialects, including

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could have arisen through an originally prosthetic vowel (e.g. *\*əl-malkā* for /l-malkā/), unless the *-l-*bases represent a homonymous preposition that goes back to *\*əl(ay)-* ‘to(ward)’, which was lost in Syriac, but survived in other Aramaic languages (Jastrow 1903, 66a).

(ʾəl)l-	e.g. C. Ashitha (SE Turkey; Borghero 2006, 372)
(ʾəb)b-, biyy- <sup>27</sup>	C. Lewen (SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 112.37).
ʔ(l)a-	C. Jilu (SE Turkey; Fox 1997, 47)
ta- (ʔal- ~ ʔat-)	J. Dohok (NW Iraq; Molin 2021)
ba(q)-	J. Arbel (NE Iraq; Khan 1999, 119)
qa(d/t)-	C. Sardarid (NW Iran; Younansardaroud 2001)

### 2.2.2 Unmarked vs. Prepositional Pronouns

There is an independent set of unmarked pronouns that functions similarly to nouns, but neither inflects nor takes prepositions, alongside demonstrative pronouns.

The third person pronouns are part of a larger system of demonstratives, for example J. ʾAmedia (NW Iraq; Greenblatt 2011, 83)

	PROXIMAL	MEDIAL	DISTAL	ABSENT
ms.	ʾayya	ʾəwaha	ʾəwaʾha	ʾo
fs.	ʾayya	ʾəyaha	ʾəyaʾha	ʾe
pl.	ʾanna	ʾənaha	ʾənaʾha	ʾan

All demonstratives as such can serve as third person pronouns. These demonstratives can also be prepositional, e.g. NENA *əl-d-ö* ‘to that one, to him’ (J. Urmi, NW Iran; Khan 2008b, 193), ʦuroyo *l-āwo* ‘to that one, to him’.

The forms of independent personal pronouns differ considerably across dialects. An illustrative paradigm can be found in Tables 8 and 9 at the end of this chapter. If gender distinction occurs, independent personal pronouns are distinguished by gender only in the third person singular and sometimes also the second person singular, but never in the plural, e.g. C. Marga (SE Turkey)

	THIRD	SECOND	FIRST
ms.	ʾawa	ʾayət	ʾana
fs.	ʾaya	ʾayat	ʾana
pl.	ʾani	ʾaxnutən	ʾaxni

Unlike nouns, this series of independent person markers generally does not complement prepositions<sup>28</sup> and is thus morphologically unmarked for case, i.e.

27 For example in C. Lewen (SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 112.37).

28 The exception being the ʦuroyo dialect of Midyat, where personal pronouns parallel demonstratives, see Chapter 5.

non-prepositional.<sup>29</sup> They are used to express a discourse-salient pronominal argument with little or no integration in the clause and are often combined with focus markers, e.g. ʤuroyo *óno-ste*, NENA *ʔána-ži* ‘Even, also I / me too’.<sup>30</sup>

Since the unmarked personal pronouns generally cannot complement prepositions, speakers resort to the inflection of prepositions themselves through pronominal suffixes, thus respectively ʤuroyo (rural) *éli-ste*, NENA *ʔalli-ži* ‘Even, to I / me too’.

There are apparent parallels between independent person markers based on the preposition *l-* and the verbal L-suffixes. They are not always clearly distinguishable. The two are diachronically related and share certain functional properties that are sometimes even overlapping or complementary so that prepositional pronouns can become dependent and treated like verbal person markers such as the L-suffixes.<sup>31</sup> The L-suffixes are also analyzable as consisting of *l-* with attached possessive suffixes, e.g. 1sg. *-l-i*, 1pl. *-l-an*. Moreover, dialects can also have a set of ‘B-suffixes’ corresponding at least historically to the preposition *b-*.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, the L-suffixes have a grammatical status distinct from independent prepositional pronouns and should not be understood synchronically as prepositional. All else being equal, the L-suffixes are fully grammaticalized verbal person markers and are properly an integrated part of the verbal form itself, functionally equivalent to the E-suffixes. The independent prepositional pronouns, by contrast, are equivalent to the unmarked independent set, being used more like full nominals.<sup>33</sup>

### 2.2.3 Possession

Possession can be expressed adnominally (attached to the possessee) or predicatively (independent of the possessee). Generally, an annexing particle *d* links two nominals in adnominal possession and may be inflected for person.<sup>34</sup> The set of L-suffixes (besides another similar set of B-suffixes) is combined with existential particles or the verb *hwy* ‘be’ to express predicative possession.

29 See Subsection 2.3.2.1. on the notion of case in the context of Neo-Aramaic.

30 See Subsection 2.3.1.2. on pragmatic functions.

31 See § 3.1.2.2., § 3.3.2.1., § 4.2.2.4., § 4.3.2.1.

32 See § 2.2.3.2.

33 Where prepositional pronouns and L-suffixes are conflated or where originally independent prepositional pronouns give rise to the innovation of new dependent person markers, this will be indicated and such person markers will be treated as another set of dependent person forms. See § 3.1.2.2.

34 Gutman (2018) offers an overview of nominal annexation in NENA.

## 2.2.3.1 Adnominal Possession: ‘X of Y’

Nouns can be combined with other nouns in a possessor-possessee annexation construction, much like a genitive case in genitive relationships. In the default expression of nominal annexation the linker *d* and its dialectal variants attaches either to the possessee, e.g. NENA (J. ‘Amedia) *šəmm-əd babi* ‘the name of my father’, or to the possessor, e.g. Turoyo *ú-əšmo d-ú-babayđi* ‘the name of my father’, where *u-* is the definite article. The linker *d* may also be augmented and degrammatized<sup>35</sup> into the particle *dəd*, e.g. *xora dəd babi* ‘a friend of my father’. Similarly, this linker may be inflected through the ‘possessive’/pronominal suffixes, often with augmentation, to construct independent possessive pronouns, e.g. J. ‘Amedia *did-i* ‘mine’, *d-eni* ‘ours’, Turoyo *did-i*, *did-an* respectively. Such independent possessive pronouns can also feature in the annexation construction instead of or in combination with the dependent counterparts, e.g. J. ‘Amedia *lišana d-eni* ‘our language’, *xmar-əd did-i* ‘my donkey’, *bron-e did-e* ‘his own son’ (Greenblatt 2011, 80–81). Finally, truncated nominal forms can occur with elision of the final vowel, e.g. *gora* ‘husband’ → *gor-’amtı* ‘the husband of my aunt’ (Greenblatt 2011, 71–75), reminiscent of the construct state (Gutman 2018).

## 2.2.3.2 Predicative Possession: ‘X has Y’

Predicative possession is based on existential clauses introduced by the existential marker *’ıt-* ‘there is/are’ and dialectal variants thereof. This particle is marked for negation by the negator *la-*, e.g. *la-yıt ~ l-ıt-* ‘there is/are not’, and for past tense by *-wa*, e.g. *’ıt-wa* ‘there was/were’. Together with L-suffixes they express predicative possession akin to English *have*, e.g. Turoyo *ono kət-li tre na’ıme* ‘I have two children’. (4) and (5) below show parts of the paradigms in Turoyo and J. ‘Amedia. As seen in example (4), the existential predicate may receive the TAM-marker *k-*, similarly to verbs. The verb *hwı* stands in a suppletive relation to these existential markers to express other TAM categories such as the future tense and subjunctive.

## (4) Turoyo (SE Turkey, rural)

		PRESENT	PAST	NEGATIVE	SBJV
		<i>kit(o)</i>	<i>kət-wa</i>	<i>layt(o)</i>	
1sg.	<i>ono</i>	<i>kət-li</i>	<i>kát-way-li</i>	<i>lat-li</i>	<i>howe-li</i>
3sg.	<i>hiye</i>	<i>kət-le</i>	<i>kát-way-le</i>	<i>lat-le</i>	<i>howe-le</i>
3pl.	<i>hənnək</i>	<i>kət-te</i>	<i>kát-wa-lle</i>	<i>lat-te</i>	<i>howa-lle</i>

35 I owe this insight to a discussion with G. Khan.

## (5) NENA (J. ‘Amedia NW Iraq; Greenblatt 2011)

	PRESENT	PAST	NEGATIVE	SBJV
	<i>’it(ən)</i>	<i>’ət-wa</i>	<i>lit(ən)</i>	
1sg.	<i>’ana ’ət-li</i>	<i>’ət-wa-li</i>	<i>lət-li</i>	<i>hawe-li</i>
3sg.	<i>’awa ’ət-le</i>	<i>’ət-wa-le</i>	<i>lət-le</i>	<i>hawe-le</i>
3pl.	<i>’ani ’ət-lu</i>	<i>’ət-wa-lu</i>	<i>lət-lu</i>	<i>hawe-lu</i>

The L-suffixes are obligatory to cross-reference the possessor. Indeed, the co-referential nominal is never prepositional in NENA, but optionally in Ṭuroyo.<sup>36</sup> Compare for example *ú-zlām-ano* in (6a) with *l-ú-malk-ano* ‘belonging to the king’ in (6b) below:

## (6) Ṭuroyo (‘Iwardo, Ritter 1967–1971: 58/3, 57/12)

- a. *ú-zlām-ano kət-way-le arb’i kalotē*  
 the-man-DEM:MS EXST-PST-him forty daughter-in-law:PL  
 ‘This man had forty daughters-in-law.’
- b. *ma kət-le l-ú-malk-ano*  
 Q EXST-him to-the-king-DEM:MS  
 ‘What does the king have?’

Finally, dialects can have similar constructions combined with B-suffixes related to the preposition *b-* ‘in; at’. This can be used to express containment or having something inside, but are also equivalent to English *can* followed by the subjunctive, e.g.

- c. *mə ki-be d-soyəm-Ø*  
 what EXST-in.him SBJV-do<sub>1PFV-3MS</sub>  
 ‘What can he do?’ (see Ritter 1967–1971:33–37).

#### 2.2.4 Nouns as Verbs and Verbs as Nouns: Non-verbal Clauses and Nominal Forms of the Verb

As we turn to compound verbal constructions based on nominal forms of the verb such as the resultative participle (*qṭila*) and the infinitive (*qṭala*) or agent noun (*qaṭola*), we enter a space where the categorical distinction between (pro)nouns and verbs becomes ‘fuzzy’ in Neo-Aramaic.

<sup>36</sup> See further Noorlander (2021) for a comparative study.

The term ‘copula’, for instance, should not be mistaken for a copula verb ‘be’ in the strict sense such as found in Indo-European languages. In some dialects such as C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey), it is still clearly more pronominal, while in other dialects such as Trans-Zab Jewish varieties it is more verbal (Khan 2012). The enclitic copula consists of pronominal elements and can denote syntactic roles like the E-suffixes and L-suffixes; for instance, in ditransitive constructions<sup>37</sup> as well as verbal constructions with a nominal basis. This notwithstanding, such pronominal copulas do have verbal properties and sometimes even follow verb-like inflection, especially in the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA. They stand in a suppletive relation to the verb *hwy* ‘be’ in the expression of an indicative affirmative state of affairs in the present tense and have a negative and past counterpart, similarly to verbs. There generally is also a deictic or presentative counterpart alongside a special form of the copula used in relative clauses.

#### 2.2.4.1 Pronouns as Copulas

Varieties of deictic elements and pronominal elements can be used to express the copula (cf. Diessel 1999) in NENA, ʒuroyo and Mlaḥsó. Generally, the copula cliticizes to the predicate, i.e. attaches to it without modifying the stress, in the expression of the realis, non-negated present, unless it attaches to another constituent for pragmatic purposes. These unmarked dependent person markers closely correlate with independent pronouns, e.g. ʒuroyo *hat áyko-hat* ‘Where are you—you?’, *ono hárke-no* ‘I—I am here’. Adjectives agree with their subject for number in predication and in the singular only also for gender.

It is common for NENA dialects to have a presentative or deictic set of copulas directing the attention to an observed state of affairs, i.e. more or less ‘Look/I see here he is’. This deictic copula usually based on *ho(l)-*, *du-* or *k(al)-* as well as the negative copula with initial negator *l-* are independent and precede the verbal element, e.g. ʒuroyo *kalí harke* ‘Look! I am here’, *latyo harke* ‘I am not here’. The past counterpart of the copula is expressed via an additional set usually containing *-wa* like verbal and predicative possessor constructions, e.g. ʒuroyo *hárke-wayno* ‘I was here’. The form and usage of these copulas varies greatly across dialects (Khan 2012, 32).<sup>38</sup> For example:

37 See Subsection 5.2.1.2. for examples in ʒuroyo.

38 Examples of complete paradigms of the enclitic copula may be found in the overview at the end of this chapter and in § 3.1.3.3. and § 4.1.2.1. for respective dialect subgroups.

(7) **Ṭuroyo** (rural, SE Turkey)

	PRESENT	PAST	NEGATIVE	DEICTIC	RELATIVE
1sg.	<i>-no</i>	<i>-wayno</i>	<i>latno</i>	<i>kalí</i>	<i>d-kətno</i>
3sg.	<i>-yo</i>	<i>-wa</i>	<i>latyo</i>	<i>kalé</i>	<i>d-kətyo</i>
3pl.	<i>-ne</i>	<i>-wayne</i>	<i>latne</i>	<i>kalón</i>	<i>d-kətne</i>

(8) **NENA** (C. Marga, SE Turkey)

	PRESENT	PAST	NEGATIVE	DEICTIC	RELATIVE
1sg.	<i>-wən</i>	<i>-wənwə</i>	<i>lun</i>	<i>wun</i> <sup>39</sup>	<i>ʾadd-iwən</i>
3ms.	<i>-ile</i>	<i>-wewə</i>	<i>lele</i>	<i>hole</i>	<i>ʾadd-ile</i>
3pl.	<i>-ilay</i>	<i>-wiwə</i>	<i>lelay</i>	<i>holay</i>	<i>ʾadd-ilay</i>

The relationship between the copula and other resembling person markers is somewhat ambiguous. The third person markers that betray an /l/-segment in NENA are noteworthy, e.g. 3ms. *-ile*, and, for all practical purposes, are not considered another instance of L-suffixes. This does not mean that speakers always make a sharp distinction between copula forms like *ʾi-le* and L-suffixes like *-le*, and a sharp distinction between the first/second person forms of the copula and the E-suffixes cannot always be maintained either (see § 3.4. and § 4.3.2.); the latter may even be identical in Ṭuroyo, e.g. 1sg. *-no* (copula) is identical to 1sg. *-no* (E-set).

The verb *hwy* ‘be’ is a suppletive pendant to these forms in other TAM contexts such as the subjunctive and future, e.g. Ṭuroyo *kt-owe-no harke* ‘I<sub>M</sub> will be here’.

## 2.2.4.2 Nouns and Adjectives as (Compound) Verbs

The resultative participle is a verbal adjective inflected for number and only in the singular also for gender like other adjectives. The paradigm for stem I verbs is as follows:

(9) **Resultative participle**<sup>40</sup>

ms.	<i>qṭil-a</i>	(~ <i>qəṭl-a</i> )	‘killed’
fs.	<i>qṭəl-ta</i>	(~ <i>qṭəl-ta</i> )	
p.l.	<i>qṭil-e</i>	(~ <i>qəṭl-e</i> )	

39 *hun* < \**ho-wun*.

40 The variant forms in parentheses are mainly found in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, on which see Chapter 3.

The resultative participle can be combined with the copula to form an analytical perfect or resultative construction, as exemplified for C. Karamlesh (NW Iraq) below. Generally, the final vowels of the participle /a/ and /e/ and initial vowel of the copula /i/ undergo contraction to /e/, e.g. C. Karamlesh

3ms.	<i>šqil-ele</i>	‘He has taken’	<	*šqila ile
	<i>šqil-ewa</i>	‘He had taken’	<	*šqila iwa

The perfect is used for transitive and intransitive verbs alike with the expression of grammatical agreement through the copula and participle:<sup>41</sup>

(10) C. Karamlesh (NW Iraq, Borghero 2008, 80–81)

a.	PRESENT AFFIRMATIVE			
	INTRANSITIVE		TRANSITIVE	
3ms.	<i>zíl-elə</i>	‘He has gone’	<i>šqíl-elə</i>	‘He has taken’
3fs.	<i>zál-t-ela</i>	‘She has gone’	<i>šqált-ela</i>	‘She has taken’
1pl.	<i>zíl-ewax</i>	‘We have gone’	<i>šqíl-ewax</i>	‘We have taken’

The resultative participle can also combine with the deictic copula, which always precedes it:

b.	DEICTIC			
3ms.	<i>k-ilə zila</i>	‘He has gone’	<i>k-ilə šqila</i>	‘He has taken’
3fs.	<i>k-ila zəлта</i>	‘She has gone’	<i>k-ila šqəлта</i>	‘She has taken’
1pl.	<i>k-iwax zile</i>	‘We have gone’	<i>k-iwax šqile</i>	‘We have taken’

For past tense reference, the past copula is used, for example:

c.	PAST	
3ms.	<i>šqil-ewa</i>	‘He had taken’
3fs.	<i>šqált-ewa</i>	‘She had taken’
1pl.	<i>šqil-ewaxwa</i>	‘We had taken’

The verb *hwy* ‘be’ complements the enclitic copula to form a perfect in various (dialect-dependent) moods and tenses such as the subjunctive or past irrealis.

Apart from the perfect, an uninflectable agent noun or infinitive, generally together with the preposition *b-* ‘in (the process of)’ e.g. *bə-dmaxa* ‘in-sleeping’,

<sup>41</sup> Devianting agreement patterns are discussed in § 3.4. and § 4.1.4.

but also without, e.g. *dmaxa* ‘taking’, may be used to form a progressive, generally by a similar type of construction involving a copula.

(11) C. Marga (SE Turkey)

	BASIC	DEICTIC	
PROGRESSIVE	<i>dmáx-ele</i>	<i>hole dmaxa</i>	‘He is sleeping’
PERFECT	<i>dmáx-ele</i>	<i>hole dmixa</i>	‘He has slept, is asleep’

Not all dialects have fully grammaticalized such constructions, and the compound perfect and progressive are not necessarily both found in a given dialect, although they often do occur together (Khan 2007d). In C. Karamlesh (Borghero 2008), for example, the compound progressive is marginal and the copula generally combines with the indicative *qaṭal-*, e.g.

PROGRESSIVE	<i>k</i>	<i>-ila</i>	<i>k-</i>	<i>šaql-a</i>	‘She is taking’
	DEIX	-COP.3FS	IND	take <sub>PFV-3FS</sub>	
PERFECT	<i>k</i>	<i>-ila</i>		<i>šqal-ta</i>	‘She has taken’
	DEIX	-COP.3FS		taken-FS	

Several dialects, especially in NW Iraq, employ a special preverbal TAM-marker *lā* alongside *nā*, which is presumably a fossilized 3fs. form of the copula *ila* ‘It<sub>F</sub> is’ (Khan 2007d), before *qaṭal-* and/or before *qṭil-*, e.g. J. Dobe (NE Iraq Mutzafi 2004b, 260)

PROGRESSIVE	<i>nā</i>	<i>palax-∅</i>	‘He is opening’
PERFECT	<i>nā</i>	<i>plax-le</i>	‘He has opened’

### 2.2.5 *Objects on ‘Noun’ Verbs*

The marking of pronominal objects, if it occurs in the relevant dialect, is generally based on prepositions or on adnominal pronominal suffixes in the compound verbal forms expressing the perfect or progressive.<sup>42</sup> The following major types of constructions are found among the NENA dialects:<sup>43</sup>

42 See Sections 3.4. and 3.5.3 on the alignment of arguments in these compound verbal constructions in Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, and Section 4.2. and 4.3.2. on their relationship to passive and transitive clauses in other NENA varieties.

43 Cf. Kapeliuk (2008). See Talay (2008, 318–323) for an overview of the Khabur valley dialects. These constructions have not undergone grammaticalization as such in Central Neo-Aramaic.

- a) an independent or dependent ‘possessive’ set;
- b) an independent or dependent prepositional set.

Object indexes in the compound verbal forms based on *q̄tala* and *q̄tila* thus differ from those found with *q̄taṭal-* and *q̄ṭil-*, largely because of their ultimately nominal origin in the modern Aramaic system.

#### 2.2.5.1 ‘Possessive’ Person Markers

The originally nominal form of the verb takes object indexes from the otherwise adnominal set that denotes the possessor, cf. *bab-əḥ* ‘his father’ with *šqil-əḥ* ‘taken him’ below. The object is thus marked by the ‘possessive’ suffixes typical of nouns, for example:

#### (12) C. *Baghdeda* (Qaraqosh, NW Iraq; Khan 2002a, 363)

a. *k-ina*      *šqil-ə*  
 DEIX-3PL taken-PL  
 ‘They have taken.’ (lit. They are taken)

b. *k-ina*      *šqil-əḥ*  
 DEIX-3PL taken-3MS  
 ‘They have taken **him**.’ (lit. They are taken his)

The combination with full nominal objects in this construction type can also be based of adnominal possession. The object NP is marked by the genitive linker *-əd* typical of adnominal possessors in the annexation of noun phrases (Khan 2002a, 367–368):

c. *k-ilə*      *xil-əd*      *xabušə*  
 DEIX-3MS eaten-LK apples  
 ‘He has eaten apples.’ (lit. He is eaten-of apples)

This also applies to pronominal objects in Jewish Zakho (Cohen 2012, 142–143). The latter are marked by means of the independent possessive pronouns based on *did-*, an augmented form of the linker *-əd*, to which ‘possessive’ suffixes are added, e.g.

#### (13) J. *Zakho* (NW Iraq; Cohen 2012, 142–143)

*le-wən*      *q̄ṭil-a*      *dīd-a*  
 NEG-COP.1MS killed-MS POSS-her  
 ‘I<sub>M</sub> have not killed **her**.’ (lit. I am not killed hers)

A copula may also be cliticized to this form depending on the dialect, e.g. C. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2016<sub>1</sub>:387) *šqólta-vat* ‘You<sub>FS</sub> have taken’, *šqólta-u-vat* ‘You<sub>FS</sub> have taken **him**’ (lit. You<sub>FS</sub> are taken **his**). The same holds for the compound progressive if it exists, but the original verbal noun generally does not inflect for agreement with its subject.

#### 2.2.5.2 Prepositional Pronominal Objects

Prepositional person markers are based on the preposition (*ʿal*)/- in the majority of NENA dialects, but other prepositions such as (*ʿab*)/- also occur, especially in SE Turkey. The prepositional pronominal objects undergo increasingly deeper integration within the verbal form, e.g.

##### (14) C. Marga (SE Turkey)

*ho-li gríš -əll-ux*

DEIX-1SG pulled:MS -OBJ-2MS

‘I have pulled **you<sub>MS</sub>**.’ (lit. Look-me pulled to-you)

##### (15) C. ʦal (SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 312.106)

*ho-lay qtil -əbb-ay*

DEIX-3PL killed:MS -OBJ-3PL

‘They killed **them**.’ (lit. Look-them killed at-them)

The *əll*-series or *əbb*-series are regularly cliticized before the enclitic copula, e.g.

##### (16) C. Ashitha (SE Turkey; Borghero 2006, 195, 198)

*qtil -əll-ax -iwin*

killed:MS -OBJ-2FS -COP.1MS

‘I have pulled **you**.’ (lit. I am killed to-you)

##### (17) C. Tkhuma (Mazra, SE Turkey; Talay 2008, 321)

*gríš -əbb-e -le*

pulled:MS -OBJ-3MS -COP.3MS

‘He has pulled **him**.’ (lit. He is pulled at-him)

### 2.3 Defining and Identifying the Alignment of Who Did What to Whom

Having concluded the description of the main inflectional morphology of Neo-Aramaic, this section proceeds to examine its clause structure in a typological perspective and introduces the theoretical preliminaries necessary for the more detailed dialectal studies in subsequent chapters.

Alignment, here, is considered first and foremost a property of constructions and not of a language as a whole (Comrie 1989, 114).<sup>44</sup> Constructions are viewed as integrated wholes and independent units of grammatical meaning in the broadest and most common sense as form-meaning combinations at all possible levels of abstraction, ranging from word formation patterns to contextual pragmatic inferences of word order.<sup>45</sup> In the application of the models of Comrie (1989) and Andrews (2007), the following five major distinctions will be made in clause structure. They will be explained in the following subsections.

- (1) **grammatical relations:** subject, object;
- (2) **grammatical functions** or **syntactic roles:** S, A, P, T, R, OBL;
- (3) **pragmatic functions:** topic, comment, focus, others;
- (4) **semantic roles:** agent, patient, theme, recipient, experiencer etc.;
- (5) **grammatical case morphology:** nominative, accusative, dative, ergative, etc.;
- (6) **morphological properties** (e.g. affixes) vs. **syntactic behavioral properties** (e.g. relativization);
- (7) **nominal marking** (case, adpositions) vs. **verbal person marking** (agreement);
- (8) **independent** vs. **dependent person markers** (pronouns).

The typological approach followed in this book allows for different alignment types to be manifested at the same time from different perspectives. Alignment may not necessarily show a single, uniform and rigid all-encompassing pattern. Rather it is specific to constructions in a particular language and can come across as chaotic, unstable and variable. Groupings or alignment patterns can be identified for different properties and from different perspectives, none of which is assumed to be a superficial manifestation of another deeper

44 Cf. Croft (2001, 168), Haig (2008).

45 See *inter alia* Goldberg (1995, 2001), Croft (2001), Booij (2010, 2013).

type. Clause structure is thus not considered as an autonomous, complete and closed sentence-generating system, but a part of a larger total process of pairing form and meaning. Such an approach will inevitably lead to conclusions on Neo-Aramaic alignment different from other theoretical viewpoints (e.g. generative) found in the literature. This difference already begins with the definition of core grammatical functions (not be to confused with so-called *theta-roles*).

Andrews (2007) differentiates between grammatical functions and grammatical relations. Grammatical relations such as 'subject' and 'object' pertain to higher levels of abstraction and rule-based principles of grammar. The 'subject' is a structural, primitive ingredient that accumulates several primary semantic, pragmatic, morphological and syntactic behavioral properties. The grammatical functions such as S, A and P can be considered a 'subject', when the significant grammatical processes of sentence structure specifically apply to them. Such more abstract properties are commonly known as syntactic (or more specifically behavior-and-control) properties as opposed to their morphological building blocks (or more specifically coding properties).

In the examination of shared and unshared properties, grammatical functions can align or not align with each other. Typologists discern several distinct types of morphological alignment such as nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive, where shared coding properties align specific arguments with s. In syntactic alignment, the shared syntactic behavioral properties may also point to a particular grouping of A or P with s.

### 2.3.1 *Arguments in the Clause and Their Core Functions*

As will be explained below, the core grammatical functions labelled s, A and P/O as well as T and R, are, respectively, reminiscent of (but not necessarily identical to) the notion '(S)ubject' (or '(O)bject') and the semantic roles '(A)gent', '(P)atient', '(T)heme' and '(R)ecipient'. These labels represent arguments of similar semantics and morphosyntax in the broad sense rather than the narrow sense. They are adapted to cover language-specific conventional marking of arguments beyond the primary clauses that instantiate them. The core functions A and P are defined by both their semantic and constructional prototypes, so that they, by definition, occur in a primary transitive construction (such as *The cat killed the mouse*). Thus, as will be explained, they are not to be conflated with the agent and patient of a passive voice construction.

As we will see, these grammatical functions, also known as syntactic roles, can also be assigned pragmatic functions such as topic and comment. Such discourse pragmatics deals with certain basic distinctions speakers make in

the information flow and express what they consider more or less important to the conversation.

### 2.3.1.1 Grammatical Functions: S, A, P, T and R

Alignment typology presupposes a major classification of verbs in terms of basic combinability with slots to be filled by (pro)nominals, called *arguments*, representing the main participants entailed by the clause. Verbal constructions generally comprise up to three core arguments and are classified accordingly as *intransitive*, involving one argument, and *transitive*, involving two or more. The transitive is further divided into *monotransitive* and *ditransitive* constructions. Monotransitive verbs such as ‘break’ involve one argument, the object, in addition to the subject, typically the patient affected by an agent. Ditransitive verbs such as ‘give’ involve two additional arguments, one generally called ‘recipient’ representing the goal, receiver or addressee and the other generally called the ‘theme’ representing the gift.

Typologists generally presuppose a qualitative core of primary transitive verbs. Primary transitive verbs express physical causation such as ‘break’ and ‘kill’, i.e. those verbs where the agent acts in such a way that the patient is most obviously and definitively affected (Tsunoda 1985, 387). Following Comrie (1978; 1984) and Andrews (2007), alignment patterns will be described by means of the grammatical functions S, A and P (or O).<sup>46</sup> (9) offers a simple definition in terms of semantic properties and primary syntactic functions following Comrie (1984).

#### (9) Definitions of S, A and P (following Comrie 1984)

- S represents “the single argument of an intransitive predicate” (Comrie 1989, 110), such as *barti* ‘my daughter’ in (11a) below, and this argument is therefore by definition its *subject*;
- A stands for the *agent*, the actor (cf. Latin *agens* ‘one who acts’) in a primary transitive construction, such as the subject *ú-gawrano* ‘this man’ of the transitive verb ‘kill’ in (11b) below;
- P is the label for the *patient*, the undergoing (cf. Latin *patiens* ‘one who undergoes’) or affected participant in a primary transitive construction, such as the object *barti* of ‘kill’ in (11b).

<sup>46</sup> S, A and P are similar, but not necessarily equivalent to s, A and O in Dixon (1994) and Bickel (2011), see Haspelmath (2011a). Compare also x, y and z in Lazard (1994, 1998) and A for actor and U for undergoer in Foley and Van Valin (1984).

Subsequent, similar approaches also include accordingly R<sup>47</sup> for the most recipient-like argument and T for the most theme-like argument in ditransitive constructions:<sup>48</sup>

(10) **Definitions of T and R**

**T** stands for ‘theme’, the argument that is most like the entity that is transferred from one entity or location to another in a ditransitive construction, such as *u-ktowo* ‘the book’ in (11c) below;

**R** stands for ‘recipient’, the argument that is most like the receiver or ultimate goal of the transfer, such as *l-bart̄i* ‘to my daughter’ in (11c) below.

(11) **Ṭuroyo (SE Turkey)**

[S] [V -S]  
 a. *bart̄-i* *g-mayt* -o (intransitive)  
 daughter:FS-my FUT-die<sub>IPFV</sub> -3FS  
 SUBJECT  
 ‘My daughter will die.’

[A] [V -A]  
 b. *ú-gawr-ano* *g-qoṭəl* -∅  
 the-man-DEM:MSG FUT-kill<sub>IPFV</sub> -3MS  
 AGENT  
 [P]  
*bart̄-i* (monotransitive)  
 daughter:FS-my  
 PATIENT  
 ‘This man will kill my daughter.’

[A] [V -A] [T]  
 c. *ono* *gd-obe* -no *ú-ktowo*  
 I FUT-give<sub>IPFV</sub> -1MS DEF-book:MS  
 AGENT THEME  
 [R]  
*l-bart̄-i* (ditransitive)  
 to-daughter:FS-my  
 RECIPIENT  
 ‘I<sub>M</sub> will give the book to my daughter.’

47 The R corresponds with G for ‘goal’ in other functionalist approaches like Croft (1990, 102). Sometimes T is used for ‘target’ instead, corresponding with the R here.

48 See Croft (1990, 2001), Siewierska (2003), Andrews (2007), Haspelmath (2005a).

What is common to all Neo-Aramaic languages is the use of the E-series to encode both S and A and the L-series to encode P in alignment patterns completely based on *qaṭal-* in NENA or *qoṭal-* in Ṭuroyo (e.g. *ko-qūṭl-o-le* ‘She kills him’; see Section 2.1.).

Linguistically, it makes perfect sense to reduce the number of semantic roles to a few general grammatical functions, since languages tend to systematize the way they realize arguments (Andrews 2007). Strictly speaking, the A is defined according to what degree it is semantically like a typical agent and P to what extent it is semantically like a typical patient (or *unlike* a typical agent). Yet, somewhat confusingly, the terms ‘A’ and ‘P’ do not represent the merely semantic, participant roles of ‘agent’ and ‘patient’. A and P stand for primary syntactic functions defined by both their semantic role and grammatical function. In other words, agents and patients are typically associated with, but not necessarily conditioned by, specific morphological and behavioral properties (Comrie 1989, 111).

The core grammatical functions (S, A, P, T, R) are not presupposed to operate differently on a deep or surface level of the sentence in this approach. There are semantic prototypes associated with primary transitive actions that correlate with the conventionalized grammatical properties of such actions.<sup>49</sup> Without A and P, the construction is not considered transitive. This is not purely semantic. In Comrie’s view, for instance, there are no deep or logical arguments A and P that surface or lexicalize differently in, for example, passivization. Even though both the agent and patient are expressed in a passive construction like *The woman was hit by the man* represented in (12b) below, the core argument *the woman* is in fact considered to be the S of an intransitive construction, while *the man* introduced using a *by*-phrase is understood to be oblique (Comrie 1989, 114). This means that A and P occur only in (12a), but not in (12b).

- |         |                          |              |                      |           |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------|
|         | [A]                      | [V]          | [P]                  |           |
| (12) a. | <i>The man hit</i>       |              | <i>the woman.</i>    | (active)  |
|         | AGENT                    | TRANSITIVE   | PATIENT              |           |
|         |                          |              |                      |           |
|         | [S]                      | [V+PASS]     | [OBL]                |           |
| b.      | <i>The woman was hit</i> |              | <i>(by the man).</i> | (passive) |
|         | PATIENT                  | INTRANSITIVE | AGENT                |           |

49 See Haspelmath (2011a) for a comparison of Comrie’s approach with other approaches to alignment.

The patient in the P function of (12a) corresponds to the s function of a passive voice construction, while the agent, if expressed, in the A function corresponds to the oblique, i.e. non-core, argument. The term *oblique* argument, abbreviated OBL, will be used here in the same sense as Andrews (2007; cf. Keenan and Comrie 1977, 66) to refer to an argument specified by the verb, but expressed differently from the core grammatical functions S, A and P. This is different from adjuncts which are always considered oblique, but have a more adverbial function, such as *on Monday* in *The woman was hit on Monday*.

This might seem confusing to some readers at first glance, because, from a purely semantic role perspective, *the woman* would still be considered the patient and the oblique argument or prepositional phrase *by the man* expresses the agent. In this model of the functions of arguments, however, a passive construction like (12b) may offer insight into the treatment of s in the language in question or into the semantic identity of agents and patients in a language, but it is not considered a primary example of how a language treats A and P.

Conversely, the so-called *antipassive* is an intransitive construction where the agent is expressed like s, the patient is omitted or possibly expressed as OBL, and the verb may have a special marker (Comrie 1978, 361–362, Cooreman 1994, 50). An illustrative example is given below from Dyirbal, an Australian language. Like the passive, its functions and restrictions differ from language to language, but as a construction it is largely uniform. Although semantically transitive, it is morphosyntactically intransitive and therefore lacks an A and P. The A of the transitive clause in the Dyirbal example is treated similarly to the s of the verb in the antipassive construction in (13b). The antipassive as such is the mirror image of the passive in making the patient rather than the agent as less salient, and the activity more central or identifiable (e.g. Cooreman 1994).

(13) **Dyirbal** (Australia, North Queensland; Comrie 1978, 358, 360, 348, glossing slightly simplified, original source cited therein)

[P]	[A]	[V]	
a. <i>Balam wud<sup>ɔ</sup>u</i>	<i>baŋgul yaŋangu</i>	<i>d<sup>ɔ</sup>angay-n<sup>ɔ</sup>u</i>	(active)
fruit-ABS	man-ERG	eat-TENSE	
PATIENT	AGENT	TRANSITIVE	
‘The man eats fruit.’			

[S]	([OBL])	[V+ANTIP]	
b. <i>Bayi yaŋa</i>	<i>(bagum wud<sup>ɔ</sup>u-gu)</i>	<i>d<sup>ɔ</sup>angay-mari-n<sup>ɔ</sup>u</i>	(antipassive)
man-ABS	fruit-DAT	eat-REFL-TENSE	
AGENT	PATIENT	INTRANSITIVE	
‘The man eats (fruit).’			

Thus both passive and antipassive are semantically transitive, but typically morphosyntactically intransitive. The passive decreases the valency and downplays the agent to the periphery as omissible (A vs. OBL), while the patient becomes the subject of an intransitive construction (P vs. S). This operation is also commonly known as a type of *detransitivization*, since the passive comprises an intransitive valence pattern. The reverse is known as *transitivization*, where the valence increases and the verbal construction becomes a transitive valence pattern.

Naturally, languages may categorize verbs and systematize semantic roles differently. S, A and P are grammatical functions meant to be heuristic tools to describe, compare and capture language- as well as construction-specific morphosyntactic groupings of arguments that are expressed in a more or less systematic fashion. The same coding strategies of primary transitives are conventionalized differently from language to language for verbs denoting mental causation such as ‘frighten’ and mental states such as ‘see’ and ‘like’ (Croft 1993). These may be treated like primary transitives, even though strictly speaking A and P semantically do not express an agent and patient, respectively.

Similarly, languages differ to what degree certain properties relevant to the agent’s and patient’s involvement in the event are also conventionalized in the grammatical structure. Some languages have specific constructions to express events where the agent acts unintentionally, for example, differently from those where the agents acts intentionally.<sup>50</sup> Such unintentional interpretations, however, are generally contributed by the anticausative verb with an intransitive valence pattern typically denoting a spontaneous and, thus, uncontrolled event.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, in many cases, the intentionality is not directly relevant to the clause structure of a language (Andrews 2007; Fauconnier 2012, 94–100), even in English, for example *John broke his leg*, where the intentionality is ambiguous. Similarly, partial or complete affectedness of the patient can be grammatically significant in languages favoring an intransitive construction for the less affected patient,<sup>52</sup> but this is by no means a necessary requirement, cf. the transitive verb *hit* in English (Andrews 2007). As expected, we will also observe such phenomena in Neo-Aramaic languages, where not all verbs are compatible with the morphosyntax of primary transitive verbs.

Recently, Haude and Zúñiga (2016) argue that languages may have more than one basic transitive construction depending on discourse-pragmatic factors. Consequently, this makes it difficult to typify such alignment patterns.

50 See DeLancey (1984, 1987), Croft (1991, 168), Kittilä (2005), Fauconnier (2011b, 2012).

51 See Haspelmath (1993a), Kittilä (2005), Shibatani (2006), Fauconnier (2011b, 2012).

52 See Hopper and Thompson (1980), Tsunoda (1981, 1985), Dowty (1991), Testelec (1998).

Neo-Aramaic languages, as we will see, also make use of several transitive constructions that could be characterized as basic depending on various factors and thereby challenge the more traditional monolithic view of alignment patterns.<sup>53</sup>

In the end, transitive clauses, by definition, include A and P. When these are lacking, the clause is considered intransitive, so that one of the arguments is considered s-like and/or something else, i.e. OBL. Languages differ to what extent argument types are compatible with the syntactic functions A and P.

### 2.3.1.2 Pragmatic Functions: Topic and Focus

Pragmatically speaking, a sentence contains a clausal *topic* referent, i.e. what is being talked about in the clause; the remaining elements are called the *comment*. On the level of discourse, the topic referent, once introduced, is familiar to the listener. When the discourse topic is the same across clauses, we speak in terms of *topic continuity*. In a sentence such as *Mary is going to bed because she is tired*, *Mary* is the topic and this is continued by *she* in the next clause, the referent being known/identifiable to the listener through the immediate context. Languages typically express the topic by means of anaphora (such as *she*) and sometimes by means of topicalization constructions, especially in the case of a switch of topic referent.

*Focus*, like topic, is another functional category in the information structure analysis of discourse. There are various types of focus, but, simply put, focus highlights some piece of information that somehow stands out because it is not presupposed, but asserted, while the remainder expresses what is presupposed to be familiar to the listener (Givón 1979, 1995; Lambrecht 1994). A focal argument typically expresses unexpected, new information, and may be contrasted with an alternative. A focal referent is most clearly represented by *Mary* in cleft constructions like *It is Mary who stole my beer (and not John)*.

Pragmatic functions should not be conflated with grammatical functions. Generally speaking, Semitic languages can use independent pronouns to highlight a switch in topic reference or express a focal argument, i.e. narrow focus, and this typically concerns S and A, but such independent pronouns can also mark other functions such as possessor in (14a) and (15a) or P in (14b) and (15b) for ʤuroyo<sup>54</sup> and NENA.

53 The concept of a primary construction appears to apply much less to constructions in which T and R occur. Languages may not have an obvious primary ditransitive construction at all (Malchukov et al. 2010b, 2).

54 See Waltisberg (2016, 95–97) for a discussion of the syntax of independent pronouns in ʤuroyo.

(14) **Ṭuroyo** (SE Turkey)a. *ono əšm-i Xāngir-yo*

I name-my Xangir-COP:3MS

'As for me, my name is Xangir.' (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 73/56)

b. *gd-üxl -o -li óno-ste*FUT-kill<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3FS -P:1SG I-ADD'She will eat me too!' (Miden, *ibid.* 75/98)(15) **NENA** (SE Turkey)a. *'ana šəmm-i 'ile Awiqam Šakro*

I name-my COP:3MS Awiqam Šakro

'As for me, my name is Awiqam Šakro.' (C. Shamsdin, Nochiya, SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 456.1)

b. *'ana qaṭl -ət -li w 'aw qaṭl -ət -le*I kill<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:2MS -P:1SG and he kill<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:2MS -P:3MS

'You can kill me and you can kill him.' (C. Tkhuma, SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 222.46)

Such personal pronouns are equivalent to zero-marked nouns in Neo-Aramaic as the unmarked citation form. They typically occupy clause-initial position and sometimes clause-final position, as shown in (14b), but are fully integrated as arguments in the clause as they focalize or topicalize the argument expressed through a dependent person marker. They can also occur between subject and predicate, e.g. Ṭuroyo *əšm-i ono Yāhqo-yo* 'My name is Jakob' (Ritter 1967–1971, 116:37), or after the predicate, e.g. NENA *lé-qaṭl-ən-nux ana I<sub>M</sub>* 'won't kill you' (C. Tal, SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 302.54).

The independent pronouns, therefore, are unmarked for a particular grammatical function, but typically express a pragmatic function (narrow focus). As illustrated in examples (14)–(15), there is a dependent person marker (*-i, -li*) that expresses the grammatical function of the independent equivalent.

Moreover, all arguments can undergo topicalization through fronting or left-dislocation, being only loosely integrated into the clause to introduce the clausal topic as a "forethought" (Givón 1976), indicated by two vertical strokes || in the example below. A verbal suffix on the verb refers back to it and resumes its syntactic role, such as the P in the following example:

- (16) **Ṭuroyo** (Miden, SE Turkey; Ritter 1967–1971, 75/323)  
*ú-zlām-ano* || *lo-k-ūđ'* *-ína* *-le*  
 the-man-DEM:MS NEG-IND-know<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:1PL -P:3MS  
 'This man—, we do not know **him**.'

Thus, the unmarked citation form of full nominals and independent personal pronouns can be used to express all sorts of grammatical functions in Neo-Aramaic. Use of a zero-marked nominal or independent pronoun in a particular position in the sentence is motivated by the discourse and not by a grammatical function *per se* in Neo-Aramaic.

### 2.3.2 *Alignment: Morphological Properties*

The properties by which alignment patterns are identified are subdivided into morphological and syntactic (or coding and behavioral) properties in typological studies after Keenan (1976). The latter are syntactic constructions in a given language, which may be preferred or disfavored for particular functions, i.e. s, A, P etc., and are relevant to the determination of syntactic alignment types. We will review some of these syntactic behavioral properties in Subsection 2.3.3.

Only morphological alignment is pertinent to our discussion, since in many languages of the world syntactic properties group s and A accusatively. Still, some of these processes may be relevant to differentiate passive voice from ergative alignment.

The morphological properties generally involve a) and b) but also sometimes c) below:

- a) nominal marking, i.e. case and/or adpositional morphology, 'flagging';
- b) verbal person marking, i.e. agreement, 'indexing';
- c) order of constituents, i.e. word order.

The morphological properties a) nominal case and/or adpositional marking and b) verbal person marking are the main morphosyntactic features examined in this monograph and will be further explained below.<sup>55</sup> While case declensions and adpositional marking as well as verbal person marking are ultimately functionally equivalent as syntactic role signals and may even overlap (Siewierska and Bakker 2009; Kibrik 2012), they are distinct coding strategies.<sup>56</sup> Indeed,

55 The terminology and accompanying ideas vary in the typological literature. Nichols (1986, 1992) distinguishes between head- and dependent-marking respectively, Andrews (2007) between NP-marking and cross-referencing, and more recent typological literature such as Malchukov et al. (2010a) between flagging and indexing.

56 Verbal person marking and prepositional marking, however, may sometimes be difficult to distinguish in Neo-Aramaic, cf. § 3.1.2.2.

verbal person marking will be kept separate from case morphology. ‘Case’ is not treated here as an overarching abstract system of rules, so that cases and thematic roles are assigned by more deeply generalizable dependency relations between the verb and its complement in the generative sense. The latter leads to different analyses. Taking a generative approach, Doron and Khan (2010, 2012) and Barotto (2015), for example, use labels based on grammatical case such as *ERG* and *ACC* for what are called L-suffixes here and *NOM* and *ABS* for what corresponds to the E-suffixes in their analysis and glossing of person markers.<sup>57</sup> This sometimes leads to confusing and cumbersome combinations of *ERG-ACC* and sometimes even *ERG:NOM* in the glossing of verbal forms.

Such case labels are not used for verbal person markers in this book, being reserved for nominal morphology. Case is treated as a morphological property of nouns distinct from verbal person marking. Hence, we do not speak of ‘absolute S-suffixes’, ‘accusative L-suffixes’ etc., since this conflates verbal person marking as well as the syntactic role (s) with case morphology.

Word order will not be treated in full detail, as it is not always relevant in identifying an alignment type. Indeed, as will be explained in more detail in §2.3.2.4, it would seem that word order potentially leads to ambiguity and, hence, will only be considered a morphological manifestation of alignment, when at least one of the argument’s more or less fixed position relative to the verb is sufficiently distinctive as in, for example, a language like English.

In addition, while word order is generally subsumed under coding properties, it may also be considered a syntactic property instead (Haspelmath 2010). One may consider, for instance, the potential for word order shifts in interrogative, relative and/or passive clauses, processes subsumed under syntactic properties by typologists. Various other constituents in the sentence, e.g. interrogative pronouns, could affect argument placement in more complex constructions.

Moreover, word order is also clearly a discourse-sensitive property. It is relatively free and usually varies depending on the discourse properties of arguments irrespective of other coding properties in Neo-Aramaic (cf. Hoberman 1989, 100) like other languages with flexible word order (Givón 1995, 255–256). This notwithstanding, word order can be a contributing factor to argument discrimination in transitive constructions (see below).

All in all, the defining distinction of intransitive-transitive alignment patterns is the link between the single argument (s) of intransitive constructions and the two arguments (A, P) of primary transitive constructions through its

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57 Similarly, Khan (2017) refers to ‘ergative L-suffixes’ and ‘absolute D-suffixes’.

morphological and syntactic behavioral properties (Croft 2012, 259). In other words, what defines an alignment type is whether *s* is grouped with either *A* (*S=A*) or *P* (*S=P*) in its coding (or behavior). The major types are:

- a) (*A=S≠P*) (nominative-)accusative: *A* is treated like *s*;
- b) (*A≠S=P*) ergative(-absolutive):<sup>58</sup> *P* is treated like *s*;
- c) (*A=S=P*) neutral: all are treated alike.

Two other minor types can be distinguished, where *s* is grouped with neither *A* nor *P*:

- d) (*A≠S≠P*) tripartite: all are treated differently;
- e) (*S≠A=P*) horizontal: *A* and *P* are treated alike.

The alignment patterns we review below can be and generally are represented by the following schemas given in Figure 1 on the next page.<sup>59</sup>

The aforementioned differences among the various morphological and syntactic behavioral properties will be examined alongside these distinct alignment types. Alignment patterns need not at all be coherent in the sense that the same type is identified across all criteria. One alignment type can occur in morphology as opposed to syntactic behavior, or in nominal marking against verbal person marking; even verbal person marking can in itself diverge and show discrepancies depending on form and affix placement. Moreover, it is not uncommon that one particular alignment type only manifests in one particular grammatical domain. When the manifestation of one alignment pattern alongside another is conditioned by semantic and/or grammatical properties, we speak in terms of a split, such as the well-known cross-linguistic ‘split-ergative’ opposition between the accusative imperfective/present and the ergative perfective/past. This is of course the case in Neo-Aramaic, where alignment types that are consistently marked on the basis of *qaṭəl-* always show accusative patterns, whereas only alignment types involving constructions at least partly based on *qtil-*, the historically resultative participle, ultimately yield non-accusative patterns.

Before we can address such splits, the alignment typology framework adopted here will be introduced, in which the morphosyntactic properties and manifestations of the constructions rather than the grammatical and/or semantic conditions *per se* are in focus. These conditions are discussed in the

58 It is common for nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive alignment to be simply labelled according to the nominal marker of the isolated argument (accusative for the *P*, ergative for the *A*).

59 See Comrie (1978, 332), Payne (1997, 140), Croft (2001, 138), Siewierska (2003), Velupillai (2012, 239).

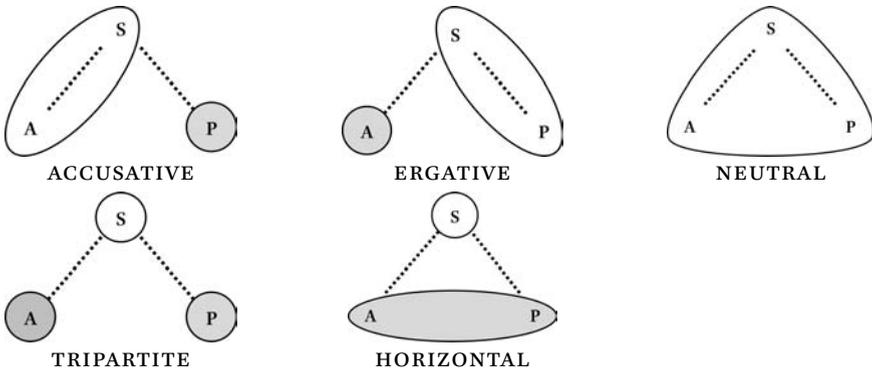


FIGURE 1 Monotransitive alignment schemas

subsequent chapters per dialect group: the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA in relation to the conditions of ergativity in Chapter 3, other NENA dialects with respect to markedness, the distinction between passive and ergative and cross-system harmony along splits in Chapter 4, and, finally, Turoyo and Mlahsó in comparison to NENA, including ergative prepositional marking, in Chapter 5.

### 2.3.2.1 Nominal Case and Adpositional Marking (Flagging)

Both nominal case inflection and adpositional marking indicate morphologically grammatical functions by manipulating or adding a morpheme to the nominal argument itself. The Semitic languages that exhibit case declension may serve as an example of how accusative alignment is typically manifested through case marking (see also Hasselbach 2013). Consider the example from Akkadian in (17) below. The *nominative* case (Akk. sg. *-um*, pl. *-ū*) groups s and A, whereas the *accusative* case singles out P (Akk. *-am*).

(17) Akkadian (East Semitic, see Huehnergard 1997, 6–7, 19–18, 168–169, 98)

- [S←NOM] (intransitive)  
 a. *bīt-um*                    *i-mqut-∅*  
 house-S:NOM:MS    S:3-fall<sub>PV</sub>-S:SG  
 ‘The house collapsed.’
- [A←NOM]                    [P←ACC] (transitive)  
 b. *ward-ū*                    *bīt-am*                    *i-qqur-ū*  
 slave-A:NOM:MPL    house-P:ACC:MS    A:3-destroy<sub>PV</sub>-A:MPL  
 ‘The slaves destroyed the house.’

Whereas the accusative pattern groups s with A, the ergative groups s with P (A≠S=P). In the following example from Standard Kurmanji (Northern Kurdish),

the first case form (*ez*, *tu*) marks both S and P and is generally referred to as the *absolutive*. The second case (*min*, *te*) marks only A and is termed *ergative*.

(18) **Kurmanji** (Northern Kurdish, Turkey; Matras 1997, 617–618, glossing modified)

- |    |   |              |               |                |
|----|---|--------------|---------------|----------------|
|    | [S:ABS]                                 |              |               |                |
| a. | <i>ez</i>                               | <i>çû-m</i>  |               | (intransitive) |
|    | I:ABS                                   | went-S:1SG   |               |                |
|    | 'I went.'                               |              |               |                |
|    |   |              |               |                |
| b. | <i>tu</i>                               | <i>cû-yî</i> |               |                |
|    | you:SG:ABS                              | went-S:2SG   |               |                |
|    | 'You went.'                             |              |               |                |
|    |   |              |               |                |
|    | [A:ERG]                                 | [P:ABS]      |               |                |
| c. | <i>te</i>                               | <i>ez</i>    | <i>dît-im</i> | (transitive)   |
|    | you:SG:ERG                              | I:ABS        | saw-P:1SG     |                |
|    | 'You saw <b>me</b> .' (lit. Your saw I) |              |               |                |
|    |   |              |               |                |
| d. | <i>min</i>                              | <i>tu</i>    | <i>dît-î</i>  |                |
|    | I:ERG                                   | you:SG:ABS   | saw-P:2SG     |                |
|    | 'I saw <b>you</b> .' (lit. Me saw you)  |              |               |                |

In typology, not only affixal case declensions, e.g. Akkadian NOM *bît-um*, ACC *bît-am* etc., but also adpositional marking through, for instance pre- or postpositions or particles, e.g. Hebrew differential object marker *'et*; Aramaic differential object marker *l-*, or a combination of the two are treated as one and the same type of coding property (cf. Comrie 2005, 398). Signaling or 'flagging' the NP in this general sense manifests itself in Neo-Aramaic by means of prepositions or particles.

Generally speaking, S and A are zero-marked, i.e. non-prepositional in Neo-Aramaic. The same holds for P arguments, except when they are definite, compare (19a) and (19b) below. Overt prepositional marking of P, if it occurs in a Neo-Aramaic variety, is always conditional. When an NP ranks highly in discourse salience, it will tend to be marked by a preposition that is often the same as or historically related to the marker of recipients (see § 4.4.2.). The Jewish Salmas differential object marker *al-* in (19b) below, for instance, signals the object of the following determined noun, *aya lexma* 'that bread'. As shown in (19b), prepositions, especially those marking full nominals, can be augmented with *-d*—sometimes also its variant *-t-*, a linker that is often added before an immediately following vowel.

(19) J. Salmas (NW Iran; Duval 1883, 120–121.19, 134.32, transcription modified)

[A]		[P]	
a. ... <i>aya</i>	<i>brüna kudyöm</i>	(∅) <i>lexma</i>	<i>méndē-∅-va</i>
... DEM:SG	boy:MS every.day	bread:MS	throw <sub>1PFV-A:3MS-PST</sub>
‘(Where) the boy would throw <b>bread</b> every day.’			

[A]		[DOM→P]	
b. <i>ya</i>	<i>mašíta xel-la</i>	<i>al-at</i>	<i>aya lexma</i>
DEM:SG	fish:FS eat <sub>PFV-A:3FS</sub>	DOM-LK	DEM:SG bread:MS
‘The fish ate <b>the bread</b> .’			

Pronominal objects tend to be expressed independently by the same preposition (see § 3.1.2):

c. <i>k-exl-ex</i>	<i>al-ef</i>	
IND-eat <sub>1PFV-A:1PL</sub>	DOM-3MS	
‘We eat <b>it</b> .’		

Generally, when the marking of arguments is conditional as in differential object marking, the pattern with overt marking is taken to represent the more basic alignment type.<sup>60</sup> In this case, only P is marked in such a way, so that the nominal marking above can be characterized as accusative (A=S≠P).

While definite Ps can be flagged, s and A are typically zero-marked in Neo-Aramaic. There is no overt nominal marking that indicates their role. What indexes their respective role, is the verb itself.

### 2.3.2.2 Verbal Person Marking from Different Perspectives (Indexing)

Person markers, also known as anaphoric pronouns, may be *dependent* (or bound, i.e. affixal or clitic) or *independent* (i.e. free). Independent person markers are generally included in the nominal system and are required when dependent equivalents are not available.<sup>61</sup> Only dependent person markers qualify as indexes of a coreferential nominal.<sup>62</sup>

In alignment typology, agreement involves co-referencing the person, number and/or gender features of an argument in the clause. Agreement is neither necessarily confined to core grammatical functions nor confined to verbs.<sup>63</sup>

60 See Comrie (2005), Siewierska (2005), Malchukov et al. (2010).

61 Universal G. in Haspelmath (2013, 222).

62 Universals A. and B. in *ibid*.

63 See Corbett (2003, 2006), although there is no universally accepted definition of agree-

The controller of agreement is the co-nominal referent, i.e. a full nominal or independent pronoun, which determines the agreement. The target it controls can be another constituent, which for our purposes is always a verbal form taking a person marker or index: thus we are dealing with verbal person marking.

Verbal person marking is not restricted to S and A in Aramaic. Hence, as shown in the Christian dialect from Aradhin (20) below, when we consider the P *laxma* ‘bread’, the co-nominal referent is marked by the verb *yḡy* ‘bake’ through the person index *-le* agreeing with it. Such person indexes are traditionally known as pronominal suffixes, i.e. pronominal copies, in Semitics and typically occur when P, i.e. object argument, is definite (see Khan 1988).

(20) C. Aradhin (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982, 94.82)

[A]	[V	-A	-P]	[P]			
<i>kul</i>	<i>βeta</i>	<i>yāpē</i>	<i>-∅</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>laxm-e</i>	<i>dīy-e</i>	
each	house:MS	bake <sub>IPFV</sub>	-A:3MS	-P:3MS	bread-his	POSS-3MS	

‘Each house bakes **his own bread**.’

Some linguists make a sharp distinction between *affix* and *clitic* as subtypes of bound morphology. The distinction is, however, taken here to be fuzzy and not clear-cut (see Haspelmath 2011b), although, naturally, not all bound morphology will show the same usage patterns or the same effect on stress. It is rather a matter of a continuum, so that no strict categorical demarcation is implied here. The L-suffixes, for instance, do have certain clitic-like properties (see § 2.3.3.3.) that set them apart from the E-suffixes and ‘possessive’ suffixes and make them more like enclitic elements in Neo-Aramaic.

Person indexing through dependent person markers should not be mistaken for pronouns in the strict sense, as they are not necessarily anaphoric or cataphoric noun substitutes.<sup>64</sup> Importantly, the nominal coreferent is always the same constituent in the clause for person indexes, while this is not required for anaphoric pronouns. The full co-nominal *laxma* in (20) can, for instance, be absent, so that the L-suffix on the verb expresses an anaphoric pronoun:

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ment (Siewierska 2004, 120). See also Haspelmath (2013), following Lazard (1998) and drawing on Siewierska (2004), on defining person *indexing*.

64 See Siewierska (2004, 121–127) for a discussion of the differences between pronouns and agreement markers. See Haspelmath (2013) on the distinction between *pronouns* as noun substitutes proper (English *he*) and *argument indexes*.

(21) C. Aradhin (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982, 94.82)

[A] [V-A-P]  
 'ani yāp-i-le  
 they bake<sub>1PFV-A:3PL-P:3MS</sub>  
 'They bake it<sub>M</sub>.'

In this analysis, therefore, expressing the pronominal object through the L-set of *dependent* person markers is a strategy morphologically distinct from expressing the pronominal object through an *independent* prepositional pronoun, such as *al-ef* in J. Salmas above in (19c).

This verbal indexing in (19) and (20) is different from languages where the co-nominal is always lacking and an object index is always pronominal. An object index like *-hu* in Classical Arabic, for instance, typically lacks a co-nominal, so that clauses like

\*\* ra'ay -tu -hu l-kalba  
 saw -A:1SG -P:3MS ART-dog:MS

are not grammaticalized as such for 'I saw the dog' but rather convey 'I saw him,—the dog'. The shift from such a pronominal index or *pro-index* to a *cross-index* is a well-known diachronic development found in Semitic languages that lost case declensions. Originally stressed independent pronouns become unstressed and increasingly dependent on the host, e.g. the verb, to end up as verbal person markers via topicalization constructions (cf. Givón 1976; Lehmann 1988). The person marker becomes increasingly obligatory in more routine-driven grammatical functions as fully integrated person indexes (see further below).

When the coreferential nominal is optional, as illustrated for both A and P in (19a), this is generally known as *pro-drop*. This is referred to here as *cross-indexing*, following Haspelmath (2013). Thus, a verbal predicate like *yāp-i* may occur with a subject NP, an independent pronoun often with pragmatic force (see § 2.3.1.2.), or without a co-referent, e.g. C. Aradhin

baxtāta yāp-i 'Women are baking.'  
 'ani yāp-i 'THEY are baking.'  
 yāp-i 'They are baking.'

The E-suffix functions as a cross-index of A, the co-nominal not being obligatory.

At the same time, there is a difference between the absence and presence of cross-indexing for a particular grammatical function in itself. The indexing of P,

for instance, is always conditional in Aramaic and depends mainly on definiteness. When a nominal P argument is indefinite, it will not be cross-indexed. Compare (22a) below with (22b):

(22) C. *Aradhin* (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982, 94.82)

	[V-A]		[P]	
a.	<i>yāp-i</i>		<i>laxma</i>	(indefinite object)
	bake <sub>IPFV-A:3PL</sub>		bread:MS	
	'They bake <b>bread</b> .'			

	[A]		[V	-A	-P]	
b.	<i>kul</i>	<i>bēta</i>	<i>yāpē</i>	<i>-∅</i>	<i>-le</i>	(definite object)
	each	house:MS	bake <sub>IPF</sub>	-A:3MS	-P:3MS	
		[P]				
	<i>laxm-e</i>		<i>dīy-e</i>			
	bread-his		LK-3MS			
	'Each house bakes <b>his own bread</b> .'					

By contrast, such indexing of s and A is generally not optional or conditional in Aramaic. While forms like *yāp-i* 'They bake' can easily occur in transitive constructions without an object L-suffix such as (22a) above, it is not possible to omit the E-suffix when a co-nominal is present, e.g.

\*\* *baxtāta* *yāpe(-∅)*  
 woman:PL bake<sub>IPFV(-A:3MS)</sub>  
 'Women are baking.'

The potential for overt indexing in general is thus greater for s and A.

We could therefore characterize this verbal person marking as basically accusative for multiple reasons. Indeed, verbal person marking can be viewed from different perspectives: Siewierska (2003) and Bickel et al. (2013) assume the following perspectives. The first question is whether indexing is possible at all. If so, then in what form and to what extent? The markers are compared not only in terms of morphological marking, i.e. what particular set of person markers, but also in terms of the relative position or left-to-right order of affixes,<sup>65</sup> e.g. the markers are prefixal for s and A, but suffixal for P. It may also be rele-

65 Cf. Kibrik (2012). However, affix position is confined to clear distinctions between prefixal and suffixal forms in this monograph, since the relative position of dependent person forms that are all prefixal or all suffixal is not clearly significant for alignment, see § 2.3.2.3.

vant how the arguments align in triggering a verbal person marker in general, e.g. only s and A trigger agreement but never P, or under specific conditions, e.g. agreement with s and A is conditioned by word order or cross-indexing of the P is conditioned by definiteness.

These criteria can be illustrated by examining example (17) again from Akkadian, but now from the perspective of verbal person marking. The alignment of verbal person marking can be viewed from the perspective of:

- a) morphological marking;
- b) affix order;
- c) trigger potential;
- d) conditionality.

(23) **Akkadian** (East Semitic; Huehnergard 1997)

- |    |   |                               |                                   |
|----|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|    | [s]   | [s-v-s]                       |                                   |
| a. | <i>bīt-um</i>                                   | <i>i-mqut-∅</i>               | (intransitive)                    |
|    | house-S:NOM:MS                                  | s:3-fall <sub>PFV</sub> -S:SG |                                   |
|    | ‘The house collapsed.’                          |                               |                                   |
|    |   |                               |                                   |
|    | [A]   | [P]                           | [A-V-A]                           |
| b. | <i>ward-ū</i>                                   | <i>bīt-am</i>                 | <i>i-qqur-ū</i> (transitive)      |
|    | slave-A:NOM:MPL                                 | house-P:ACC:MS                | A:3-destroy <sub>PFV</sub> -A:MPL |
|    | ‘The slaves destroyed the house.’               |                               |                                   |
|    |   |                               |                                   |
|    | [A-V-A-P]                                       |                               |                                   |
| c. | <i>ī-qqur-ū-šu</i>                              |                               |                                   |
|    | A:3-destroy <sub>PFV</sub> -A:MPL-P:3MS         |                               |                                   |
|    | ‘They <sub>M</sub> destroyed it <sub>M</sub> .’ |                               |                                   |

First, s and A align accusatively at least in terms of morphological marking (*i-V-∅*, *i-V-ū*), i.e. the same set of person markers is used to express both. When P is expressed by a pronominal object suffix, as shown in (23c), a different set is used (e.g. *-šu*).

Secondly, the affix order allows for some gender and number indexing of s and A to follow the verbal stem (*-∅*, *-ū*), but the verbal person marking is otherwise prefixal for s and A, but suffixal for P. Again, the alignment is accusative in terms of affix order.

Finally, s and A are also grouped in terms of trigger potential and conditionality, since nominal P arguments do not trigger indexing at all, as shown in (23b). The alignment of the verbal person marking in Akkadian as such is accusative throughout.

The accusative type can be contrasted with the ergative example from Standard Kurmanji in (18) above. Only *s* and *P* are indexed by the same set immediately following the verbal stem (e.g. *-im*, *-yi*). Agreement, therefore, is ergative throughout in morphological marking, affix order, trigger potential and conditionality. Pronouns are expressed independently in Kurmanji. Naturally, dependent person markers alone can also be manifested ergatively, as illustrated by the following example from a Gorani dialect, another Northwest Iranian language. *s* and *P* are marked through the same set of affixes (*-Ø*) immediately following the verbal stem, while *A* is expressed through a different set of clitics (*-š*), which, as indicated in (24c), can move to a preverbal host if present.

(24) **Gorani Hawramani Luhon** (NE Iraq, W Iran; Mackenzie 1966)

- [V-S]  
 a. *wit-Ø* (intransitive, no clitic)  
 sleep<sub>PST-S:3MS</sub>  
 'He slept.'
- [V-P-A]  
 b. *di-Ø-š* (transitive, A attached to verbal form)  
 see<sub>PFV-P:3MS-A:3MS</sub>  
 'He saw him.' (lit. Him saw he)
- [P            -A]    [V-P]  
 c. *močīāri*    *-šā*    *karḏ-a* (transitive, A attached to object)  
 instruction -A:3PL do<sub>PFV-P:3FS</sub>  
 'They instructed her.' (lit. Them instructed she)

The trigger potential of verbal person marking may also be graded in terms of obligatoriness, i.e. if agreement is possible, it may be optional or obligatory:

impossible > optional > obligatory

Recently, Haig (2018) has shown that there is a notable cross-linguistic tendency for object indexes to remain conditioned, once they have grammaticalized. This also holds for Aramaic throughout its long history. Despite the variation we find in terms of morphological marking in the verb and despite the alignment splits we encounter, object indexing is always conditioned in Neo-Aramaic, just as it has been in pre-modern Aramaic varieties. What sets one dialect (bundle) apart from the other is first and foremost the morpholog-



(26) **Ṭuroyo** (Miden, SE Turkey)

	[V      -A]	[P]
a. <i>ftəḥ</i>	-le	ʿayn-e
	open <sub>PFV</sub>	-A:3MS eye-his
‘He opened his eyes.’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 81/18)		

	[s]	[v      -s]
b. <i>ʿayne d-ú-babo</i>	<i>ftiḥ</i>	-i
	eyes of-the-father	open <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3PL
‘Father’s eyes opened.’ (ibid., 57/237)		

Furthermore, Waltisberg (2016, 20, 176) points out that the inflectional base of certain intransitive verbs, i.e. *CaCiC*- as in *damix-o* ‘She fell asleep’, differs from that of transitive verbs, i.e. *CCiC*- as in *ftiḥ-o-la* ‘She opened it.’ There is a major subclass of verbs belonging to stem I that takes an alternative ‘perfective’ base *qaṭil-* against *qṭil-*, e.g. *damix-o* ‘She fell asleep’ instead of *\*\*dmix-o* like *ftiḥ-o* ‘It opened’. NENA does not have a stem corresponding to Ṭuroyo *damix-* derived from *\*CaCCiC*, i.e. *\*dammik-*. The different inflectional base for certain intransitive verbs in Ṭuroyo, however, is an integral part of the same system as *qṭil-* and does not alter the facts about the sets of person markers responsible for expressing the syntactic roles, which evidently align ergatively in morphological marking.

Hence, as we will see, the morphological marking makes one dialect different from the other as well as from the rest of Semitic. The morphology is therefore more significant for alignment from a comparative perspective.

### 2.3.2.3 Order of Independent and Dependent Argument Coding

Malchukov et al. (2010b) discuss how word order leads to ambiguity for alignment typology. This also holds for the relative order of dependent person markers.<sup>67</sup> Word order and the order of person affixes or clitics are obviously not completely parallel. It is, for instance, more likely that independent (pro)nominal arguments would vary in position relative to the verb than dependent person markers relative to the verbal base. This notwithstanding, they both lead to ambiguous conclusions for argument *grouping*, i.e. *S=A≠P*. Word order and affix order are not helpful as alignment determinants, if all the arguments are expressed on the same side of the verb(al stem).

Consider the Arabic example of accusative alignment given below.

67 Cf. Siewierska (2003).



(28) **Chorti** (Mayan, Guatemala; Siewierska 2003, 343, original source cited therein, glossing adapted)

[V -S]

a. *wayan -et* (intransitive)

sleep -S:2SG

'You<sub>SG</sub> slept.'

[A- V -P]

b. *in- ira -et* (transitive)

A:1SG- saw -P:2SG

'I saw you<sub>SG</sub>.'

c. *a- ira -en*

A:2SG- saw -P:1SG

'You<sub>SG</sub> saw me.'

This does not rule out, of course, that word order and affix/clitic order are possibly significant contributors to argument *discrimination* in transitive constructions (i.e. A before/after P). Word order is arguably considered relevant in languages like English, for example. Morphologically, S, A and P are all treated in the same way in English, apart from most of the pronouns and the third person -s in the present simple. Distinct morphological marking of the arguments is otherwise absent, so that the alignment is neutral in terms of both nominal marking and verbal person marking (A=S=P). Word order, however, clearly contributes to role discrimination. P typically follows the verb, but S and A occupy pre-verbal position, as observed in the translation of the examples above. Thus English alignment could be characterized as accusative in terms of word order: pre-verbal S and A vs. post-verbal P.

In fact, word order in general is more geared toward information processing in discourse. For instance, arguments placed consistently before the verb (e.g. A-P-V) are cross-linguistically more likely to be distinguished through case or adpositional marking than those consistently placed at either side of the verb (e.g. A-V-P, P-V-A). The obvious reason that Siewierska and Bakker (2009) give for this observation is that the linearization of arguments in verb-final constructions contributes much less to role discrimination than distinct nominal morphology (cf. de Hoop and Lamers 2006).

Neutral alignment can also manifest itself through non-distinct morphological marking instead of its absence. The neutral type, on the other hand, is sometimes understood solely as the absence of dependent person markers (e.g. Siewierska 2004, 52), since the phonologically non-distinct person indexes gen-

erally do display a distinct affix position, as exemplified below in the Papuan language Reefs. Here, *s* is prefixal, while *A* is suffixal, even though they are phonologically non-distinct, i.e. *dyi-V* vs. *V-dyi*.<sup>68</sup>

(29) **Reefs** (Papuan, Eastern Outer Islands; Siewierska 2003, 343–344, original source cited therein, glossing slightly adapted)

[s-            v]  
 a. *dyi-            ki-egi* (intransitive)  
 S:1DU:INC ASP-cry  
 'We cry.'

[P]            [v            -A]  
 b. *nyenaa ki-bwaki -dyi* (transitive)  
 stick ASP-break -A:1DU:INC  
 'We broke the stick.'

Non-distinct phonological verbal person marking is also found in Neo-Aramaic. The Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan on the eastern periphery such as Urmi and Salmas and Turkish Christian dialects on the western periphery such as Borb-Ruma (Bohtan; Fox 2009), Artun (Hertevin, Jastrow 1988), Haşsan (Hasane, Jastrow 1997; Damsma forthcoming), Umra and Jinnet (Noorlander field notes) use the L-suffixes for all grammatical functions in the preterit constructions based on *qtil-*. For example:

(30) **C. Borb-Ruma** (Bohtan, SE Turkey; Fox 2009)

[v            -s]  
 a. *qəm -li* (intransitive)  
 rise<sub>PFV</sub> -S:1SG  
 'I rose.' (lit. Me rose)

[v            -A            -P]  
 b. *ptáx -li -le* (transitive)  
 open<sub>PFV</sub> -A:1SG -P:3MS  
 'I opened it<sub>M</sub>.' (lit. Me opened him)

68 The relative order of arguments can also be free in e.g. Bantu languages (Siewierska 2003, 264).

The transitive construction takes two L-suffixes. The L-suffixes are used in a strict order: L-suffixes that mark the patient always follow the L-suffixes that mark the agent, so that V-P-A affix arrangements like

- [V        -P        -A]  
 c. *ptáx*    *-li*    *-le*  
 \*\*open<sub>PFV</sub> -P:1SG -A:3MS  
 \*\*'He opened me.'

do not occur, but only V-A-P.

The extent to which one includes the order of affixes can affect the way one identifies alignment patterns and lead to ultimately different analyses. Coghill (2016, 64, 90), for instance, subsumes this type under accusative alignment, presumably because of the relative position of the set of suffixes that she considers a determinant for alignment. Neutral alignment is sometimes confined to the absence of overt verbal person marking (e.g. Siewierska 2004, 52). Still, this completely ignores the fact that they are treated alike in terms of morphological marking. The same set is used for all grammatical functions, an important difference with, for example, the accusative pattern found in *qaṭal*-based constructions. The position of affixes seems to me only significant if the position relative to the verb is distinct for both A and P (i.e. prefixal vs. suffixal). S, A and P are all suffixal in the case of (26c) and (29). Thus, although the relative linear position evidently supports role *discrimination*, it cannot be unambiguously applied as a criterion to determine which suffix is *grouped* with s: it could arguably be either. Phonologically non-distinct person markers, therefore, are in principle also treated under neutral alignment here.<sup>69</sup>

#### 2.3.2.4 Other Morphological Alignment Types

Cross-linguistic studies<sup>70</sup> show that neutral and accusative alignment turn out to be the most common, followed by the ergative type.<sup>71</sup> The other two minor alignment types are tripartite and horizontal alignment. A major difference between the latter two and accusative, ergative as well as neutral alignment is that s does not group with any other argument and is isolated.

Tripartite alignment is the mirror image of the neutral pattern. S, A and P are all treated differently (A≠S≠P), as illustrated in the following example from Yazgulyami, a Pamir language (East Iranian). The independent pronouns

69 Cf. Siewierska (2003).

70 See Siewierska (2004, 2005), Comrie (2005), Croft (2012, 259), Velupillai (2012, 243).

71 See Section 3.2. on ergativity and alignment splits.

exhibit distinct nominal marking. The first person singular would be *ž-mon* in the object case (Payne 1980, 176), yielding *az* for s in the so-called ‘direct’ case, *mon* for A in the so-called ‘oblique’ case and *ž-mon* for P in the object case:

- (31) **Yazgulyami** (East Iranian, Pamir; Bickel and Nichols 2009, 309, original sources cited therein, glossing modified)

[DIR→S] [V]  
 a. *áz=əm mət mad* (intransitive)  
 1SG:ABS=1SG tired become:PST  
 ‘I am tired.’

[OBL→A] [OBJ→P] [V]  
 b. *mon š-tu wint* (transitive)  
 1SG:ERG OBJ-2SG see:PST  
 ‘I saw you.’ (lit. Me saw to-you)

Horizontal alignment stands out in grouping A and P (S≠A=P). It is also known as ‘double oblique alignment’ after the terminology for case systems in modern Iranian languages, where this pattern predominates (Payne 1980), as illustrated below for Rošani, another Pamir language. The s pronoun (*az*) is completely distinct from the A and P pronouns, while the latter two are the same in the so-called ‘oblique’ case (*mu*). The A-P-V word order contributes to their role discrimination, A coming immediately before P.

- (32) **Rošani** (East Iranian, Pamir; Payne 1980, 156, glossing adapted)

[ABS:SS] [V]  
 a. *az=um tar xār vij* (intransitive)  
 1SG:ABS=1SG to town be:PERF  
 ‘I’ve been to town.’

[OBL:A] [OBL:P] [V]  
 b. *mu tā wunt* (transitive)  
 1SG: OBL 2SG: OBL see:PST  
 ‘I saw you.’ (lit. Me saw your)

c. *tā mu wunt*  
 2SG: OBL 1SG: OBL see:PST  
 ‘You saw me.’ (lit. Your saw me)

Verbal person marking can show the same patterns. The *s* in (32a) is also treated differently in triggering indexing via a clitic person form (= *um*), while *A* and *P* are not indexed.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, Comrie (1978, 342) explains that if only one argument function is indexed, this will be *s*. The indexing is thus horizontal in terms of trigger potential and morphological marking. In yet other languages, such as Vafsi (Northwestern Iranian, Tati; Stilo 2004b, 239–240), the indexing may also be horizontal in terms of trigger potential only, since verbal person marking of *A* and *P* is largely optional, but that of *s* is obligatory.

On the whole, intransitive clauses are treated differently from transitive clauses in all of these systems. This will also be a recurring theme in the Neo-Aramaic dialects we will examine. Such patterns will be further discussed in the following chapters.<sup>73</sup>

### 2.3.3 *Syntactic Properties: Role and Reference Inversion in Neo-Aramaic*

The Neo-Aramaic languages we will examine have the following constructional split in common. Two sets of person markers are used in transitive verbal forms, but each indexes the reverse grammatical function of *qaṭəl-* in the *qṭil-* based system. *qṭil-* and *qaṭəl-* are the mirror image of each other in the majority of NENA dialects as well as Turoyo at least in some respects. The constructions based on *qṭil-*, however, will often comprise a subsystem of their own, depending on the dialect.

The same template and person markers for *qaṭəl-* can be found for *qṭil-*. Ultimately, however, each dialect (bundle) can ‘do its own thing’.<sup>74</sup> Generally speaking, nevertheless, the *E*-set is used to mark the patient in both Turoyo and the majority of NENA for at least the third person.

For both *qaṭəl-*<sup>75</sup> and *qṭil-* inflectional bases, the shape and order of the 1st and 2nd set, i.e. *E*- and *L*-suffixes, are equivalent, but their cross-referencing of the *A* and *P* function is reversed. This is obviously reminiscent of an active-passive alternation. While reminiscent of the passive, the functions of the person indexes are also inverted, which clearly rules out a passive analysis on at least a synchronic level (Doron and Khan 2012).

72 These clitics, however, also feature in the marking of *A* in other contexts and are extended to clauses like (19b) and (19c) among younger speakers (Payne 1980, 158–161).

73 Particularly Sections 3.4. and 4.3.

74 In fact, theoretically, each set of person forms can be used to encode the grammatical functions *s*, *A* or *P*. This is by no means uniform in the dialects, as Chapters 3 to 6 demonstrate.

75 Generally, however, what applies to *qaṭəl-* will also apply to the imperative and possibly other innovated inflectional bases, which we will leave out of discussion.

By way of comparison, inverted morphological marking that is sensitive to tense-aspect can also be found in Kartvelian and Iranian languages. For instance Georgian, illustrated in (33) below, has several distinct case-marking patterns depending on tense (Harris 2001). The nominative case is used to mark S and A for the present or future, while the dative marks A in the evidential perfect. The dative case marks P in the first, but the nominative marks P in the latter. The result is that the case morphology refers to exactly opposite syntactic roles depending on the verbal construction.

(33) **Georgian** (Kartvelian, Georgia; Harris 2001, 1378–1380, glossing slightly adapted)

	[A]	[P]	[V]	
<b>I: NOM-DAT</b>	<i>merab-i</i>	<i>γvino-s</i>	<i>amoiyeb-s</i>	(future)
	Merab-NOM	wine-DAT	take.out	
	‘Merab will take out wine’			
<b>III: DAT-NOM</b>	<i>merab-s</i>	<i>γvino-∅</i>	<i>amoiyia</i>	(perfect)
	Merab-DAT	wine-NOM	take.out	
	‘Merab evidently took out wine’			

Similarly, a characteristic of Northwest Iranian languages is that they generally mark A in the past tense in the same way as P in the present tense. When this primarily involves verbal person marking, P in the present tense and A in the past tense will both be marked by the same set of enclitic person markers. Apart from the third person, the marking of the other respective roles can also be identical, as in Gorani, illustrated below. What marks P in the present, marks A in the past, and *vice versa*:

(34) **Gorani** (Stilo 1981, 168)

	[V	-A	-P]	
a. <i>ma- bar</i>	<i>-de</i>	<i>-mā</i>		(present)
	IND- see <sub>PRES</sub>	-A:2PL	-P:1PL	
	‘You <sub>PL</sub> see us.’			
	[V	P	-A]	
b. <i>bard</i>	<i>-ayde</i>	<i>-mā</i>		(past)
	see <sub>PAST</sub>	-A:2PL	-P:1PL	
	‘We saw you <sub>PL</sub> .’			

North-Eastern and Central Neo-Aramaic languages are similar in this respect. What marks P in the *qaṭəl*-constructions typical of the imperfective present marks A in the *qṭil*-, i.e. the preterit. The role marking can be partially or completely inverted.

### 2.3.3.1 Inverted Role Marking in *qṭil*-

Two sets of person markers are used in transitive verbal forms in NENA and Turoyo, but each indexes the reverse grammatical function of *qaṭəl*- in the *qṭil*-based system. Transitive clauses manifest a type of what we can call role reference inversion<sup>76</sup> conditioned by the kind of inflectional base, which may be characterized as follows. The table below can be taken as representative. While the L-series marks P in *qaṭəl*-, it marks A in *qṭil*-, and *vice versa* for the E-series. This morphological role reference inversion generally applies to their entire functional distribution.

The zero morpheme for the E-set third masculine singular leads to ambiguous forms in the perfective, cf. *grəš-lan* ‘We pulled’ and *grəš-Ø-lan* ‘We pulled **him**’. The context will usually make clear whether a 3ms. P argument is meant.<sup>77</sup>

The morphemes, however, are not completely identical for both inflectional bases in all dialects. In Christian dialects of the Khabur valley going back to villages in SE Turkey (Talay 2008, 317–318) and Christian dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan (Hoberman 1989, 105–106; Khan 2016, 384) and the closely related dialect of Diyana (NW Iraq; Napiorkowska 2015, 209), the 3pl. E-set morphemes *-i* and *-e* differ for strong verbs depending on their usage in *qaṭəl*- and *qṭil*- before L-suffixes, i.e. *ṗqatl-i* ‘they kill’ vs. *qṭil-e* ‘killed them’. In fact, Napiorkowska (2015, 197–198) indicates that some levelling has taken place between the inflection of *qaṭəl*- and *qṭil*-, so that *-e* is now available to express 3pl. agents in the inflection of *qaṭəl*-:

(35) C. Diyana (NW Iraq; Napiorkowska 2015, 198, 209)

- a. *patx-i-le* ~ *patx-e-le* ‘**They** open it<sub>M</sub>’  
 b. *ptix-e-le* ‘He opened **them**’

Finally, there can be considerable—dialect-dependent—morphological overlap between *qaṭəl*- and *qṭil*-bases due to vowel reduction, which will be pointed out when relevant. Consider, for instance, final-/y/ verbs such as *xzy*

76 Or “agreement inversion” (Doron and Khan 2012). See also Polotsky (1979, 209, 1991, 266, 1994, 95), Hoberman (1989, 96, 113), Mengozzi (2002b, 44–45).

77 This is consistent with the cross-linguistic tendency that the third person is paradigmatically zero (Siewierska 2004, 24).

TABLE 7 Conjugation of *qaṭəl-* and ‘perfective’ with object indexes in Jewish ‘Amedia

<i>qaṭəl-</i>	E-set	L-set	<i>qṭil-</i>	E-set	L-set
V <sub>IPFV</sub>	A	P	V <sub>PFV</sub>	P	A
<i>ḡarəš</i>	-∅	- <i>la</i>	<i>grəš</i>	-∅	- <i>la</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>a</i>	- <i>le</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>a</i>	- <i>le</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>i</i>	- <i>lan</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>i</i>	- <i>lan</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>ət</i>	- <i>ti</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>ət</i>	- <i>ti</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>at</i>	- <i>ti</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>at</i>	- <i>ti</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>ətu</i>	- <i>lu</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>ətu</i>	- <i>lu</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>ən</i>	- <i>nax</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>ən</i>	- <i>nax</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>an</i>	- <i>nux</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>an</i>	- <i>nux</i>
<i>ḡarš</i>	- <i>áx</i>	- <i>loxun</i>	<i>griš</i>	- <i>áx</i>	- <i>loxun</i>

‘see’, which have a *qṭil-* base and *qaṭəl-* base that are only distinguishable by the vowel in the stem:

*xəzy-a-le* ‘He saw her’  
*xəzy-a-le* ‘She sees him’

Similarly in the inflection of stem III verbs, the distinction can be marginal, e.g. J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 89–90)

*mrədx-a-le* ‘He boiled it<sub>F</sub>’  
*marədx-a-le* ‘She boils it<sub>M</sub>’

The *qṭil-* base may sometimes display a slight difference in the vowel template of sound verbs when combined with both E-suffixes and L-suffixes:

*ḡarš-a-le* ‘She pulls him’  
*ḡərš-a-le* ‘He pulled her’ instead of *griš-a-le*

This so-called *Aufsprengung* (blasting apart, i.e. breaking up) of the syllable from *griš-* to *gĩš-* ~ *ḡərš-* before vowels is characteristic of several Jewish NENA dialects and is also found in Christian NENA dialects in Turkey, such as C. Beşpən (Sinha 2000, 142), and varieties of Țuroyo. Also the inflectional bases may even be identical at least for some derived stems in Țuroyo and the NENA

dialect C. Hertevin (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988, 38), so that a form like Țuroyo *mħalq-i-le* (stem II) can either denote the preterit ‘He threw them’ or subjunctive ‘May they throw it<sub>M</sub>’.

Transitive verbal constructions that are based on *q̄til-* and *qaṭal-* are thus characterized by an inversion of role referencing, while the sets of person markers are morphologically the same and only the inflectional base differs. What holds for A (E-set) in *qaṭal-* will generally also hold for A (L-set) in *q̄til-*, and *vice versa* for P.

The functional distribution of the E-suffixes or L-suffixes is completely mirrored according to the role reference inversion. This can be seen, for instance, in the indexing of prominent object NPs. Coghill (2014) mentions that, as a general tendency, indexing is primarily used to differentially mark topicalized NPs and definite and specific indefinite NPs across NENA dialects. Compare *qaṭal-* in (36) and *q̄til-* in (37) for J. ‘Amedia below.

(36) *qaṭal-*base (J. ‘Amedia, NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989, 102–104)

a. *k-šam’ -i baxta* (no indexing of P)

IND-hear<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3PL woman:FS

‘They hear a woman.’

b. *k-šam’ -i -la* (L-set → pronominal P)

IND-hear<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3PL -P:3FS

‘They hear **her**.’

c. *k-šam’ -i -la baxta* (L-set indexes definite P)

IND-hear<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3PL -P:3FS woman:FS

‘They hear **the woman**.’

(37) *q̄til-*base (J. ‘Amedia, NW Iraq; Hoberman *ibid.*)

a. *šme’ -lu baxta* (no indexing of P)

hear<sub>PFV</sub> -A:3PL woman:FS

‘They heard a woman.’ (lit. Them heard woman)

b. *šmi’ -a -lu* (E-set → pronominal P)

hear<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:3PL

‘They heard **her**.’ (lit. Them heard she)

c. *šmi’ -a -lu baxta* (E-set indexes definite P)

hear<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:3PL woman:FS

‘They heard **the woman**.’ (lit. Them heard she, the woman)

The L-suffix cross-references for *qaṭəl* in (36a–c) what the E-suffix cross-references for *qṭil-* in (37a–c), and *vice versa*. Depending on the base, the L-set or E-set marks P.

Ditransitive verbs can mark the object in the same way. When the role marked by the E-set is a recipient in the *qṭil-* forms, it can also similarly be marked by the L-set in the corresponding *qaṭəl-* forms, for example the addressee of *ʾmr* ‘say’:

(38) J. ‘Amedia (NW Iraq; Greenblatt 336.8)

a. *g-əmr*      -ən      -*nux*      (qaṭəl-)  
 IND-say<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:1MS -R:2MS  
 ‘I<sub>M</sub> tell you<sub>MS</sub>.’

b. *mir*      -ət      -*ti*      (qṭil-)  
 say<sub>PFV</sub> R:1MS -A:2MS  
 ‘I told you<sub>MS</sub>.’

The same holds for the theme. Where the E-set marks the theme and/or cross-indexes a definite full nominal theme for *qṭil-*, the L-set does so for the corresponding *qaṭəl-* forms. This is illustrated below for the ditransitive verb ‘give’ and the theme *pare* ‘money’, a *plurale tantum*.

(39) J. ‘Amedia (NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989, 107–109)

[V      -A      -T]      [DAT→R]  
 a. *g-yawəl*      -∅      -*lu*      *ṭal-i*      (qaṭəl-)  
 FUT-give<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3MS -T:3PL to-me  
 ‘He gives it (lit. **them**, i.e. the money) to me.’

[V:      -A      -T]      [T]      [DAT→R]  
 b. *g-yawəl*      -∅      -*lu*      *pare*      *ṭal-i*      (qaṭəl-)  
 IND-give<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3MS -T:3PL money:PL to-me  
 ‘He gives **the money** to me.’

[V      -T      -A]      [DAT→R]  
 c. *hiw*      -*i*      -*le*      *ṭal-i*      (qṭil-)  
 give<sub>PFV</sub> -T:3PL -A:3MS to-me  
 ‘He gave it (lit. **them**) to me.’

[V	-T	-A]	[T]	[DAT→R]	
d. <i>hiw</i>	-i	-le	<i>pare</i>	<i>tal-i</i>	( <i>qṭil-</i> )
give <sub>PFV</sub> -T:3PL -A:3MS money:PL to-me					
‘He gave <b>the money</b> to me.’					

Finally, the differential object marker, if it is used in a dialect for *qaṭəl-*, can also be used in corresponding *qṭil-*-based clauses, for example:

(40) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 158, 221)

[DOM→P]		[V-A]	
a. <i>həl-d-o</i>	<i>gora</i>	<i>garəš-∅</i>	( <i>qaṭəl-</i> )
DOM-LK-DEM:SG man:MS pull <sub>IPFV-A:3MS</sub>			
‘He pulls <b>that man</b> .’			

[DOM→P]		[V-A]	
b. <i>həl-d-o</i>	<i>gora</i>	<i>grəš-le</i>	( <i>qṭil-</i> )
DOM-LK-DEM:MS man:MS pull <sub>IPFV-A:3MS</sub>			
‘He pulled <b>that man</b> .’			

Across the constructional split between *qaṭəl-* and *qṭil-*, therefore, the functions of A and P are uniform in the aforementioned respects in the majority of Neo-Aramaic languages. The fact that verbal person marking of A, like s, is not triggered by argument properties such as definiteness sets it apart from other grammatical functions, i.e. P, T, possibly R. Indexing or prepositional marking of the object nominals is always conditioned by such argument properties. The conditioning and trigger potential of arguments is therefore the same throughout the verbal system. This is one relevant piece of evidence for consider the constructional split between *qaṭəl-* and *qṭil-* not to be one of active-passive (Doron and Khan 2012). Further supporting evidence can be found in the syntactic behavioral properties.

### 2.3.3.2 Syntactic Behavioral Properties

Syntactic behavioral properties include the control of reflexives, relativization, interclausal co-referential reduction (sometimes called *equi NP-deletion*) and same subject constraints in complement clauses such as the complement of modal verbs like ‘can’, ‘want’, ‘begin’, ‘finish’ etc.<sup>78</sup> Such syntactic behavioral properties tend to be confined to particular grammatical functions.

<sup>78</sup> See for example Keenan (1976), Silverstein (1976) and Dixon (1979, 1994).

Take for instance the anaphoric deletion of an equivalent NP across clausal chains. If applicable in the language, this is also manifested in the control of verbal agreement of connected verbs across clauses. The cross-clausal co-reference of s and A is the same in accusative syntax. A typical example in English is offered in (41) below, taken from Comrie (1988), where s and A control anaphoric deletion and P does not. Equivalent NP co-reference in complement clauses or conjunctions is the same for s and A, but distinct from P in accusative syntax. A particular device may be available to signal a switch of reference, for example, independent pronominalization or a full NP, and indicates that the referents are distinct. If the controller of the anaphoric deletion were distinct in the conjoined intransitive clauses, English would highlight this by expressing the subject as an independent pronoun or full NP, i.e. *The man hit the woman and she/the woman ran away*.

- (41) a. [S] *The man<sub>i</sub> came and ...* [S=S] *[∅<sub>i</sub>] ran away.*  
       [A]                    [P]                    [S=A≠P]  
       b. *The man<sub>i</sub> hit the woman<sub>y</sub> and ...* [∅<sub>i/\*\*y</sub>] *ran away.*

A morphologically ergative construction generally patterns according to accusative syntactic behavior. In a strictly morphological ergative pattern, then, the ergative A fulfills the syntactic behavior that corresponds to the s of intransitive constructions like the nominative (s=A) in an accusative system. This also holds for the Neo-Aramaic dialects with ergative alignment (Doron and Khan 2012). A marked by the L-suffixes, for instance, controls reflexives in the same way as s in *qaṭal*-based constructions. An example is given below for Ṭuroyo.

- (42) **Ṭuroyo** (Rural, SE Turkey)  
 a. *ú-z'uro ko-ḥoze -∅ ruḥ-e*  
    the-boy:MS IND-see<sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3MS REFL-3MS  
    'The boy sees **himself**.' (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 75/149)  
 b. *ftih -i -le ḥze -le ruḥ-e*  
    open<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3PL -A:3MS see<sub>PFV</sub> -A:3MS REFL-3MS  
    'He opened them (i.e. his eyes) (and) found **himself** (in his father's castle).' (Miden, ibid. 74/457)

Independent pronouns are not at all required to indicate a switch of topic reference in Neo-Aramaic. In (42c) below, for example, P nominal *id-e* 'his hand' is continued as s in the subsequent verbal construction without any need to indi-

cate the switch reference. As co-nominals are not obligatory (unlike in English), the verbal person marking is sufficient.

c. *hano grāš -le id-e u nafiq -o*  
 DEM:MS open<sub>PFV</sub> -A:3MS hand:FS-his and go.out<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS  
 ‘He pulled his hand and it<sub>F</sub> got out.’ (ibid. 46/17, ‘Iwardo’)

Finally, it is rare but possible for ergative alignment to be found not only in morphology, but also in syntactic behavior, so that it is s and p that share more syntactic behavioral properties than a, much like the patient in the passive.<sup>79</sup>

Dyirbal is an oft-cited example of this, where the behavioral properties of p and s share the same pattern. As illustrated in (43) below, it is p that controls anaphoric deletion rather than a. If a were intended to control the anaphoric deletion, Dyirbal would require an antipassive construction to indicate such a switch, where the agent is expressed as s (Comrie 1988, 11).

(43) **Dyirbal** (Australia, North Queensland; Comrie 1988, 10, glossing slightly simplified)

[P]	[A]	[S=P≠A]
<i>Balan dʷugumbil<sub>y</sub></i>	<i>baŋgul yaŋaŋgu<sub>i</sub></i>	<i>balgan</i> [ <i>∅<sub>y</sub>/**<sub>i</sub></i> ] <i>baninyu</i>
woman-ABS	man-ERG	hit came

‘The man<sub>i</sub> hit the woman<sub>y</sub> and (she<sub>y</sub>/\*\*he<sub>i</sub>) came here.’

The s-like behavioral properties, such as equi-NP deletion of p in languages like Dyirbal, are very passive-like. They are, however, irrelevant to languages where ergativity is only manifested in morphological properties and not syntactic behavior.<sup>80</sup>

The same syntactic behavior follows an accusative pattern throughout all of Neo-Aramaic.<sup>81</sup> It is only the morphological marking that shows different alignment types.

### 2.3.3.3 The Semi-Clitic Nature of the L-set

The L-series have some morphological peculiarities reminiscent of clitics in comparison to the E-series (Doron and Khan 2012, 228). They may be omitted or stacked on verbal forms in certain dialects.

79 See Subsection 4.2. on the relationship between the passive and ergative.

80 See Keenan and Comrie (1977), Comrie (1988, 12–15), Givón (1995, 256–267).

81 See also Coghill (2016, 73–81) for inconclusive tests of syntactic ergativity in NENA.

First of all, the L-suffixes are different in that they can be duplicated on a verb, depending on the dialect. (44a) below offers an example of such stacking of L-suffixes in a *qaṭal*-based construction. The first L-set marks the theme, the second L-set marks the recipient.

(44) J. Dohok (NW Iraq)

- a. *b-yāw -ón -na -lox*  
 FUT-give<sub>1PFV</sub> -A:1MS -T:3FS -R:2MS  
 ‘I<sub>M</sub> will give **her** (i.e. my daughter) to you<sub>MS</sub>.’

Stacking may also occur in *qṭil*-. In (44b) below, the first L-set denotes the agent, the second one the recipient.

- b. *húl -li -la zuze*  
 give<sub>PFV</sub> -A:1SG -R:3FS money:PL  
 ‘I gave **her** money.’

In both constructions, the extra L-suffix on top of the other is limited to the R role.<sup>82</sup> Thus it is not possible to say *\*\*hú-li-la ṭalox* ‘I gave **her** to you’, as the additional L-suffix is not available to express the theme, nor the patient such as *\*\*grš-li-la* ‘I pulled her’ (Hoberman 1989, 108–109).

The L-suffixes enjoy an overall semi-mobile status, unlike other suffixal person markers. This is a lingering feature of their enclitic origin (Doron and Khan 2012, 231) and sets them apart from other verbal affixes. L-suffixes allow elements to intervene between the verbal base and its agreement, which also includes the E-suffixes and the past convertor *-wa-*. Examples (45)–(46) offer a comparison.

- (45) *°garš-at-ti* ‘You<sub>FS</sub> pull **me**.’  
*°garš-át-wa-li* ‘You<sub>FS</sub> would pull **me**.’
- (46) *griš-at-ti* ‘I pulled you<sub>FS</sub>.’  
*griš-át-wa-li* ‘I had pulled you<sub>FS</sub>.’

82 Additional L-suffixes, however, are generalized for all objects in a few Christian dialects in the western periphery in SE Turkey and Jewish dialects in NW Iran; see § 4.4.3.

In addition, the L-suffixes marking P in *qaṭəl-* may be omitted, creating a morphologically objectless construction (for whatever purpose). This also applies to the E-suffixes that express P in *qṭil-*. Compare:

(47) *k-əxl-a* 'She is eating.' (implicit patient)

(48) *xəl-la* 'She ate.' (implicit patient)

Yet unlike E-suffixes in *qaṭəl-*, the L-suffixes can also be omitted in *qṭil-*-based constructions in some NENA dialects. The patient remains expressed by the E-suffixes and the construction becomes agentless:

(49) *xil-a* 'It<sub>F</sub> was eaten (by sb.)' (implicit agent)  
*xil-a-wa* 'It<sub>F</sub> had been eaten (by sb.)'

The L-suffixes expressing the patient in *qaṭəl-* behave thus in a similar fashion to the L-suffixes expressing the agent in *qṭil-*. The argument they denote, the patient or agent, is left unexpressed.

And yet, while the *qṭil-*-based constructions generally show an inversion in verbal person marking that is consistent with the equivalent *qaṭəl-*-constructions, the agentless *qṭil-*-forms in (49) have a special status, the function of which depends on the dialect. In general, when the full agent NP is unexpressed but still manifested in agreement, this is indistinct from a situation where the co-nominal is not obligatory (Comrie 1988, 18), so that constructions like *'aya* °*axl-a* vs. °*axl-a* 'She eats' are essentially not distinct from each other. Similarly, *qṭil-*-based constructions do not require a co-nominal so that *'aya* °*xəl-la* vs. °*xəl-la* 'She ate' are essentially non-distinct. Nevertheless, *qaṭəl-*-forms cannot leave the agent unexpressed in both verbal person marking as well as nominal marking. The *qṭil-*-based constructions are strikingly different in that they may do so. Moreover, it is ambiguous as to whether such forms are passive, i.e. intransitive, or ergative, i.e. transitive. The omission of A can still yield well-formed sentences in languages that otherwise exhibit an ergative pattern.<sup>83</sup> Both morphological and syntactic behavioral properties will play a key role in assessing their passive-like or ergative-like properties. As the dialects differ in this respect, we will discuss this for each dialect group in the following chapters.<sup>84</sup>

83 Cf. Keenan (1976, 313) and Comrie (1988, 18–19).

84 Particularly Section 3.5. for Trans-Zab Jewish NENA dialects, Section 4.2. for other NENA varieties and Subsection 5.2.3.2. for Ṭuroyo.

In terms of verbal morphology, then, the L-set can be omitted and even added to another instance thereof, stacking the L-suffixes. Even as agent markers they can also be omitted in the inflection of *qtil-*. Other sets of person markers, such as the E-set, do not have these properties. All of this is an epiphenomenon of the L-suffixes, being historically cliticized prepositional person markers.

#### 2.4 Conclusion: A Construction-Specific Approach

The variation of alignment in Neo-Aramaic is inextricably bound to the ‘life cycle’ of a specific combination of a particular inflectional base (*qtil-*) going back to a verbal adjective as well as a particular set of person markers and the preposition *l-*. This alignment variation is determined by the properties of constructions that instantiate argument groupings and not *per se* of a language as a whole (Comrie 1989, 114).<sup>85</sup> Indeed, we already noted that *qtil*-based constructions can have a special status. Such a typological approach thus diverges from other approaches to Neo-Aramaic alignment (e.g. Doron and Khan 2012; Kalin and van Urk 2015) where constructions are not always regarded as meaningful units in themselves, but as having meaning derived from the lexical parts of speech inserted in a system of rules blind to the observable output. Morphology is viewed only as a surface phenomenon and discoveries about universal (innate) principles of language are the ultimate goal. This notwithstanding, morphological marking is crucial for the purposes of this study in order to capture the microvariation typologically. Constructions themselves are viewed as integrated wholes and independent units of grammatical meaning, without a deeper hidden structure or indeed more basic alignment type of the language in its entirety.

This has important repercussions to bear in mind before examining the Neo-Aramaic microvariation in closer detail. First of all, when we consider that alignment typology identifies a (cor)relation between the properties of arguments across intransitive and transitive constructions, we must take into account that ergativity as an alignment type is not a property of one particular transitive construction. There is nothing inherently ergative about the *qtal-le* verbal forms in Neo-Aramaic, even though this is often taken for granted in the literature.<sup>86</sup> We establish ergativity on the basis of the shared, distinctive prop-

85 Cf. Croft (2001, 168), Haig (2008).

86 See further Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of this issue.

erties of s and P in contradistinction to A. If s and P are not grouped in this sense, it makes no sense to speak of ergativity.

Secondly, an alignment type such as ergativity can be identified from different perspectives without being an essential part of either the constructions or the language as a whole. Verbal person marking in itself is a complex phenomenon that may not show a uniform treatment of grammatical functions on every level of abstraction. This concerns the trigger potential, conditionality, morphological marking and affix order. Which property is a more basic characterization of verbal person marking alignment than another is a moot point. Since the trigger potential and conditionality as manifested in differential object marking is largely uniform across Aramaic languages, it is the morphological marking that will be considered to be key here for comparative purposes, without assuming that there is a deeper overarching alignment.

Lastly, intransitive and transitive constructions can vary and evolve independently of each other. Certain alignment types such as the tripartite (A=S=P) and horizontal (S≠A=P) ones do not group s with any other argument, thus not showing any particular relation between the coding of arguments across intransitive and transitive constructions. Speakers can adjust or expand the usage and reshape the architecture of intransitive and transitive constructions independently of each other as well as the alignment as a whole. Each construction thus has the full potential to 'lead a life of its own' within the Neo-Aramaic speech community.

## 2.5 Overviews of Inflection

TABLE 8 Basic pronominal inventory in Țuroyo

	Independent	Dependent			
		Basic copula (enclitic)		Adnominal (possessive)	
1MS	<i>ono, ŭno</i>	<i>z'uro-no</i>	'I <sub>M</sub> am small'	<i>bab-i</i>	'my father'
FS		<i>z'urto-no</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> am small'		
PL	<i>aḥna, əḥna</i>	<i>z'ure-na</i>	'We are small'	<i>bab-an</i>	'our father'
2MS	<i>hat, hate</i>	<i>z'uro-hət, -hat</i> etc.		<i>bab-ux</i>	etc.
FS	<i>hat, hate</i>	<i>z'urto-hat</i>		<i>bab-ax</i>	
PL	<i>hatu</i>	<i>z'ure-hatu</i>		<i>bab-ay-xu</i>	

TABLE 8 Basic pronominal inventory in Țuroyo (*cont.*)

	Independent	Dependent	
		Basic copula (enclitic)	Adnominal (possessive)
3MS	<i>hiye, huwe</i>	<i>z'uro-yo</i>	<i>bab-e</i>
FS	<i>hiya</i>	<i>z'urto-yo</i>	<i>bab-a</i>
PL	<i>hanne, -nək</i>	<i>z'ure-ne</i>	<i>bab-ay-ye</i>

DATA BASED ON RITTER (1990)

TABLE 9 Basic pronominal inventory in J. 'Amedia

	Independent	Dependent	
		Basic copula (mostly enclitic)	Adnominal (possessive)
1MS	<i>'ana</i>	<i>z'or-ewən</i> 'I <sub>M</sub> am small'	<i>bab-i</i> 'my father'
FS		<i>z'urt-ewan</i> 'I <sub>F</sub> am small'	
PL	<i>'axəni</i>	<i>z'or-ewax</i> 'We are small'	<i>bab-an</i> 'our father'
2MS	<i>'ahi</i>	<i>z'or-ewət</i> etc.	<i>bab-ux</i> etc.
FS	<i>'ahi</i>	<i>z'urt-ewat</i>	<i>bab-ax</i>
PL	<i>'axtun</i>	<i>z'or-etun</i>	<i>bab-oxun</i>
3MS	<i>'awa</i>	<i>z'or-ele</i>	<i>bab-e</i>
FS	<i>'aya</i>	<i>z'urt-ela</i>	<i>bab-a</i>
PL	<i>'ani</i>	<i>z'or-elu</i>	<i>bab-u, -ohun</i>

DATA BASED ON GREENBLATT (2011)

TABLE 10 Simplified overview of the main forms of the verb in NENA

	Sound			First-'	Second-y	Second-w	Final-y
	I <i>qṭl</i> 'kill'	II <i>šdr</i> 'send'	III <i>qṭl</i> 'have sb. killed'	I <i>'xl</i> 'eat'	I <i>qym</i> 'rise'	I <i>lwš</i> 'wear'	I <i>xzy</i> 'see'
INFINITIVE	<i>qṭala</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šadore</i>	<i>maqṭole</i>	<i>'xala</i>	<i>qyama</i>	<i>lwaša</i>	<i>xzaya</i>
RESULTATIVE	FS <i>qṭalta</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šudarta</i>	<i>muqṭalta</i>	<i>xalta</i>	<i>qamta</i>	<i>lušta</i>	<i>xzita</i>
PARTICIPLE	MS <i>qṭila</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šudra</i>	<i>muqṭla</i>	<i>xila</i>	<i>qima</i>	<i>lwiša</i>	<i>xəzya</i>
PERFECTIVE	PL <i>qṭili-</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šudri-</i>	<i>muqṭli-</i>	<i>xili-</i>	<i>qimi-</i>	<i>lwiši-</i>	<i>xze(ni)-/xəzyi-</i>
	FS <i>qṭila-</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šudra-</i>	<i>muqṭla-</i>	<i>xila-</i>	<i>qima-</i>	<i>lwiša-</i>	<i>xəzya-</i>
	MS <i>qṭəl-</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šodər-</i>	<i>muqṭəl-</i>	<i>xəl-</i>	<i>qəm-</i>	<i>luš-</i>	<i>xze-</i>
IMPERFECTIVE	<i>_V</i> <i>qaṭl-</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šadr-</i>	<i>maqṭl-</i>	<i>'axl-</i>	<i>qem-</i>	<i>loš-</i>	<i>xazy-</i>
	<i>_C#</i> <i>qaṭəl-</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šadər-</i>	<i>maqṭəl-</i>	<i>'axəl-</i>	<i>qem-</i>	<i>lawəš-</i>	<i>xaze-/xaz-</i>
IMPERATIVE	<i>qṭul</i>	( <i>m</i> ) <i>šádər</i>	<i>máqṭəl</i>	<i>xul</i>	<i>qu</i>	<i>lwuš</i>	<i>xzi /xzaw</i>

TABLE 11 Simplified overview of *qaṭəl*-conjugations in Eastern Neo-Aramaic

TAM*	Base	A	PST	P	Basic TAM functions	Example
Ṭuroyo	<i>g(d/əd)-, kt-</i>	<i>qoṭəl-</i>	+ E	(-wa)	L Future, Past Habitual, Irrealis	<i>g(əd)-qūṭl-o-li</i> 'She will kill me.'
	<i>k(o)-</i>	<i>qoṭəl-</i>	+ E		L Indicative Present, Realis	<i>ko-qūṭl-o-li</i> 'She's killing me.'
	<i>∅-, d-, t-</i>	<i>qoṭəl-</i>	+ E	(-wa)	L Subjunctive, Past Habitual, Irrealis, Negative Imperative	<i>lo qūṭl-at-li</i> 'Don't kill me!'
NENA	<i>b-/p-/m-(ət/d)-, t/d-</i>	<i>qaṭəl-</i>	+ E	(-wa)	L Future, Past Habitual, Irrealis	<i>b-qaṭl-a-li</i> 'She will kill me.'
	<i>k/g-, ki-, či-, i-, y- **</i>	<i>qaṭəl-</i>	+ E	(-wa)	L Indicative, Realis, Past Habitual	<i>k-qaṭl-á-wa-li</i> 'She used to kill me'
	<i>∅-, d-, t-</i>	<i>qaṭəl-</i>	+ E	(-wa)	L Subjunctive, Irrealis, Past Habitual	<i>∅-qaṭl-a-li</i> '(that) she kill me'
	<i>qam-, k/gəm-, tam-</i>	<i>qaṭəl-</i>	+ E	(-wa)	L Preterit (Transitive)	<i>qam-qaṭl-a-li</i> 'She killed me.'

Notes: Forms given for stem I. \* TAM-markers are highly diverse and dialect-dependent in NENA (Khan 2007d). \*\* These may be restricted to initial weak verbs, as in C. Ṭyari (NENA) and Mlaḥsó, or absent.

## Ergativity and Its Typology: The Trans-Zab Jewish Dialects

The Jewish towns to the east of the Greater Zab comprise a separate Trans-Zab Jewish subgroup against the Jewish communities to the west of the Greater Zab and the settlement Barzan. These western Jewish dialects, such as Dohok, Zakho and ‘Amedia, known as *lishana deni*, are closer to the Christian dialects and will be discussed in the following chapter. The Barzani cluster shares a number of features with the Trans-Zab communities.

Mutzafi (2008b) discerns further clusters within the Trans-Zab subgroup displayed on the map below:

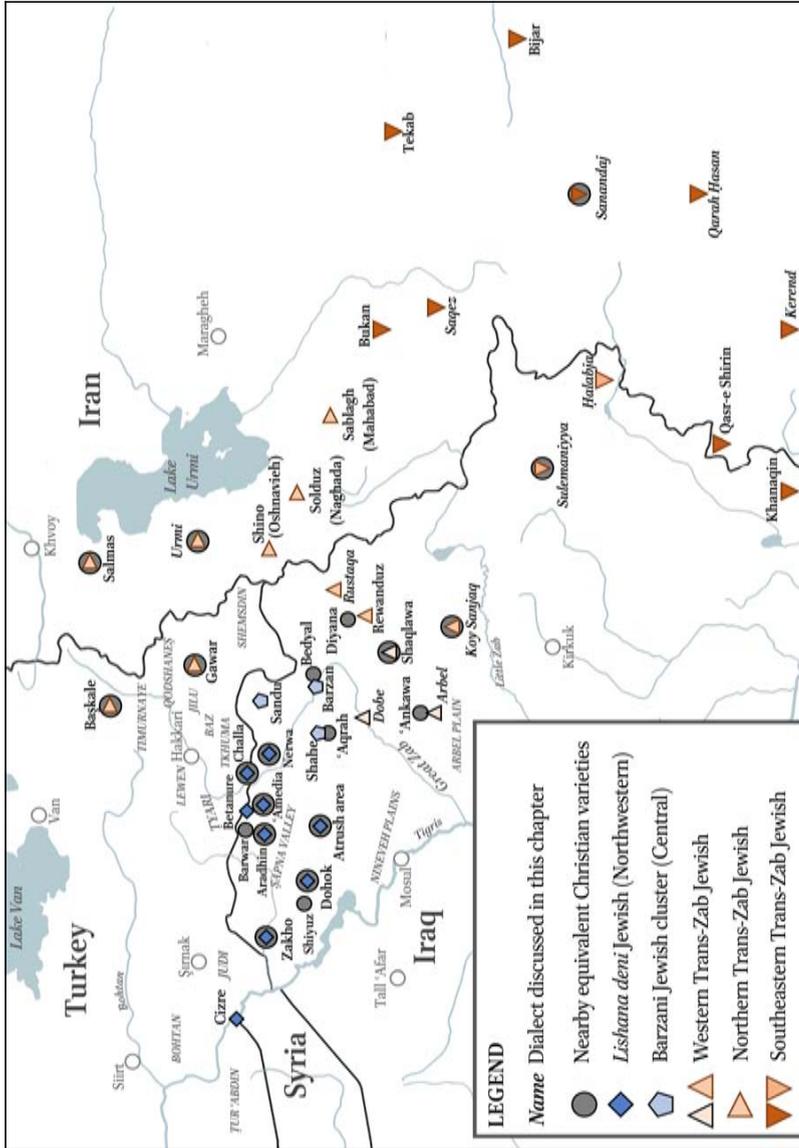
- The **Western Trans-Zab** cluster in the Arbel—or Erbil—region, between the Great and Little Zab rivers: Dobe, Arbel and Shaqlawa alongside Rewanduz, Rustaqa and Koy Sanjaq in Iraq;
- The **Northern Trans-Zab** cluster in Iranian Azerbaijan, including Salmas (or Salamas, Duval 1883), Urmi (or Urmia, Garbell 1965; Khan 2008b), Solduz (Naghada; Hopkins 1989b), Shino (Oshnavieh) and Sablagh (Mahabad);
- The **Southeastern (SE) Trans-Zab** subgroup in the Sulemaniyya region of Iraq and western Iran, with Bijar as the easternmost and Kerend as the southernmost Jewish outpost.

The Trans-Zab dialect bundle is characterized by isoglosses such as final stress, e.g. *gorá* ‘man’ vs. *góra* elsewhere, the merger of interdental /t/ and /d/ into /l/, e.g. *belá* ‘house’ (< \**baytā*) and *ʔelá* ‘festival’ (< \**ʔedā*), lexemes, e.g. *bāruxa* ‘friend’, the definite suffix *-aké* borrowed from Gorani and verb-final word order under influence of Iranian.<sup>1</sup>

The SE Trans-Zab cluster stands out in the whole of NENA for its type of ergative morphology, its typology will be the focus of our discussion in this chapter in light of the Trans-Zab Jewish subgroup as a whole.

After introducing some of the unique morphosyntactic features common to most of the Trans-Zab Jewish group, the differences in their nominal marking and verbal person marking will be examined from a typological perspective. Splits between ergative and non-ergative alignment are generally divided according to clause/verb-related factors, such as tense, aspect and mood, and

<sup>1</sup> See Mutzafi (2008b) for a discussion of these and more features.



MAP 2 The location of Jewish NENA dialects  
 COPYRIGHT: PAUL M. NOORLANDER

argument prominence-related factors, such as person and definiteness, alongside morphological factors, such as prepositional vs. verbal person marking. These factors tend to be presented as scales or hierarchies. When and in what sense do we find ergative marking in these dialects? Valency alternations, i.e. voice, are also pertinent to ergativity as to how these dialects distinguish between intransitive and transitive verbal predicates or (anti)passive and ergative constructions. The splits in Trans-Zab Jewish are manifold and concern all of these factors. They not only occur in simplex verbal forms, but also in compound verbal constructions based on the resultative participle as well as the infinitive.

What is central to this chapter is not only the question to what extent the properties found for ergativity in the Trans-Zab Jewish cluster are (un)expected typologically, but also to what extent there is a correlation between these properties and ergativity within this group. Some of these properties can seem rather unusual from a functionalist approach, but it will be argued that they make sense from a dialectological perspective.

### 3.1 Main Morphosyntactic Hallmarks

#### 3.1.1 *Verb-Final Word Order*

All Trans-Zab Jewish varieties typically exhibit an Object-Verb, i.e. P-V, sequence as the unmarked word order throughout,<sup>2</sup> similarly to other NENA varieties in the eastern periphery, for example:

(1) J. Saqez (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 186)

	[P]	[V]	
a. <i>baxt-év</i>	<i>aburw-év</i>	<i>labl-a-le</i>	( <i>qaṭəl-</i> )
	woman:FS-his	dignity:MS-his	take <sub>1PFV-A:3FS-P:3MS</sub>
	'His wife takes away his dignity.'		

	[P]	[V]	
b. <i>ḥatán</i>	<i>kaldá</i>	<i>nəšq-a-le</i>	( <i>qṭil-</i> )
	groom:MS	bride:FS	kiss <sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>
	'The bridegroom kissed the bride.'		

<sup>2</sup> See Noorlander and Molin (forthcoming) for a comparative study of word order typology in NENA.

### 3.1.2 *Prepositional Marking of Objects*

#### 3.1.2.1 ('əl)l- and Accusative Prepositional Marking

The Trans-Zab Jewish dialects use the preposition *l-* 'to, for' and its allomorphs, i.e. 'əl-/həl-, to mark definite full nominal objects differentially in an accusative fashion. This is regardless of the type of verbal construction and, hence, also occurs together with *qtil-*, such as (2a) for J. Sanandaj and (2b) for J. Urmi.

#### (2) Differential prepositional marking

- |    |   |                    |                            |                                   |                   |
|----|---|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
|    | [A]   | [DOM→P]            | [V-A]                      |                                   |                   |
| a. | <i>bronǎké</i>  | <i>həl-</i>        | <i>bratǎké</i>             | <i>lá-xe-wa-le</i>                | <i>ba-ʿamr-éf</i> |
|    | boy:DEF   | DOM                | girl:DEF                   | NEG-see <sub>PFV</sub> -PST-A:3MS | in-lifetime-his   |
|    | ‘The boy had never seen <b>the girl</b> in his life.’ (J. Sanandaj, W Iran; Khan 2009, 323) |                    |                            |                                   |                   |
|    |   |                    |                            |                                   |                   |
| b. | <i>+šǔltaná</i>   | <i>ʿəl-brön-éw</i> | <i>nšáq-le</i>             |                                   |                   |
|    | king:MS   | DOM-son:MS-his     | kiss <sub>PFV</sub> -A:3MS |                                   |                   |
|    | ‘The king kissed <b>his son</b> .’ (J. Urmi, Garbell 1965, 170)                             |                    |                            |                                   |                   |

#### 3.1.2.2 'əll-Series of Person Markers

Typical of the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties is the use of the same preposition ('əl)l- as the basis for object pronouns that we shall refer to as the 'əll-series (cf. Khan 1999), which are distinct from the unmarked series, e.g. 'ana 'I, and from suffixal person markers as given in the following example.

#### (3) J. Arbel (NW Iraq; Khan 1999, 334)

- |    |                                     |                                   |  |  |  |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
|    | [P]                                 | [V-A]                             |  |  |  |
| a. | <i>ʿəll-ǒx-iš</i>                   | <i>ǧazy-a</i>                     |  |  |  |
|    | OBJ-2MS-ADD                         | see <sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3FS        |  |  |  |
|    | ‘that she sees <b>you</b> also.’    |                                   |  |  |  |
|    |                                     |                                   |  |  |  |
|    | [P]                                 | [V-A-P]                           |  |  |  |
| b. | <i>ʿəll-án</i>                      | <i>qatł-i-lan</i>                 |  |  |  |
|    | OBJ-1PL                             | kill <sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3PL-P:1PL |  |  |  |
|    | ‘that they kill (also) <b>us</b> .’ |                                   |  |  |  |

The narrow focus position in these dialects is immediately before the verb (see Noorlander and Molin forthcoming). Object pronouns can thus occupy this focus position, occurring independently of verbal inflection, like full nominals. Pre-verbal position, then, factors in the selection of *independent* object pronouns, since they provide a pronominal equivalent of full nominals in the verb-

final word order, characteristic of Trans-Zab Jewish varieties,<sup>3</sup> as illustrated for Jewish Urmi below.

- (4) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; Khan 2008b, 448, 300)  
 a. *əl-<sup>+</sup>yalé dah-i-wa* ‘They would beat **the children.**’  
 b. *əl-án dah-i-wa* ‘They would beat **us.**’

The P-V word order is only possible with the fully independent person form, for example:

- (5) **J. Kerend** (W Iran; Hopkins 2002, 287)  
 [P] [V-A]  
*’əlóx grəs-li*  
 ‘I pulled **you<sub>MS</sub>.**’

The default position, however, is immediately after the verb, which tends to be the perfective past form based on *qtil-*. When the *’əll-* series is placed after the verb, there is a very strong tendency to cliticize, with syncope of the initial /’/ after consonants and /’ə/ after vowels. This coalescence yields another set of dependent person markers alongside the familiar L-suffixes. Thus J. Arbel (Khan 1999, 118–119, 133–134) has for ‘We saw him’:

[V	-A	-P]	[V	-A]	[P]
<i>ǰzé-</i>	<i>-lan</i>	<i>-illeu</i>	< <i>ǰze-</i>	<i>-lan</i>	<i>’ill-eu</i>
<small>see<sub>PFV-</sub></small>	<small>-A:1PL</small>	<small>-P:3MS</small>	<small>see<sub>PFV-</sub></small>	<small>-A:1PL</small>	<small>-OBJ-3MS</small>

These pronouns may even attach to inverted *qtil-*-based ditransitive constructions, where the E-set always denotes the theme and the *’əll-* series the recipient, e.g. J. Urmi (Khan 2008b, 123):

[V	-A	-P	-R]
<i>hiw</i>	<i>-á</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-lli</i>
<small>give<sub>PFV-</sub></small>	<small>-T:3FS</small>	<small>-A:3MS</small>	<small>-R:1SG</small>
‘He gave her <b>to me.</b> ’			

The preposition *’əl-* can also be extended by the linker *d-* or the independent possessive pronominal base *did-*; the latter can also completely take over the pronominal object form, e.g. J. Sanandaj (Khan 2009, 348)

<sup>3</sup> See §3.3.2.2.

[P]	[V	-A]	
<i>did-i-č</i>	<i>qaṭl</i>	<i>-í</i>	
POSS-1SG-ADD	kill <sub>IPFV</sub>	-A:3PL	
‘They will kill me also.’ (lit. will kill mine also)			

3.1.3 Verbal Inflection and Person Marking

3.1.3.1 Transitive Verbal Base *qaṭl-*

The *qaṭl-*base may sometimes display a slight difference in the pattern, i.e. vowel template, of sound verbs when combined with both E-suffixes and L-suffixes in all Trans-Zab Jewish varieties. While the template of the verb on its own is C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>2</sub>əC<sub>3</sub>- before suffixes beginning with a consonant, e.g. I *nšəq-le* ‘He kissed’, III *madməx-la* ‘She put to sleep’, it breaks up the syllable as C<sub>1</sub>əC<sub>2</sub>C<sub>3</sub>- when followed by an affix beginning with a vowel before the L-suffix, e.g. *nəšq-a-le* ‘He kissed her’ instead of *\*\*nšiq-a-le* similarly to *madəmx-i-la* ‘She put them to sleep’ for *\*\*madmix-i-la*.<sup>4</sup> This is presumably at least partially under the influence of the equivalent *qaṭəl-*based forms that coincide in the syllable structure C<sub>1</sub>VC<sub>2</sub>C<sub>3</sub> in the inflection of final-y verbs, compare J. Saqez (Israeli 1998, 26) *xazy-a-le* ‘She sees him’ and *xəzy-a-le* ‘He saw her’ and *mazdy-a-le* ‘She frightens him’ and *məzdy-a-le* ‘He frightened her’ (Khan 2005).<sup>5</sup>

3.1.3.2 Possessive Suffixes and Secondary L<sub>2</sub>-Suffixes (L<sub>2</sub>-set)

The possessive suffixes of the 3ms. and 3fs. in Trans-Zab Jewish varieties generally end in a characteristically labial element ranging from *-u*, *-w*, *-v* to *-f* depending on the dialect, as illustrated in (6) below. They contrast with the L-suffixes 3ms. *-le* and 3fs. *-la* respectively.

(6) Possessive suffixes vs. L-suffixes

	L-SUFFIX		POSSESSIVE SUFFIX			
	(all)	vs.	J. Urmi	J. Saqez	J. Sanandaj	
3MS	<i>-le</i>	vs.	<i>bel-éw</i>	<i>bel-év</i>	<i>bel-éf</i>	‘his house’
3FS	<i>-la</i>	vs.	<i>bel-áw</i>	<i>bel-áv</i>	<i>bel-áf</i>	‘her house’

Occasionally, these distinct suffixes also end up on verbal forms through the *’all-*series. While the object is normally marked by L-suffixes after E-suffixes in *qaṭəl-*, such as *garš-a-le* ‘She pulls him’ or *garš-á-wa-le* ‘She pulled him’ in J. Sanandaj, the first person singular verbal forms of *qaṭəl-* take object indexes

4 To the best of my knowledge, only J. Rustaqa (Khan 2002b) does not display this shift and maintains the pattern of *nšiq-a-le*.

5 See also § 2.3.3.1.

in *-ef* and *-af* and after *-wa* they are *-lef* and *-laf*. Thus, the following constructions in (7) below do not contain the expected L-suffixes *-le* and *-la*.<sup>6</sup> Possibly, forms such as \**garáš-na-lox* underwent anticipatory assimilation *garáš-na-nox* and syncope, developing into *garáš-n-ox*.<sup>7</sup> Then the second affix was reanalyzed as an adnominal suffix, resulting in the use of distinct 3ms. and 3fs. suffixes identical to the adnominal suffixes *-ef* and *-af*.

(7) **Distinct L-suffixes after first person singular (Khan 2009, 155–156)**

	PRESENT		PAST				
3MS	<i>garáš</i>	<i>-n -éf</i>	<i>garáš-</i>	<i>-na -wa -lef</i>			'I <sub>M</sub> pull(ed) him.'
3FS	<i>garáš</i>	<i>-n -áf</i>	<i>garáš-</i>	<i>-na -wa -laf</i>			'I <sub>M</sub> pull(ed) her.'

Similarly, the simplification of originally geminate /ll/ neutralizes the distinction between the L-suffixes and 'əll-series attached to the preterit. The following data from Jewish Saqez (W Iran; cf. Khan 2009, 158 for J. Sanandaj) show how the sets of person markers can be neutralized:

(8) **Secondary L-set of affixes in J. Saqez (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 30, 113)**

	L-SET	'əll-SET	POSS
1SG	<i>-li</i>	<i>-l-i</i>	<i>-i</i>
2MS	<i>-lox</i>	<i>-l-ox</i>	<i>-ox</i>
2FS	<i>-lax</i>	<i>-l-ax</i>	<i>-ax</i>
3MS	<i>-le</i>	<i>-l-ev</i>	<i>-ev</i>
3FS	<i>-la</i>	<i>-l-av</i>	<i>-av</i>
3PL	<i>-lu</i>	<i>-l-u</i>	<i>-u</i>

The second set in (8) represents the forms that correspond to the 'əll-series in closely related dialects of Jewish Saqez. The distinction in (8) between the first set and the second set is minimal in Jewish Saqez and clearly correlates with the 'possessive' suffixes. Hence, all indexes except for the third person singular are identical to the familiar L-suffixes and have arguably merged. The third person singular thus has a unique set of indexes in Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, which characteristically end in a labial sound that can become a special type of L<sub>2</sub>-suffixes contrasting with the more typical *-le* and *-la*.

6 J. Rustaqa (Khan 2002b, 401) is the only dialect known to me that does not show deviant forms, e.g. *qaṭəl-n-e* 'I<sub>M</sub> kill him'.

7 Similarly to Turoyo (SE Turkey), e.g. *ko-goráš-n-üx* 'I<sub>MS</sub> pull you<sub>MS</sub>', a contraction of *ko-goráš-no-lux*.

3.1.3.3 The Clause-Final Copula and Secondary E-suffixes (E<sub>2</sub>-set)

The Trans-Zab Jewish dialects diverge to a great degree in the expression of the perfect and progressive that are generally based on nominal forms of the verb. When dialects use a nominal form of the verb combined with the enclitic copula, the person indexes can convert into suffixes virtually identical to the E-set. The dialects in the Western Trans-Zab region (Khan 1999; Mutzafi 2004b), however, make no use of such nominal based forms, but simply add a preverbal TAM-marker instead, e.g.

PROGRESSIVE	<i>lā/nā</i>	<i>paləx-∅</i>	'He is opening'
PERFECT	<i>lā/nā</i>	<i>pləx-le</i>	'He has opened'

The past copula consists of the *q̄til-* of *hwy* 'be, become' with L-suffixes in all Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, e.g.

<i>wele</i>	'he was'
<i>weli</i>	'I was'
<i>welan</i>	'we were'
	etc.

The shape of the corresponding present enclitic copula can vary significantly across the dialects, as illustrated in (9). Western Trans-Zab dialects such as Arbel have the paradigm that is most common to NENA overall. Northern Trans-Zab dialects such as Urmi stand out because of their generalization of the /l/ from the third to all persons and Southeastern varieties stand out because of their characteristic -y.<sup>8</sup>

(9) The basic clause-final copula in Trans-Zab Jewish<sup>9</sup>

	Arbel (Khan 1999)	Urmi (Khan 2008b)	Sulemaniyya (Khan 2004a)
3MS	<i>-ile</i>	<i>-ile</i>	<i>-ye</i>
3FS	<i>-ila</i>	<i>-ila</i>	<i>-ya</i>
3PL	<i>-ilu</i>	<i>-ilü</i>	<i>-yen</i>
2MS	<i>-wat</i>	<i>-ilet</i>	<i>-yet</i>
2FS	<i>-wat</i>	<i>-ilat</i>	<i>-yat</i>
	etc.	etc.	etc.

8 Khan (2004a, 94) argues the inflection of the originally pronominal copula was verbalized to match that of the final-/y/ verb *hwy*.

9 Cf. Khan (2002b, 408).

Certain contractions of the enclitic copula and the vocalic ending of the predicate can result in person indexes that are (nearly) identical to the E-suffixes. When the preceding word ends in /e/ or /a/, all the copula forms containing /e/, except for the 3ms. *-ye*, contract completely in SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects like Sulemaniyya. These are the 3pl., 2ms., 2pl. and 1pl; thus compare, e.g. J. Sulemaniyya (Khan 2004a, 94–95)

<i>laxxá</i>	+	<i>-yex</i>	<i>laxx-éx</i>	‘We are here.’
		<i>-ya</i>	<i>laxxa-ya</i>	‘She is here.’
<i>naxóš</i>	+	<i>-yex</i>	<i>naxóš-yex</i>	‘We are ill.’
		<i>-ya</i>	<i>naxóš-ya</i>	‘She is ill.’

The same process applies to compound verbal forms consisting of the copula and a nominal element of the verb that typically ends in /e/ or /a/. J. Sulemaniyya contracts progressive forms such as *garošéx* ‘We are pulling’ from the infinitive \**garošá* ‘pulling’ plus the enclitic copula *-yex* ‘we are’ are phonologically identical to the E-suffixes, The progressive *garoš-éx* is identical to the inflection of *qatəl-* as in *garš-éx* ‘We pull’ (Khan 2004a, 100). The difference between the two sets is obsolete with respect to the 2ms., 2pl. and 1pl., while other person indexes are kept apart, for example:

(10) J. Sulemaniyya (NW Iran; Khan 2004a, 83, 100)

	HABITUAL	PROGRESSIVE
3MS	<i>garəš-∅</i>	<i>garošá-y</i>
3FS	<i>garš-á</i>	<i>garoša-ya</i>
3PL	<i>garš-í</i>	<i>garoš-én</i>
2MS	<i>garš-ét</i>	<i>garoš-ét</i>
2PL	<i>garš-etun</i>	<i>garoš-etun</i>
1PL	<i>garš-éx</i>	<i>garoš-éx</i>

Among Jewish dialects, contracted forms can thus fall ‘out of synch’ with their uncontracted counterparts. This is the case in Iranian Azerbaijan, where the synthesis of a formerly analytic construction constitutes the basis of an inflectional paradigm no longer synchronic with the copula,<sup>10</sup> as compared in (11) below for the first person.

10 Only a non-verbal clause can take the full form of the enclitic copula in J. Urmi (Khan 2008b, 282).

(11) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2008b, 84)

PROGRESSIVE				COP	E-SET
+ <i>qatöl-én</i>	<	* <i>qatolá-ilen</i>	'I <sub>M</sub> am killing'	- <i>ilen</i>	- <i>en</i>
+ <i>qatöl-án</i>	<	* <i>qatolá-ilan</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> am killing'	- <i>ilan</i>	- <i>an</i>
+ <i>qatöl-áx</i>	<	* <i>qatolá-ilax</i>	'We are killing'	- <i>ilax</i>	- <i>ax</i>

These endings are completely identical to the E-set found in the rest of the verbal system. They only differ in the third person morphemes *-é* and *-ú* based on copula forms *-ile* and *-ilu*, for example:

PROGRESSIVE				COP	E-SET
+ <i>qatöl-é</i>	<	* <i>qatolá-ile</i>	'He is killing'	- <i>ile</i>	-∅
+ <i>qatöl-ú</i>	<	* <i>qatolá-ilü</i>	'They are killing'	- <i>ilü</i>	- <i>i</i>

First and second person agent indexes combine with the L-suffixes to denote the object, for example:

PERFECT	+ <i>qtalt-an-ne</i>	<	* <i>qtalta</i> + <i>-ilan</i> + <i>-le</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> have killed him.'
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The merger of the compound progressive and perfect with *qatəl-* is virtually complete in dialects like J. Urmi. Only the third person masculine singular and third person plural agent indexes constitute separate set, being *-é* and *-ú*, consistent with the copula forms *-ile* and *-ilü* from which they derive. Unlike first and second person subject and agent indexes, which are identical to the E<sub>1</sub>-set, these third person forms combine with an object series that shows secondary gemination of the /l/ like the 'əll-series, for example:

PERFECT	+ <i>qtil-ü-lli</i>	<	* <i>qtilé</i> + <i>-ilü</i> + 'əll- <i>i</i>	'They have killed me.'
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Negation and past tense are not expressed by special forms of the copula in Urmi. The past convertor *wa* and negator *la* are used instead:

PERFECT	+ <i>qtalt</i>	- <i>an-ne</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> have killed him.'	(present)	
	<i>la</i>	+ <i>qtalt</i>	- <i>an-ne</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> haven't killed him.'	(negative)
		+ <i>qtalt</i>	- <i>án-wa-le</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> had killed him.'	(past)

The difference between the copula and the E-set, therefore, can be minimal, although a residue of the copula is still observed, especially in the third person. This gives rise to a special secondary E<sub>2</sub>-set for the third person only, similarly to the 'əll-series, while the first and second persons are fully merged with the primary E-set in Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan.

### 3.2 Ergativity and Alignment Splits in Typological Perspectives

When a particular alignment type is restricted to a grammatical domain, we are dealing with an *alignment split*. This phenomenon has become so closely linked with the typology of ergativity in the literature that when ergative alignment is restricted with respect to the accusative type, as it often is, this is generally called *split ergativity* (Comrie 1978; Dixon 1979, 1994). In fact, it is so common for ergativity to be restricted by various factors, that split ergativity has been considered one of the defining hallmarks of an ergative language.<sup>11</sup> Labeling this ‘split ergative alignment’ is not only arbitrary, but also confusing. This terminology is avoided altogether here, as “it is not ergativity that is split, but alignment” (Haig 2008, 9). More specifically, it is not alignment *per se* that is split, but constructions that instantiate different argument marking strategies.

Alignment splits as such can occur between:

- a) clausal categories, e.g. imperfective vs. perfective verbal constructions, or verbal categories, e.g. agentive vs. patientive verbs;
- b) morphological strategies, e.g. flagging vs. indexing;
- c) argument categories, e.g. first/second vs. third person.

There are at least two major approaches within linguistic typology to account for such splits, which can be divided into functional-communicative and areal-diachronic typology. The difference between the two approaches will become especially apparent in the alignment splits conditioned by the properties of the argument itself, but the difference between the more cognitive and more historical approaches is arguably noticeable for all factors.

Functionalists emphasize an underlying functional-communicative and cognitive basis. They adopt (sometimes universal) functional explanations for why certain patterns are favored cross-linguistically.<sup>12</sup> It is a common assumption among such typologists, for instance, that cross-linguistic variation is largely not random, but due to general cognitive principles and an iconic relationship existing between the speaker’s experience and the constructions they choose (e.g. Givón 1985b). What is more in line with speakers’ experiences is easier to process, and, because they are easier to process, constructions that maximally correspond to speakers’ experiences are preferred over others.

The other approach emphasizes the role of areal and diachronic factors that contribute to preferences in alignment typology. The historical development of

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, Silverstein (1976), Dixon (1979), Givón (1985a).

<sup>12</sup> See *inter alia* Givón (1979, 1990, 1995, 2001), Foley and Van Valin (1984), Langacker (1987), (1991a–b), Croft (1994a, 2001).

the source construction and areal factors concerning replications or transfers from one language to another are considered pertinent. They may be equally or even more germane to why alignment varies or is manifested in this way in a given language (e.g. Creissels 2008b). While functionalistic approaches do not deny that diachronic factors and language contact play a role, such ‘areal-diachronic typologists’<sup>13</sup> argue that functionalist explanations for typology have been overstated, and historical and area-specific factors have more explanatory scope and power.

When we consider the typology of ergativity and its expected properties based on predications made in the literature, these approaches evidently diverge, but both arguably need to be taken seriously. Therefore, none of the generalizations made here are intended to be taken as universally true, i.e. inferences of universals about human language. When a given property is considered exceptional or unexpected, it is simply contrary to a given predication or expectation found in the relevant typological literature. While communicative efficiency is not considered to be irrelevant, it will become clear that areal and diachronic factors have to be taken into account. The focus here, nevertheless, is on the synchronic variation and its typological properties, not its diachronic development *per se*.

### 3.2.1 *Clause- and Verb-Related Factors for Alignment Splits*

The marking of *s* and alignment of arguments can vary based on verbal semantics, sometimes referred to as “semantic alignment” (Donohue 2008). *s* can align with either *A* or *P*, so that we can speak in terms of an *s<sub>A</sub>* and *s<sub>P</sub>* form. Lexical verb classes can be open as opposed to closed, so that one construction may be available to all verbs, while another is restricted. Alignment may also differ depending on clause-level grammatical information expressing the categories of tense (such as future, present and past), grammatical aspect (such as imperfective and perfective) and mood (such as realis vs. irrealis) or modality (such as possibility, necessity etc.), often abbreviated to TAM. All of these factors are, broadly speaking, verb-related (e.g. Tsunoda 1981).

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13 Bickel (2008), Cristofaro (2013), Bickel et al. (2015) and the contributions to the special issue on hierarchies in alignment in *Linguistics* 54/3 (Haude and Witzlack-Makarevich 2016) are examples of recent studies and surveys.

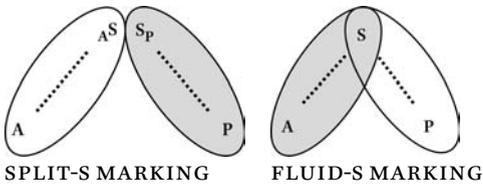


FIGURE 2 Split- and fluid-subject marking

### 3.2.1.1 Split and Fluid Subject Marking

Dixon (1979, 1994) distinguishes between *split*-subject marking and *fluid*-subject marking.<sup>14</sup> Figure 2 displays the two types in form of a schema.

The main difference between them is the number of lexemes or verb classes involved. Split-subject marking confines  $s_A$  or  $s_P$  forms to specific verb classes depending on semantic prototypes. In Guaraní, a Tupian language spoken in Paraguay, for example, the  $s_A$  form is limited to verbs that denote an active-dynamic situation such as ‘go’, ‘die’ or ‘sleep’, while the  $s_P$  form to those that denote a stative situation (like ‘be fast’, ‘be dead’ or ‘be sleepy’). In the following example, the prefix *a-* marks *A* as well as the *s* of dynamic situations and the prefix *še-* marks *P* as well as the *s* of stative situations.

(1) **Guaraní** (Tupian, Paraguay; Mithun 1991, 511)

TRANSITIVE		INTRANSITIVE	
a.	<i>a-gwerú aína</i>	c.	<i>a-xá</i> (s <sub>A</sub> , dynamic)
	A:1SG-bring them		S:1SG-go
	‘I am bringing them now.’		‘I go.’
TRANSITIVE		INTRANSITIVE	
b.	<i>še-rerahá</i>	d.	<i>še-ropehíi</i> (s <sub>P</sub> , stative)
	P:1SG-carry.off		S:1SG-be.sleepy
	‘It will carry me off.’		‘I am sleepy.’

Sometimes there is an open as opposed to a closed verb class, so that one form is more common overall than the other. Fluid-subject marking, however, allows a single verb class to occur in both  $s_A$  and  $s_P$  forms. In Guaraní, for example, some verbs can occur in both the  $s_A$  and  $s_P$  form. Mithun (1991, 13), for instance, demonstrates that “the verb *ka’ú* means ‘to get drunk’” in the  $s_A$  form “but ‘to be a drunkard, to be drunk’” in the  $s_P$  form. A language, therefore, may

14 This is sometimes also called split intransitivity (e.g. Payne 1997; Andrews 2007; Creissels 2008a). See also Klammer (2008) for more examples of overlap between the two.

show both split- and fluid-subject marking, a situation that also holds for Neo-Aramaic languages.

NENA dialects may exhibit  $s_A$  or  $s_P$  forms, i.e. for the third person, in *qtil*-based constructions in a similar way, in particular the Northern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties. *s* aligns with *A* in the perfective aspect, i.e. with dynamic action focus, but with *P* in the resultative or retrospective aspect, i.e. with result state focus.<sup>15</sup>

(2) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; Garbell 1965; Khan 2008b)

a.  $+dm\acute{x}-la$ <sup>16</sup> ( $s_A$  intransitive: perfective past)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
 'She went to sleep.' (lit. 'Her slept')

b.  $+dmix-a$  ( $s_P$  intransitive: realis perfect)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
 'She has gone to sleep.' (lit. 'She slept')

The patient-like inflection (i.e. E-set) for *s* serves to denote an observed state resulting from a prior event. This can generally encompass stative, resultative or retrospective (i.e. perfect) aspect, all of which are properly subsumed under the imperfective aspect focusing on a continuous result state against the perfective past representing the event as a whole completed in the past. This co-variation is a fluid type of subject-marking, in which the  $s_A$  form, i.e. L-set, expresses the perfective past, i.e. wholly completed dynamic event, and the  $s_P$  form, i.e. E-set, the perfect or resultative, i.e. an enduring result state.

Various factors may be involved in split- and fluid-subject marking. The type exemplified in Guaraní above is on the basis of aspect and also known as *active-stative* alignment. A *dynamic* situation or action is generally distinguished from a *stative* situation or inaction by the occurrence or absence of change. Activities like 'walk' or processes like 'grow' are dynamic, since they presuppose a change, while a state like 'be sleepy' does not. The opposition between action and inaction of the intransitive situations correlates with the agent as instigator or initiation phase and patient as endpoint or result-state phase of a transitive situation (e.g. DeLancey 1981). Another type of split- and fluid-subject marking is known as an *agent-patient* split (Nichols 1990), where the degree of agentivity

15 The corresponding transitive construction of the resultative or perfect varies considerably across these dialects, see Subsection 3.4.

16 The symbol + indicates suprasegmental pharyngealization of the following word or syllable.

or affectedness determines the grouping of *s*. If *s* is in control and thus instigating like an agent (such as the subject of ‘walk’, ‘swim’ etc.), it shares its coding properties with *A*, but if *s* lacks control and is affected like a patient (such as the subject of ‘fall’, ‘die’), it shares these with *P*. The *telic-atelic* split also exists, where, for example in Georgian, telic verbs will align their *s* with *P* and not with *A*, which indicates that telicity outranks volitionality (Arkadiev 2008). A *telic* situation is characterized by a change of state that reaches its natural endpoint or result phase after Greek *telos* ‘goal, end’, such as *I sat down, I went to the market* and the like (Comrie 1976, 45), whereas the counterpart is known as *atelic*.

The split and fluid-*s* marking found in the indigenous languages of the Americas, as discussed in the seminal study by Mithun (1991), is sometimes referred to as an alignment type of its own, being essentially not a split between ergative and accusative marking but a system *sui generis*. The dynamic-stative or rather perfective-resultative fluid-*s* marking in (2) would accordingly not be a subtype of ergativity, but of semantic alignment. With respect to (2), however, this is further complicated by the fact that forms like *dmix-a* in (2b), i.e. the realis perfect or resultative, also have a transitive counterpart belonging to the same clause type where *s* may not be treated like *A* and/or *P*. If there is a transitive counterpart to (2b) with the same or a similar TAM value, I will consider the *s<sub>P</sub>* form also part of that system.

Furthermore, split intransitivity is a common feature of languages with ergative alignment because of the differential treatment of *A*; a feature that is generally not apparent in an accusative pattern.<sup>17</sup> Basque, for instance, is a well-known example of a language with ergative morphosyntax, but the *s* of a few intransitive verbs, such as ‘boil’ in (3c), takes ergative case-marking, and the verb takes transitive coding instead of the expected absolutive, such as the *s* of ‘come’ in (3b) (Creissels 2008a, 143).

(3) **Basque** (Creissels 2008a, 143, glossing slightly adapted)

a. *Gizon-ak ur-a edan du*  
 man-SG:ERG water-SG:ABS drink<sub>PFV</sub> AUX:PRS:P:3SG:A:3SG  
 ‘The man has drunk the water.’

b. *Gizon-a etorri da*  
 man-SG:ABS come<sub>PFV</sub> AUX:PRS:S:3SG  
 ‘The man has come.’

<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, this distinction may be reflected elsewhere, for example in the different selection of auxiliaries, such as HAVE vs. BE, in the various European perfects.



(Comrie 2005, 399), it may be argued<sup>19</sup> that splits of the kind in (4) can be considered a hallmark of the typology of transitivity alternations or lexical verbal classes in general, which could only manifest itself in an ergative morphological pattern because of the differential treatment of A. In fact, it is so common for ‘ergative languages’ to show variation in the marking of s depending on lexical transitivity that this has even been considered one of their defining hallmarks (e.g. Givón 1985a). It also depends on how much weight is given to the number of subsets of  $s_A$  and  $s_P$  verbs or verbal forms. This is radically different from the type in (2), since, there, both situations are equally intransitive and pertain to the same intransitive verb. For this reason, I will avoid subsuming the type in (4) under semantic alignment and consider it possible for verbs like (4a) to show transitive morphology but intransitive semantics.

Finally, although semantic factors may be discerned in the classification of verbs and splits in subject coding, there is ample room for language-specific arbitrariness (e.g. Dixon 1994, 74–75; Creissels 2008a, 150–151). There appears to be no obvious semantic reason for the  $s_A$  coding in Basque, for example. It appears to be a recent, increasingly common shift that is spreading from Western to Eastern Basque (Aldai 2008).

Hence, semantic criteria can be ambiguous, and lexicalization often obscures semantic tendencies. What favors  $s_A$  or  $s_P$  coding is ultimately construction-specific and language-specific.<sup>20</sup>

### 3.2.1.2 Tense, Aspect and Mood

Alignment may also differ depending on clause-level grammatical information expressing the categories of tense (such as future, present and past), aspect (such as imperfective and perfective) and mood (such as realis vs. irrealis) or modality (such as possibility, necessity etc.), often abbreviated to TAM. There are noteworthy cross-linguistic preferences for the grouping of s and A ( $s=A$ ) in the irrealis, non-past, and/or imperfective constructions against the grouping of s and P in the realis, past, and/or perfective constructions. s aligns either with P or A depending on the TAM category expressed by the construction.

In the Standard Kurmanji variety of Northern Kurdish, for example, past tense constructions show ergative alignment, while non-past tense constructions show accusative alignment. Example (5) illustrates this split: the verb always indexes (e.g. *-î*) only the argument in the ‘nominative’ case (e.g. *ez, tu*); this is P in the past and A in the present. The ‘oblique’ case (e.g. *min, te*), in

19 See further Section 3.5.

20 See, for example, Dixon (1994, 74–75), Creissels (2008a, 150–151).

TABLE 12 Alignment split conditioned by TAM in Standard Kurmanji

	Non-past accusative (S=A)	Past ergative (S=P)	Gloss
A	<i>ez</i>	<i>min</i>	'I, me'
S	<i>ez</i>	<i>ez</i>	
P	<i>min</i>	<i>ez</i>	

turn, marks A in the past, but P in the present. The word order is consistent in both past and present transitive constructions, where A precedes P. The coding properties, by contrast, are inverted, in which S aligns ergatively with P in the past, but accusatively with A in the present. Table 12 above represents this in a schema for the first person singular.

(5) Kurmanji (Northern Kurdish, Turkey; Matras 1997, 617–618)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>PAST: ERGATIVE (S=P)</p> <p>[A] [P] [V-P]</p> <p>a. <i>min tu dît-î</i></p> <p>I:OBL you:NOM saw-2SG</p> <p>'I saw you.'</p><br><p>[S] [V-S]</p> <p>b. <i>tu çû-yî</i></p> <p>you:NOM went-2SG</p> <p>'You went.'</p><br><p>c. <i>ez çû-m</i></p> <p>I:NOM went-1SG</p> <p>'I went.'</p> | <p>PRESENT: ACCUSATIVE (S=A)</p> <p>[A] [P] [V-A]</p> <p>d. <i>ez te di-bîn-im</i></p> <p>I:NOM you:OBL PROG-see-1SG</p> <p>'I see you.'</p><br><p>[S] [V-S]</p> <p>e. <i>tu di-ç-î</i></p> <p>you:NOM PROG-go-2SG</p> <p>'You are going.'</p><br><p>f. <i>ez di-ç-im</i></p> <p>I:NOM PROG-go-1SG</p> <p>'I am going.'</p> |
|---|---|

Resultative, perfect and preterit are associated with ergative alignment: if ergative alignment is found in the preterit, it will also be expected to be found in the perfect and resultative (Malchukov 2015). The dividing line between accusative and ergative alignment in languages such as Kurmanji is non-past

vs. past. In Indo-Aryan languages such as Hindi and Mayan languages such as Chorti, the dividing line is between perfective and imperfective aspect (Dixon 1994, 100; cf. Comrie 1978, 351–352).

Although such TA-conditioned splits are commonly between accusative and ergative alignment in the imperfective/non-past and perfective/past, other oppositions are also found. The imperfective in Gujarati, for instance, follows a neutral case-marking pattern against ergative case-marking in the perfective (DeLancey 1981, 628–631). Furthermore, it has been claimed for some Cariban languages (Amazonia) that it is rather the imperfective/non-past conditions that favor an ergative pattern (Gildea and de Castro Alves 2010).

Mood is also a category that correlates with accusative or ergative marking and indirectly with tense (e.g. future) and possibly aspect (e.g. proximative). The future/irrealis or imperative/hortative mood favors accusative marking in some languages that manifest a split (Dixon 1994, 101). Dixon (*ibid.*) points out that moods such as the imperative focus on a controllable activity, which would typically target A and/or S and, hence, disfavor a grouping of S with P. Nevertheless, it may also be the other way around. Ergative alignment, for instance, is found for the future/irrealis and past and perfect in Newari (Tibeto-Burman, Nepal, Givón 1985a, 93).

Some scholars<sup>21</sup> argue that the features associated with the accusative alignment entail a viewpoint of the event from the perspective of the agent and the features associated with the ergative alignment a viewpoint from the perspective of the patient. The perfective aspect, then, entails a viewpoint of the event that is ultimately oriented towards a definite result terminating in and affecting the patient. This readily combines with the past tense, since completeness and completion neatly go hand in hand. *Aspect* defines where the situation unfolds over time within its temporal structure in a part-whole relationship (Shibatani 2006, 220–221). The event is viewed as a complete whole from beginning to end in the perfective aspect, but viewed from a specific point or several points of the temporal phase (such as habits) between beginning and end in the imperfective. The perfective past, for instance, expresses complete, bounded events in the past and aligns S with P distinct from the accusative alignment in the imperfective past, which expresses ongoing or iterated events. Since the manner in which the activity or process unfolds through time is more central to the imperfective aspect, this is mainly dependent on the agent's involvement, which would be conventionalized in accusative alignment (e.g. Comrie 1981, 69; DeLancey 1982).

21 See *inter alia* DeLancey (1981), Givón (1984a, 156–158), Dixon (1994, 100–101), Lazard (1998, 214–217) and Næss (2007, 118–119).

Nevertheless, it seems more plausible that this patient-orientation is merely an epiphenomenon of diachrony. There is no *a priori* reason why perfective past constructions should favor ergative alignment or disfavor accusative alignment. Indeed, ergative constructions in tense-aspectual splits are well-known to originate historically in resultative constructions involving an adjectival form of the verb that expresses the state of a patient.<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, the aspect scale of resultative, perfect and preterit in Malchukov (2015) represents diachronically the grammaticalization of resultative to perfective past via the perfect (e.g. Bybee and Dahl 1989):

stative > resultative > perfect > perfective past

It is thus more likely that the ergative construction in a TAM alignment split is at least in some cases the outcome of a historical development of originally intransitive resultative participial constructions that grammaticalized to and were conventionalized as the main expression of the perfective past. Conversely, in other cases, it is the progressive that is based on an intransitive construction, where *s* typically marks the agent of an activity in progress. This can further grammaticalize to an accusative pattern alongside the predominant ergative alignment in the rest of the language (e.g. Creissels 2008b).

### 3.2.2 *Argument-Related Factors for Alignment Splits: Prominence*

Alignment splits based on properties of the argument itself rather than the verb mainly hinge on the special treatment of either *A* or *P*. The opposition between zero and overt coding of an NP depending on such properties is generally known as differential argument marking and is mainly associated with objects (e.g. Bossong 1985, 1998). Argument salience has been argued to correlate with associated roles and alignment typology by various functionalist approaches (e.g. Givón 1976; Croft 1988). Lower ranking arguments are associated with the *P* role, while higher ranking arguments with the *A* role. Similarly, the ergative type (*S=P*) is associated with lower ranking arguments, while the accusative (*S=A*) is associated with higher ranking ones.

#### (6) **Role hierarchies**

- a. SALIENCE: high > low
- b. FUNCTION: A > P

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22 See *inter alia* Anderson (1977), Trask (1979), Creissels (2008b). Cf. Haig (2008) on Iranian.

The features that determine the inherent and/or discourse salience of a nominal are generally broken down into the following distinct subscales, listed in (7),<sup>23</sup> where the terminology differs for the overarching scale that merges them. What is commonly known as “the nominal hierarchy” (Dixon 1994), is variously also referred to as the animacy, agency, empathy, individuation, topicality and salience scale/hierarchy. Aissen (2003) adopts the more general term “prominence hierarchy”. These features are generally subsumed under a single prominence hierarchy with first and second person pronouns as the highest ranking type and inanimate, non-specific (indefinite) common nouns as the lowest ranking type.

(7) **Prominence hierarchy**

	MORE PROMINENT	LESS PROMINENT
a. <b>PERSON:</b>	first, second	> third
b. <b>NOMINAL:</b>	pronoun	> full nominal
c. <b>ANIMACY:</b>	human	> animate > inanimate
d. <b>REFERENTIAL:</b>	definite	> specific indefinite > non-specific

Which particular pragmatic and/or semantic features of the prominence hierarchy demarcates the marking of an argument differs from language to language. Topicalization constructions can also trigger differential marking.<sup>24</sup> There is a cross-linguistic tendency to distinguish speech act participants, i.e. the (1p.) speaker and/or (2p.) addressee, against non-speech act participants (3p), i.e. somebody other than speaker or addressee (DeLancey 1981, 645–646; Dahl 2000),<sup>25</sup> so that a basic discourse distinction exists between third and non-third, i.e. first/second person.

Recent large-scale typological surveys, however, show there is no conclusive evidence that demonstrates the universal validity of the correlation between argument salience and indexing, and such correlations are possibly better explained as side-effects of areal diffusion or historical contingencies within languages.

23 See for instance Croft (1990, 116, 127), Bossong (1991, 160), Siewierska (2004, 149). Other categories not listed in (7) may obviously also be involved. Hopper and Thompson (1980, 253), for example, also include the properties number (singular vs. plural), countability (count vs. mass) and concreteness (concrete vs. abstract).

24 See Givón (1979), Lazard (2001, 878), Iemmolo (2010, 2013).

25 First and second person, if so subsumed under one term, are generally referred to as SAPs after speech act participants. This abbreviation is not used here, since it may lead to confusion with S, A, and P.

## 3.2.2.1 Divergence between Morphological Properties

Cross-linguistic typological surveys<sup>26</sup> show that ergative alignment is rarer than neutral and accusative alignment, and ergative verbal person marking even rarer still (though see further below). In terms of geographical distribution, ergativity is significantly rarer in Europe, virtually absent in Africa, but common in the Americas and Australia as well as the Austronesian language family (Comrie 2005, 401; Siewierska 2005, 407).

We have seen in the previous chapter how distinct morphological strategies such as nominal or verbal person marking can instantiate the same alignment pattern in a language. Both case and agreement are accusative in Modern Standard Arabic, for example. Constructions, however, can also consist of a combination of *distinct* alignment types through different morphological properties, having, for instance, ergatively aligned nominal marking and accusatively aligned verbal person marking. Comrie (1978, 340; original source cited therein) offers the following example from an Australian language called Walbiri (Pama-Nyungang):

(8) **Walbiri** (Pama-Nyungang, Central Australia; glossing adapted)

a. *ɲatʷu ka -na pułami.*

I:ABS TENSE -1SG:S shout

'I shout.'

b. *ɲatʷulułu ka -na -ŋku nʷuntu nʷanʷi.*

I:ERG TENSE -1SG:A -2SG:P you:ABS see

'I see **you**.'

c. *nʷatʷulułu ka -ŋpa -tʷu ɲatʷu nʷanʷi.*

you:ERG TENSE -2SG:A -1SG:P I:ABS see

'You see **me**.'

The dependent person markers for the first person singular show accusative morphology in grouping s and A (*-na*), but isolating P (*-tʷu*), while the independent pronouns group s and P (*ɲatʷu*) ergatively and isolate A (*ɲatʷulułu*). Hence, verbal person marking aligns accusatively, whereas the nominal marking aligns ergatively.

Similarly, Stilo (p.c.) explains that the Northwest Iranian language Vafsi may manifest a horizontal pattern (S≠A=P) for case-marking, while the person indexing may be ergative:

26 Cf. Siewierska (2004, 2005), Comrie (2005), Croft (2012, 259), Velupillai (2012, 243).

(9) **Vafsi** (Northwest Iranian, Tat, Iran; Stilo p.c.)

[S←DIR] [V]

a. *hæsæn-Ø dé-kætte* (intransitive)

PRN-NOM PVB-fell

'Hasan fell.'

[A←OBL] [P←OBL]-[A] [V]

b. *hæsén-i tæmen-s bæ-xændena* (monotransitive)

PRN-OBL 1SG:OBL-A:3SG:II PUNC-made.laugh

'Hasan made me laugh.'

The first form in (9a) is known as the 'direct' case, the other nominal forms in (9b) and (9c) as the 'oblique'. Both A and P are marked by the 'oblique',<sup>27</sup> but S is in the 'direct' case. Only A features as dependent person marker, so that S and P are grouped ergatively in not triggering overt indexing.

Dixon (1979, 92, 1994, 95–96) claims that ergative dependent person markers never combine with accusative nominal marking, and Comrie (1978, 340) states it is "rare or nonexistent". The possible combinations of ergative and accusative strategies are given below. The dependent person markers tend to pattern accusatively, even when the full nominals pattern ergatively, but the other way around is exceptional (Dixon 1994, 95–96).

(10) **Ergative and accusative person and/or nominal marking**

DEPENDENT PERSON MARKERS	INDEPENDENT PERSON MARKERS	FULL NOMINALS
ACC	ACC	ACC
ACC	ACC	ERG
ACC	ERG	ERG
ERG	ERG	ERG
(**)ERG	ERG	ACC
(**)ERG	ACC	ACC

The prominence hierarchy has been postulated by functional typologists to make implicational predictions regarding nominal marking and verbal agreement patterns across languages with reference to several grammatical functions.<sup>28</sup> Functional typologists often differentiate arguments that are more topic-worthy than others, i.e. more readily considered salient in the discourse.

27 This alignment pattern only applies to animate NPs.

28 See Keenan (1976), Silverstein (1976), Givón (1976, 1984), Comrie (1989), Croft (1988, 1990

Such topic-worthy arguments instantiate the higher ranking properties that make them more eligible to be selected as the agent-like topic in the transitive clause (e.g. Givón 1979, 1994; Comrie 1989). Given that A is more often human or first/second person pronoun, the higher ranking properties are associated with A. The lower ranking properties, in turn, are associated with P, since they are more often inanimate and full nominals:

(11) **Expected role ranking associations**

- a. RANKING: high > low  
 b. ROLE: A > P

The zero-marking on the (pro)noun and the potential for the overt person indexing would correlate with a higher ranking of A as well as a lower ranking of P. In accordance with such scales, pronouns, for example, favorably occur as A, while nouns favorably occur as P. This functional principle thus predicts that dependent person markers can show ergative morphology only when lower ranking arguments also do so.

Verbal person marking itself, however, can also be broken down into morphological marking, position and trigger potential and therefore show combinations of alignment types on these levels. Concerning affix order, Siewierska (2004, 167) observes that a V-P-A sequence is more commonly combined with accusative rather than ergative morphological marking. Recently, Bickel et al. (2013) showed that, cross-linguistically, there is essentially no strong preference for a particular agreement pattern<sup>29</sup> in terms of morphological marking alone. Thus, a preference for accusative morphological person marking does not appear to be supported. Nevertheless, they indicate there is a strong avoidance of the grouping of S and P (or A and P) in terms of what triggers verbal person marking, i.e. the trigger potential. Ergative and horizontal alignment thus appears to be strongly disfavored only in this latter respect.

3.2.2.2 Differential Marking and Split Case Marking

The most well-known effects of the prominence hierarchy are found in differential object marking (henceforth DOM). Aramaic, Hebrew and Ethiopic, for

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1994a), Bossong (1991, 160), Aissen (1999, 2003), Haspelmath (2004b, 2007), Næss (2007), among many others.

29 Accusative indexing is still favored slightly (37% against 21% for ergative). Bickel et al. (2013) exclude tripartite alignment from their study, but do include horizontal alignment (S≠A=P).

instance, differentiate between definite and indefinite P arguments by means of overt flagging. Strictly speaking, neutral alignment (A=S=P) is found for indefinite NPs in these languages because they lack nominal case morphology in general, while accusative alignment (A≠S=P) is found for definite NPs, since these are only marked by a preposition in the P role. Generally, the pattern with overt marking is taken to be the more basic alignment type,<sup>30</sup> so that we would characterize the alignment in Hebrew and Ethiopic, for instance, as basically accusative. Thus DOM, much like the other phenomena we have observed in previous sections, first and foremost involves a constructional split, not an alignment split *per se*.

Differential argument-marking need not be sensitive to all the subscales of prominence. DOM, for example, solely depends on definiteness or information structure, i.e. identifiability in the discourse, and covers the whole range from personal pronouns to definite NPs in Hebrew (Givón 1982) and Amharic (Amberber 2005), but excludes indefinite NPs altogether.

Furthermore, differential marking can be obligatory or optional. Some languages such as Sinhalese (Indo-Aryan, Sri Lanka; Næss 2004, 196) optionally mark animate NPs, while inanimates are never marked. By the same token, definite NPs may not be obligatorily marked in a language, suggesting that speakers need not bind themselves to a definite reading of the object, if they do not feel such a need. In Classical Syriac, for example, differential marking of definite object NPs is not obligatory. Speakers can increase an argument's identifiability through DOM as they feel necessary to signal what they, for whatever reason, find salient in the discourse.<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, coding properties that are sensitive to the prominence of the P arguments can override other alignment splits. Hindi has a TAM-sensitive alignment split: ergative in the perfective (and the perfect), but accusative in the imperfective (and future). A is distinguished by the postposition =*ne* in the perfective; s and indefinite Ps are zero-marked. When, however, P is definite inanimate, such as *hār* 'necklace' in (12b) below, or animate, such as *bacce* 'child' in (12c), it is marked by the postposition =*ko*. Hindi, therefore, shows a tripartite case-marking pattern (A≠S≠P) with respect to higher ranking NPs, while the ergative case-marking pattern is manifested only for lower ranking NPs.

30 Thus Comrie (2005), Siewierska (2005), Malchukov (et al. 2010).

31 Cf. Khan (1988, 139–140), Joosten (1996, 45).

(12) **Hindi** (Indo-Aryan, India; Mohanan 1994, 180, glossing slightly modified, transcription adapted)

a. *Ilā=ne hār ut<sup>h</sup>ā-yā* (indef. inanimate P)

Ilā=ERG necklace-NOM lift-PERF  
'Ila lifted up a/the necklace.'

b. *Ilā=ne hār=ko ut<sup>h</sup>ā-yā* (def. inanimate P)

Ilā=ERG necklace=DOM lift-PERF  
'Ila lifted up **the** necklace.'

c. *Ilā=ne bacce=ko ut<sup>h</sup>ā-yā* (animate P)

Ilā=ERG child=DOM lift-PERF  
'Ila lifted up **the/a** child.'

Similarly, the prominence scale has been used to explain alignment splits based on argument properties. Dyirbal, an Australian Aboriginal language, is an oft-cited example, where first/second person markers follow an accusative pattern, while all other (pro)nominals follow an ergative pattern (Dixon 1979, 63–64). Table 13 illustrates this split for 'we all' and 'father'.<sup>32</sup> There are languages where the cut-off point is between pronouns and full nominals, pronouns being neutral or accusative and nouns ergative (Comrie 1989, 131; Dixon 1994, 95–96). The same tendencies for accusative and ergative alignment have been argued to hold for verbal person marking (e.g. Siewierska 2005). Again, accusative alignment is associated with the higher ranking first/second persons and ergative with lower ranking third persons. There appears to be no correlation between person reference and other alignment types than ergativity (Siewierska 2004, 63). Accordingly, first/second person arguments are predicted to show ergative alignment only when third person arguments also do so.

In addition, split-subject marking can be limited to non-third person markers in languages such as Lakota (Siouan, Dakota, United States) or to pronouns against full NPs in Koasati (Muskogean, Louisiana, United States; Mithun 1990).

A functional-communicative motivation for the special marking of higher ranking Ps and special marking of lower ranking As offered by functional typologists is that the unexpected candidates would favor morphology to disambiguate them from the more expected candidates with the properties associated with the opposite role:

32 Essentially, only A and P are affected, while S is not. Dyirbal may express actual transitive clauses where both A and P are marked by ergative and accusative case or both zero-marked (Comrie 1989, 131; Croft 2001, 309–310).

TABLE 13 Split conditioned by argument properties in Dyirbal

Non-third			Third	
	Accusative (S=A)	Gloss	Ergative (S=P)	Gloss
A	<i>ɲana</i>	'we all'	<i>ɲuma-ɲgu</i>	'father'
S	<i>ɲana</i>		<i>ɲuma</i>	
P	<i>ɲana-na</i>		<i>ɲuma</i>	

AFTER DIXON (1979, 63)

## (13) Unexpected role ranking associations

- a. RANKING: high > low  
 b. ROLE: P > A

Unexpected Ps are morphosyntactically distinguished from the expected A, and overt nominal marking tends to be limited to one argument for economy (e.g. Comrie 1975, 1978). Similarly, functional typologists (e.g. Givón 1976; Croft 1988) have argued that argument salience, i.e. what is central to the speech situation and the speakers' experience, enhances the trigger potential for person indexing. Speakers tend to limit person indexing to what they consider the most important referents, applying this limitation to both monotransitive and ditransitive clauses (e.g. Haspelmath 2007) along the cline from higher to lower ranking arguments and associated syntactic roles. Haspelmath (2004b) explains this tendency on the basis of frequency-driven grammaticalization, arguing that the more frequent and more harmonic combinations of argument types and associated roles are more likely to be grammaticalized, while disharmonic combinations, such as the combination where P outranks A, are disfavored and therefore less likely to be grammaticalized.

The higher ranking topic-worthiness of A is often used as an explanation for its cross-linguistic tendency to be grouped with s in accusative indexing (e.g. Comrie 1989). Topic referents expressed through person markers are mainly found in s and A function (e.g. Cooreman et al. 1984; Dixon 1994, 54–55). On the other hand, corpus-based studies indicate that P and s rather than A are the more likely bearers of new information expressed by full nominals, so that these discourse properties would group s and P ergatively (ever since e.g.

DuBois 1987). Thus, in the functionalist approach, NPs that are overtly marked and do not trigger agreement are the less likely arguments.<sup>33</sup> This is the higher ranking argument type in the P function, but the lower ranking argument in A function. A pronoun ranks higher than a common full NP on the nominal hierarchy. And first/second person referents rank higher than third person referents on the person scale. Hence, when there is a split in alignment based on the referential properties of the NP, the absolute higher ranking arguments have often been said to associate with accusative alignment, while the lower ranking arguments associate with ergative alignment.<sup>34</sup>

Nevertheless, there are numerous exceptions that run counter to these functional principles and are more likely to be based on areal-diachronic contingencies. Siewierska (2005, 407), for instance, points out that it is equally possible for the third person only to trigger indexing either accusatively or ergatively; cf. English, for example, where the accusative agreement affix -s is confined to third person referents and Trumai, a language isolate in Upper Xingu, Brazil, which expresses overt ergative verbal person marking that is confined to the third person. This is contrary to the functional principle that predicts verbal person marking is associated with lower ranking arguments.

There also examples where differential object marking does not serve a discriminatory function (Payne 1980, 149–150; Bossong 1985), and need not be an unstable system (Haig 2008, 197). Morphological identity between A in the past tense and salient Ps is found in some Iranian languages. In Vafsi (Northwest Iranian), for example, salient NPs follow a horizontal pattern (S≠A=P), as illustrated below. The ‘direct’ case (∅) not only neutrally subsumes S, A and P in the present, but also groups ergatively S and non-salient Ps in the past. The ‘oblique’ case (-i) is used for A of the past tense as well as for salient Ps in all tenses. Hence, one finds the term ‘double oblique alignment’ for horizontal alignment in the literature.

(14) **Vafsi** (Northwest Iranian, Tati, Iran; Stilo p.c.)

[S←DIR]	[V]	
a. <i>hæscæn-∅</i>	<i>dæ-kæt-tæ</i>	(direct)
PRN-DIR	PVB-fall:PST-PPT	
	‘Hasan fell.’	

33 See further § 4.1.1. on typological markedness in relation to the NENA dialects.

34 Cf. *inter alia* Silverstein (1976), Silverstein (1976, 122–129), Comrie (1978, 1989), Dixon (1995, 83–94).

- [A←OBL] [P←DIR] [V]  
 b. *tine yey dánæ yú-æ-s dærd-æ* (ergative)  
 he:OBL one CLF heifer-DIR-A:3SG:II have:PST-PL  
 'He had a heifer.' (Stilo 2004b, Bl.2)

- [A←OBL] [P←OBL] [V]  
 c. *hæscæn-i mæhmud-i-s bæ-xænd-en-a* (horizontal)  
 PRN-OBL PRN-OBL-A:3SG:II PUNC-laugh-CAUS-PST  
 'Hasan made Mahmud laugh.'

Recently, Bickel (2008) and Bickel et al. (2015) have tested the significance of referential hierarchies for alignment split tendencies in large language databases. First/second person, for example, would not be expected to pattern ergatively, unless all other argument types also do so. Accusative for the third person and ergative for the first/second person would be unexpected. Nevertheless, Bickel (2008) and Bickel et al. (2015) evince such reverse splits do occur. Bickel (2008) offers examples from Kiranti languages (Sino-Tibetan), where the first person (singular) aligns ergatively and the third person accusatively, while the other persons align neutrally. Table 14 below illustrates this for the Kiranti language Puma.

Bickel et al. (2015) argue that accusative-ergative splits in accordance with higher ranking AS and lower ranking PS cannot be considered universally valid, as much of the provided evidence is ambiguous or leaves room for alternative analyses, leading to their conclusion that person-based splits are an epiphenomenon.<sup>35</sup> Bickel et al. (2015) show on the basis of survey of 460 case systems around the world that the languages that fit with the aforementioned predictions are common in the macroareas of Eurasia and New-Guinea and Australia, but not outside of these areas. Hence, they conclude that such hierarchical effects are prone to areal diffusion. Furthermore, Gildea and Zúñiga (2016) explain these effects on the basis of their historical source rather than underlying cognitive principles.

Finally, person-conditioned splits can also be restricted by TAM. Balochi, a Northwest Iranian language, for example, manifests a person and nominal role-based split in the past (Korn 2009). Some (Eastern) Balochi dialects express ergative agreement with higher ranking full nominal PS only, while this is expected for lower ranking arguments. Moreover, the higher ranking persons optionally trigger agreement only with A in these Balochi dialects.

35 Cf. Witzlack-Makarevich et al. (2016).

TABLE 14 Person split in Puma

	1SG Accusative (S=A)	3SG Ergative (S=P)
A	- <i>ŋ</i> (>3), - <i>na</i> (>2)	∅- ( <i>p</i> Λ-, >1)
S	- <i>ŋa</i> (non-past), - <i>oŋ</i> (past)	∅-
P	- <i>ŋa</i> (non-past), - <i>oŋ</i> (past)	<i>u</i> -, <i>i</i> -

AFTER BICKEL (2008, 197)

Recent cross-linguistic studies indicate, therefore, that there is no conclusive evidence for the predictions regarding alignment splits based on the prominence scales. Since areal diffusion or historical contingencies could equally account for the various alignment splits, functional principles do not hold for alignment splits in human language in general. What does appear to hold cross-linguistically, is that the higher ranking A or the lower ranking P are associated with zero NP-marking. That is, if arguments are zero-marked by default, this will tend to be animate and/or definite AS and inanimate and/or indefinite ps. Also, s and A tend to be grouped in trigger potential. That is, if there is—obligatory—agreement at all, this will be more likely triggered by s and A than by P.

### 3.3 Ergativity and Patient-Related Splits in Trans-Zab Jewish NENA

In Northeastern Neo-Aramaic dialects, there are three competing constructions, i.e. coding strategies, involved in differential object marking, i.e. higher ranking ps. As in the *qaṭel*-based constructions, differential object marking in *qṭil*- typically involves, depending on the dialect:

- nominal marking, i.e. flagging: differential prepositional marking;
- verbal person marking, i.e. indexing: differential object indexing;
- or a combination of the above.

NENA dialects can even have more than one construction for each of these DOM strategies. The Trans-Zab Jewish dialects are so similar in this respect that a correlation with a particular alignment type and coding strategy cannot be established, nor a particular alignment type associated with a higher ranking

of P *per se*. The usage of a construction is dialect-specific rather than motivated by underlying communicative-functional principles. The alignment type, therefore, is more aptly described as incidental dialectal variation. While there are notable differences, these cannot be linked to the grouping of grammatical functions in themselves, and points to the autonomy of certain transitive construction types across and within dialects. Considering verbal person marking, we concentrate here on morphological marking, i.e. phonological form, since the trigger potential is accusative throughout. After all, P is clearly the only argument whose indexing and/or flagging is optional and conditioned in contradistinction to the obligatory and unconditioned indexing of S and A.

### 3.3.1 Alignment of *q̄til*- in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish Dialects

The flagging and indexing systems diverge most sharply in the alignment typology of the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties. The nominal prepositional marking is accusative (A=S≠P), whereas verbal person marking is ergative (A≠S=P) and tripartite (A≠S≠P) or horizontal (S≠A=P) in phonological form. We will observe that what constrains the E-suffixes as object-markers also constraint ergative indexing. At the same time, prepositional marking overlaps with verbal person marking. The system found in these NENA dialects is thus typologically rather unusual.

#### 3.3.1.1 Ergative Verbal Person Marking

First, P and S are grouped ergatively in *q̄til*- by means of the E-set, while A is distinguished by the L-series:

#### (1) J. Kerend (W Iran; Hopkins 1989a, 428; 2002)

INTRANSITIVE		TRANSITIVE	
a. <i>pləṭ</i> -∅	- <i>li</i>	c. <i>pəṭ</i> - <i>a</i>	- <i>li</i>
move.out <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-P:3MS</sub>	-A:1SG	move.out <sub>F<sub>V</sub>-P:3FS</sub>	-A:1SG
'I took <b>him</b> out.'		'I took <b>her</b> out.'	
(lit. Him moved I out)		(lit. Me moved she out)	
b. <i>plit</i> -∅		d. <i>plit</i> - <i>a</i>	
move.out <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S:3MS</sub>		move.out <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S:3FS</sub>	
'He went out.'		'She went out.'	

Secondly, ergative morphological marking is restricted to third person indexes. A and S are contrastive for all persons, including first/second person markers, e.g.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>e. <i>plit-na</i><br/>         move.out<sub>PFV</sub>-S:1MS<br/>         ‘I<sub>M</sub> went out.’<br/>         (lit. I moved out)</p> | <p>f. <i>plət-li</i><br/>         move.out<sub>PFV</sub>-S:1SG<br/>         ‘I took out.’<br/>         (lit. Me moved out)</p> |
|---|--|

By contrast, no s-like realization of P is accepted by speakers of these dialects for non-third persons, so that forms like

- g. *\*\*plət-na -le*  
 move.out<sub>PFV</sub>-P:1MS -A:3SG  
 ‘He took **me<sub>M</sub>** out.’ (lit. Him moved I out)

do not occur. Khan (2009, 159), however, mentions one informant of Sanandaj that does use a similar *qtil*-based formation for the first feminine singular, as given in (2) below.

- (2) **J. Sanandaj** (W Iran; Khan 2009, 472.2)  
*hiy -āna, ləbl -āna -nu bimaristān-e Hādasá*  
 COME<sub>PFV</sub> -S:1FS take<sub>PFV</sub> -P:1FS -A:3PL hospital-EZ Hadasa  
 ‘I<sub>FS</sub> came (and) they took **me** to Hadasa hospital.’

This construction has not been attested for other Trans-Zab Jewish dialects. Since these forms do not occur in elicitation, but only in texts, their status remains unclear. The forms used by this informant are also rather unusual in their inflection, given that they involve a secondary suffix of the ‘*all*’-series to express A, e.g. ‘*axoní ləbl-āna-nef*’ ‘My brother took me’ (Khan 2009, 472.2) instead of the form with the expected L-suffix *\*\*ləbl-āna-le* or *\*\*ləbl-án-ne*. It is possible this is ultimately formed in analogy to *qaṭəl-*, where such ‘*all*’-series can attach to indicate the reverse role, e.g. *ləbl-āna-nef* ‘I take **him**’ (cf. Khan 2009, 159). These special third person indexes are only found in combination with the first person singular E-suffixes (Israeli 1998, 116).<sup>36</sup>

Apart from this general person restriction, the E-suffixes are used in differential indexing. (3) below illustrates how the E-set cross-references a prominent NP *xalistá* ‘sister’ in either the S or P function. The L-suffixes index A referent, such as *-le* cross-referencing *ahmád* in (3a).

36 See § 3.1.2.2.

- (3) **J. Saqez** (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 103)  
 a. *aḥmád xalist-év xəzy -a -le*  
 Ahmad sister-his see<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:3MS  
 ‘Ahmad saw **his sister**.’

- b. *lima xalist-í mət̪y -a bel-óx?*  
 when sister-my arrive<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS at.house-your:MS  
 ‘When did **my sister** arrive at your<sub>MS</sub> house?’

The differential indexing is only ergative in phonological form in *q̄til-*. The trigger potential of indexing is accusative (A=S≠P) in both inflectional systems, as illustrated for J. Sulemaniyya below. P differs from s and A only in trigger potential. s and A arguments are always indexed, while P is indexed only when it is definite (Khan 2007a, 154). The indexing of full nominal Ps is more restricted and context-dependent than the indexing of s. This limits the manifestation of the ergative pattern even further, but to a similar degree as the accusative pattern in *qaṭəl-*.

- (4) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; illustration based on Khan 2004a, 2007a, 154)
- | PERFECTIVE (PRETERIT)                              | IMPERFECTIVE (PRESENT)      |            |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|
| a. <i>baxta nšəq-le</i><br>‘He kissed a woman.’    | e. <i>baxta nāšəq-Ø</i>     | (indef. P) |
| b. <i>baxta qim-a</i><br>‘A woman rose.’           | f. <i>baxta qem-á</i>       | (indef. s) |
| c. <i>baxt-i nšəq-a-le</i><br>‘He kissed my wife.’ | g. <i>baxt-i nāšəq-Ø-la</i> | (def. P)   |
| d. <i>baxtaké qim-a</i><br>‘The woman rose.’       | h. <i>baxtaké qem-á</i>     | (def. s)   |

All else being equal, the coding of s is the same across both systems. What is peculiar to *q̄til-* against *qaṭəl-* is marking A in a way distinct from s, reserving the more marked set of argument indexes, i.e. L-series, for A. Of course, the morphological alignment of s with P is also peculiar to *q̄til-* but its manifestation is more restricted than the coding of A. There is thus a degree of diffusion of agreement properties across the grammatical functions for *q̄til-*. s and P align morphologically, both are marked by the E-set, but not in terms of trigger potential, i.e. the marking of s is unconditioned, but that of P conditioned,

whereas s and A align in terms of trigger potential, both are unconditioned, but not morphologically, i.e. E-suffixes mark s, but L-suffixes mark A.

The Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, however, have also lexicalized certain intransitive verbs as transitive, so that they also exhibit constructions whereby s may also align with A, sometimes depending on semantic and/or morphological factors.<sup>37</sup> This is obviously not apparent in the *qaṭəl*-based ‘imperfective’ constructions, since there is no morphological distinction between s and A, i.e. intransitive and transitive constructions:

- i. *baxtá šəhəl-la*                      j. *baxtá šahl-á*  
 ‘A woman coughed.’                      ‘A woman coughs.’

All else being equal, ergative alignment is thus evidently a rather restricted phenomenon in these dialects, being confined to third person indexes. In terms of differential marking, it is striking that only higher ranking full nominals are marked ergatively, while NPs of lower ranking in prominence, such as indefiniteness, proceed on a tripartite basis, since the expression of P is zero, but s and A are distinct.

The unfolding distribution, therefore, is somewhat unusual. Topic-worthy full nominal Ps trigger differential marking that patterns ergatively, while the most topic-worthy arguments, namely the first and second person, are generally precluded from such ergative person marking (*qim-na* : \*\**nšəq-na-li*), contrasting with the accusative person marking in *qaṭəl*.

### 3.3.1.2 Tripartite or Horizontal Person Marking

In the inflection of the perfective past, first/second person markers can occur only in their independent prepositional form, e.g. J. Sulemaniyya *nšəq-li ʔall-ax* ‘I kissed **you<sub>FS</sub>**’. This prepositional *ʔall*-series<sup>38</sup> expresses both third and non-third person referents, like J. Sulemaniyya *ʔall-i* ‘me’ and *ʔall-éw* ‘him’, but the E-suffixes are confined to the third person. The independent object person markers, however, do not have the same status as the E-set. They are not used to differentially index nouns, for instance.

Strictly speaking, the independent person markers would seem essentially accusative like prepositional marking of full nominals. When we consider non-third person markers in *qṭil*- only, however, a tripartite subsystem unfolds. As there is no dependent person form available for P, an independent one is

37 See further Section 3.5.

38 See § 3.1.2.1.

selected instead. Nevertheless, combined with other person indexes, this gives rise to a tripartite alignment type for all first/second person markers in contradistinction to the ergative third person morphology. In our approach, this is strictly speaking not an accusative pattern (*pace* Barotto 2015, 240, 243), since S and A are still differentiated. This is illustrated below for first person masculine singular S and A and second person feminine singular P.

- (5) **Tripartite alignment** (J. Sulemaniya NW Iraq; Khan 2004a)
- a. *kwiš-na* (intransitive)  
 descend<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S:1MS</sub>  
 ‘I<sub>M</sub> descended.’
- b. *q̄ṭəl-li*      ʔəll-áx (transitive)  
 kill<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:1SG</sub> OBJ-2FS  
 ‘I killed you<sub>FS</sub>.’

Nevertheless, although the split is strictly conditioned by the absolute properties of the argument in terms of person or nominal type, it has the effect that distinct combinations are possible in actual transitive clauses. When P and A are both full NPs, the construction is evidently accusative, and when both are third person pronouns, it is evidently ergative. The cut-off point is between dependent person markers and independent nominals, both belonging to the third person, while the first and second persons seem to have a mixed subsystem of their own. Essentially, however, only A and P are affected, while S is not. When P is non-third person, but A is third person, the transitive construction is identical to (5b) above:

- [A: 3]      [P: 2]  
 c. *q̄ṭəl-la*      ʔəll-áx  
 kill<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:3FS</sub> OBJ-2FS  
 ‘She killed you<sub>FS</sub>.’

When A is non-third person, but P is third person, the transitive construction is consistent with (3a) above:

- [P: 3—A: 2]  
 d. *q̄ṭəl-a-lax*  
 kill<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-P:3FS-A:2FS</sub>  
 ‘You<sub>FS</sub> killed her.’

Both patterns may also occur when both arguments are third person.

For completeness sake, I also mention a possible instance of horizontal grouping in the SE Trans-Zab dialects. The attachment of the *'all*-series may end up as a secondary L<sub>2</sub>-set and merge with the L-suffixes, for example in Jewish Saqez (Israeli 1998) and Jewish Sanandaj (Khan 2009, 158). The independent object person markers ultimately based on the preposition *l-* attach to the immediately preceding verbal form and are phonologically non-distinct from the agent markers, except for the third person singular.<sup>39</sup> Thus the equivalent of (5b) *qtəl-li 'allax* would be in J. Saqez:

*qtəl-li-lax*  
kill<sub>PFV-A:1SG-P:2FS</sub>  
'I killed you<sub>FS</sub>.'

Here, *-lax* from *'alax* 'you' is identical to the corresponding L-suffix. A distinction between the L-suffixes and the *'all*-series is limited to the third person in Jewish Saqez. The object person markers *-lav* 'her' and *-lev* 'him' comprise another special L<sub>2</sub>-set corresponding to the *'all*-set (i.e. *əlav*, *əlev*) in other dialects and are distinct from the agent person markers *-la* and *-le* belonging to the L-suffixes. Since the /ə/ of the preposition *əl-* is absent in the forms that have undergone coalescence (Israeli 1998, 115), so that only the third person singular forms are indicative of another series of person markers,<sup>40</sup> e.g.

*nšəq-la-lav*  
kiss<sub>PFV-A:3FS-P:3FS</sub>  
'She kissed her.'

This form corresponds to *nšiq-le ilav* 'He kissed her', and not *\*\*nšəq-le-la*, as we would expect for L-suffixes. By contrast, the other person affixes for J. Saqez are effectively nondistinct from L-suffixes.

Hence, one could argue that the merger of the *'all*-series and the L-suffixes results in another alignment pattern, namely a horizontal one, where P and A are marked alike, as given below.

39 See § 3.1.2.2.

40 See § 4.2. for similar phenomena in Christian dialects.

- (6) **Horizontal alignment (1/2 and 3pl.) in Jewish Saez**
- a. *dmix-an* (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:1FS</sub>  
 'I<sub>F</sub> went to sleep.'
- b. *nšəq-lī-lax* (transitive)  
 kiss<sub>PFV-A:1SG-P:2FS</sub>  
 'I kissed you<sub>FS</sub>.'

Ergative third person marking (*dmix-a* 'She slept': *nəšq-a-le* 'He kissed **her**') thus co-varies with tripartite third person singular marking (*dmix-a* 'She slept': *nšəq-le ʔallāw* ~ *nšəq-le-lav* 'He kissed **her**'). When the prepositional object indexes attach to the verbal form, however, there is only a single L-set for first and second person, such as *-lī*, *-lan*, *-lox* etc., as well as the third person plural, i.e. *-lu*. A and P are thus identical in phonological form in these constructions and are arguably expressed by means of the same set of person indexes.

### 3.3.1.3 Combining Prepositional and Verbal Marking

The system that ultimately unfolds from these diverse strategies is represented in Table 15 below. Full nominals can be marked differentially by flagging and/or indexing. First and second person markers are ultimately derived from the same preposition that marks full object NPs.

Differential prepositional marking and indexing of full nominals can also be combined. Thus, remarkably, it is possible, though highly exceptional, for differential object marking to involve both ergative indexing and accusative prepositional marking of the object. Khan (2004a) offers the following example, unique within his entire corpus. Although, strictly speaking, the verb is ditransitive, it proves the possible combination for transitive verbs. This is thus far only documented for the Sulemaniyya dialect. Khan (2009, 319–320) does not mention an example for Sanandaj, for instance, and neither does Israeli for Saez (Israeli 1998).

- (7) **J. Sulemaniyya** (W Iran; Khan 2004a, 326, 514.141)
- |   |                            |            |                  |              |
|---|----------------------------|------------|------------------|--------------|
| [DOM→T]                                   | [V-T                       | -A]        |                  |              |
| <i>lā-yalé</i>                            | <i>ləbl-i</i>              | <i>-le</i> | <i>ta-bağdád</i> | (transitive) |
| DOM-child:MPL                             | bring <sub>PFV-T:3PL</sub> | -A:3MS     | DAT-Baghdad      |              |
| 'He took <b>the children</b> to Baghdad.' |                            |            |                  |              |

TABLE 15 Argument coding strategies in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish NENA

	Nominal marking	Gloss	Verbal person marking		Gloss
A	<i>baxtaké</i>	'the woman'	<i>-la</i>		3fs.
S	<i>baxtaké</i>		<i>-a</i>		
P	<i>ʔal-baxtaké</i>		<i>-lav</i>	<i>-a</i>	
	<b>Independent</b>		<b>Dependent</b>		
A	<i>ana</i>	'I, me'	<i>-li</i>		1ms.
S	<i>ana</i>		<i>-na</i>		
P	<i>ʔalli</i>			<i>(-li)</i>	

[s]            [v-s]  
*yalé ... zil-i ta-maktab-i hulaye* (intransitive)  
 child:MPL go<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3PL DAT-school-EZ Jew:MPL  
 'The children ... went to the school of the Jews.'

The difference, then, is merely one of morphological strategies. Prepositional marking has a wider range on the prominence hierarchy than verbal person marking, which just happens to be ergative. Prepositional marking results in a tripartite or horizontal pattern for non-third person markers and in an accusative pattern for nouns, while dependent third person markers are ergative or tripartite.

In some respects, this alignment system is contrary to Dixon's (1994) and Comrie's (1978) observations.<sup>41</sup> Ergative dependent person markers tend to combine with ergative nominal morphology, but not with accusative. Moreover, it is not expected for alignment splits sensitive to the referential hierarchy of NPs to favor ergative indexing for higher ranking full nominals. Rather, the higher ranking nominal is expected to align accusatively.

41 See § 3.2.2.1.

The ergativity in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects seems to constitute a noteworthy counterexample to these tendencies. The dependent person markers pattern ergatively, while the independent person markers and full nominals do not. The lower ranking full nominals follow a tripartite cross-indexing pattern, while the higher ranking ones an ergative cross-indexing pattern. This tripartite-ergative split conditioned by the referentiality of the full nominal is the exact mirror image of the ergative-tripartite split conditioned by the person reference of the person marker:

TRIPARTITE INDEXING :	(high) 1st/2nd person	(low) indefinite NPs
ERGATIVE INDEXING:	(low) 3rd person	(high) definite NPs

Person indexing is thus not confined to the most salient arguments. It is the first/second person markers that are most salient, and these are not marked as such in the P function for these NENA dialects.

Finally, it has been argued that cross-linguistically object person markers tend to be coded more readily independently than the agent and subject, especially when they have human referents (Siewierska 2004, 46–47, 60–61). It is possible this tendency may play a role here, but the prepositional object series can also attach to the immediately preceding verbal form in some dialects of NENA in western Iran and become dependent person markers like the L-suffixes.

The other Trans-Zab Jewish varieties will provide further evidence for why the alignment split, particularly ergativity, is most likely not motivated by functional-communicative factors.

### 3.3.2 *Comparative Syntax of Trans-Zab Jewish Dialects*

Object marking in other Trans-Zab Jewish dialects shares the following tendencies:

- a) verbal person marking that is inverted in relation to *qaṭəl-* is limited to the third person;
- b) prepositional person markers are used to mark objects independently of the verb;
- c) if dependent, the set that marks P is added after the affix that marks A in accordance with the *qaṭəl-*-based affix order;
- d) and the object is normally in pre-verbal position, i.e. P-V.

As we will see, none of these constructions group S and P ergatively, yet the distribution of these constructions is strikingly similar. These tendencies hold irrespective of the alignment type, and thus have no connection with ergativity in itself. The Trans-Zab Jewish varieties make use of common transitive

constructions as differential object marking strategies regardless of how intransitive constructions are treated in the preterit or elsewhere in the system, e.g. a dynamic-stative split as found in J. Urmi.

### 3.3.2.1 Verbal Person Marking and/or Nominal Marking

The Western and Northern Trans-Zab dialects mainly differ from the Southeastern ones in only one respect, namely the coding of *s*. This is represented by the following examples in (8) from Jewish Arbel for Western Trans-Zab dialects, where *s* is marked by the L-suffixes. The E-series is confined to the third person. Another 'all-series derived from prepositional person markers is necessary to express non-third person objects.

(8) **J. Arbel** (NE Iraq; Khan 1999)

a. *dmix-le* (intransitive)

sleep<sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub>

'He slept.' (lit. Him slept)

b. *ǰəzy-a-le* (dependent P)

see<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>

'He saw **her**.' (lit. Him saw she)

c. *ǰze-le* 'all-*í* (independent P)

see<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub> OBJ-1SG

'He saw **me**.' (lit. Him saw to-me)

Both flagging and indexing pattern accusatively in dialects like Jewish Arbel. Full nominal P arguments receive special treatment in either cross-referencing through the E-set or prepositional marking by ('ə/)/-. There is no clear-cut distribution for either of these constructions (Khan 1999, 289–291). In addition, accusative prepositional marking and indexing of full NPs can, sporadically, be combined, as illustrated below.

(9) **J. Arbel** (NE Iraq; based on Khan 1999, 288–290)

[s] [v-s]

a. *kābrá* *dmix-le*

man:MS sleep<sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub>

'The man slept.'

- [A]            [DOM→P]            [V-P-A]  
 b. *kābrá*    *lə-ʿanne*        *beʿé*    *zəbn-i-le*  
 man:MS DOM-DEM:PL egg:PL sell<sub>PfV</sub>-P:3PL-A:3MS  
 ‘The man sold **those** eggs.’

The *ʿall*-series is generally attached to an immediately verbal form, e.g. *ǰzélox=əlleu* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> saw him’ for *ǰzelox ʿalléu*. The third person  $\emptyset$ -morpheme from the E-set is not used in Jewish Arbel, but the corresponding person form of the *ʿall*-series must be used instead, i.e. *ʿalléu* ~ *-lleu* ‘him’. Jewish Arbel has adopted this in the cross-indexing system and can even be combined with differential prepositional marking. It is the only means to index a masculine singular NP, for example:

(10) J. Arbel (NE Iraq; Khan 1999, 498.83, 484.546)

- [V            -A            -P]            [(DOM→)P]  
 a. *xíp*        *-la*        *-ll*        *-eu*    *bron-í*  
 wash<sub>PfV</sub> -A:3FS -OBJ -3MS son-my  
 ‘She washed (lit. **him**) **my** son.’
- b. *ǰzé*        *-le*        *-ll*        *-ew*    *əl-xalonəd*    *bāb-í*  
 see<sub>PfV</sub> -A:3MS -OBJ -3MS DOM-uncle.of father-my  
 ‘He saw (lit. **him**) **the maternal uncle of my father.**’

The difference between indexing and prepositional marking could also hinge on the relative iconicity-related morphological markedness of the patient (Mengozzi 2005; Barotto 2015). Prepositional marking shifts the morphological markedness more definitively to P over S and A, especially with respect to the third person in the inverted *qtil*-construction, where the E-suffix for the 3ms. denoting P is realized as zero ( $\emptyset$ ), but, using prepositional marking, P receives distinct overt coding. The E-set may still be preferred for feminine singular and plural nominals, so that we obtain the following verbal person marking in the preterit:

- baxta*    *ǰəzy-ā-lox*    ‘You<sub>MS</sub> saw (lit. her) the woman’  
*nāšē*    *ǰz-éni-lox*    ‘You<sub>MS</sub> saw (lit. them) the people’  
*kābra*    *ǰzé-lox-əlleu*    ‘You<sub>MS</sub> saw (lit. him) the man’

Another difference is that the object indexes of the *ʿall*-series immediately follow subject and agent coding when they attach to the verb, which is in accordance with *qaṭəl*-. Although all person referents are marked accusatively, the



do not seem to have strong preferences for a particular strategy (Khan 2008b, 297–300). This, however, does not mean that the verbal person marking constructions have the same status, and the alignment typology of the dialects of Azerbaijan is somewhat different from that of Arbel.

First of all, the two transitive verbal forms result in two distinct alignment patterns in terms of phonological form/morphological marking. Verbal person marking inflection in the perfective past varies between accusative, as illustrated in (12) below, and neutral, i.e. phonologically non-distinct, as shown in (13).

(12) **Third person only** (J. Urmi NW Iran; Khan 2008b)

a. *+dməx-la* (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
 ‘She fell asleep.’ (lit. Her fell asleep)

b. *xəzy-a-le* (transitive)  
 see<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He saw her.’ (lit. Him saw she)

(13) **First and second person** (J. Urmi NW Iran; Khan 2008b)

a. *+dməx-lan* (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:1PL</sub>  
 ‘We fell asleep.’ (lit. Us fell asleep)

b. *xzə-lax-lan* (transitive)  
 see<sub>PFV-A:2FS-P:1PL</sub>  
 ‘You<sub>FS</sub> saw us.’ (lit. Your<sub>FS</sub> saw us)

First/second person indexes, however, *necessarily* manifest neutral phonological form, as shown in (13). The difference from the horizontal morphological marking in certain SE Trans-Zab Jewish Dialects like Saqez<sup>42</sup> is only the expression of *s* in the perfective past. First and second person references are thus excluded from the *accusative* verbal morphology in (12) above, just as they are from the *ergative* verbal morphology in SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects. Another difference between the accusative and neutral coding is affix order. In the accusative pattern, *P* is suffixed immediately to the inflectional base and pre-

42 See § 3.3.1.2.

cedes A, i.e. V-P-A. In the neutral pattern, A always comes before P,<sup>43</sup> i.e. V-A-P, so that forms like *\*xzé-lax-li* for ‘You<sub>FS</sub> saw me’ do not occur.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, independent object person markers seem to follow the same pattern as full NPs. There is free alternation between dependent and independent person markers in J. Urmi. The independent *ʔall*-series in pre-verbal position are given in (14a) and (14b) below, and the suffixal L-series are given in (14c) and (14d) below. This applies to both *qaʔal-* and *qʔil-*. Independent pronominal objects can also be indexed like full nominal objects. This is the regular construction for demonstrative pronouns with human referents (Khan 2008b, 299), such as *o* in (14e) below. Independent first and second person markers are regularly expressed without additional indexing (Khan 2008b, 301), as illustrated in (14f.).

(14) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2008b, 426.137, 428.148, cf. 329)

- |                   |  |                                      |
|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| P = <i>ʔall-</i>  |  | P = L-set                            |
| [P]               | [V-A(-P)]  | [V-A-P]                              |
| a. <i>ʔall-án</i> | <i>dah-i-wa</i>  | c. <i>dah-í-wa-lan</i>               |
| DOM-1PL           | beat <sub>1PFV-A:3PL-PST</sub>                             | beat <sub>1PFV-A:3PL-PST-P:1PL</sub> |
|                   | ‘They would beat us.’                                      |                                      |
| b. <i>ʔall-í</i>  | <i>ambal-lu</i>  | d. <i>amból-lu-li</i>                |
| DOM-1SG           | take <sub>PFV-A:3PL</sub>                                  | take <sub>PFV-A:3PL-P:1SG</sub>      |
|                   | ‘They took me.’  |                                      |
| [P]               |  | [V-A-P]                              |
| e. <i>ʔal-d-ó</i> | <i>löka</i>  | <i>+plát-le-le</i>                   |
| DOM-LK-DEM:SG     | there  | release <sub>PFV-A:3MS-P:3MS</sub>   |
|                   | ‘He had <b>him</b> released from there.’ (Khan 2008b, 298) |                                      |
| f. <i>ʔall-án</i> | <i>löka</i>  | <i>+plát-le(-**lan)</i>              |
| OBJ-1PL           | there  | release <sub>PFV-A:3MS(-P:1PL)</sub> |
|                   | ‘He had <b>us</b> released from there.’                    |                                      |

43 How this aligns with the L-suffix marking s immediately following the verbal base is a moot point, see § 2.3.2.3.

44 Khan’s (2008b, 259) informants for Jewish Urmi say the two transitive constructions are not entirely functionally equivalent, *xazy-a-le* expressing rather recent past ‘He saw her just now’. The speakers’ attempt to explain the difference could be connected with the dynamic-stative split in these varieties, *+dmix-a* ‘She has gone to sleep’ vs. *+dmax-la* ‘She went to sleep’. However, it is clear from the texts that both *xazy-a-le* and *xzé-le-la* express narrative perfective past without a tense-aspect distinction between the two.

TABLE 16 Morphosyntax of *qtil*- in Western and Northern Trans-Zab Jewish NENA

	Independent	Gloss	Dependent		Gloss
A	<i>baxtaké</i>	'the woman'	<i>-la</i>		3fs.
S	<i>baxtaké</i>		<i>-la</i>		
P	<i>ʔal-baxtaké</i>		<i>-la</i>	<i>-a</i>	
A	<i>baruxaké</i>	'the friend'	<i>-le</i>		3ms.
S	<i>baruxaké</i>		<i>-le</i>		
P	<i>ʔal-baruxaké</i>		<i>-le</i> (Urmi)	<i>-alleu</i> (Arbel)	
	Independent	Gloss	Dependent		Gloss
A	<i>ʔana</i>	'I, me'	<i>-li</i>		1sg.
S	<i>ʔana</i>		<i>-li</i>		
P	<i>ʔalli</i>		<i>-li</i> (Urmi)	<i>-alli</i> (Arbel)	

Notes: Forms in darker gray shade in the dependent column only occur in dialects like Jewish Arbel, whereas their alternative in the same row only occurs in dialects like Jewish Urmi.

Morphologically non-distinct verbal person marking is presumably the result of levelling the L-set of object indexes throughout the verbal system in analogy with *qaʔal*-.<sup>45</sup>

In terms of transitive morphosyntax, therefore, the differences among the Western and Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects are marginal, as well as their differences from the Southeastern Trans-Zab varieties treated in the previous section. In all of them the transitive inverted V-P-A *qtil*-forms with the E-set as object indexes are disfavored for the first/second persons regardless of alignment type. A construction, where the inversion is uplifted is favored overall, as the alternative coding strategies show a V-A-P order of affixes or require an inde-

45 See Subsection 4.3.3. for further argumentation, including other NENA dialects.

pendent pronominal object. The systems that unfold across these Trans-Zab varieties are summarized in Table 16 above. The third person dependent forms are also used to differentially index full NPs. This leads to a salient morphological distinction between third masculine singular objects, e.g. 3ms. *-alleu*, and third non-masculine singular objects, e.g. 3fs. *-a*, 3pl. *-i*, in J. Arbel not found in other dialects as such.

3.3.2.2 Object-Verb Order

Word order usually varies depending on the discourse properties of arguments irrespective of alignment type manifested in verbal person marking or prepositional marking. It can also lead to ambiguity in determining alignment.<sup>46</sup>

There are nevertheless evident dialect-specific word order preferences in Neo-Aramaic. The NENA dialects in the eastern periphery, including all Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, typically exhibit an Object-Verb (i.e. P-V) arrangement as the unmarked word order throughout. The word order is irrespective of the clausal properties (i.e. TAM), for example:

(15) J. Saqez (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 186)

	[P]	[V]	
a. <i>baxt-év</i>	<i>aburw-év</i>	<i>labl-a-le</i>	( <i>qaṭəl-</i> )
	woman:FS-his dignity:MS-his take <sub>1PFV-A:3FS-P:3MS</sub>		
	‘His wife takes away his dignity.’		

b. <i>ḥatán</i>	<i>kaldá</i>	<i>nəšq-a-le</i>	( <i>qṭil-</i> )
	groom:MS bride:FS kiss <sub>PFV-A:3FS-P:3MS</sub>		
	‘The bridegroom kissed the bride.’		

Moreover, while the SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects do show some degree of ergativity, it is not ergativity *per se* that correlates with a particular dialectological word order preference. Trans-Zab NENA dialects with a different alignment typology in *qṭil-* may also have this particular arrangement, such as Jewish Arbel and Jewish Urmi, cf. (16) below.

(16) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Garbell 1965, 197)

	[P]	[V]	
<i>ḥatán</i>	<i>reš-év</i>	<i>glé-le-le</i>	( <i>qṭil-</i> )
	groom:MS head:MS-his reveal <sub>PFV-A:3MS-P:3MS</sub>		
	‘The bridegroom uncovered his head.’		

46 See § 2.3.2.3.

Thus, although the Trans-Zab varieties with ergativity in *qtil*- prefer P-V order, this preference is not specific to this alignment type, but to the Trans-Zab dialect bundle as a whole. This is borne out by the fact that the same word order preference is found for the *qaṭel*-based clauses and that related dialects with other alignment typology betray the same word order preference.

### 3.3.2.3 Person Restrictions in Relation to Compound Verbal Forms

Compound verbal forms can also be restricted by person in NENA dialects, similarly to *qtil*-. This shows that person constraints are regardless of the alignment constellation we consider them part of.

Dependent first/second person object markers, for example, cannot be combined with dependent A markers in the Jewish dialect of Sulemaniyya (Khan 2004a), which is part of the Southeastern Trans-Zab cluster. When the object is of first or second person reference, it must be expressed independently. Two types of object coding occur in the present progressive, namely a) independent *'all*-series and b) 'possessive' suffixes restricted to the third person:

#### (17) J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 139)

	INDEPENDENT	DEPENDENT		
3PL	<i>(garošá-y 'all-ú)</i>	<i>garoš-u-ye</i>	'He is pulling	<b>them'</b>
3FS	<i>(garošá-y 'all-áw)</i>	<i>garoš-aw-ye</i>	etc.	<b>her'</b>
3MS	<i>(garošá-y 'all-éw)</i>	<i>garoš-ew-ye</i>		<b>him'</b>
1SG	<i>garošá-y 'all-í</i>	–		<b>me'</b>
2PL	<i>garošá-y 'all-āxún</i>	–		<b>you<sub>PL</sub>'</b>
	etc.			etc.

Only third person referents can occur as dependent object person markers. They are suffixed between the verb (*garošá* 'pulling') and the coding for A (-y(e) 'He is') in construction type II (second column). By contrast, the progressive combines with all persons when the object is not dependent, but expressed independently by a preposition instead (e.g. *'all-í*, first column). This parallels the person restrictions on the E-suffixes that mark P before agent indexes in *qtil*- such as:

#### (18) J. Sulemaniyya

	INDEPENDENT	DEPENDENT		
3MS	<i>(grəš-le 'all-aw)</i>	<i>grəš-a-le</i>	'He pulled	<b>her'</b>
1SG	<i>grəš-le 'all-í</i>	–		<b>me'</b>
	etc.			

Moreover, the person restriction on *qtil*-forms can be motivated by the perfect in the Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects such as J. Urmi. The transitive realis perfect assimilates almost fully to *qaṭəl-* apart from the third person. The morphemes and stress pattern<sup>47</sup> of first/second person indexes is indistinguishable from *qaṭəl-*. Importantly, then, the compound verbal construction's merger with *qaṭəl-* would potentially also affect the interpretation of the inflection of *qtil-*, being liable to role reference inversion. Supposing *qtil*-forms like *\*\*\*+qtil-ən-ne* for 'He killed me' had been used, they would have completely converged with the masculine singular forms of first and second person in the realis perfect. The J. Urmi perfect and pluperfect ms. forms, for instance, would have been phonologically identical to preterit and pluperterit ms. forms, but with inverted morphosyntax (as *qaṭəl-*), for example:

(19) PERFECT (+ <i>qtila</i> + E <sub>1/2</sub> -set)	PRETERIT (+ <i>qtil-</i> + E <sub>1</sub> -set)
+ <i>qtil-ən-ne</i>	: <i>***+qtil-ən-ne</i>
'I <sub>M</sub> have killed him.'	'He killed me <sub>M</sub> .'
+ <i>qtil-śn-wa-le</i>	: <i>***+qtil-śn-wa-le</i>
'I <sub>M</sub> had killed him.'	'He had killed me <sub>M</sub> .'

It is conceivable that these two constructions would be incompatible and therefore increase the pressure to constrain the constructions with inverted role reference. There is only a subtle difference, so that a construction based on the resultative participle *+qtila* like *+qtil-śn-ne* 'I<sub>M</sub> had killed him' that potentially could be conflated with an instance of *+qtil-* together with the E<sub>1</sub>-set can neatly co-exist with inverted preterit forms based on *+qtil-* of the third person like *+qtil-a-le* 'He killed her'.<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, in J. Koy Sanjaq (NE Iraq), a Western Trans-Zab Jewish variety, the marking of P shifts depending on the coding of A. s and A are always marked by the copula, but the copula marking A either follows or precedes object suffixes. When A is first/second person, P is expressed by L-suffixes, following the copula, whereas, when A is third person, P is expressed by 'possessive suffixes', preceding the copula. This is a constructional split first and foremost, and does not affect the alignment:

47 Ultimate stress on nominal forms facilitates this analogy in J. Urmi, i.e. *+qtilá* 'killed one'.  
 48 These two are incompatible in the Christian dialect of Borb-Ruma (Bohtan) where the transitive realis perfect is fully based on *qtil-*, i.e. *qtil-ən-na* 'I have killed her' and *qtil-a-li* 'She has killed me' (both *qtil-* + E<sub>1</sub>-set), see § 4.4.3.2.

## (20) J. Koy Sanjaq (Mutzafi 2004a, 100–101)

		[V	A: 1,2	P: L-suffix]	
PROGRESSIVE	<i>nšaqá</i>	<i>-wən</i>	<i>-ne</i>		‘I <sub>M</sub> kiss him.’
PERFECT	<i>nšiqá</i>	<i>-wən</i>	<i>-ne</i>		‘I <sub>M</sub> have kissed him.’
		[V	P: POSS	A: 3]	
PROGRESSIVE	<i>nšaq</i>	<i>-án</i>	<i>-ile</i>		‘He kisses us.’
PERFECT	<i>nšiq</i>	<i>-án</i>	<i>-ile</i>		‘He has kissed us.’

The person constraints in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects therefore do not correlate with a particular alignment type *per se* (i.e. ergativity) or with a particular Tense-Aspect-Mood property *per se*. They are presumably based on a specific combination of dependent person markers, possibly in a specific order, namely V-P-A like *qtil-* or V-A-P like *qaṭəl-*. The *ʔall-* series and/or L-suffixes, especially in the preterit, are ideal alternatives for object indexes following the agent indexes just as they do in the rest of the verbal system, particularly *qaṭəl-*.<sup>49</sup>

All in all, ergativity in itself is not what triggers this person restriction, nor another alignment type. It is simply a combination of dependent person markers in the inflection of transitive verbs that is disfavored or impossible for first/second person objects.

### 3.4 Ergativity and Splits along the Tense-Aspect-Mood Scale

Drawing on cross-linguistic studies, Malchukov (2015) proposes an implicational Tense-Aspect-Mood scale for alignment splits conditioned by TAM. Resultative and perfect are the most likely to pattern ergatively against the perfective past and especially the imperfective present and imperative. Once the ergative pattern is manifested in the perfective past, it will also tend to be in the perfect and resultative, but not *vice versa*. NENA data, as we will see, however, run counter to this tendency. The perfective past can pattern accusatively, while the perfect and/or resultative patterns ergatively.

The degree of grammaticalization of intransitive resultative-stative to transitive perfective past seems to me more fundamental to the microvariation found in NENA than a particular alignment pattern and/or functional category. In terms of grammatical aspect, for instance, the E-set of subject indexes, if employed, will be further removed from the perfective past than the L-set of

49 See further Section 4.3. on the typology of person-role constraints in NENA.



	SIMPLEX		COMPOUND	
INTR.	<i>smix-∅</i>	‘He waited’	<i>smixá-y</i>	‘He has waited’
	<i>smix-a</i>	‘She waited’	<i>smixtá-ya</i>	‘She has waited’
	<i>smix-i</i>	‘They waited’	<i>smix-én</i>	‘They have waited’

The transitive stem I verbs conjugate similarly to the equivalent stem III verbs, e.g. preterit *mrədx-a-le* ‘He boiled it<sub>F</sub>’ and perfect *mrədxá-y* ‘He has boiled’.

Unlike J. Sulemaniyya, illustrated in (2) above, Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects do show the *q̄təl-/q̄ətl-* pattern in the preterit, e.g. J. Urmi <sup>+</sup>*q̄ətl-i-le* ‘He killed them’, but not in the participle, e.g. pl. *q̄tile* ‘killed’. The Jewish dialect of Rustaqa (Khan 2002b, 403–405) has /CCiC/ throughout, i.e. *q̄til-i-le* and *q̄tile*, respectively. Also, the shape of the copula can differ from dialect to dialect. The simplex verbal forms pattern ergatively throughout the Southeastern Trans-Zab varieties, including Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq) and Sanandaj (W Iran). The alignment of the compound verbal forms, however, need not do so, and even if they do, the conditions are generally different as well.

Broadly speaking, verbal constructions overlap in the expression of perfect and preterit. Both simplex constructions based on *q̄til-* and compound constructions based on the resultative participle can be used to express either of these. Occasionally, the differences between the two can be very subtle. Khan (2004a, 306, 314–318) observes in J. Sulemaniyya, for instance, that *q̄til*-based forms such as *qim-∅* ‘I arose’ can also express the perfect and serve as the dynamic counterpart to the participle-based constructions such as *qimá-y* ‘I have arisen’ focus on the state resulting from an action. This notwithstanding, there are three main construction types that typically express the realis perfect:

- distinct preverbal TAM-marking added to *q̄til-*;
- distinct subject marking added to *q̄til-* (L-set vs. E-set);
- compound perfect based on the resultative participle (*q̄tila*) and a copula.

It is an important distinction whether dialects prefer preverbal TAM-marking or TAM-marking via distinct sets of subject indexes. Dialects may even mix these constructions across intransitive and transitive verbs.

This applies in particular to dialects with a dynamic-stative type of fluid subject coding. This occurs further to the northwest among Northern Trans-Zab Jewish and some Western Trans-Zab Jewish varieties. These dialects minimally group together s and A through the L-set (*dməx-lan* ‘We slept’: *nšəq-lan* ‘We kissed’), but they differentiate between E-suffixes and L-suffixes to mark the subject depending on aspect, as illustrated below.

- (3) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; Garbell 1965; Khan 2008b)
  - a. +*dmāx* -*le* 'He went to sleep.'
  - b. +*dmix* -∅ 'He is asleep, has gone to sleep.'

The result-oriented *s<sub>p</sub>* form (E-set) interacts with a fundamental distinction between transitive and intransitive realis perfect constructions. As a realis perfect, it is generally confined to the expression of result states, of which its continuation in the actual present is inferred from direct perceptible evidence. In expressing the transitive counterpart, the 'dynamic-stative dialects' must have recourse to other means of coding, since the coding for the intransitive-resultative (e.g. *qim*-∅) creates a gap for the transitive counterpart:

	PRETERIT		PERFECT	
TR.	<i>qətəl-le</i>	'He killed'		'He has killed'
INTR.	<i>qim-le</i>	'He rose'	<i>qim-∅</i>	'He is/has risen'

All else being equal, it is the morphosyntax of the transitive realis perfect that stands out. Compound verbal forms (e.g. *qimá* or *qətlá* + copula) may interact with the simplex ones based on *qtil-* (e.g. *qim-* or *qətl-*) and manifest converging or diverging alignment patterns depending on the dialect.

**3.4.2 Arbel: Accusative**

Several dialects have grammaticalized preverbal TAM-markers to indicate the realis perfect. These are, for example, the particles *nā* in J. Dobe and *lā* in J. Arbel.<sup>51</sup> The object marking is the same throughout (see §3.3.2), thereby yielding no split alignment but consistent accusative alignment:

(5) **Jewish dialects on the Arbel Plain**

	<b>J. Dobe</b> (N Iraq; Mutzafi 2004b)		<b>J. Arbel</b> (NE Iraq; Khan 1999)		
a.	(∅) 'əlye-le	(∅) 'əlye-le	'He came.'		(preterit)
	(∅) pəlx-a-le	(∅) pəlx-a-le	'He opened it.'		
b.	<i>nā</i> 'əlye-le	<i>lā</i> 'əlye-le	'He has come.'		(perfect)
	<i>nā</i> pəlx-a-le	<i>lā</i> pəlx-a-le	'He has opened it.'		

<sup>51</sup> These are presumably fossilized forms of a deictic copula (Khan 2007d), i.e. *hola* 'here she/it<sub>r</sub> is', *hona* 'here they are'.

The resultative participle has not grammaticalized to a perfect in J. Arbel (NE Iraq; Khan 1999, 284–285) and its usage is mainly confined to intransitive verbs, e.g.

*rkiwa-wen* ‘I am riding.’ (lit. am mounted)  
*skina-wet* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> dwell.’ (lit. are settled)

Both *lā* and the participle can be used to express a present result state, e.g. (Khan *ibid.* 269)

*xmīla-wen* ‘I am standing.’ (lit. am stood)  
*lā xmāl-li* ‘I am standing.’ (lit. Here-now me stood)

The intransitive verb *pyš* ‘remain’ retains an *s<sub>p</sub>* form denoting a continuous state, e.g. (Khan *ibid.* 284).

*ʔ-la-piš-Ø* ‘He is not alive.’ (lit. He not remained)

This is a relic of an earlier dynamic-stative distinction still preserved more extensively in the following Trans-Zab dialects.

### 3.4.3 *Rustaqa: Ergative and Tripartite Resultative*

Jewish Rustaqa and Rewanduz, dialects bordering Arbel and Urmi, combine two strategies. The same particle generally and redundantly accompanies the *s<sub>p</sub>* form (*qim-Ø* ‘He is risen’) in fluid-s marking. The actualizer *lā* together with E-suffixes to mark the subject (*lā qim-Ø* ‘He is risen’) shifts the event viewpoint to a state resulting from prior action (Khan 2002b, 404) against the *s<sub>A</sub>* form, as compared below. There appears to be no semantic difference between the presence or absence of the actualizer *lā*; it always combines with the *s<sub>p</sub>* form.

(6) **J. Rustaqa** (NE Iraq; Khan 2002b, 404)

- a. (Ø) *dye-le* ‘He came (but might not be here).’ (dynamic)  
 b. *lā dye-Ø* ‘He has come and is here now.’ (stative)

There is no distinction in agent coding between the preterit and perfect. *lā* expresses the realis perfect for transitive verbs, where the L-suffixes mark the agent:

- (7) **J. Rustaqa** (NE Iraq; Khan 2002b, 404)
- |                        |                             |                      |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| a. (∅) <i>q̄ṭal-le</i> | 'He killed.'                | (preterit A = L-set) |
| b. (∅) <i>q̄im-le</i>  | 'He stood up.'              | (preterit s = L-set) |
| c. <i>lā q̄ṭal-le</i>  | 'He has killed.'            | (perfect A = L-set)  |
| d. <i>lā q̄im-∅</i>    | 'He is (risen and now) up.' | (perfect s = E-set)  |

The choice of subject coding between E-suffixes and L-suffixes would be enough for intransitive verbs, but the TAM-marking regularly precedes intransitive verbs just as their transitive counterparts. The only difference is the use of the E-set for subject person marking in the realis perfect.

Just as in J. Arbel, the role inverted construction is limited to the 3fs. and 3pl. objects in J. Rustaqa, while non-third person arguments require an independent prepositional object (Khan 2002b, 405), for example:

- (8) (*lā*) *q̄ṭil-ā-le* 'He (has) killed **her**.'

- (9) (*lā*) *q̄ṭal-le ʿill-i* 'He (has) killed **me**.'

Consequently, we not only have a split between *q̄ṭal-* and *q̄ṭil-* but we also have a split within the inflection of *q̄ṭil-* that is sensitive to TAM.

There are thus two subsystems that each have their own variation in alignment patterns. The dynamic and perfective aspect exhibits a markedness shift in accusative alignment depending on the type of patient-marking. The prepositional marking complements the verbal person marking system. The system in the preterit is largely indistinct from that of J. Arbel:

- (10) **Accusative: Preterit** (J. Rustaqa, NE Iraq; Khan 2002b)
- |  |                |   |
|--|----------------|---|
| a. <i>prəq-le</i>                          |                | (intransitive)  |
| finish <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S:3MS</sub>     |                |   |
| 'He finished.'                             |                |   |
| b. <i>q̄ṭil-i-le</i>                       |                | (transitive, 3fs. and 3pl. patient)                       |
| kill <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-P:3PL-A:3MS</sub> |                |   |
| 'He killed them.'                          |                |   |
| c. <i>q̄ṭal-le</i>                         | <i>ʿall-ox</i> | (transitive, non-third person<br>or third person patient) |
| kill <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:3MS</sub>       | OBJ-2MS        |   |
| 'He killed you <sub>MS</sub> .'            |                |   |

The alignment, however, is largely the same as the preterit of Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects in the realis resultative or perfect of J. Rustaqa (see § 3.3.1). J. Rustaqa similarly evinces an ergative and tripartite pattern conditioned by person. While the tripartite pattern is available for all persons, the ergative type is limited to the 3fs. and 3pl. This is illustrated in (11) and (12) below. Importantly, then, ergative alongside tripartite alignment is found in the realis perfect rather than the preterit in this Jewish dialect:

(11) **Ergative: Realis perfect** (J. Rustaqa, NE Iraq; Khan 2002b)

- a. *lā priq-i* (intransitive)  
 ACTZ finish<sub>PFV-S:3PL</sub>  
 'They are finished.'
- b. *lā qṭil-i-le* (transitive, 3fs. or 3pl. patient)  
 ACTZ kill<sub>PFV-P:3PL-A:3MS</sub>  
 'He has killed them.'

(12) **Tripartite: Realis perfect** (J. Rustaqa, NE Iraq; Khan 2002b)

- a. *lā priq-et* (intransitive)  
 ACTZ finish<sub>PFV-S:2MS</sub>  
 'You<sub>MS</sub> are finished.'
- b. *lā qṭal-li ʿall-ox* (transitive, non-third person  
 ACTZ kill<sub>PFV-A:1SG OBJ-2MS</sub> or third person patient)  
 'I have killed you<sub>MS</sub>.'

Once again, the coding strategies of the transitive verbs do not hinge on a particular alignment pattern. The role inverted construction with dependent person marking is person-restricted regardless of either ergative alignment in the resultative or perfect or accusative alignment in the preterit. What differs are the intransitive constructions, where the E-set of subject indexes are lagging behind, as it were, on the grammaticalization from resultative-stative to preterit.

Finally, in many respects, intransitive resultative or perfect forms like *dmix-∅* are akin to compound verbal forms based on the enclitic copula and resultative participle found in the same dialect. The same sense of the intransitive resultative-stative is available for a construction based on the participle:

- (13) **J. Rustaqa** (NE Iraq; Khan 2002b, 404)<sup>52</sup>  
 a. *lā xmil-et* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> are standing.’ (TAM + *qtil-* + E-set)  
 b. *xmil-a-wet* ‘id.’ (RPP *qtila* + encl. copula)

Based on Khan (2002b), we can assume the following system for J. Rustaqa. The schema below gives the first person masculine forms for the two types of resultatives and the preterit; one (‘resultative I’) based on *qtil-*, the other (‘resultative II’ represented in gray shade) based on the resultative participle (*qtila*):

- (14) **Two resultatives in J. Rustaqa** (NE Iraq; Khan 2002b)

	PRETERIT	RESULTATIVE I	RESULTATIVE II
	<i>qtil</i> -based		
TR.	<i>qṭəl-li</i>		<i>lā qṭəl-li</i>
INTR.	<i>dmix-li</i>	( <i>lā</i> ) <i>dmix-na</i>	<i>dmixá-wena</i> <i>qtila</i> -based

Note how it is the intransitive constructions that show distinct verbal inflection. In principle, the transitive resultative *lā qtil-li* with preverbal TAM-marking functions as the transitive counterpart to both ‘resultative I’ (*lā*) *dmix-na* and ‘resultative II’ *dmixá-wena*.

**3.4.4 Koy Sanjaq: Competing Resultatives**

Jewish Koy Sanjaq (NE Iraq) is closely related to J. Rustaqa (NE Iraq), but there are notable differences. The TAM-marker *lā* is absent, but ‘resultative I’ forms like *rxiš-Ø* ‘He has walked’ (Mutzafi 2004a, 82) do occur. They are marginal and are largely supplanted by the second resultative construction, i.e. compound verbal form. Compound verbal forms like *dmixe-lu* ‘They are asleep’ (*qtila* + COPULA) are more common than ‘resultative I’ forms like *dmix-i* ‘They are asleep’ (*qtil-* + E-set) (Mutzafi 2004a, 78, 105, 108). The compound perfect is, however, fully available for transitive verbs, so that we obtain the following system:

- (15) **Two resultatives in J. Koy Sanjaq** (NE Iraq; Mutzafi 2004a)

	PRETERIT	RESULTATIVE I	RESULTATIVE II
	<i>qtil</i> -based		
TR.	<i>qṭil-li</i>		<i>qṭilá-wen(a)</i>
INTR.	<i>dmix-li</i>	<i>dmix-en(a)</i>	<i>dmixá-wen(a)</i> <i>qtila</i> -based

52 Third person enclitic copula forms (*-ile, -ila, -ilu*) presumably undergo contraction (e.g. *dmix-ile* < \**dmixa-ile*). Khan (2002c) does not provide an example of this contraction, but we can infer this from the contraction with noun phrases elsewhere.

It is the second resultative (*qtilá-wena*) that serves as the transitive counterpart to the ‘resultative I’ based on *qtil-* (*dmix-ena*) in J. Koy Sanjaq.

Certain typical change-of-state verbs belonging to stem 1, however, are essentially voice-neutral in their resultative construction. A verb like *twr* ‘break’ can therefore express the following semantic ambiguity in Jewish Koy Sanjaq. The resultative participle *twirta* agrees with the subject expressed by the enclitic copula *-ila* ‘She is’. It can express an intransitive state that is either patient-oriented (imply some external cause) or subject-oriented (anticausative, spontaneous), or a transitive perfect that is agent-oriented:

(16) J. Koy Sanjaq (NE Iraq; Mutzafi 2004a, 106)

*twir-té-la* (< \**twirtá-ila*)

broken-FS-she.is

- a. ‘She is broken.’ (patient or subject-oriented, intr., stative)  
 b. ‘She has broken.’ (agent-oriented, tr., dynamic)

The aspectual opposition between the intransitive stative-resultative and transitive perfect also correlates with their integration into the verbal system.<sup>53</sup> The difference is partly found in agreement pattern and negation in J. Koy Sanjaq. The resultative-stative conforms to other adjectives by expressing agreement in the plural, while the perfect lacks this. As illustrated in (17) below, the participle *šwiqé* is in the plural and agrees with the first plural subject in the resultative *šwiqe-wex* ‘We are left’, while in the corresponding perfect, it takes the unmarked masculine singular form *šwiqa-wex* ‘We have left’. The agent-oriented perfect of transitive verbs will therefore lack agreement as opposed to the patient-oriented resultative of transitive verbs: *nšiqá-wex* ‘We have kissed’ as opposed to *nšiqe-wex* ‘We are kissed’.

- (17) pl. *šwiqé* + *-wex* *šwiqe-wex* ‘We are left’  
 sg. *šwiqá* + *-wex* *šwiqa-wex* ‘We have left’

The alignment of verbal person marking is partly accusative and partly tripartite in J. Koy Sanjaq. Moreover, the coding strategy for P depends on the person of A. The copula indexes A and the participle agreement always groups S and A in accusative fashion. The coding strategy for P, however, depends on the person of A; its marking is sensitive to the properties of a co-argument.<sup>54</sup> When A is

53 See Kapeliuk (2008); cp. Mutzafi (2004a, 105–109) and Khan (2008a, 653–659).

54 See § 4.4.1.1. on the issue of co-argument sensitivity raised by Witzlack-Makarevich et al. (2016).

first/second person, P is expressed by L-suffixes. Somewhat confusingly, when A is third person, P is expressed by ‘possessive suffixes’ attached to the participle instead,<sup>55</sup> e.g. (Mutzafi 2004a, 100–101)

[V    -A    -A        -P]  
*nšəq*   -t-   -ewan   -ne   ‘I<sub>FS</sub> have kissed him.’ (lit. I am kissed him)

[V    -A    -P        -A]  
*nšəq*   -t-   -éw     -ila   ‘She has kissed him.’ (lit. She is kissed his)

While there is a clear difference in construction preference depending on the person of A, there is ultimately no distinction in alignment. However, a tripartite alignment unfolds when we consider simplex ‘resultative I’ *dmix-en* based on *qtil-*, where s, marked by the E-set, aligns with neither A nor P in the compound transitive perfect. This is similar to the system we find in the Jewish dialect of Urmi.

3.4.5 *Urmi: Mixing Resultatives*

3.4.5.1 Complementary Simple and Compound Verbal Forms

There is some overlap between *qtil-* and the resultative participle *qtila* in either direction in both J. Rustaqa and J. Koy Sanjaq. A mixed system with complete complementary distribution between the two types of resultatives occurs in dialects further north in Iranian Azerbaijan, such as J. Urmi (Khan 2008b, 82–83). Here, intransitive verbs are inflected for the familiar E<sub>1</sub>-set (*plix-∅* ‘It<sub>M</sub> opened’), while transitive verbs have a complete system of their own based on the resultative participle and a secondary E<sub>2</sub>-set ultimately based on but not identical to the enclitic copula: *plix-é* < \**plix-elé* < \**plixa-ile* ‘He has opened’ (see § 3.1.3.3).

(18) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2008b, 263, 83)

- a. *xa tara plix-é* ‘He opened a door.’ (tr., *qtilá*, A = E<sub>2</sub>)
- b. *tara plix-∅* ‘The door has opened.’ (intr., *qtil-*, S = E<sub>1</sub>)
- c. *ö-tara plix-ele* ‘The door is open.’ (adj., *qtilá*, S = COP)

55 Although I cannot fully address this here, there could be a correlation with ditransitives, where the third person copula marks the theme and attaches to a preceding L-set. See also parallels in Christian dialects of NENA in § 4.3.2.3.

The two systems complement each other entirely and constitute a paradigmatic relation, as illustrated in (19) below. The feminine forms highlight the difference between the verbal bases. The construction based on the resultative participle inflects for gender like the nominal form, e.g. fs. *q̇ṫalta* 'killed', and is combined with the E<sub>1</sub>-series for the first and second person, but the E<sub>2</sub>-series for the third person. If the intransitive form had the same basis, it would inflect in the same way, i.e. *\*\*dmixt-án* 'She has slept', but this is impossible.

(19) **Two resultatives mixed in J. Urmi** (NE Iraq; Khan 2008b)

	PRETERIT	PERFECT
	<i>q̇til</i> -BASED	<i>q̇tila</i> -BASED
TR.	+ <i>q̇ṫal-li</i>	+ <i>q̇ṫalt-án</i>
INTR.	+ <i>dṁax-li</i>	+ <i>dmix-an</i>

This also applies to the relative past tense forms that take the past convertor *-wa* instead of the past copula. Compare:

(20) **Equivalent forms with 'past convertor'**

	PRETERIT	RESULTATIVE I+II
	<i>q̇til</i> -BASED	<i>q̇tila</i> -BASED
TR.	+ <i>q̇ṫal-wa-li</i>	+ <i>q̇ṫalt-an-wa</i>
INTR.	+ <i>dṁax-wa-li</i>	+ <i>dṁix-an-wa</i>

3.4.5.2 Ergative Feminine Gender and Tripartite Person Marking

The subsystem in Jewish Urmi is further characterized by a split between accusative and tripartite alignment depending on mood; realis as opposed to irrealis. Whenever the verb takes an object index in the perfect, this is marked by the L-suffixes analogically to *q̇aṫal-*, e.g. *+q̇ṫalt-an-ne* 'I<sub>F</sub> have killed **him**' (see § 3.1.3.3.)

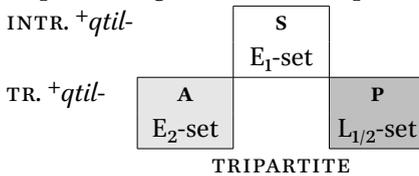
A more analytic construction is preferred in the *irrealis* mood, however. The auxiliary verb *hwy* 'be' is employed together with the participle, both agreeing with the subject and agent. The unmarked *q̇aṫal-* form of *hwy*, i.e. *∅-hawe*, expresses the subjunctive. The intransitive and transitive verbs pattern alike in this analytic construction, for example:

(21) **Irrealis perfect in J. Urmi** (NE Iraq; Khan 2008b, 82, 142)

	RESULTATIVE II			
TR.	+ <i>q̇ṫal</i>	- <i>tá</i>	- <i>hawy</i>	- <i>a</i>
	+ <i>q̇ṫal</i>	- <i>tá</i>	- <i>hawy</i>	- <i>a -le</i>
INTR.	+ <i>dṁax</i>	- <i>tá</i>	- <i>hawy</i>	- <i>a</i>

In terms of alignment, then, the irrealis perfect is accusative, and this is expected, because the inflection is fully based on the *qatəl*-form of *hwy* 'be'. When we confine ourselves to the realis perfect, however, the alignment pattern is best considered to be tripartite for the third person indexes and accusative only for the first and second person indexes. The first and second person subject and agent indexes are expressed by the  $E_1$ -set, e.g.  $+dmix-an$  'I<sub>F</sub> have slept':  $+qtəlt-an$  'I<sub>F</sub> have killed', while third person s and A are differentiated by the primary  $E_1$ -set, e.g. *plix-∅* 'It<sub>M</sub> is opened', and secondary  $E_2$ -set, e.g. *plix-é* 'He has opened (sth.)'. The patient index may be a primary  $L_1$ -set or secondary  $L_2$ -set. (22) illustrates this tripartite pattern.

(22) Tripartite alignment for third person in the perfect in J. Urmi



Finally, there is one subtle aspect in which A is isolated in an ergative fashion. The resultative participle only agrees with A, and this is only overt in the feminine singular. No such overt agreement is found for s and P. Morphologically speaking, the transitive construction betrays more differentiation for A than for P, which is also distinct from s for feminine singular arguments. The difference is not visible for the masculine singular and the common plural. We may illustrate this with the first person coding. The  $\emptyset$  symbol indicates that we observe no difference with the intransitive verbs here:

- (23) 1ms.  $+qtil-\emptyset-\acute{a}n-wa-la$  'I<sub>M</sub> had killed her.'  
 $+dmix-\emptyset-\acute{a}n-wa$  'I<sub>M</sub> had gone to sleep.'  
 1pl.  $+qtil-\emptyset-\acute{a}x-wa-la$  'We had killed her.'  
 $+dmix-\emptyset-\acute{a}x-wa$  'We had gone to sleep.'

Although the inflectional bases of transitive verbs is diachronically different from those of intransitives, i.e. resultative participle *qtilá* + enclitic copula as opposed to perfective *qtil-* + E-set, synchronically, they comprise a single system.

The feminine singular, by contrast, shows an additional /t/-element, which originally reflect the resultative participle form  $+qtəl-ta$  'killed', inflected like an adjective. This is distinct from intransitive verbs, for example:

- (24) ifs.  $+qt\acute{a}l$   $-t$   $-án$   $-wa$   $-le$  ‘I<sub>F</sub> have killed him.’ (transitive)  
 $+dmíx$   $-Ø$   $-an$   $-wa$  ‘I<sub>F</sub> had gone to sleep.’ (intransitive)

Hence, we observe an incidental special marking of A in the feminine singular. This agreement is not just gender-conditioned, but also conditioned by the A role. We observe, therefore, ergative agreement for the feminine singular, and accusative agreement for the masculine singular and the (common) plural. If this is correct, this would be an instance of a *marked* ergative agreement pattern. In the unmarked ergative type, only S and P trigger overt agreement (see § 4.2.1.2). By contrast, only A triggers overt participial agreement in gender here in Jewish Urmi.

### 3.4.6 *Sulemaniyya: Gender-Conditioned Ergativity*

The morphosyntax of compound verbal forms in Jewish dialects of Sulemaniyya and Ḥalabja in NE Iraq is different from their Southeastern Trans-Zab peers in W Iran. The participle and copula mainly (though not always) undergo contraction in non-third person forms of the masculine singular and all forms of the plural. Which syllable is stressed, is an important cue to distinguish between these contracted perfect forms and their near-identical preterit counterparts (Khan 2004a, 99, 2005, 366):

- (25) *smíx-ex* ‘We waited.’  $q\acute{t}il-$  + E-suffixes  
*smix-éx* ‘We have waited.’  $q\acute{t}ila$  + enclitic copula

The difference is more conspicuous in transitive constructions:

- (26) *šqál-lan* ‘We bought (sth.)’  $q\acute{t}il-$  + L-suffixes  
*šəqł-éx* ‘We have bought (sth.)’  $q\acute{t}ila$  + enclitic copula

Strictly speaking, the participial agreement is only apparent in uncontracted intransitive forms, which are the feminine and the third masculine singular, e.g.

<i>qəṭl-ét</i>	‘You <sub>MS</sub> have killed.’	:	<i>qəṭl-ét</i>	‘You <sub>MS</sub> kill.’
<i>qəṭl-étun</i>	‘You <sub>PL</sub> have killed.’	:	<i>qəṭl-étun</i>	‘You <sub>PL</sub> kill.’
<i>qəṭlá-ya</i>	‘She has killed.’	≠	<i>qəṭl-á</i>	‘She kills.’

Other person indexes render the agreement obsolete as well, see (27) below for the full paradigm.

(27) **Perfect paradigms in J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 98; 2005)

INTRANSITIVE			TRANSITIVE			
<b>MS</b>	<i>q̄tilá</i>	+COP		<i>q̄ṭlá</i>	+COP	
3	<i>smixá</i>	-y	‘He has waited’	<i>šəqlá</i>	-y	‘He has bought’
2	<i>smix-ét</i>		‘You <sub>MS</sub> have waited’	<i>šəql-ét</i>		‘You <sub>MS</sub> have bought’
1	<i>smix-ena</i>		‘I <sub>M</sub> have waited’	<i>šəql-ena</i>		‘I <sub>M</sub> have bought’
<b>FS</b>	<i>q̄tíltá</i>	+COP		<i>q̄ṭáltá</i>	+COP	
3	<i>smixta</i>	-ya	‘She has waited’	<i>šqəлта</i>	-ya	‘She has bought’
2	<i>smixta</i>	-yat <sup>56</sup>	‘You <sub>FS</sub> have waited’	<i>šqəлта</i>	-yat	‘You <sub>FS</sub> have bought’
1	<i>smixta</i>	-yan	‘I <sub>F</sub> have waited’	<i>šqəлта</i>	-yan	‘I <sub>F</sub> have bought’
<b>PL</b>	<i>q̄tilé</i>	+COP		<i>q̄ṭlé</i>	+COP	
3	<i>smix-én</i>		‘They have waited’	<i>šəql-én</i>		‘They have bought’
2	<i>smix-etun</i>		‘You <sub>PL</sub> have waited’	<i>šəql-etun</i>		‘You <sub>PL</sub> have bought’
1	<i>smix-éx</i>		‘We have waited’	<i>šəql-éx</i>		‘We have bought’

Generally, the alignment is accusative in the perfect in J. Sulemaniyya. The participle and copula will agree with A and S, and the object is marked independently, available for all persons just as in the progressive (see § 3.3.2.3.), for example (Khan 2004a, 138)

*q̄tilá-y* ‘əll-óx ‘He killed you.’

Dependent person markers may also be used as object indexes for the third person. The alignment is more complex, however. First of all, P is attached to the participle as a ‘possessive’ suffix, restricted to third person referents, e.g.

3ms.	<i>q̄ṭl</i>	-éw	‘killed him’	(lit. killed his)
3fs.	<i>q̄ṭl</i>	-áw	‘killed her’	(lit. killed hers)
3pl.	<i>q̄ṭl</i>	-ú	‘killed them’	(lit. killed their)

This parallels the marking of P in the preterit through the E-series. The copula in the perfect resembles the L-suffixes in the preterit. Compare the parallel sentences in preterit and perfect in (28) below.

56 The feminine singular forms in *-yat* and *-yan* may also contract, e.g. *smixtá-yan* > *smixtán* (Khan 2004a, 998).

(28) J. Sulemaniyya (W Iran; Khan 2004a, 522 R:163)

	[P]		[V	-P	-A]
a. <i>ay-bratá</i>	<i>ma-ya</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>-t-aw</i>	<i>-yet?</i>	
DEM:FS-girl:FS what-COP:3FS bring:RPP -P:FS-P:3FS -A:2MS					
‘Why have you <sub>MS</sub> brought <b>this girl?</b> ’					

	[V	-P	-A]
b. <i>aya</i>	<i>ma-ya</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>-a -lox?</i>
DEM:FS what-COP:3FS bring <sub>P:3FS</sub> -P:3FS -A:2MS			
‘Why did you <sub>MS</sub> bring <b>her?</b> ’			

These person indexes always pattern accusatively, the copula expressing s and A. The resultative participle, however, can agree either with A or P in this construction. This depends on the *gender(-number) hierarchy*, given in (29) below.

(29) **Gender(-number) hierarchy**

FS > non-FS (PL, MS)

The participial agreement in gender and number with the feminine singular outranks the non-feminine irrespective of its role as either A or P. The masculine singular and the plural participial forms *qətlá* and *qətle* coincide into *qətl-* before the ‘possessive’ suffixes, which renders any distinction between the masculine singular and the plural obsolete. The main difference, then, is fs. *qətl-t-* against non-fs. *qətl-Ø-*.

First of all, when all referents are non-feminine singular, participial inflection does not express anything other than non-feminine singular reference, so it could refer to either participant, as illustrated in (30). Forms like *qətl-ew-yex* ‘We have killed him’ (30a) and *qətl-u-yet* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> have killed them’ (30c) are ambiguous with respect to their agreement with either A or P; their underlying declension could be *qətlá* (ms.) or *qətle* (pl.) or no agreement at all. We simply cannot tell on the basis of these forms. The participial agreement of non-feminine singular forms is essentially neutral.

(30) **Null agreement with the non-feminine singular P/A** (Khan 2004a)

	A/P = non-FS		A/P = non-FS		
a. <i>qətl</i>	<i>-Ø</i>	<i>-ew -yex</i>	c. <i>qətl</i>	<i>-Ø</i>	<i>-ú -yena</i>
kill:RPP -NONFS -P:3MS -A:1PL			kill:RPP -NONFS -P:3PL -A:1MS		
‘We have killed him.’			‘I <sub>MS</sub> have killed them.’		
b. <i>šmix</i>	<i>-éx</i>	<i>(*-é -yex)</i>	d. <i>šmix</i>	<i>-ena</i>	<i>(*-á -yena)</i>
wait:RPP -S:1PL -S:PL -S:1PL			wait:RPP -S:1MS -S:MS -S:1MS		
‘We have waited.’			‘I <sub>MS</sub> have waited.’		

When feminine singular is involved, the participle will always express agreement with the feminine argument, irrespective of its role. Agreement with feminine singular arguments thus overrides agreement with non-feminine singular arguments (Khan 2004a, 137–138, 157).

When P is feminine singular, the person markers align accusatively, but the participle agrees ergatively, grouping s and P in gender and number:

(31) Ergative agreement with P (Khan 2004a)

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| P = FS > A = NONFS                 | P = FS > A = NONFS                 |
| a. <i>q̄təl</i> -t    -aw    -ye   | c. <i>q̄təl</i> -t    -aw    -yen  |
| kill:RPP   -P:FS   -P:3FS   -A:3MS | kill:RPP   -P:FS   -P:3FS   -A:3PL |
| ‘He has killed her.’               | ‘They have killed her.’            |
|                                    |                                    |
| b. <i>šmix</i> -ta    -ya          |                                    |
| wait:RPP   -S:FS   -S:3FS          |                                    |
| ‘She has waited.’                  |                                    |

When A is feminine singular, however, the participle groups s and A:

(32) Accusative agreement with A (Khan 2004a)

- |                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A = FS > P = NONFS                 | A = FS > P = NONFS                    |
| a. <i>q̄təl</i> -t    -ew    -ya   | c. <i>q̄təl</i> -t    -u    -yat      |
| kill:RPP   -A:FS   -P:3MS   -A:3FS | kill:RPP   -A:FS   -P:3PL   -A:3FS    |
| ‘She has killed him.’              | ‘You <sub>FS</sub> have killed them.’ |
|                                    |                                       |
| b. <i>šmix</i> -ta    -ya          | d. <i>šmix</i> -ta    -yat            |
| wait:RPP   -S:FS   -S:3FS          | wait:RPP   -S:FS   -S:2FS             |
| ‘She has waited.’                  | ‘You <sub>FS</sub> have waited.’      |

When all arguments are feminine singular, it is a moot point with which argument the participle agrees.

The same holds for the indexing of full NPs. When a full nominal P is not indexed, the participle agrees with A, for example:

(33) Agreement with A like s (Khan 2004a, 490.72)

- |   |              |            |            |                      |
|---|--------------|------------|------------|----------------------|
| [A]   | [P]          | [V         | -A         | -A]                  |
| <i>ʾana noši ... jullé</i>  | <i>kaldá</i> | <i>xiṭ</i> | <i>-ṭa</i> | <i>-yan</i>          |
| I   | myself       | clothe:PL  | bride:FS   | sew:RPP -A:FS -A:1FS |
| ‘I <sub>F</sub> myself (on my own) sewed the clothes of a bride.’ |              |            |            |                      |

When a full nominal P is indexed, the gender determines participial agreement. A salient, feminine singular patient, such as *ay-bratá* ‘this girl’ in (34) below, may trigger overt participial agreement with P.

(34) **Agreement with P like s** (Khan 2004a, 522.163)

[P]		[V	-P	-P	-A]
<i>ay-bratá</i>	<i>ma-ya</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>-aw</i>	<i>-yet?</i>
DEM:FS-girl:FS what-COP:3FS bring:RPP -P:FS -P:3FS -A:2MS					
‘Why have you <sub>MS</sub> brought <b>this girl</b> ?’					

The alignment therefore depends on the properties of a co-argument.<sup>57</sup> All functions s, A and P can trigger agreement. It only patterns either ergatively or accusatively, when a non-fs. argument is additionally involved. The non-feminine singular arguments are ambiguous only in transitive clauses. Only non-feminine singular s triggers overt participial agreement, while A and P do not. The morphosyntax shifts in the direction of the morphologically more marked feminine singular, regardless of the function. Only A and P are treated differently depending on gender, while s remains unaffected and the person indexes (i.e. the copula and the ‘possessive’ suffixes) remain accusative throughout.

We observed for J. Urmi that the overt gender agreement depends on both the argument type, i.e. feminine singular, and its grammatical function, i.e. A. In J. Sulemaniyya, however, it is the argument type, i.e. feminine singular, that triggers overt agreement, regardless of its grammatical function. Non-feminine singular arguments arguably do not trigger participial agreement in transitive clauses, since there is no overt morphology that distinguishes masculine singular or common plural. The resultative participle expresses agreement in gender and number with P only for the third person. The ergative grouping of s and P, then, occurs only if P is expressed as a dependent person form of the third person feminine singular and no competing feminine singular A is involved.

### 3.4.7 *Jewish NENA in West Iran: Ergative Third Person*

Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA in Iran, such as Sanandaj, Saqez and Kerend, differ drastically from those elsewhere in NENA, including Sulemaniyya and Ḥalabja, which belong to the same Southeastern subgroup. The dialects differentiate between various moods and tenses of the perfect

<sup>57</sup> See § 4.4.1.1. on this point raised by Witzlack-Makarevich et al. (2016).

mainly by means of the verb *hwy* 'be'. Intransitive verbs can occur in all perfect constructions, for example:

(35) J. Saqez (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 110, 149)

	PRESENT PERFECT	PAST PERFECT
REALIS	<i>dmixá-y</i> 'He has fallen asleep'	<i>dmixēle</i> < <i>dmixá ye-le</i> 'He had fallen asleep'
IRREALIS	<i>dmixá Ø-hawé-Ø</i> 'He may have fallen asleep'	<i>dmixá Ø-hawe-Ø-wa</i> 'He would have fallen asleep'

Transitive perfect constructions are more restricted and peculiar. Both the copula and participle agree with the patient. This is a striking deviation from the more common pattern in the transitive realis perfects among NENA dialects. The copula always expresses the subject and agent in all of the NENA dialects except for these Jewish dialects in western Iran.

Consider the following hypothetical clauses in J. Urmi and J. Sulemaniyya. In J. Sulemaniyya, the participle agrees with the object only because of the gender hierarchy and the object is indexed by a 'possessive suffix' (see § 3.4.6, cf. § 2.2.5.1.). Nevertheless, the copula agrees with A regardless.

(36) Copula agrees with the agent

a. J. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2009, 7–8)

[A]	[P]	[V-	-A	-P]
<i>šwaw-í</i>	<i>baxt-í</i>	<i>nšiq</i>	<i>-e</i>	<i>-lla</i>
neighbor:MS-my	woman:FS-my	kissed:RPP	-A:COP:3MS	-P:3MS
'My neighbor has kissed my wife.' (lit. My neighbor is kissed her my wife)				

b. J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq)

[A]	[P]	[V-	-P	-P	-A]
<i>šwaw-í</i>	<i>baxt-í</i>	<i>nšaq</i>	<i>-t</i>	<i>-aw</i>	<i>-ye</i>
neighbor:MS-my	woman:FS-my	kissed:RPP	-P:FS	-P:3FS	-A:COP:3MS
'My neighbor has kissed my wife.' (lit. My neighbor is kissed hers my wife)					

The corresponding sentence would be as follows in dialects in western Iran such as Sanandaj. Both the participle and the copula agree with the patient only.

(37) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 7–8)

[A]	[P]	[V	-P	-P]
<i>šwaw-í</i>	<i>baxt-í</i>	<i>nšəq</i>	<i>-ta</i>	<i>-ya</i>

neighbor:MS-my woman:FS-my kissed:RPP -P:FS -P:COP:3FS

‘My neighbor has kissed my wife.’ (lit. My neighbor—my wife is kissed)

At the same time, in all three dialectal subgroups, pronominal P may be expressed by the *ʔal(l)*-series (see § 3.1.2.1), e.g.

J. Urmi	<i>nšiq</i>	<i>-e</i>	<i>-llax</i>	‘He has kissed you <sub>FS</sub> .’
J. Sulemaniyya	<i>nəšqa</i>	<i>-y</i>	<i>ʔallax</i>	
J. Sanandaj	<i>nəšqa</i>	<i>-y</i>	<i>ʔalax</i>	

The perfect of Western Iranian Jewish dialects of NENA<sup>58</sup> shows additional splits. Transitive clauses with two full NPs can freely occur in this construction, but pronouns are treated differently depending on person, showing, as we will see, ergative morphological marking for the third person and tripartite for the other persons. Furthermore, the trigger potential is also tripartite, with different degrees of possibility. s agreement is obligatory and unconditioned, P agreement is possible, but conditioned, and A agreement is impossible. This, too, is linked with person in a horizontal way in that first/second person AS and PS are never expressed on this verbal form. Finally, contrasting with other dialects, the irrealis pendant of this construction patterns like the preterit.

#### 3.4.7.1 Verbal Person Marking in the Realis Perfect

The marking of the patient is conditioned by person. Only the third person is overtly marked on the compound verbal form through the copula and participial agreement, much like the E-set in the preterit. Thus, the third person patterns ergatively only in the realis perfect:

(38) J. Saqez (W Iran; Hopkins 2002, 292)

[V-S]

a. *dmix-ta-ya*

(intransitive)

slept:RPP-FS-3FS

‘She has slept.’

58 See Hopkins (2002) and Khan (2009, 90–92, 295–296, 323–326, 327–329).

- [A]                      [V-P]  
 b. *axonawal-i*      *xzi-ta-ya*                      (transitive)  
 brother:PL-my seen-FS-3FS  
 'My brothers have seen her.'

The non-third person forms are necessarily expressed through a different set. This is the 'all-series of person markers, for example 'əl-ax 'you' in J. Sanandaj (39b) below. Third person pronominals can also be expressed this way, e.g. *bāruḫāwali gərša-y 'əl-ef* 'My friends have pulled him', but they are not used in differential object indexing.

(39) **Verbal vs. Prepositional marking** (based on Khan 2009, 324)

- [A: fNP]                      [V-P: PRO 3]  
 a. *bāruḫāwali*      *grəš-te-ya-Ø*  
 friend:PL-my pulled-P:FS-P:3FS  
 'My friends have pulled her/it<sub>F</sub>.'
- [A: fNP]                      [V]                      [P: PRO 1,2,3]  
 b. *bāruḫāwali*      *gərša-y*                      'əl-ax  
 friend:PL-my pulled(MS-3MS) OBJ-2FS  
 'My friends have pulled you<sub>FS</sub>.'

If a speaker should wish to express an agent other than the third person, the simple form, which otherwise typically expresses the perfective past must be used instead of the compound verbal form (Khan 2009, 94). Thus, it is possible to say (41) below to convey either 'I saw the woman' (preterit) or 'I have seen the woman' (perfect), but it is not possible to include a non-third person agent in the compound form as illustrated in (40).

- (40) *\*(aná) baxtaké*                      *xzita-ya*                      (*qtilá*)  
 I                      woman:FS:DEF seen:FS-P:3FS  
 Intended: 'I have seen the woman.'

- (41) *(aná) baxtaké*                      *xəzy-a-li*                      (*qtil-*)  
 I                      woman:FS:DEF see<sub>PV</sub>-P:3FS-A:1SG  
 'I have seen the woman.' (or: 'I saw the woman.')

For third person agents as such, there are two distinct transitive constructions: *gərš-a-le* 'He pulled her' for the preterit, i.e. perfective past, but *grəštá-y* '(He) has pulled her' for the realis perfect (J. Sanandaj, W Iran, Khan 2009, 94). For

first and second person agents, the perfect must be expressed through a transitive *qtil*-construction, e.g. *gərš-a-li* ‘I have pulled her’ (Khan 2009, 284). The following variation in the realis perfect is found for a non-referential agent, an third person agent and a non-third person agent:

(42) **Variation in agent-marking for the realis perfect** (based on Khan 2009, 94)

	INTRANSITIVE	S		
a. <b>Agentless:</b>		[1,2,3]	<i>grīšté-yan</i>	‘I <sub>F</sub> have been pulled’
	TRANSITIVE	P	A	
b. <b>Agent 3rd person:</b>		[3]	[3]	
		<i>grāšt-é-y</i>	∅	‘He has pulled her’
c. <b>Agent 1st/2nd person:</b>	P	A		
( <i>qtil</i> -based)	[3]	[1,2]		
	<i>gərš-a</i>	- <i>li</i>		‘I have pulled her’

When we consider the person categories in isolation, there is an alignment split between ergative and tripartite. The *qtil*-based form necessarily also expresses the realis perfect for non-third person agents. The participial agreement and copula in the realis perfect align s and P ergatively for third person reference, while A is left unmarked (∅). The ’*all*-set attaches to *qtalle* expressing P for non-third person reference, while s is readily expressed through the construction based on the participle, so that each function is treated differently. The alignment pattern for non-third person arguments is therefore tripartite throughout (much as in the preterit).

(43) **Ergative vs. tripartite alignment in the realis perfect** (based on J. Sanandaj; Khan 2009)

	FIRST/SECOND PERSON	THIRD PERSON	
	TRIPARTITE	ERGATIVE	
a. <i>šmix-te-yan</i>		c. <i>šmix-te-ya</i>	(intransitive)
‘I <sub>F</sub> have stood up’		‘She has stood up’	
b. <i>grāš-li ’əl-ax</i>		d. <i>grāš-te-ya-∅</i>	(transitive)
‘I have pulled you <sub>FS</sub> ’		‘(They) have pulled her’	

In actual transitive clauses, the person categories are expressed differently depending whether they occur in A or P role. That is, there is both a person split in the coding of A and the coding of P. The transitive form of the compound realis perfect as given in (43d) above is completely confined to the third person, both with respect to A and P. However, a third person agent may combine with a non-third person form of the *'əll*-series just as in the preterit, e.g. J. Sanandaj (Khan 2009, 324)

*gərša-y 'əl-ax* '(He) has pulled you<sub>FS</sub>.'  
*grəš-le 'əl-ax* 'He pulled you<sub>FS</sub>.'

3.4.7.2 Full Nominals in the Realis Perfect

The compound realis perfect freely combines with full NPs. When there is no overt agreement with either A or P, the verb takes an unmarked 3ms. form. Agreement with full nominal patients is only overtly expressed, when the NP is definite or referential indefinite (Khan 2009, 318–319, 326). In the following example, the indefinite *xa baxta* in (44b) is salient and triggers overt agreement through both the participle and the copula, while *baxta* (44a) is not; and the lack of agreement is indicated by the non-referential dummy 3ms. verbal form.

(44) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 326)

	[A]	[P]	[V]
a.	<i>tat-í</i>	<i>baxtá</i>	<i>nəšqá-y</i>
	father:MS-my	woman:FS	kissed(:MS-3MS)
	'My father has kissed a woman.'		

	[A]	[P]	[V-P]
b.	<i>tat-í</i>	<i>xa baxtá</i>	<i>nšəq-taya</i>
	father:MS-my	one woman:FS	kissed-P:FS-P:3FS
	'My father has kissed a certain woman.'		

By contrast, the agent NP never triggers agreement. This may be expected for ergative agreement morphology.<sup>59</sup> The zero realization of the agent is typologically unmarked for ergative agreement.<sup>60</sup>

59 One may be tempted to consider this form rather like a passive, since the agreement potential of A is even less than that of P. See § 3.5.3. for arguments why these clauses should not be treated as passive.

60 See Subsection 4.2.1. on typological markedness and ergativity in relation to NENA dialects.

## 3.4.7.3 The Irrealis Perfect

Turning to other moods and tenses of the perfect, the same pattern occurs in the irrealis perfect. In the past realis perfect, the preterit of the (weak) verb *hwy* ‘to be’ is inflected with  $L_1$ -suffixes (*yele* ‘He was’) and is employed to expressed a past tense copula, the past counterpart to the enclitic copula (*-y(e)* ‘He is’). The past copula is employed in intransitive perfect constructions, but this cannot be employed in a transitive pluperfect construction, cf. J. Saqiz (Israeli 1998, 110, 149)

*baxtaké*     *dməxtá-yela*     ‘The woman had slept.’  
 \*\**baxtaké*     *xzítá-yelan*     intended: ‘We had seen the woman’

There is therefore no past tense counterpart to the present perfect.

There is, however, an equivalent *irrealis* perfect. Instead of the copula, the subjunctive of *hwy* ‘be’, i.e.  $\emptyset$ -*hawē*- ‘may be’ against realis base *k-we*- ‘is, shall be’, is combined with the resultative participle, e.g. *dməxtá-hawy-a* ‘She would have slept’ (J. Saqez, Israeli 1998, 119). The two elements often have phonetically reduced contracted alternants, fusing into one conjugational form through elision, compare *rqilé-hawen(i)* and *rqilá-wen(i)* ‘They would have danced’ (J. Kerend, Hopkins 2002, 291 ff.).<sup>61</sup> The irrealis *transitive* perfect is based on the same morphological elements, but freely allows agent-marking through the use of  $L_1$ -suffixes to the subjunctive *hwy* in the same way as the preterit, e.g. *grəštá-hawy-a* ‘pulled her’ + *-le* ‘he’ > *grəštáwy-a-le* ‘He would have pulled her’ (lit. Him may be pulled she). The person indexes consist of the  $L_1$ -series to mark A and the  $E_1$ -series<sup>62</sup> to mark s and p. Table 17 below offers an overview.

The functional distribution of the  $E_1$ -set and the  $L_1$ -set in the irrealis perfect is equivalent to that in the preterit. The morphosyntax is once again ergative in the expression of the third person, which is all the more striking given that the inflectional base  $\emptyset$ -*hawē* ‘may/would be’ is, in fact, ultimately a *qaṭəl*-form. Other NENA dialects that have similar coding devices in an irrealis perfect construction have an alignment as fully accusative as *qaṭəl*-. In J. Urmi, for example, *grəštá-hawy-a-le* would mean ‘She may have pulled him’ (Khan 2008b, 142), not ‘He may have pulled her’. Thus we observe the following contrast:

61 Cf. Khan (2009, 92) for J. Sanandaj.

62 The inflection is, nonetheless, based on the paradigm of final-y verbs as expected for the verb *hwy*.

TABLE 17 Irrealis perfect in J. Kerend

INTRANSITIVE				
BASE		S		
<i>q̄t̄ila + hawe</i>		E <sub>1</sub> -SET		
3MS	<i>rq̄il-awe</i>	-∅	'He may have danced'	
3FS	<i>rq̄ilt-awy</i>	-a	'She may have danced'	
3PL	<i>rq̄il-áwe</i>	-n(i)	'They may have danced'	
TRANSITIVE				
BASE		P	A	
<i>q̄āt̄la + hawe</i>		E <sub>1</sub> -SET	L <sub>1</sub> -SET	
3MS	<i>ḡarš-áwe</i>	-∅	-le	'He may have pulled him'
3FS	<i>ḡaršt-áwy</i>	-a	-le	'He may have pulled her'
3PL	<i>ḡarš-áwe</i>	-ni	-le	'He may have pulled them'

DATA BASED ON HOPKINS (2002)

(45) **Contrasting the irrealis perfects of J. Urmi and J. Saqiz**

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| J. Urmi (Khan 2008b)         | J. Saqiz (Israeli 1998)    |
| ACCUSATIVE                   | ERGATIVE                   |
| a. <i>+dm̄ax-tá-hawy-a</i>   | c. <i>dm̄ax-tá-hawy-a</i>  |
| 'She may have slept.'        | 'She may have slept.'      |
| b. <i>gr̄aš-tá-hawy-a-le</i> | d. <i>gr̄aš-t-áwy-a-le</i> |
| 'She may have pulled him.'   | 'He may have pulled her.'  |

The two irrealis perfect constructions in the two distinct Jewish dialects mirror each other's morphosyntax. It would seem that the ergative coding of *q̄til-* lies at the base of the irrealis inflectional base *q̄āt̄lawe-* in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects in western Iran like Kerend, while in Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects in northwestern Iran like Urmi the construction is based on *q̄āt̄al-*. Both can be accounted for on system-internal grounds.

Table 18 at the end of this subsection below gives a brief overview of the ergative patterns attested in the Western Iranian dialects. Morphologically

speaking, the three TAM-categories preterit, irrealis perfect and realis perfect constitute a separate uniform subsystem, which operates according to principles non-existent in other TAM morphology within these dialects. There is a primary distinction between intransitive and transitive inflectional bases for sound verbs throughout. The two perfects are based on allomorphs of *qtil-* in the preterit along with its accompanying ergative morphosyntax. Finally, the coding associated with s and p is directly linked with this aspectual stem and marked as close as possible to the verbal base.

Interestingly, it is the *realis* perfect that is morphosyntactically *less* transitive than the irrealis, while, semantically, realis mood is said to be a key feature of ergative transitive constructions (e.g. Hopper and Thompson 1980). Although both essentially employ a verbal adjective, the irrealis incorporates the copula verb *hwy* into a new inflectional base that can be conjugated like the preterit. This facilitates the use of L<sub>1</sub>-suffixes to mark the agent.

The realis transitive perfect (*qətlá-y*) is the most restricted of the three in not permitting the expression of non-third person arguments as either P or A. Although this is reminiscent of the passive voice, it otherwise qualifies as an active transitive construction (see § 3.5.3). Absence of overt A coding could be explained by the unique nature of the construction itself. Since both the participle *and* the copula always agree with P, no agreement morphology is available for the agent, while the copula would always express A in other dialects. Moreover, the copula is not mobile in these realis perfect forms and cannot be combined with the L<sub>1</sub>-suffixes, the L<sub>2</sub>-series or the *'əll*-series to encode A, so that the following forms are impossible:

\*\* *nqəšté-ya -li* intended: 'I have kissed her.'  
 \*\*\* *'əli nqəšté-ya* (lit. Me is kissed she)

This may be blocked because of system-internal pressure from the differential prepositional marking with (*'əl*)-. Nevertheless, one would expect that the copula would become available as an agent index, when it need not mark the patient. This is not what we find. Instead, even when the patient coding attaches to the compound verbal form, the unmarked 3ms. is still preferred, leaving the agent unexpressed, e.g. J. Saqez (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 117)

*nəšqa-y -li* '(He/she/they) have kissed me'

TABLE 18 Ergativity in Jewish NENA in the preterit and beyond

	Base <sub>PFV</sub>	S/P	A
PRETERIT	<i>rqil-</i>	[3] E <sub>1</sub> -SET	[1,2,3]
	<i>q̄əł-/q̄əł-</i>	E <sub>1</sub> -SET	L <sub>1</sub> -SET
IRREALIS PERFECT	<i>rqiláwe</i>	[3] +E <sub>1</sub> -SET	[1,2,3]
	<i>q̄əłáwe</i>	+E <sub>1</sub> -SET	L <sub>1</sub> -SET
REALIS PERFECT	<i>rqilá</i>	[3] +COP	[3]
	<i>q̄əłá</i>	+COP	∅

DATA BASED ON KHAN (2009, 94) AND HOPKINS (2002, 297)

### 3.5 Ergativity and Transitivity: Argument Omission and Valency Alternations

Maintaining our focus on Southeast Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, we have observed that most intransitive verbs are inflected like P only in the third person, the first and second person being treated differently. Many of intransitive verbs with coding distinct from A generally express a situation oriented towards a single participant that registers

- a state or (dis)position, such as *zəde-∅* ‘be afraid’;
- a transitory state, e.g. *nəxip-∅* ‘be ashamed’, *kənip-∅* ‘become hungry’;
- or an uncontrolled process, such as *pil-∅* ‘fall’, *mil-∅* ‘die’, *šəre-∅* ‘slip’ (Khan 2004a, 298–305).

Not all intransitive constructions, however, follow this pattern; others take L-suffixes like A. Placing this within a typology of transitivity alternations, can we predict when a verb takes either E-suffixes or L-suffixes, respectively, when the referentiality of the patient or agent is reduced or completely omitted? As it happens, many verbs can take both, and this is reminiscent of fluid subject marking, i.e. semantic alignment, where verbs take s<sub>P</sub> or s<sub>A</sub> coding. In these NENA dialects, however, this only applies to the third person. For practical considerations, I will speak in terms of s<sub>P</sub> or s<sub>A</sub> coding. Nevertheless, I remain non-committal to the view that considers this a system *sui generis*. It seems to

me consistent with the cross-linguistic typology of transitivity that is largely determined by lexical semantics rather than the presence of a syntactic object. The difference in subject coding unfolds because A in the perfective past or *q̄til-* is distinguished from A in the imperfective or *qaṭəl-*, while S is treated alike in both systems. Where ergative alignment is found cross-linguistically, the salience of the patient can be reduced either through morphosyntactically intransitive constructions, such as the antipassive, or through morphosyntactically transitive constructions, such as an anti-impersonal construction. The patient is oblique or completely omitted in the antipassive<sup>63</sup> as the counterpart to the oblique or absent agent in the passive. An anti-impersonal construction is the counterpart to the impersonal passive: the referentiality of P is reduced, but some third person morphology and/or transitive coding is maintained.<sup>64</sup>

### 3.5.1 *Patient Omission: Lexical Transitivity*

Some languages that betray ergative morphosyntax opt for intransitive coding even though the orientation remains directed towards the agent (cf. Comrie 1978, 358; 1975, 118). In Samoan (a Polynesian language), for example, verbs that allow the dropping of the patient, such as ‘eat’, conform to the coding of other intransitive predicates, including agent-oriented intransitives, such as ‘run away’.

- (1) **Samoa** (Polynesian, Samoa; Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992, 108, glossing adapted)

[V]	[A]	[P]	
a. <i>Sā</i>	<i>‘ai e le teine</i>	<i>∅ le i’a</i>	(active)
PST	eat	ERG the girl ABS the fish	
	‘The girl ate the fish.’		

[V]	[S]	
b. <i>Sā</i>	<i>‘ai ∅ le teine</i>	(patientless antipassive)
PST	eat	ABS the girl
	‘The girl ate.’	

[V]	[S]	
c. <i>Sā</i>	<i>sola ∅ le teine</i>	(agentive intransitive)
PST	run.away	ABS the girl
	‘The girl ran away.’	

63 See Givón (1990, 624–628), Cooreman (1994), Payne (1997, 220).

64 See Lazard (1998, 137). Cf. Comrie (1978, 118).

Often, however, languages that exhibit non-accusative alignment will also have a set of verbs that take A-like subject marking within their system, reminiscent of split-s systems. In Basque, for example, when an otherwise transitive verb ‘eat’ occurs in an intransitive construction, it may maintain A-like subject coding. The 3sg. is the unmarked form of the verb and therefore non-referential in the meaning of ‘Martin ate’, but it indicates that morphosyntactically some transitivity is preserved (Comrie 1978, 118):

(2) **Basque** (Comrie 1975, 118, 1978, 333, 358)

[ABS→S] [V]  
 a. *Martin ethorri da.*  
 Martin-ABS came AUX-3SG:S  
 ‘Martin came.’

[ERG→S(A)] [V]  
 b. *Martin-ek jan du.*  
 Martin-ERG ate AUX-3SG:A(-3SG:P)  
 ‘Martin ate.’

Generally, Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish NENA fits the profile of Basque, maintaining transitivity coding in allowing for some verbs to be lexicalized like transitives. Effective transitive verbs, such as *xl* ‘eat’ and *pqy* ‘shoot’, may omit the patient, while the coding of the agent remains the same. In (3a–b), for example, the patient *tfanga* may be freely omitted and the L-suffix encodes the agent:

(3) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 297, 301)

[P] [V-A] (patient specified)  
 a. *tfanga pqe-le*  
 rifle:FS shoot<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He shot a gun.’

[V-S(A)] (patient unspecified)  
 b. *pqe-le*  
 shoot<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He shot.’

Since agent-like marking can be maintained for lexicalized transitive verbs, the dividing line between ergative alignment and split-s marking is not always clear, although fluid- and/or split-s marking systems are sometimes character-

ized as an alignment type *sui generis* (e.g. Mithun 1991). Comrie (2005, 399) considers that, when it is only a small number of verbs that take A-like subject coding, the pattern instantiated by the majority of verbs is the basic alignment at least for comparative purposes. Indeed, there seems to me no reason to conclude that the transitivity alternation displayed by languages like J. Sulemaniyya, or like Basque in (2) above for that matter, renders their ergative morphology more ‘split-ergative’ than that in languages like Samoan, which display the alternation illustrated in (1). By contrast, some scholars consider the latter a kind of split conditioned by the nature of the object. In her survey of these alternations, Woolford (2015), for instance, argues that the types like (2) and (3) are more fully ergative than the types like (1) conditioned on the object, and that it remains questionable whether ergative patterns exist that are purely grounded in transitive syntax rather than in additional semantic factors. Each approach depends on what type one considers more basically ergative than the other, though we have no *a priori* reason to consider (2) and (3) more ‘superficially ergative’ than (1), perhaps except for the fact that (2) and (3) remind us of the similar alternation in accusative patterns.

Thus, while one could consider SE Trans-Zab Jewish displaying a type of semantic alignment, for all other purposes, they show ergative verbal person marking in the third person. As we will observe in §3.5.2, some causative/inchoative alternations (Haspelmath 1993b) follow the opposite pattern reminiscent of the antipassive in (1b), i.e. P-like subject coding. By contrast, the stronger the implication of a patient, the more likely A-like coding. Those verbs that are most likely to receive agent-like coding (i.e. the L-set) in SE Trans-Zab Jewish are those that at least imply a change in a patient-like argument, even when no such patient argument is expressed explicitly. These include transitive verbs of which the patient may be omitted, e.g. *xəl-le* ‘He ate’, in which the ergative coding of A is retained. As Khan points out (2009, 303):

The use of the transitive inflection for these verbs, therefore, can be explained by the fact that there is an implied ‘latent’ affectee of the action, although this is not necessarily specified.

Complex predicates or light verb compound constructions (sometimes also termed phrasal verbs) also involve reduced referentiality of the patient, but may still maintain transitive coding. This is a typical feature of Iranian languages, but also occurs in several NENA varieties, in many cases due to contact with neighboring languages (Kapeliuk 2002). In such light verb constructions, a non-referential dummy nominal element is incorporated in the verbal con-

struction as a single constructional unit. In Vafsi (Tati, Northwestern Iranian; p.c. Stilo), for example, the verb *da-* ‘give’ may combine with the NP *sezne* ‘sneeze’ to convey the meaning of ‘sneeze’ (lit. ‘to sneeze-give’). The choice of  $S_A$  or  $S_P$ , however, is largely determined by the light verb and may be semantically arbitrary (Creissels 2008b; Haig 2008, 11). The verb *gen-/kætt-* ‘fall’, for example, may combine with the NP *rá* ‘road’ to convey the meaning of ‘set off’ (lit. ‘to road-fall’) and takes  $S_P$  coding despite its agentive semantics. By contrast, less controllable or uncontrollable situations, such as *ærcæq kærd-* ‘sweat’, take  $S_A$  coding because of the otherwise transitive light verbs, such as *kærd-* ‘do’ or *da-* ‘give’.

Such complex predicates or light verb constructions where the verb takes a dummy full NP also occur in NENA, most of which are replicated either in material or pattern from Persian and/or Kurdish combining with *ʔwl* ‘do’ or *xØr* ‘become’ (e.g. Khan 2009, 153), e.g.

<b>J. Sanandaj</b>			<b>Central Kurdish</b>	
<i>ʔila</i>	<i>wi-le</i>	:	<i>dast-î</i>	<i>kird</i> ‘He began’
hand	do <sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>		hand-A:3MS	did

The verb itself determines  $S_A$  coding or lack thereof. A light verb construction may also involve non-Iranian material, such as *miłá* ‘circumcision’ from Hebrew, and can also combine with additional object coding on the verb or on the nominal element, e.g. (Khan 2009, 154, 160–161)

<i>miłá</i>	<i>xir-Ø</i>	‘He was circumcised.’
<i>tahdíđ</i>	<i>wil-a-le</i>	‘He threatened <b>her</b> .’
<i>daʔwät-óx</i>	<i>wi-le</i>	‘He invited <b>you<sub>MS</sub></b> .’

Animal noises or sound emission verbs, such as ‘bark’, more or less controllable bodily responses, such as ‘sneeze’ and ‘laugh’, and manner of motion verbs, such as ‘dance’ and ‘run’, are a common exception in taking agent-like/transitive coding in languages with ergative constructions (Lazard 1998, 136–139). They typically include verbs whose lexical aspect belongs to situations that are called *semelfactive* (Comrie 1976, 42). This term is used to distinguish a punctual atelic predicate involving an instantaneous event, i.e. happening only once, from an iterative atelic one with a serial meaning, i.e. happening in a series. Lazard (1998, 139) suggests that such verbs tend to take  $S_A$  coding, because they imply a single, instant, manifestation impressing on a perceiver via the senses that is, morphosyntactically, realized in the reduced referentiality of the patient. Some of the verbs in dialects like J. Sulemanniya that are semantically

intransitive, but combine with  $s_A$  coding belong to semantic fields of the anti-impersonal constructions mentioned by Lazard (1998, 139), e.g. J. Sulemaniyya (Khan 2004a, 583)

<i>tiffe</i>	<i>di-le</i>	'spit'	(lit. spit-hit)
<i>čirike</i>	<i>di-le</i>	'shout'	(lit. shout-hit)
<i>bora</i>	<i>di-le</i>	'low, bellow (cow)'	(lit. <i>bora</i> -hit)

Indeed, such semelfactive verbs do tend to take  $s_A$  coding in these dialects. This includes animate and inanimate sound emissions and bodily emissions and reactions such as *phr* 'yawn', *šhl* 'cough', and so forth. They are not equivalent in all dialects (see further below). In J. Sulemaniyya, all such semelfactive verbs are inflected like  $\Lambda$ :

- (4) **Semelfactives** (J. Sulemaniyya; Khan 2004a, 300, 2007a, 151; transcription adapted)
- kalbá nwax-le* 'The dog barked.'
  - ʔewá gərgəm-le* 'The cloud thundered.'

The implied effect is morphosyntactically realized in an implicit P that that triggers transitive coding. This can be made explicit through cognate objects much like *xalá xəl-le* 'He ate food', for example:

- c. (*tapoltá*) *tpəl-le* 'He sneezed (a sneeze).'

Another possible reason why these verbs tend to take  $s_A$  coding is they correspond to local Central Kurdish complex predicates composed of *kirdin* 'do' and an indefinite noun phrase (Khan 2007b), which are lexically transitive.

In omitting the patient, a particular set of verbs pertaining to grooming and putting on may take transitive coding, but invoke a reflexive meaning contrasting with the aforementioned verbs:

- (5) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq)
- |                  |   |                     |
|------------------|---|---------------------|
| [P]              | [V-P-A]   |                     |
| a. <i>jəl-éf</i> | <i>ləwš-i-le</i>                                | (patient specified) |
|                  | clothes:PL-his dress <sub>PV</sub> -P:3PL-A:3MS |                     |
|                  | 'He put on his clothes.' (Khan 2004a, 303)      |                     |

- [V-S<sub>A</sub>]  
 b. *lwəš-le* (patient unspecified)  
 dress<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>  
 'He got dressed (i.e. dressed himself).' (ibid. 258)

This reflexive meaning is semantically restricted; thus, a verb such as *xəl-la* 'She ate' would not be considered reflexive without further specification. Such a reading would require an explicit reflexive pronoun, such as *noš-aw* 'herself' (; Khan 2004a, 300). While the agent of reflexive verbs is much more so affected than other verbs such *pqe-le* 'shoot' and *xəl-le* 'eat' that have an implicit patient, one could view the explicit patient in (5a) as a supplementary extension of a self-oriented action. That is, clauses like *jəl-éf ləwš-i-le* 'He put on his clothes' literally mean 'He dressed (in) clothes'. There is indirect evidence for this in the corresponding derived causative of this verb, where the additional object is also semantically secondary but more object-like, e.g.

- c. *jullé*      *labl-i-wa*      *julle*      *malbiš-i-wa-le*  
 clothes:PL take<sub>PFV-A:3PL-PST</sub> clothes:PL III:dress<sub>PFV-A:3PL-PST-P:3MS</sub>  
 'They took his clothes and dressed him **in clothes**' (Khan 2004a, 566.13), lit. 'they used to dress him clothes'.

Another possibility is that the transitive coding is influenced by the Kurdish equivalent complex predicate, e.g. *jil nān* 'to put on clothes', lit. 'clothes-do'.

Purely morphological factors can also be important determinants. As expected, the absence or presence of object coding can result in A-like coding. First, there are intransitive verbs that exhibit dummy, non-referential 3fs. object coding, compare (6a–b) below. Lazard (1998, 137) calls this an *anti-impersonal* construction. The referentiality of P is reduced, but some third person morphology is maintained. A-like subject coding is used, because the E-suffixes are reserved for the non-referential P. Hence, a verb like *gɣk* 'laugh' in (6a) is generally treated differently from *bxy* 'cry'. A single lexeme *ʔq* in (6b) can express a semantic distinction between 'flee' and 'run' that is reflected in the type of inflection.<sup>65</sup> The verb *gɣk* 'laugh' can also occur without transitive coding to express an incidental occurrence of laughter (Khan 2009, 308).

65 Semantically, verbs that exhibit a dummy object typically belong to the middle voice (cf. Mengozzi 2005). See Kemmer (1993) on the semantics of the middle voice.

- (6) **Verbs with non-referential 3fs. object** (J. Sanandaj; Khan 2009, 307–308)
- a. *gəxk-a-le* ‘He laughed’ vs. *bəxe-∅* ‘He wept’  
 b. *ʔərq-a-le* ‘He fled’ vs. *riq-∅* ‘He ran’

When such verbs take a prepositional complement, the coding remains A-like, e.g. *gəxk-a-le ga-i* ‘He laughed at me’ (Khan 2009, 515). Dialects may differ in this respect; compare *pəšx* ‘rejoice’ in Jewish Saqez and Sanandaj:

c. <b>J. Saqez</b>	<b>J. Sanandaj</b>	
(Israeli 1998, 118)	(Khan 2009, 523)	
<i>pəšx-a-le</i>	<i>pəšix-∅</i>	‘He rejoices’

The same verb *pəšx* ‘rejoice’ takes A-like coding and combines with a prepositional complement in Jewish Sulemaniyya:

- (7) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 582)
- [V-S(A)] [OBL]  
*pəšax-le baʔ-éu* ‘He was happy with him’

The verb *hwy* ‘be’ takes A-like subject coding in all these dialects. This is most likely morphologically motivated, as the L-suffixes are presumably a means to express the past. A paradigm based on the E-series would have been morphologically identical to the present copula forms. Compare the forms for J. Sulemaniyya (Khan 2004a) below:

(8)	PAST		PRESENT	
	<i>-ye-le</i>	‘He was’	<i>-ye-∅</i>	‘He is’
	<i>-ye-la</i>	‘She was’	<i>-y-a</i>	‘She is’
	<i>-ye-lan</i>	‘We were’	<i>-y-ex</i>	‘We are’ etc.

Finally, agent coding may also occasionally be extended to intransitive verbs when they co-occur with a transitive verb. The L-suffixes that mark the agent of a transitive verb are attracted to an immediately preceding intransitive verb. Normally, the intransitive verb *zyl* ‘go’ is inflected with E-suffixes, but in (9) below it takes an L-suffix to index the subject argument due to the following transitive verb:

- (9) *ʔay-zíl-wa-la*                      *mír-wa-la*                      *baqa Mərza Xəñáká*  
 she-go<sub>PfV</sub>-PST-S:3FS    say<sub>PfV</sub>-PST-A:3FS    DAT    PRN    PRN

The majority of intransitive verbs, however, will not take  $S_A$  forms in South-eastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects. They do not show the same coding as the agent in the corresponding transitive valence pattern, if it exists. Khan (2004a, 295–305)<sup>66</sup> explains such exceptions on the basis of transitivity in a broader semantic sense, to which we turn in the following subsection.

### 3.5.2 *Agent Omission: Ergative and Antipassive Typology*

Transitive and intransitive verbs can show causative/inchoative alternations (Haspelmath 1993b), where both verbs express a similar situation, but the intransitive pendant omits a cause, denoting a spontaneous process; hence the term *inchoative* as the process of entering into a state, such as ‘break’ in English *My leg broke* in the sense of ‘become broken’. When transitive and intransitive morphosyntax differ in a transitivity alternation, the intransitive pendant of a valence alternation will show distinct subject coding from the agent in the transitive counterpart through what is called the *antipassive* voice. This is considered to be a hallmark of ergative typology (e.g. Keenan 1976, 313; Comrie 1988, 18–19).

Cognitive linguists have indicated several tendencies in linguistic typology that seem to point to a correlation between reduced semantic or less prototypical transitivity and reduced or less prototypical morphosyntactic transitivity. At the same time, such valence alternations marked by voice show construction-specific and language-specific properties.

#### 3.5.2.1 Ergativity: Causative/Inchoative Alternations

The omission of A can still yield well-formed sentences in languages that otherwise exhibit an ergative pattern (cf. Keenan 1976, 313; Comrie 1988, 18–19). For instance, Samoan, a Polynesian language, allows the absence of agent coding for most transitive verbs, such as ‘hit’ in (10) below (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992, 104). The agent of the corresponding active transitive clause is omitted in (10b), and the resulting construction is similar to the passive in that an impersonal agent may still be implied. The agent, therefore, is more loosely integrated in the clause in being freely omitted and unspecified, much like oblique agents in the passive, but there is no special verbal morphology indicating a voice shift.

66 Cf. Khan (2007a, 148–152, 2008b, 73–75, 2009, 302–308).



- [s]
- b. *'ole'ā ma=fa'i nifo!*  
 FUT DTR=break tooth  
 'My teeth are about to break off!' (inchoative)

In some languages where ergative morphosyntax predominates (such as Lezgian, Haspelmath 1993a), however, there is no distinction in verbal morphology between verbs that freely omit the agent and spontaneous events.

Weak verbs show such labile alternations in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, though, naturally, the ergativity is limited to the third person. The agentless form generally denotes a spontaneous event, which indicates that the agent may be completely absent as with a patientive intransitive verb (such as *pil-∅* 'He fell'). In (12) below, a verb like *pqy* 'shoot, burst' can lack agent indexing. The agent agreement is present and the L-suffixes mark the agent in (12a). The verb takes no agent index in (12b) and the agent is left unspecified.

(12) J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 297)

- |    |                                |                                   |                                |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|    | [P]                            | [V-P-A]                           |                                |
| a. | <i>tfangǎké</i>                | <i>pəqy-a-le</i>                  | (specified agent, causative)   |
|    | rifle:FS:DEF                   | shoot <sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS-A:3MS |                                |
|    | 'He fired the rifle.'          |                                   |                                |
|    |                                |                                   |                                |
|    | [s]                            | [V-S <sub>p</sub> ]               |                                |
| b. | <i>tfangǎké</i>                | <i>pəqy-a</i>                     | (agent unspecified/inchoative) |
|    | rifle:FS:DEF                   | shoot <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS         |                                |
|    | 'The rifle was fired (by sb.)' |                                   |                                |
|    | 'The rifle exploded.'          |                                   |                                |

At a first glance, agent coding seem to be simply deleted, so that forms like *pəqy-a* 'It<sub>F</sub> exploded' are to some extent analyzable as truncated transitive forms conveying '(Somebody) fired the rifle'. In leaving the agent unexpressed, the question arises whether the construction is morphosyntactically still transitive or not (cf. Keenan and Dryer 2007, 330). Is the patient-like argument in *pəqy-a* an s or a P? There are grammatical and morphological reasons to treat such constructions as intransitive inchoative that may more strongly imply an agent as a passive rather than as a transitive construction where the unspecified agent has been deleted.

First of all, while the inflectional base of transitives is identical to that of the intransitive in the case of weak verbs, it not the same as that of intransitives for *strong* verbs. Intransitive verbs constitute a special class of verbs with

a different inflectional base consistently maintaining the long vowel /i/ (see § 3.1.3.1.). This modification suggests we are not dealing with labiality in the strict sense,<sup>67</sup> but perhaps with what Haspelmath (1993b, 91–92) calls an *equipollent* alternation, where both transitive and intransitive stems are derived from the same abstract root with a subtle difference in stem modification. As illustrated in (13) below, the intransitive counterpart of ambitransitive verbs morphologically follows the pattern of all basic strong intransitive verbs. This is an indication that the patient argument is s and not p, since the intransitive counterpart is morphologically distinguished even within the same stem formation.

(13) **Transitive and intransitive bases** (J. Sulemaniyya, NE Iraq; Khan 2005)

TRANSITIVE				INTRANSITIVE	
3MS	<i>bšəl-∅-le</i>		'He cooked it <sub>M</sub> '		
3FS	<i>bšəl-a-le</i>		'He cooked it <sub>F</sub> '		
3PL	<i>bšəl-i-le</i>		'He cooked them'		
INTRANSITIVE				INTRANSITIVE	
3MS	<i>bšil-∅</i>		'It <sub>M</sub> cooked'	<i>smix-∅</i>	'He waited'
3FS	<i>bšil-a</i>		'It <sub>F</sub> cooked'	<i>smix-a</i>	'She waited'
3PL	<i>bšil-i</i>		'They cooked'	<i>smix-i</i>	'They waited'

Transitive verbs can naturally also alternate in valency through different stem formations. Several intransitive verbs, such as *tym* 'finish', are transitivized in stem III derivations:

- (14) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 299)
- a. *tim-∅* (inchoative, stem I)  
 finish<sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub>  
 'It<sub>M</sub> finished.'
- b. *ktebăké mtim-a-le* (causative, stem III)  
 book:FS:DEF finish<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>  
 'He finished the book.'

67 This was pointed out to me by M. Kossmann.

Khan observes for Jewish Sanandaj (W Iran), closely related to Jewish Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq), that the agentless counterpart of transitive verbs is generally conditioned by telicity, i.e. “telic actionality with an inherent endpoint constituting a change of state” (Khan 2009, 309). Transitive verbs that have a definitive, lasting effect, such as ‘kill’, e.g. *mamí q̄til-Ø* ‘My uncle was killed’,<sup>68</sup> have an agentless counterpart, but transitive verbs without a definitive, lasting effect on the patient-like argument, such as ‘see’ or ‘hit’, cannot occur in such a construction. The passive of such verbs has to be expressed differently, for example by the resultative participle and the copula or *hw̄y*, e.g. *x̄iya Ø-hāwe-Ø* ‘He may have been seen’ (Khan 2009, 310).

Khan’s observations imply that practically all effective transitive verbs can occur in causative/inchoative transitivity alternations. Regardless of morphological modification in inflectional base or not, both forms like *bšil-a* ‘It<sub>F</sub> cooked’ and *pəqy-a* ‘It<sub>F</sub> exploded’ are essentially inchoative (Khan 2009, 309). They denote an uncontrolled process arising spontaneously, where the origin is less salient to the course of the event.

The agent, however, could also be more strongly implied, in which case the meaning is similar to that of an agentless passive: *q̄til-a* ‘She was killed (by somebody)’. The passive construction essentially follows the pattern of spontaneous events, but a cause is more easily contextualizable because of the nature of the event. Inchoatives do not exclude that a speaker is unaware of any causal origin and may add a causal phrase (e.g. *The door opened because of the wind*; Croft 1994b, 110), but the cause is otherwise not as strongly implied as in the prototypical passive.

Similarly, overt expression of the agent is not altogether avoided. An additional oblique agent is possible (Khan 2004a, 297, 2009, 309). The agent is introduced by the source preposition *mən-* ‘of’ as in the following example:

(15) J. Sanandaj (W Iran)

[S]	[v-s]	[OBL]	
a. <i>mam-í</i>	<i>q̄til-Ø</i>	<i>mən-laga sarbazé</i>	(overt agent)
uncle-my	kill <sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub>	from-side soldiers	
‘My uncle was killed by the soldiers.’ (Khan 2009, 309)			

The same preposition marks the indirect cause (i.e. ‘because of’) and can be added to any intransitive predicate

68 It is not clear whether this could also mean ‘My uncle died’.

- [OBL]  
 b. *mən-qardá* *ret-∅* (overt agent)  
 from-cold:FS shake<sub>IPFV-S:3MS</sub>  
 'He is shaking because of the cold.' (ibid. 585)

The agent complement in (15) is also typical for denoting the indirect cause of events that are construed as spontaneous. If thus understood, (15) would be akin to English 'My uncle got killed because of the soldiers' rather than a passive.

All else being equal, therefore, intransitive valence patterns that alternate with a transitive valence pattern of the same basic verb allow for an interpretation where the event unfolds spontaneously, consistent with the higher degree of saliency on the part of the patient for inchoatives (cf. Croft 2001, 317). Most intransitive verbs are inflected with E-suffixes and pattern as such. There are, however, a number of relevant exceptions, to which we turn in the following subsection.

### 3.5.2.2 Ergativity: Transitive Semantics and Antipassives

Ever since Hopper and Thompson's (1980) seminal article, functional typologists<sup>69</sup> have argued that the prototypical transitive semantics of the event as a whole contributes to the preference for more transitive morphosyntax in constructional splits and alternations. The intransitive valence pattern tends to be used for the semantically less transitive situation.<sup>70</sup> Agent-like or patient-like arguments are treated more like s or more like OBL, respectively.<sup>71</sup>

Languages have various valence-reducing devices that downgrade the patient (cf. Payne 1997). Alternative constructions, such as the antipassive voice, are favored when the effect on the patient is reduced (e.g. Cooreman 1994). Cross-linguistically, the antipassive and comparable constructions are largely uniform in expressing reduced semantic transitivity and marginalizing the effect on the patient (e.g. Hopper and Thompson 1980; Tsunoda 1981). In Samoan, for example, a transitive verb such as 'eat' occurs in an intransitive

69 See *inter alia* Lakoff (1977), Comrie (1978, 1989), Hopper and Thompson (1980), DeLancey (1984, 1987), Givón (1984a, 1985a), Langacker (1987, 1991a–b), Croft (1990, 1991), Lazard (1998, 2002), de Swart (2006), and Næss (2007).

70 E.g. Hopper and Thompson (1980), Tsunoda (1981), Givón (1984a, 1985).

71 A rather extreme view found in the literature is that ergative alignment itself is even conceptually based on transitivity (e.g. Cooreman et al. 1984; Givón 1985a) and its effects, therefore, are predicted to characterize any split between ergative and other constructions (e.g. Givón 1984a, 153–163).

construction in (16b), where the agent is expressed as s. The patient equivalent to the transitive counterpart in (16d) is expressed as the OBL with the locative-directional case, used to denote a partially affected undergoer (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992, 108).

(16) **Samoa** (Polynesian, Samoa; Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992, 105, 108, 429, glossing adapted)

[V] [S]  
 a. *Sā pa'ū Ø le teine* (patientive intransitive)  
 PST fall ABS the girl  
 'The girl fell.'

[V] [S]  
 b. *Sā 'ai Ø le teine* (patientless antipassive)  
 PST eat ABS the girl  
 'The girl ate.'

[V] [S] [OBL]  
 c. *Sā 'ai Ø le teine i le i'a* (antipassive)  
 PST eat ABS the girl LOC the fish  
 'The girl ate some fish.' (lit. The girl ate at the fish)

[V] [A] [P]  
 d. *Sā 'ai e le teine Ø le i'a* (transitive)  
 PST eat ERG the girl ABS the fish  
 'The girl ate the fish.'

The affectedness or change of state of P is arguably the most fundamental feature that contributes to the transitivity overall. When the patient is totally affected, the change of state is completed, the endpoint of the event is clearly delimited and the transitive construction is preferred. When the patient is not totally affected and/or the change of state is incomplete, the delimitations become vaguer. The most important of these shared properties can be summed up as follows:

(17) ANTIPASSIVE	ERGATIVE
less transitive	more transitive
imperfective	perfective
partial affectedness of P	complete affectedness of P
atelic	telic

ANTIPASSIVE	ERGATIVE
durative	punctual
stative	dynamic

The intransitive construction is favored when the effect on the patient is less salient and the activity is more central. In Hopper and Thompson (1980)'s model, this is the reduction of transitivity.

Similarly, some transitivity alternations in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects do evince a distinction in the coding of A and S that are arguably reminiscent of the antipassive voice. The less definitive the effect, the more likely the verb will not take  $S_A$  coding.

To illustrate, the intransitive alternant of (18a) in (18b) is patientless, but takes subject coding distinct from A.

(18) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 522)

[A]	[V-A]	[P]	
a. <i>hangăké</i>	<i>nqas-la</i>	<i>'əl-í</i>	(active)
bee:FS:DEF	prick <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A</sub> :3FS	OBJ-1SG	
'The bee stung me.'			

[S]	[v-S]		
b. <i>xmatá</i>	<i>nqis-a</i>		(patientless antipassive)
needle:FS:DEF	prick <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S</sub> :3FS		
'The needle pricked.'			

Such an antipassive may also be extended with an oblique patient. This is typical of bivalent verbs that combine with prepositional complements and generally involve an aimer and a target as participants.

[S]	[v-S]	[OBL]	
c. <i>xmatá</i>	<i>nqis-a</i>	<i>ga-'il-í</i>	(antipassive)
needle:FS:DEF	prick <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S</sub> :3FS	at-hand-my	
'The needle pricked (lit. at) my hand.'			

Similarly, the alternation between (19a) and (19b) below depends mainly on whether the patient is more definitively affected or not. In (19a), the less affected patient is encoded as oblique with the preposition *ba-*. Here the patient *yalaké* is only partially affected and the verb literally conveys 'became attached to' (Khan 2004a, 304). The direct counterpart to this is (19b). The patient is completely affected and this is expressed in the primary transitive morphosyntax.

(19) OBL opposed to P (J. Sulemaniyya; Khan 2004a, 304)

	[S]	[V-S]	[OBL]	
a.	<i>hanga</i>	<i>dwiq-a</i>	<i>bǎ-yalaké</i>	(OBL, less affected)
	‘The bee stung the child.’			

	[P]	[V-P-A]	
b.	<i>yaláké</i>	<i>dwəq-Ø-la</i>	(P, more affected)
	‘She seized the child.’		

Variation in s-marking is also partly conditioned by properties of the situation or event as a whole, i.e. aspect. This concerns punctuality and dynamism. In (20) below, for instance, the difference in punctuality plays a role, and in (21), the degree of dynamism (Khan 2008b, 73–74).

(20) Punctual (A-like) vs. durative (P-like) (J. Sulemaniyya; Khan 2004a, 305)

a.	<i>torá lip-le</i>	‘He learnt Torah.’	(A, punctual)
b.	<i>ga-maktáb lip-Ø</i>	‘He learnt at school.’	(S <sub>P</sub> , non-punctual)

Khan (2004a, 301) explains that the patient-like form of *ylp* ‘learn’ in (20b) refers to a “more diffuse, durative activity, spread over a long period of time, although presented perfectly as a unitary whole.” Hence, the disfavor of agent-like coding depends on the durativity of the action.

The S<sub>A</sub> construction therefore seems to be disfavored for durative and stative situations in accordance with Hopper and Thompson’s transitive semantics. Khan (2004a, 304) also attributes the difference between *prq* ‘finish’ and *bdy* ‘begin’ in (21) to action-dynamics. *prq* ‘finish’ in (21b) expresses the cessation (endpoint) of an activity resulting in an enduring state of completion (i.e. durative and stative) and hence aligns with P. *bdy* ‘begin’ entails the initiation of an event with a greater degree of dynamism and, hence, aligns with A.

(21) Active-dynamic (A-like) vs. stative (P-like) (J. Sulemaniyya; Khan 2004a, 301)

a.	<i>haštá (m)pərq-a-le</i>	‘He finished the work.’	(stem II transitive)
b.	<i>pəriq-Ø m-xalá</i>	‘He finished eating.’	(S <sub>P</sub> , more stative)
c.	<i>bde-le b-xalá</i>	‘He started eating.’	(S <sub>A</sub> , more dynamic)

Antipassives may also correlate with reflexives (Comrie 1978, 361–362). A few intransitive constructions that are understood as reflexive reveal coding distinct from A in NENA, such as *sxy* and *xpy* conveying ‘wash (oneself)’, for example:

(22) J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 300; 2007a, 150)

- |                         |                                  |               |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| [P]                     | [V-P-A]                          |               |
| a. <i>bronǎké</i>       | <i>xip-∅-la</i>                  | (active)      |
| child:MS:DEF            | wash <sub>PFV</sub> -P:3MS-A:3FS |               |
| ‘She washed the child.’ |                                  |               |
|                         |                                  |               |
|                         | [V-S]                            |               |
| b. <i>xip-a</i>         |                                  | (antipassive) |
|                         | wash <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS       |               |
| ‘She washed.’           |                                  |               |

The intransitive valence pattern of verbs like *xip-a* ‘She washed’ is thus not simply agentless and does not convey the meaning ‘She was washed (by sb. else)’. This is in contrast to reflexive verbs of dressing and grooming that are lexicalized as transitive, where the corresponding form that lacks  $S_A$  coding leaves the agent unspecified, e.g.

- |                |                  |                    |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>lwǎš-le</i> | ‘He got dressed’ | (by himself)       |
| <i>lwiš-∅</i>  | ‘He was dressed’ | (by somebody else) |

There are known counterexamples, however: for example, it is possible that the antipassive marks precisely the opposite, a highly individuated and affected patient much like differential object marking (cf. Comrie 1978, 362–363). Similarly, many dynamic and/or punctual verbs are not  $S_A$  verbs in NENA, such as

- |               |           |                             |
|---------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| <i>pǎqe-∅</i> | ‘explode’ | (dynamic, punctual, telic)  |
| <i>rqil-∅</i> | ‘dance’   | (dynamic, durative, atelic) |

Moreover, the relationship between transitivity and the properties of the agent (i.e. control, intention, animacy) is even more controversial (e.g. Fauconnier 2011B, 2012). Not all scholars (e.g. Tsunoda 1981) consider the degree of agentivity a significant factor in contributing to transitivity as conceived by Hopper and Thompson (1980).<sup>72</sup> Studies such as those of Fauconnier (2011A–B, 2012)<sup>73</sup> have shown, for instance, that less transitive morphosyntax is ultimately the result of the anticausativization of a verb denoting an uncontrolled event, which, being intransitive and conceived as spontaneous, is generally not com-

72 Cf. Croft (1984), Malchukov (2006).

73 Cf. Kittilä (2005), Shibatani (2006), Fauconnier and Verstraete (2014).

patible with A. It is also generally a lexically intransitive verb that primarily determines the A-like or P-like marking of s and not the transitive semantics *per se* (Creissels 2008b; Haig 2008, 11).

Cross-linguistically, the most typical agent-like intransitive verbs are controlled activities such as ‘dance’ (Croft 1998, 52–53). It is striking, then, that the prototypically agent-like intransitive subjects, such as *rəqil-∅* ‘He danced’, are treated unlike A in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA. This is a noteworthy exception to agentivity as a contributing semantic factor. Khan (2007a, 150) points out that such verbs lack an implicit patient and do not have a labile counterpart with a transitive valence pattern. Clearly, however, such verbs could potentially take an object, cp. English *We danced the tango*, and some of them do, for example, *ylp* ‘learn’ in (20) above, perhaps shifting to the more transitive coding simply because of the presence of an object.

Several dialects in NW Iran seem to differentiate on the basis of agentivity. The subject’s agentive properties do come into play here. In J. Qarah Ḥasan, for instance, (23a) ‘bark’ as an animal noise verb is distinct from (23b) ‘sneeze’ as a bodily action, presumably viewed as an uncontrolled process, like *pil-∅* ‘fall’, instead. The subject of *tpl* ‘sneeze’ in (23b) is more patient-like than the subject of *mwx* ‘bark’ in (23a) due to lack of control.

(23) J. Qarah Ḥasan (W Iran; Khan 2009, 306)

- |                  |                           |                                 |
|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. <i>nox-le</i> | ‘It <sub>M</sub> barked.’ | (S <sub>A</sub> , controlled)   |
| b. <i>tpil-∅</i> | ‘He sneezed.’             | (S <sub>P</sub> , uncontrolled) |

Such instantaneous bodily reactions are known to lead to ambiguity in the degree of control of s (Khan 2009, 305; cf. Sorace 2000, 877).<sup>74</sup>

In the related dialect of J. Sanandaj, animacy plays a role. If the subject is inanimate, the verb is categorized as intransitive and takes E-suffixes, compare:

(24) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 294, 304–306)

- |                 |                      |                         |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
|                 | [S]                  | [V-S <sub>A</sub> ]     |                            |
| a. <i>xmara</i> |                      | <i>sre-le</i>           | (S <sub>A</sub> , animate) |
|                 | donkey:MS            | bray <sub>PfV-3MS</sub> |                            |
|                 | ‘The donkey brayed.’ |                         |                            |

74 It would be interesting to know, however, whether the verb in (23b) could take a cognate object or not. If not, this could also explain why s is not marked like A.



(26) **Controlled (A-like) vs. uncontrolled (P-like)** (J. Sanandaj; Khan 2009, 304, 543)

a. *’ó rába mǝndixané yǝp-le* (compatible with A)  
 he many thing:PL learn<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub>-3MS  
 ‘He learnt many things (by himself).’

b. *’ó rába mǝndixané yǝlip-∅* (incompatible with A)  
 he many thing:PL learn<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub>-3MS  
 ‘He learnt many things (from somebody else).’

All in all, the distinction in subject-marking does neither evince a neat split between agentive and patientive verbs nor between the presence or absence of objects. This does not mean that semantic or syntactic transitivity is completely irrelevant (cf. Khan 2004a, 304). Inanimate and/or noncontrolling arguments sometimes do not seem compatible with the S<sub>A</sub> construction.

**3.5.3 Agent Omission in Compound Verbal Forms in West Iranian Jewish Dialects of NENA**

Particular types of arguments are not compatible with the A function in the compound verbal form in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA in western Iran. In fact, there is no overt inflection of the agent in such compound verbal forms (Hopkins 2002; Khan 2009, 92), which is a major difference from other NENA dialects. Also, given the lack of agent indexes, the compound verbal form itself is unspecified for an agent, which has to be inferred from the context and can never be a highly topical argument such as the first or second person. Thus, a hypothetical clause like (27) below is not possible.

	[A]	[P]		[V-P]
(27)	<i>**aná</i>	<i>baxtí</i>		<i>nšəq-ta-ya</i>
	I	woman:FS-my		kissed-P:FS-P:3FS
	Intended: ‘I have kissed my wife.’			

The agent NP does not trigger agreement even when it is a full and definite nominal, such as *bratí* ‘my daughter’ in (28), and even when the patient is omitted, for example:

	[A]		([P])	[V]
(28)	<i>brat-í</i>		(∅)	<i>qəryá-y</i>
	daughter:FS-my			studied(:MS-3MS)
	‘My daughter has studied (lit. it <sub>M</sub> ).’ (Khan 2009, 325)			

Conversely, the prominent patient retains overt agreement when the agent is still referential, but unexpressed:

- [A] [P] [V-P]  
 (29) (∅) *mašináké lbálte-ya*  
 he car:FS:DEF taken:P:FS-P:3FS  
 'He<sup>75</sup> has taken the car.' (Khan 2009, 518)

The realis perfect is similar to the passive, since the agent is obligatorily zero and incompatible with higher ranking agents. The agent in the passive construction is limited to the third person and may be omitted in some languages of the world (Jelinek and Demers 1983; Croft 2001, 288–290<sup>76</sup>). The passive cannot be used when the agent outranks the patient. That is, when the agent is non-third person and the patient is third person (either pronominal or full nominal), a different construction must be used instead in such languages.

Nevertheless, there are good reasons to analyze this construction as transitive, i.e. ergative, and not passive. All things considered, it will be demonstrated that the transitive realis perfect (*gəršá-y*) in Iranian Jewish dialects of NENA is not a passive voice construction. This is supported by the morphological and syntactic properties of the patient (differential marking), of the agent (lacking oblique case-marking, occupying initial position, co-referential deletion) and the verbal form itself (distinct inflectional base for transitives and intransitives). It still remains a restricted and largely impersonal construction, namely in limiting both A and P to the third person.

### 3.5.3.1 Differential Object Marking

The marking of the patient is sensitive to definiteness in the realis perfect, which is typical of objects. Agreement, for instance, is only manifested, when the patient argument is salient. Otherwise the compound verbal form is in the unmarked masculine singular form, e.g. *gəršá-y*, and does not agree, just as in the preterit, e.g. *grəš(-∅)-li* 'I pulled' (Khan 2009, 326). Although it is not uncommon for passives to disfavor non-third person arguments to occur as the oblique agent, it is typical of passives to favor them as the patient. The compound verbal form that concerns us here, however, is *not* compatible with non-third person arguments as either agent or patient. The person constraint

75 This is Khan's translation; the agent's identity, i.e. he/she/it/they, is context-dependent, however.

76 Cf. DeLancey (1981), Haspelmath (2007, 94).

on the patient, however, is not typical of a passive, but is similar to the ergative preterit. A first person form, for example, cannot be expressed as the patient, as shown in the following hypothetical clause:

- (1) *šulṭaná* \*\* *nšəqta-yan*  
 king:MS kissed:P:FS-P:1FS  
 Intended: ‘The king has kissed me<sub>F</sub>.’

In addition, it is the patient argument that may receive (differential) prepositional marking by means of (*ʔəl*)/-, for example:

(2) **Differential prepositional marking**

- |  |                    |                |
|--|--------------------|----------------|
| [A]  | [DOM→P]            | [V]            |
| a. <i>šulṭaná</i>  | <i>ʔəl-ganawá</i>  | <i>qəṭlá-y</i> |
| king:MS  | DOM-thief:MS       | killed         |
| ‘The king has killed <b>the thief</b> .’ (J. Saqez, W Iran; Israeli 1998, 229) |                    |                |
| b. <i>tat-í</i>  | <i>həl-baxtaké</i> | <i>gəršá-y</i> |
| father:MS-my   | DOM-woman:the:FS   | pulled         |
| ‘My father has pulled the woman.’ (J. Sanandaj, W Iran; Khan 2009, 329)        |                    |                |

Similarly, the realis perfect freely combines with independent object person markers, for example:

(3) **J. Sanandaj** (W Iran; Khan 2009, 324)

- |  |                |               |
|--|----------------|---------------|
| [A]                                    | [V]            | [P]           |
| a. <i>brat-í</i>                       | <i>gəršá-y</i> | <i>ʔəl-éf</i> |
| girl:MS-my                             | pulled         | OBJ-3MS       |
| ‘My daughter has pulled him.’          |                |               |
| b. ∅                                   | <i>gəršá-y</i> | <i>ʔəl-í</i>  |
| A:3                                    | pulled         | OBJ-1SG       |
| ‘(He/she/it/they has/have) pulled me.’ |                |               |

Dependent person markers of the L<sub>1</sub>-suffixes or L<sub>2</sub>-series may attach to the immediately preceding verbal form in J. Saqez just as it does in the preterit (Israeli 1998, 117), e.g.

*nišqá-y -lan* ‘(He/she/it/they has/have) kissed us’

First and second person patients are never expressed by the participial agreement or the copula when the perfect is transitive. This is a type of person constraint also attested for the preterit of these dialects. One would expect for a passive that participle and copula would agree with a highly topical patient just as it would agree with *s*, but they do not. The patient coding of the perfect mimics that of objects in the preterit (cf. Khan 2009, 323).

One would expect the agent to be prepositional in a passive, but prepositional marking of the agent does not appear to be possible in these dialects for the realis perfect, so that clauses like (4) below do not occur.

- (4) **\*\**həl-brat-í***                      *gərša-y 'əlí*  
       DAT-daughter:FS-my pulled P:1SG  
       ‘My daughter has pulled me.’

### 3.5.3.2 Full Expression of the Agent and Word Order

The unmarked word order of full NPs in the perfect is consistent with other transitive clauses. Compare the perfect in (5a) with an equivalent preterit clause in (5b) in the Jewish dialect of Saqez:

- (5) **J. Saqez** (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 103)
- |   |                    |                        |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|
| [A]                                       | [P]                | [V-P]                  |
| a. <i>brat-év</i>                         | <i>axonowal-áv</i> | <i>la xəzy-én</i>      |
| girl:FS-his                               | brother:PL-her     | NEG see:RPP:P:PL-P:3PL |
| ‘His daughter has not seen her brothers.’ |                    |                        |
- 
- |                         |                  |                                 |
|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| [A]                     | [P]              | [V-P-A]                         |
| b. <i>aḥmád</i>         | <i>xalist-év</i> | <i>xəzy-a-le</i>                |
| PRN                     | sister-his       | see <sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS-A:3MS |
| ‘Ahmad saw his sister.’ |                  |                                 |

The agreement is entirely limited to the patient in the realis transitive perfect (5a) contrasting with the preterit, where the agent is also indexed (i.e. the L-suffixes). The agent NP in (5a) occupies the typical position of A in the clause. Indeed, the agent nominal is similarly zero-marked. It is never oblique, as we would expect for a passive.

### 3.5.3.3 Referential Continuity

Moreover, co-referential deletion is not expected to be possible for the (oblique) agent in a passive prototype, but only for *s* (see § 4.2.2). In the following examples, however, an intransitive construction is combined with a

transitive one, both in the realis perfect. The agent in the conjoined clause is the same referent as *s*. The  $\emptyset$  affix indicates that agent agreement is not overtly expressed.

(6) **J. Kerend** (W Iran; Hopkins 2002, 292)

[S <sub>i</sub> ]	[A <sub>i</sub> =S <sub>i</sub> ]	[P <sub>j</sub> ≠S <sub>i</sub> ]
a. <i>hy-a-y</i>	<i>u</i>	( $\emptyset$ ) <i>zuz-éf</i>
come:RPP-S:MS-S:3MS	and 3MS	money:MS-his
[V-P](-[A])		
<i>ləbl-á-y(-<math>\emptyset</math>)</i>		
taken-P:MS-P:3MS-A:3		
'He <sub>i</sub> has come and (he <sub>i</sub> has) taken his <sub>i</sub> money.'		

[S <sub>i</sub> ]	[A <sub>i</sub> =S <sub>i</sub> ]	[P <sub>j</sub> ≠S <sub>i</sub> ]
b. <i>h-ita-ya</i>	<i>u</i>	( $\emptyset$ ) <i>zuz-áf</i>
come:RPP-S:FS-S:3FS	and 3FS	money:MS-her
[V-P](-[A])		
<i>ləbl-á-y(-<math>\emptyset</math>)</i>		
taken-P:MS-P:3MS-A:3		
'She <sub>i</sub> has come and (she <sub>i</sub> has) taken her <sub>i</sub> money.'		

The *s* of the intransitive verb *hyy* 'come' shows full agreement. It has the same referent as the agent of the following transitive clause. The transitive verb *lbl* 'take' agrees with the definite patient NP, which is *zuz* 'money'. In each case there is a distinct reference for the agent as indicated by the possessor on *zuz*, and this subject reference is the same as the preceding *s* of the intransitive verb. Other than contextualization, such as the possessor pronoun, and the subject in the preceding intransitive clauses, the agent is not expressed. Accordingly, forms like *ləblá-y* 'taken her' still imply agreement with a third person agent, so that a feature [A:3] is arguably part of the construction (cf. Hopkins 2002). Transitive forms like *xəzyá-y* '(A:3) seen him' and *pəltá-y* '(A:3) taken him out' are active two-argument instances of the realis perfect.

In same-subject complements, modal verbs like 'by' 'want' (cf. 'əbe-le 'he wanted') take the agentless transitive form, while the following subjunctive verb in the complement clauses expresses overt subject agreement, for example:

c. <i>brat-í</i>	<i>'əbyá-y-<math>\emptyset</math></i>	$\emptyset_i$ <i><math>\emptyset</math>-hiy-á</i>
daughter:FS-my	wanted:RPP(:MS-3MS)-A:3	SBJ-come <sub>IPFV</sub> -S:3FS
'My daughter wanted to come.' (Khan 2009, 326)		

## 3.5.3.4 Lexical Transitivity

In addition, if the patient is omitted, the verb remains referential to the agent, even when it takes the unmarked 3ms. form (Khan 2009, 325). Thus where the patient is less salient to the event, an agent-orientation may be maintained, such as with *qry* 'study' in (7a). Similarly, intransitive  $S_A$  verbs, such as *šhl* 'cough' in (7b), which take transitive coding in the perfective past, also retain an agent-orientation (Khan *ibid.*). A passive interpretation is completely ruled out. This contrasts with most intransitive verbs, such as 'come', which always show agreement. This would be consistent in analyzing the  $S_A$  verbs, such as *šhl* 'cough', as basically lexically transitive.

## (7) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 325)

a. *brat-í*                    *qəryá-y*                    : *qre-le*    (transitive coding)  
 daughter:FS-my studied:RPP(:MS-3MS)  
 'My daughter has studied.'

b. *baxt-í*                    *šəhlá-y*                    : *šəh-le*<sup>77</sup> (transitive coding)  
 woman:FS-my coughed:RPP(:MS-3MS)  
 'My wife has coughed.'

c. *baxt-í*                    *hi-ta-ya*                    : *hiy-a*    (intransitive coding)  
 woman:FS-my come:RPP-S:FS-S:3FS  
 'My wife has come.'

## 3.5.3.5 Different Inflectional Bases

Finally, the difference between agent- or patient-orientations is also reflected in the inflectional base; not for weak verbs like *xzy* 'see' in (5) above, but for sound verbs like *grš* 'pull'. Sound verbs differentiate between transitive and intransitive predicates. They differ in the vowel template of the participle similarly to *qtil*-. Transitive verbal forms have a vowel before the second radical in the masculine and plural base, which is a reduced /ə/:

## (8) Transitive bases

ms. *gəršá* 'pulled'  
 pl. *gəršé*  
 fs. *grəšté*

Intransitive verbs, such as *smx* 'stand, wait', have a full /i/ and a stable vowel template. This also applies to the intransitive form of transitive verbs:

77 *šəh-le* < \**šəh-le*.

(9) **Intransitive bases**

ms.	<i>smixá</i>	‘waited’	<i>grišá</i>	‘pulled’
pl.	<i>smixé</i>		<i>grišé</i>	
fs.	<i>smixté</i>		<i>grišté</i>	

Thus intransitive verbs show a stable inflectional base:

<i>smix-á-y</i>	‘He has stood’
<i>smix-te-ya</i>	‘She has stood’
<i>smix-én</i>	‘They have stood’ etc.

Virtually all verbal roots that have transitive stems as shown in (8) can also have intransitive stems as shown in (9). There is a subtle morphological distinction between intransitive and transitive stems, which corresponds to their use with intransitive and transitive morphosyntax, respectively. The transitive valence pattern is *qəṭlá*, where an agent is still implied, against the intransitive *qṭilá*, e.g. J. Saqez (Israel 1998, 107)

<i>pəlt</i>	-á-y	‘(They) have taken him out’	(causative)
<i>plit</i>	-á-y	‘He has gone out’	(inchoative)
<i>gəřš</i>	-á-y	‘(They) have pulled him’	(causative)
<i>griš</i>	-á-y	‘He has been pulled’	(inchoative)

3.5.4 *Transitivity and Alternations in Northwest Iranian Jewish Dialects of NENA*

The more western and northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects are similar to the core of NENA varieties (see Chapter 4) with the following noteworthy differences. Jewish dialects in NW Iran and villages such as Rustaqa and Koy Sanjaq in NE Iraq do use *qṭil-* with E-suffixes. Forms corresponding to  $s_A$  coding express the perfective past, whereas the form with E-suffixes expresses the inchoative pendant with result state focus in these dialects, which is reminiscent of the same form in Southeast Trans-Zab dialects used in the perfective past.

Consider, for instance, *plix-Ø* and *pləx-le* in J. Urmi in (1) below.

(1) **J. Urmi (NW Iran)**

	[P]	[V-P]	
a.	<i>tar-é</i>	<i>pəlx-i-le</i>	(causative, perfective past)
	door-PL	open <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-P:3PL-A:3MS</sub>	
	‘He opened (lit. <b>them</b> ) <b>the doors.</b> ’ (Garbell 1965, 150)		



TABLE 19 Comparison of subject-marking in J. Sulemaniyya and J. Urmi

		J. Sulemaniyya	J. Urmi
		Preterit (Khan 2004a)	Perfect (Khan 2008b)
state	‘be afraid’	<i>zæde-∅</i>	<i>zæde-∅</i>
change of state	‘become hungry’	<i>kpin-∅</i>	<i>kpin-∅</i>
uncontrolled process	‘explode’	<i>pæqe-∅</i>	<i>páqe-∅</i>
controlled activity	‘dance’	<i>rqil-∅</i>	<i>rqil-é</i>
	‘jump’	<i>nænde-∅</i>	<i>nændy-é</i>
	‘ride’	<i>rkiw-∅</i>	<i>rkiw-é</i>
	‘come out’	<i>plit-∅</i>	<i>+plit-∅</i>
	‘go’	<i>zil-∅</i>	<i>zil-∅</i>
	‘arrive’	<i>mæte-∅</i>	<i>+mæte-∅</i>
	‘finish’	<i>priq-∅</i>	<i>priq-∅</i>
	sound emission	‘bark’	<i>nwæx-le</i>
‘yawn’		<i>phær-re</i>	<i>phir-∅</i>
‘sneeze’		<i>tpæl-le</i>	<i>tpil-∅</i>
‘thunder’		<i>gærgæm-le</i>	<i>gærgim-∅</i>
inherently reflexive	‘wash’	<i>sæxe-∅</i>	<i>sáxe-∅</i>
	‘undress’	<i>šlæx-le</i>	<i>šlix-∅</i>
	‘dress’	<i>lwæš-le</i>	<i>lwiš-é</i>

transitive realis perfect, e.g. *rqil-é* ‘He has danced’. This is in contrast to the other Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, where such intransitives are not compatible with transitive coding, e.g. J. Sulemaniyya *rqil-Ø* ‘He danced’.

Contrasting with J. Sulemaniyya, J. Urmi treats atelic verbs that denote a controlled activity, such as *rqil-é* ‘dance’, as transitive, consistent with the control hierarchy of Croft (1998, 52–53). Conversely, semelfactives receive transitive coding in J. Sulemaniyya (*nwax-le*), but intransitive in J. Urmi (*nwix-Ø*). Other verbs that denote a controlled activity like *mty* ‘arrive’ and *prq* ‘finish’ are treated the same in both dialects. Interestingly, J. Urmi differentiates between the putting on (*lwiš-é*) and the taking off of clothes (*šlix-Ø*), which is presumably simply an idiosyncrasy. Possibly, the distinction is similar to J. Urmi *bašlamiš widé* ‘begin’ (a light verb construction consisting of ‘beginning’ + ‘do’) and *priq-Ø* ‘finish’ in terms of dynamism, i.e. begin vs. stop wearing. Khan (2008b, 74) offers a likely explanation for the differences: punctuality is more fundamental in dialects like J. Sulemaniyya due to the perfective past sense of the preterit, whereas a resultant state is more fundamental to the J. Urmi perfect, which is not readily available for (atelic) activity verbs like *rqil* ‘dance’.

### 3.6 Conclusion: Construction-Specific, Not Alignment-Specific Factors

In general, transitive and intransitive constructions show morphosyntax independent of the argument groupings we identify for the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA. S, A and P cannot be grouped coherently in several inflectional systems, except for the ‘imperfective’, i.e. *qaṭal-*, and the imperative. Alignment patterns are confined grammatically to the same extent as transitive and/or intransitive constructions are restricted.

Consequently, ergativity is a highly restricted morphological phenomenon in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties because of third person restrictions on the transitive constructions based on *qṭil-*, i.e. the perfective, and/or *qṭila*, i.e. the resultative participle. Speaking in terms of “antidotes” (Barotto 2015) or “repair mechanisms” (Khan 2017) in order to resolve ergativity in accordance with prominence hierarchies like Silverstein (1976) presupposes that ergativity is inherently unstable in these NENA dialects and overlooks the fact that the ergative cross-indexing is conditioned by higher ranking full NPs, which goes against this prominence hierarchy. Indeed, the identification of a person split does not immediately mean we are dealing with ergativity. Person restrictions can be found also in other constructions, where neither *qṭil-* nor ergativity plays a role, possibly because of analogical affix orders elsewhere in the system. Rather it is particular transitive constructions that are restricted, not ergative

TABLE 20 Person marking for *qtil-* in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects

SE Trans-Zab					Other Trans-Zab		
Third only			All persons		Third only		All persons
A	L-set		L-set		A	L-set	
S	E-set	L-set	E-set	L-set	S	L-set	
P	E-set		'əl-		P	E-set	'əl- L-set

alignment in itself. The same third person restriction, for example, results in an accusative pattern in Western Trans-Zab Jewish varieties on the Arbel Plain, since the intransitive constructions differ from their Southeastern peers. While person splits are common for splits between ergative (third) and non-ergative (first/second) alignment, it has been shown that person restrictions occur irrespective of the intransitive constructions and thus irrespective of the grouping of s and p that characterizes ergative alignment or irrespective of any grouping whatsoever.

Table 20 above summarizes our findings for Trans-Zab Jewish NENA in the inflection of *qtil-*, generally used to express the perfective past. The person split is rather an incidental constructional split common to all the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties irrespective of their alignment in the perfective past.

The variation in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects therefore reflects two common strategies for differential object marking, namely with a verbal object index, the preposition 'əl- or both. The incidental combination of differential object indexing alongside differential object flagging results in ergative verbal person marking, but accusative nominal marking. The strategies selected in transitive morphosyntax are thereby independent of those in the corresponding intransitive constructions, which show a greater degree of differences across the dialects.

Indeed, the SE Trans-Zab dialects show variation to what extent the subject of intransitive clauses are also compatible with transitive coding, which is determined lexically. Some NENA specials ascribe great significance to this as a type of split-s marking and being distinct from the canonical type of ergativity (e.g. Coghill 2016, 90–100, 250–264; Khan 2017). The split intransitivity in the 'perfective' is striking only because it is not apparent in the 'imperfective'. If we were to subsume this pattern under a semantic alignment system, however,

this would require us to rethink ergativity altogether, as the basic alignment of third person marking is arguably as ergative as well-known ergative systems (cf. Comrie 2005, 399). The split intransitivity in these NENA varieties is not less typical of ergative morphosyntax, since ergative systems are known to opt for either A-like and/or P-like S-marking in various constructions, such as patient omission constructions. There is no reason to presuppose that one of these strategies is more canonical than the other. In fact, this typology of NENA is generally similar to that of other languages in the area that show lexical-semantic motivations for ergative morphology as well as languages with predominantly ergative morphosyntax such as Basque. When the patient is omitted, yielding a syntactically intransitive construction, the morphosyntax remains non-distinct from the equivalent transitive construction, especially when there is the implication of an effect. This is different from languages with ergative constructions like Samoan, where the ergative case is not used in the absence of a referential object. In some cases, however, the Trans-Zab dialects do show situations incompatible with transitive coding, such as inanimate arguments or human arguments lacking control.

Moreover, when we consider tense-aspect, several Jewish dialects in the northwest use forms with E-suffixes (*qim*-Ø 'He has/is risen') for the resultative and/or perfect rather than the preterit in the southeast ('He rose'). It seems plausible that this reflects the historical development from stative > resultative > perfect and later preterit of the form with E-suffixes (see § 6.1.2 and Noorlander forthcoming). The transitive counterpart or the usage of compound verbal forms from formerly resultative constructions is resolved differently for each dialect. The Jewish dialects in western Iran exhibit ergative third person marking both in the simple *qtil*-, typically denoting the perfective past, and in the compound verbal forms based on *qtila*, which typically expresses the perfect, which is consistent with the TAM scale of Malchukov (2015). The transitive compound perfect is limited to third person arguments in general. In other respects the NENA data go against this tendency: the perfective past can pattern accusatively, while the perfect and/or resultative patterns ergatively. The dialect of Rustaqa, for instance, incidentally has ergative morphological marking limited to the third person in non-perfective uses of *qtil* alongside a preverbal TAM strategy. We also observed that ergativity is not peculiar to simplex verbal forms, when one considers the feminine gender agreement in the paradigms of the compound perfect in Jewish dialects of Sulemaniyya and Iranian Azerbaijan. The ergative morphology in the compound verbal forms is summarized in Table 21 below.

The role of language contact requires further investigation, since the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, especially the Southeastern cluster, show considerable

TABLE 21 Ergative agreement in compound verbal forms in Trans-Zab Jewish NENA

Sulemaniyya (Northeast Iraq)			Northwest Iran		West Iran	
Non-fem > fem		Other	Fem only		Third only	
A	∅	AGR (-t)	A	-t	A	∅
S	-t	AGR (-t)	S	∅	S	AGR (-t)
P	-t	∅	P	∅	P	AGR (-t)

convergence with local Iranian languages (e.g. Noorlander 2014). It is likely, for instance, that contact with Gorani and Kurdish led to the grammaticalization of intransitive forms inflected with E-suffixes from resultative to perfective past in Southeastern Trans-Zab in contradistinction to Western and Northern Trans-Zab dialects, where the same form expresses the resultative or perfect.<sup>78</sup> Moreover, convergence with Iranian and the replication of light verb constructions may partly account for the distribution of transitive coding in the Southeastern dialects, especially verbs denoting sound emission (Khan 2007b, 209). Furthermore, the ergative pattern of the compound perfect in these dialects is presumably also due to convergence with Kurdish (Khan 2007b, 204–205). The system found only in Jewish dialects of NENA in West Iran, where the copula agrees with P only, is most likely a pattern replication of the compound perfect in local Iranian languages such as Gorani-Hawrami (MacKenzie 1966, 51), where the copula also agrees with P. The Iranian languages in Northeast Iraq and West Iran, however, generally use clitics to express A, which attach to the full nominal object. The ∅ expression of A in the local Jewish varieties of NENA could be due to the lack of such a corresponding clitic in their Aramaic speech and, perhaps for communicative reasons, such ∅ expression is disfavored for first and second person arguments.

In the end, the morphosyntactic microvariation in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA is not driven by underlying functional, cognitive principles in order to avoid ergativity *per se*, but rather by system-internal and/or cross-dialectal motivations, such as the development of new strategies to mark TAM, the pressure from the main inflectional system *qatəl-* and the restrictions on combi-

78 Khan (2017, 898) reaches a similar conclusion.

nations of dependent person markers to express A and P in a particular order (cf. Mengozzi 2002b, 45, fn. 144). This presumed cross-system pressure is even more apparent in other dialects, which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

## Christian and Western Jewish Dialects of NENA

Moving further westwards into the Jewish NENA dialectal landscape, we encounter the Jewish dialects, known as *lishana deni* ‘our language’, such as ‘Amedia, Betanure, Dohok and Zakho, and the Jewish Barzani cluster, both west of the Great Zab river. Since they share numerous features with the local Christian varieties, against their Trans-Zab peers, they are studied alongside the Christian dialects of NENA. The distribution of major clusters in NENA dialects is displayed in Map 3 below. Apart from the core of the Christian, i.e. Assyrian or Chaldean, communities in Southeast Turkey, Northwest Iraq and Norwest Iran, there are four clusters of Christian dialects:

- **Western:** Christian villages near Cizre, Şırnak and Pervari in the Şırnak and Siirt provinces of Turkey, south of the Bohtan river;
- **Southern:** Christian—mainly Chaldean and Syriac Catholic—communities on the Nineveh Plains near Mosul, such as Alqosh, Telkepe (Tall Kayf), Baghdeda (Qaraqosh) and Karamlesh;
- **Eastern:** Christian—mainly Chaldean—communities in the Arbel governorate of Northeast Iraq, including Shaqlawa, ‘Ankawa and Koy Sanjaq;
- **Southeastern:** Christian varieties of Sulemaniyya (Khan 2004a) and Sanandaj—also known as Senaya, Kurdish Sine (Panoussi 1990)—in Iranian Kurdistan.

Since many of these dialects are still in need of documentation and the data from those that have been documented are not fully publicly accessible, we will not be able to offer a full picture in this chapter. Importantly, considerable mixing has taken place among speakers since they left their original towns. As a result of displacement, several communities came to interact with speakers of dialects they otherwise would not have interactions with in their original homeland. Southeast Turkey, especially the Hakkari province, and Northwest Iraq used to consist of several densely populated areas with tribal affiliations, such as:

- the Atrush area, near Dohok, including Azakh, Hermashe and Ten;
- the Şapna Valley, including C./J. ‘Amedia, C./J. Aradhin (Krotkof 1982), C. Bebede, C. Dehe and C. Mangesh (Sara 1974);
- Lower Barwar, i.e. C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a) and J. Betanure (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a);
- Upper Barwar, i.e. Qodshaneş (Talay 2008)
- the Hakkari province of Turkey: Upper/Lower T̄yari, such as Ashitha, Bne-



- Matha, Bne-Lagippa, Bne-Rumta and Walto, as well as Tal, Tkhuma, Challa, Baz, Jilu, Gawar and Sat (Talay 2008);
- Timurnaye, Şaranaye and other communities in the Van province of Turkey (Nolduz and Albak).

Many of these communities originating in SE Turkey found refuge in Iraq, e.g. in Nahla along the Khazir river near Aqrah, and the Khabur valley in NW in Syria after World War I (Talay 2008, 2009). These dialects often preserve archaisms, and are closely related to C. Jilu (SE Turkey; Fox 1997) in the north and J./C. Nerwa (NW Iraq; Talay 2001). The western dialects in NW Iraq, such as Zakho (Hoberman 1993) and Peshabur (Coghill 2013), are somewhat distinct from these. The originally SE Turkish dialect of Marga is closely related to these varieties, possibly due to displacement from Turkey to Levo, NW Iraq.

In the northwestern periphery in the Siirt provinces of SE Turkey, there once was a cluster of Christian dialects in Artun (Hertevin, Turk. Ekindüzü; Jastrow 1988), Umra (Dera, Turk. Dereköyü; Hobrack 2000) and Jinnet (Turk. Bağpınar). These typically exhibit a uvular /ħ/ where other dialects have velar /x/ (Talay 2009, 44), e.g. Umra *ħzeli* 'I saw'. A few villages in Borb-Ruma (Bohtan, Fox 2009) share with Jinnet the pronunciation of /o/ instead of /a/ in stressed open syllables, but not the uvular /ħ/, i.e. *xmora* 'doney' like *ħmora* against *xmara* elsewhere, while Artun has uvular /ħ/ but not /o/, i.e. *ħmara*. Furthermore, there used to be communities around Mount Judi (Cudi) in the Şırnak province, such as Haşşan (Hassane, Turkish Köşreli; Jastrow 1997; Damsma forthcoming), Beşpen (Sinha 2000) and Harbole.

In most cases the Jewish and Christian communities, even of the same towns, still maintained rather different dialects. National borders do not necessarily coincide with dialectological borders. Some of Christian dialects near Rewandiz, such as Diyana (Napiorkowska 2015), bear a strong resemblance to the Christian dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan, and C. Sulemaniyya in NE Iraq shows close affinity with C. Sanandaj in W Iran. The dialects in the 'Aqrah (Akre) district constitute a small, separate cluster that has distinctive preverbal progressive particles, similarly to J. Barzan, J./C. Shaqlawa, J. Dobe, J. Arbel and C. Koy Sanjaq further east in Iraq (Mutzafi 2004b).

Unsurprisingly, the literature presents diverging views on the characterization of the alignment patterns in the aforementioned NENA dialects. Doron and Khan (2012) consider the majority of these dialects in question to show a type of extended ergative, arguing they have extended the L-suffixes to all transitive verbs (*qtil-li* 'I killed', *qim-li* 'I rose'). Similarly, Mengozzi (2002b, 45, fn. 144) refers to the same phenomenon as theoretically "post-ergative" and Barotto (2015) as marked nominative. Except for Coghill (2016), verbal forms like *qtil-a-*

*le* and *q̄t̄al-le* are referred to as ergative constructions, especially in contradistinction to passive constructions (e.g. Khan 2016:723), and the L-suffixes as markers of the ergative subject. By contrast, the other verbal person marking strategies in most of these dialects are subsumed under accusative alignment in Barotto (2015) and Coghill (2016), primarily because they parallel the morphosyntax of *q̄t̄al-*.

Mengozzi (2005) and Barotto (2015)<sup>1</sup> point to a “decay of ergativity”, leading to a gradual replacement by novel accusative constructions reminiscent of Kurdish (Dorleijn 1996). Mengozzi (2002b, 46 fn. 147), without going into detail, suggests a few factors that are key to the alignment variation, which can be summarized as follows: system-internal pressure from the main inflectional system (*q̄t̄al-*), morphological disambiguation, the order of A and P (“actant order”), tense-aspect distinctions, and pragmatics. My own more detailed research confirms that these are indeed important factors, but, on closer examination, do they promote accusative alignment? Haig (2008) demonstrates that cross-system harmonization has affected the alignment systems in Iranian. To what extent do we observe this in these NENA dialects, and, what patterns unfold as a result? And to what extent does it make sense to treat part of their morphosyntax as (extended) ergative, as some scholars have claimed? These are the central questions of this chapter.

In addressing the issue of alignment identification, it may be worthwhile to reiterate that, in our approach, ergative alignment hinges on the grouping of S with P in some morphosyntactic way. Thus, while the *q̄til-a-le* verbal forms tend to be taken for granted as ergative and L-suffixes as markers of the ergative subject contrasted with *q̄t̄al-* or the passive, if there is no grouping on any level for S and P, it makes no sense to speak of ergativity. By the same token, verbal person markers, such as the L-suffixes, are not considered to have inherent syntactic role marking properties associated with a particular alignment pattern. Thus when so-called ‘ergative L-suffixes’ or ‘markers of the ergative subject’ are extended, this does not mean that ergativity is also extended. At the same time there are constructions that may seem to be simply accusative at first face value and have been analyzed as such, because they are analogical or based on *q̄t̄al-*, but, in fact when one considers them in relation to intransitive constructions, these cannot be unambiguously subsumed under accusative alignment.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Khan (2013) and Coghill (2016).

Alignment typology studies similarities and/or differences, focusing on the *relationship* between S and P or A, and not a given transitive or intransitive construction *per se*. This is also what makes such a study especially complex for NENA dialects, since this relationship is not always symmetric (either synchronically or diachronically) and it is difficult to make generalizations. Constraints and conditions may not be equally relevant to all grammatical functions nor equally relevant to all dialects. We will divide these into clausal and verb-related factors (i.e. tense-aspect) and argument-related factors (e.g. third vs. non-third person, full nominal vs. pronominal), always in some way involving at least P.

In considering tense, aspect and mood, sharp distinctions of the kind that contrast past and present or imperfective and perfective cannot always be maintained in NENA. Both simplex and compound verbal forms can be used to express various situation types and clausal properties. For example, the compound 'perfect' may also be used to express narrative perfective past in certain dialects, thereby functioning similarly to *qəṭəl-le*. For practical reasons, however, I will refer to the simplex forms as the preterit and the compound verbal forms as the compound perfect, reflecting different construction types.

With respect to argument-related properties, the cross-indexing of the object is always conditioned in NENA dialects. There is no difference across dialects in this respect, but there are considerable differences in the morphological marking and affix order of the transitive constructions.

#### 4.1 Preliminary Notes on Morphosyntax

##### 4.1.1 *Person Marking in Transitive Perfective Past Constructions*

While prepositional pronominal objects are common in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, most NENA dialects prefer to express pronominal objects via verbal affixes. In a few dialects in the (north)west, pronominal objects are also expressed independently by means of prepositions. As we will see in this chapter, these independent object pronouns have a different status in the system than those in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects.

##### 4.1.1.1 *qam-qəṭəl-le*

Among Christian dialects of Northern Iraq and *lishana deni* Jewish dialects, the so-called *qam-qəṭəl*-construction is by far the most common expression for verbal forms in the perfective past containing two dependent person markers. The TAM marker *qam-* and its dialectal variants, e.g. *qəm-* ~ *kəm-* (various), *qa-* (C. Koy Sanjaq), *tam-* (C. Sulemaniyya and Sanandaj), *gəm-* (C. Peshabur), *gəb-*

(C. Mar Yaqo), are simply prefixed to the *qaṭəl*-verbal form like other preverbal TAM modifications, for example:

(1) **The *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit** (J. Dohok; Molin 2021)

- a. *k- šaql-i-la*  
 IND- take<sub>IPFV-A:3PL-P:3FS</sub>  
 ‘They take her.’
- b. *qam- šaql-i-la*  
 PFV- take<sub>IPFV-A:3PL-P:3FS</sub>  
 ‘They took her.’

Although it is based on *qaṭəl*-, it is equivalent to *qīl*- in the expression of the perfective past when both A and P are expressed in verbal person marking. This is illustrated by J. Dohok below:

(2) **J. Dohok** (NW Iraq; Molin 2021)

- ʔan qṭəl-lu ʔamma-u-ʔəsri naše,*  
 DEM:PL killed:PFV-A:3PL hundred-and-twenty people:MPL,  
*qam-qaṭl-i-lu*  
 PFV-kill-A:3PL-P:3PL  
 ‘They killed a hundred and twenty people, they killed them.’

A similar preverb *qam*- occurs in other varieties, where it expresses the indicative-progressive, cp. (Mutzafi 2002a, 70)

- J. Bejil (NW Iraq) *qam-pātəx-∅* ‘He is opening’  
 C. Bedyal (NE Iraq) *mə-k-pātəx-∅* ‘He is opening’

These indicative-progressive preverbs should not be conflated with the perfective past preverb *qam*-, which is confined to transitive perfective past constructions and presumably not historically related to the above progressive marker. One may compare this to the Arabic preverbs *qad*- in Classical Arabic and *qa(d)*- or *da*- in Baghdadi Arabic, which are also not historically related, e.g. (Rubin 2005, 33–34, 136–137)

- |                     |                |                               |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| PAST/PERFECT        | <i>qad</i>     | < * <i>qdm</i> ‘go/do before’ |
| PRESENT/PROGRESSIVE | <i>qa(d)</i> - | < * <i>qʕd</i> ‘sit’          |

Although the historical background of the perfective past preverb *qam-* is shrouded in mystery, two possible candidates have been suggested, namely (i) the verb *qdm* ‘go before’<sup>2</sup> and (ii) the verb *qym* ‘stand up’.<sup>3</sup> The first, *\*qdm*, ‘He went before’, which could explain the variant *tam-* of the preverb in C. Sanandaj and C. Sulemaniyya, e.g. *tam-* < *tam* < *qtam* < *qdam* ‘He went before’. The same shift could be observed in the related preposition *\*qodām* ‘before’, which has the various reflexes *qa-*, *ka-*, *ta-* and *ta-*<sup>4</sup> in NENA dialects. The second etymology, *\*qym*, parallels the possible grammaticalization of the indicative preverb *k-* from *\*qā'em-* ‘standing’, the original active participle of the same verb, and coincides with variants *kām-* < *\*qām-* in, for instance, Christian dialects of the Nineveh Plains. Moreover, Pennacchietti (1994, 269–270, 276–277) maintains that the *qam-qatəl-*preterit spread from the Nineveh Plains in Iraq into the west and northeast of the NENA-speaking area, which could even point to Arabic influence.

None of these suggested etymologies, however, explain why the above construction is favored for the transitive perfective past. Fassberg (2015) is a notable exception and offers the following account. The original /m/ of the preverb is historically related to the augment of stem derivations II and III. This seems to me a plausible explanation why the distinction between stem I and II verbs, for instance, is neutralized in the *qam-qatəl-*preterit as well as why there is a close link with transitive coding. The initial /m/- of derived forms, e.g. II *\*mpalət-Ø-la* ‘He brings her out’, coincides with the final /m/ of the preverb *qam-*, e.g.

$$qam + mpalət-Ø-le = qa-m-palət-Ø-la$$

The preverb *qam*, therefore, serves as a transitivizer alongside a preverbal TAM-marker, since the original transitivizer *m-* would have been extended through analogy to stem II verbs to the transitive verbs belonging to stem I. It extended in this particular construction, presumably because of their matching vowel templates, e.g.

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{II } *mpalət-la \quad : \quad \text{I } *qatəl-la, \\ \text{II } qa-m-palət-la \quad : \quad \text{I } x = qa-m-qatəl-la \end{array}$$

2 See Maclean (1895, 82), Rubin (2005, 34), Khan (2008a, 80).

3 See Pennacchietti (1997), Fassberg (2015), Khan (2021).

4 Possibly through misperception even *!la-* < *\*qđā* < *\*qđām*.

Be that as it may, the cross-dialectal distribution and morphosyntax of *qam-qaṭəl-le* as a transitive perfective past construction, which are further discussed in § 4.4.5, have important repercussions for how one understands the alignment in these dialects.

#### 4.1.1.2 Prepositional Object Marking

In dialects in the west and north of the NENA-speaking area, it is common for speakers to employ prepositional object pronouns instead of or alongside the aforementioned *qam-qaṭəl-preterit*,<sup>5</sup> e.g.

- (3) C. Upper T̄yari (Wal̄to, SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 34.12)

*prəm-le*                      *ʔall-e*      *did-e*  
 slaughter<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub> OBJ-3MS POSS-3MS  
 ‘He killed **him**.’

Apart from (*ʔəl*)-, these prepositions are often the same as the marker of goals or recipients, such as *qa(d)*- ‘to, for’ in (4) below, characteristic of Christian dialects in Iranian Azerbaijan. An unusual preposition is (5) (*ʔəb*)- ‘in, at; with; against’ found in a few Judi dialects (SE Turkey) and in Hakkari, presumably also derived from its goal marking function ‘at’, as it is used in ditransitives, for example, in C. Lewen, SE Turkey (Talay 2009, 112.37). Prepositions can be extended with the linker *d-* or the independent possessive pronominal base *did-* or *d̄iy-* depending on the dialect, e.g. *qa-d̄iy-<sup>+</sup>ux* in (4).

- (4) C. Sardarid (NW Iran; Younansardaroud 2001, 205, 232.4, transcription modified)

*may xzi-lə*                      *qa- d̄iy-<sup>+</sup>ux*  
 who see<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub> OBJ- LK-2MS  
 ‘Who saw **you**<sub>MS</sub>?’ (lit. Him saw to-you<sub>MS</sub>)

- (5) C. Gaznakh (SE Turkey; Gutman 2015, 315, glossing adapted)

*n̄šiq-li*                      *b̄iy-ux*  
 kiss<sub>PFV-A:1SG</sub> OBJ-2MS  
 ‘I kissed **you**<sub>MS</sub>.’ (lit. Me kissed at-you<sub>MS</sub>)

5 This is similar to the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, see § 3.1.2.2.

4.1.1.3 Primary and Secondary L-suffixes (L<sub>2</sub>-sets)

The at least originally independent prepositional pronouns can become increasingly dependent on the verbal base *q̄til-* and end up as a dependent series. The (<sup>ʔ</sup>ə)l-series usually attach to a preceding verbal form, e.g.

	[V	A	P]	
C. Asitha <sup>6</sup>	<i>xzé</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-llən</i>	< <i>xze-le</i> + <i>ʔall-ən</i>
	'He saw us.'			
C. Upper T̄yari <sup>7</sup>	<i>xzé</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>-lleħε</i>	< <i>xze-li</i> + <i>ʔall-εħε</i>
	'I saw them.'			

The resulting dependent person markers can become morphologically indistinct from L-suffixes in numerous dialects, except for the third persons, where a distinction may be observed, for instance in the dialects of the Hakkari province,<sup>8</sup> e.g. (Talay 2011, 56–57) respectively:

	[V	A	P]	
(most)	<i>xzé</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-le</i>	'He saw <b>him</b> .'
Upper Barwar	<i>xzé</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-lu</i>	
T̄al	<i>xzé</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-lew</i>	
Baz	<i>xzé</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-ləv</i>	

Where the respective allomorphs of the secondary L<sub>2</sub>-suffixes are identical to the primary L<sub>1</sub>-suffixes, I will treat these as an instance of a single set of L<sub>1</sub>-suffixes. This stacking of L-suffixes, discussed further in §4.4.3. will thus be treated as a construction distinct from the prepositional pronominal objects.

4.1.2 *The Copula and Compound Verbal Forms*

## 4.1.2.1 The Copula

The form and syntax of the copula is highly diverse across these varieties of NENA. In contradistinction to the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, the basic copula is often mobile and does not occupy a fixed clause-final or post-predicate position. The forms vary considerably across the NENA dialects, as illustrated in (6).

6 SE Turkey, Borghero (2006, 193).

7 Walto, SE Turkey, Talay (2009, 34.19).

8 This also applies to some SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects such as Saqiz, see §3.1.2.2. and §3.3.1.2.

## (6) The basic copula

	C. Artun (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988)	J. Dohok (NW Iraq; Molin 2021)	C. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2016)	C. Sanandaj (W Iran; Panoussi 1990)
3ms.	<i>ile</i>	<i>ile, -le</i>	<i>ilə, -lə</i>	<i>-le</i>
3fs.	<i>ila</i>	<i>ila, -la</i>	<i>ila, -la</i>	<i>-la</i>
3pl.	<i>ini</i>	<i>ilu, -lu</i>	<i>ina, -na</i>	<i>-ilu</i>
2ms.	<i>ihət</i>	<i>wət</i>	<i>ivət, -ət</i>	<i>-yet</i>
2fs.	<i>ihat</i>	<i>wat</i>	<i>ivat, -ət</i>	<i>-yat</i>
2pl.	<i>əhton</i>	<i>wetun</i>	<i>itun, -tun</i>	<i>-iton</i>
	etc.	etc.	etc.	etc.

Reduced variants of these forms can become identical to the L-suffixes and E-suffixes, respectively. The ramifications of this for the alignment in indicative present clauses has not been addressed in the literature, but deserves further investigation. In some dialects, such as Jewish *lishana deni* varieties, the third person copula forms can be morphologically identical to the L-suffixes, but remain distinct only by not affecting the stress of their host. Compare J. Dohok *góra-le* 'He is a man', which is *góra* 'man' without the copula, and *gor-á-le* 'she marries him', which is *gór-a* 'she marries' without the L-suffix.<sup>9</sup> Molin (2021), who—as far as I am aware—is the only one who has raised this issue so far, points out that third person subjects of such intransitive clauses, i.e. *-le* 'he is', is expressed in a similar way to the object of corresponding transitive clauses, i.e. *-le* 'him', both expressing the indicative present. Christian dialects in NE Iraq in particular, such as Hawdiyan, have a pre-predicate /l/-copula identical with the L-suffixes, e.g. C. Hawdiyan *le ʔətya* 'He has come'.

Khan (2001, 2012) maintains the NENA third person copula forms that betray an /l/-element are diachronically related to the L-suffixes via a presentative construction *\*ɿ-le* 'behold, him',<sup>10</sup> where *ɿ* is a fossilized 3fs. pronoun, e.g. *\*hī* 'she', as in the deictic copulas like *hawle* 'here he is' < *\*hā-ʔaw-le* 'behold that, him'. Other scholars (Retsö 1987, 220; Rubin 2005, 45) trace *ʔile* 'he is' back to *\*ʔit-* 'there is'<sup>11</sup> and *\*-le* 'to him', similarly to the predicative possessor *ʔət-le* 'he

9 Contrast with ʦuroyo *gáwro-no* 'I<sub>M</sub> am a man' and *goráš-no-le* 'I<sub>M</sub> pull him'.

10 It seems plausible to me that the third person plural forms in some NENA varieties, such as *-ni* in C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey), are ultimately cognate with ʦuroyo *-ne*, both going back to a third person pronoun, and not presentative/deictic.

11 This existential used to inflect for person, gender and number by means of pronominal suffixes in Syriac, e.g. *ʔit-ēh* 'she is', cp. *nehz-ēh* 'he may see her'. This etymology certainly holds for ʦuroyo *kət-* in the relative copula, e.g. *d-kət-yo* 'that he is' < *\*d-kīt* 'that there is'

has'. This etymology is reminiscent of the verb-like expression of ability in several dialects, which would have undergone the same phonetic development, e.g. *'ibe* 'he is able' < *\*'it-* 'there is' and *\*-be* 'in him'.<sup>12</sup> In some dialects, such as C. Peshabur, the past third person copulas are almost identical to the inflection of the predicative possessor, compare *wā-le* 'he was' and *lay-wā-le* 'he wasn't' with *'ət-wā-le* 'he had' and *lat-wā-le* 'he hadn't' (Coghill 2013, 44–45).

Furthermore, according to Khan, the /w/ or /y/-elements in at least the first/second persons in NENA possibly betray relics of the pronouns *\*hu* 'he' or *\*hi* 'she'. It cannot be excluded, however, that the variation in the respective dialects may simply have developed via different strategies that resolve hiatus in the spread of the initial *'i-* to the entire paradigm, as for instance in the second person forms:

				C. Artun	C. Marga	C. Baghdeda	
(7)	2ms.	<i>*'i-ət</i>	<i>/'i-ət/</i>	>	<i>ihət</i>	<i>iwət</i>	<i>iyət</i>
	2fs.	<i>*'i-at</i>	<i>/'i-at/</i>	>	<i>ihat</i>	<i>iwat</i>	<i>iyat</i>

This is similar to the spread of the initial /'a/ to the entire paradigm of independent pronouns in analogy to 1sg. *'ana*, compare:

				C. Artun	C. Marga	C. Baghdeda	
(8)	2ms.	<i>*'a-ət</i>	<i>/'ā-ət/</i>	>	<i>'ahət</i>	<i>'ayət</i>	<i>'ahət</i>
	2fs.	<i>*'a-at</i>	<i>/'ā-at/</i>	>	<i>'ahat</i>	<i>'ayat</i>	<i>'ahat</i>

The initial vowels, i.e. /i/ for the copula and /a/ for the equivalent independent pronoun, incidentally serve to inflectionalize pronouns, where the initial vowel can be considered a base with suffixes, e.g. *'i-hət*, *'a-hət*. Glides that are inserted to resolve a hiatus can vary between /y/ and /w/ elsewhere in Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic dialects as well as in Kurdish (Hasan and Rasheed 2016). In C. Borb-Ruma (Bohtan, SE Turkey; Fox 2009, 23) the sequence /oə/ even fluctuates between *ohə*, *oyə* and *owə*, e.g.

(9)	<b>Borb-Ruma</b> (Bohtan, SE Turkey; Fox 2009, 23)					
2ms.	<i>*'a-ət</i>	<i>/'ā-ət/</i>	>	<i>ohət</i>	<i>oyət</i>	<i>owət</i>

and *yo* 'he', which contains the same original existential *kit* 'there is' as the predicative possessor, e.g. *kət-le* 'he has'.

12 Similarly, Turoyo *ki-be* 'I am able' < *\*kīt-be*.

A historical connection with the verb *hwy* ‘be’ cannot be altogether excluded, however. The analogy to this verb arguably played a role in the inflectionalization of pronominal copulas, which was facilitated by the phonetic correspondence of /w/ to the second radical of *hwy* (Khan 2001 and elsewhere). We cannot preclude that past tense copula forms like C. Marga *wewa* ‘He was’, *wiwa* ‘They were’, which inflect like ‘be’, i.e. *hawewa*, *hawiwa*, respectively, could have been derived directly from this verb; similarly, the negated copulas, such as C. Marga *lawe* ‘he is not’, *lawi* ‘they are not’, are presumably derived from the verb ‘be’ *le hawe*, *le hawi*, respectively.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, the first and second person forms of the basic copula can also be phonetically reduced with loss of the glide, resulting in forms that closely approximate the E-set, as illustrated below for C. Barwar. Such allomorphs of the copula will be referred to as secondary E-suffixes or E<sub>2</sub>-set. When they are identical to the primary E-suffixes, it becomes debatable whether they still comprise a distinct set.

(10) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 181–182)

	BASIC COPULA	SHORT COPULA	E-SET
1ms.	- <i>iwən</i>	- <i>in</i> , - <i>en</i>	- <i>ən</i>
1fs.	- <i>iwən</i>	- <i>in</i> , - <i>en</i>	- <i>ən</i>
1pl.	- <i>iwəx</i>	- <i>ix</i> , - <i>ex</i>	- <i>əx</i>

4.1.2.2 Compound Verbal Forms

Contrasting with Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, simplex and compound verbal forms follow the same pattern in the majority of NENA dialects. Jewish dialects to the west of the Greater Zab river, for instance, group s and a both in the simplex form based on *qtil-*, i.e. the preterit, and in compound forms based on *qtila*, i.e. the compound perfect. The same holds for the majority of Christian dialects, although, here, the copula freely cliticizes to the resultative participle. Compare the following 1ms. forms of the *q-y-m* ‘rise’ and *g-r-š* ‘pull’:

(11)	J. Betanure (NW Iraq) (Mutzafi 2008a)		C. Barwar (NW Iraq) (Khan 2008a)	
	SIMPLEX	COMPOUND	SIMPLEX	COMPOUND
tr.	<i>griš-li</i>	<i>iwən griša</i>	<i>griš-li</i>	<i>grišə-wən</i>
intr.	<i>qim-li</i>	<i>iwən qima</i>	<i>qim-li</i>	<i>qimə-wən</i>

13 Similarly, the Turoyo 3sg. form *-yo* presumably arose in analogy to its past pendant *-wo* ‘he/she/it was’ < \**hwo* ‘he was’, a direct reflex of the 3ms. suffix-conjugation of *hwy*.

The deictic and relative copula never cliticize, so that the compound verbal forms for C. Barwar in (10) above correspond to the following constructions using the deictic copula. The enclitic copula forms can also be phonetically reduced, ending up identical with the E-set, illustrated for C. Barwar below.

(12) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a)

	BASIC	SHORT	DEICTIC
tr.	<i>grīšɛ-wən</i>	<i>grīš-ən</i>	<i>holi grīša</i>
intr.	<i>qīmɛ-wən</i>	<i>qīm-ən</i>	<i>holi qima</i>

A discussion of the manifold ways whereby pronominal objects can be expressed in these compound verbal forms can be found in § 2.2.5. The fact that a NENA dialect uses one strategy in the compound verbal form, i.e. the compound perfect, does not entail that it uses the same strategy in the simplex verbal forms, i.e. the preterit, and *vice versa*. Thus in C. Marga, illustrated below, the compound verbal form combines with the *ʔall*-series, but this is not attested for the simplex form.

(13) C. Marga (SE Turkey)

	SIMPLEX		COMPOUND	
tr.	<i>grīš-ux-le</i>	‘He pulled us.’	<i>hole grīš-əllan</i>	‘He has pulled us.’
intr.	<i>qəm-le</i>	‘He rose.’	<i>hole qima</i>	‘He has risen.’

The deictic copula can also be combined with forms based on *qtil*- and develop into the expression of the perfect, similarly to the compound verbal forms based on the resultative participle. Thus Western, Eastern and Southeastern Christian dialects as well as Jewish Barzani and Western Trans-Zab Jewish dialects use a preverbal TAM-marker to indicate a distinction between preterit and perfect, such as *hule* in C. Haşsan<sup>14</sup> and *gi*- in C. Sanandaj below. Forms like *hule* go back to a fossilized third person form of the deictic copula.<sup>15</sup>

(14) C. Haşsan (SE Turkey) C. Sanandaj (W Iran)  
(Damsma forthcoming) (Panoussi 1990)

	PRETERIT	PERFECT	PRETERIT	PERFECT
tr.	<i>qṭəl-li</i>	<i>hule qṭəl-li</i>	<i>qṭel-li</i>	<i>gi-qṭel-li</i>
intr.	<i>qəm-li</i>	<i>hule qəm-li</i>	<i>qem-li</i>	<i>gi-qem-li</i>

14 3fs. and 3pl. can still optionally show agreement, e.g. *hule ~ huna grəš-na* ‘They have pulled’ (Damsma forthcoming).

15 Similarly to *lā* in J. Arbel, Ruwanduz and Rustaqa, and *nā* in J. Dobe, see § 3.4.2–3.4.3.

The majority of dialects patterns like the above, where simplex and compound verbal forms, i.e. preterit and realis perfect, are neatly symmetric in s and A-marking.

#### 4.1.3 *Prepositional Marking of Agents*

Another important contrast with the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties is that a few dialects in Northwest Iraq and Southeast Turkey can employ the preposition (*'əl*)- and its allomorphs to introduce the agent. This can be used only when the agent is not additionally expressed by the L-suffixes in the preterit or the copula in the compound perfect. By way of illustration, the following alternation in (15) shows the correspondence of A in (15a) expressed by the L-suffix to the agent expressed by the preposition *'əl*- in (15b).

(15) **C. Azakh** (NW Iraq)

a. *dewa xil -i -le*  
 wolf:MS- eat<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3PL -A:3MS  
 'The wolf ate them.'

b. *'ərwe xil -i 'əll-ew*  
 sheep:PL eat<sub>PFV</sub> -3PL DAT-3MS  
 'The sheep have been eaten by it<sub>M</sub> (i.e. the wolf).'

Constructions like (15b), which betray relics of a former historical relationship between the L-suffixes and the preposition *l-*, are not common to all NENA dialects. As far as we can tell from the dialects thus far documented, those NENA dialects that have constructions like (15b) in their repertoire always mark s and A by means of L-suffixes. On the other hand, constructions like (15b) do not occur in the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA.

Some dialects may allow the same alternation only in a compound verbal form, e.g.

(16) **C. Mar Yaḡo** (NW Iraq)

*'ərwa haydo-le xila l-dewa*  
 sheep:MS DEIX-3MS eaten:MS DAT-wolf:MS  
 'The sheep has been eaten by the wolf.'

This obviously raises questions about the status of the patient and agent in these constructions and their relationship to the passive voice, to which we turn in the following section.

#### 4.2 Ergative or Passive? Agents in and out of Focus

Doron and Khan (2012) argue that the dialects that group s and A by means of the L-suffixes still manifest a type of ergativity called ‘extended ergative’.<sup>16</sup> Their main argumentation is that the syntactic and morphological markedness of the L-set point to traces of an earlier ergative type, similarly to the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties.

An agentless preterit or *q̄til*-form<sup>17</sup> occurs sporadically in dialects in Northwest Iraq and Southeast Turkey, which is reminiscent of the passive, e.g.

- (1) a. *xabuše xil-i-le*  
 apple:PL eat<sub>PFV</sub>-P:3PL-A:3MS  
 ‘He ate the apples.’
- b. *xabuše xil-i(-∅)*  
 apple:PL eat<sub>PFV</sub>-3PL  
 ‘The apples were eaten.’

Moreover, third person enclitic copulas may also be omitted entirely, so that the participial inflection is the only remaining agent or subject coding in compound perfects (Khan 2008a, 669–671), for example:

- (2) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, A31:4)  
*q̄til-a xá-neriye*  
 killed:RPP-MS a-goat:MS  
 ‘The male goat has been killed.’  
 lit. ‘X (is) killed a goat’

In addition, the agent can be introduced by the dative preposition (*ʔal*)- ‘to, for’, which is comparable to agent complements in passives. The same kind of predicate in (2), for instance, is compatible with agent complements, such as

- (3) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, A23:15)  
*xmare ho-la xil-e l-dewe*  
 donkey:PL DEIX-A:3FS eaten-A:PL DAT-wolf:PL  
 ‘The asses have been eaten by wolves.’ (ibid. A23:15)

16 Cf. Mengozzi (2002b, 45, fn. 144), Barotto (2015) and Khan (2017).

17 See Gutman (2008).

After a study of the morphological markedness of these constructions in such dialects, we examine the possible omission of the L-set and copula. We will discuss these agentless verbal forms in relation to ergativity and the passive voice along a continuum (Comrie 1988) and in the light of passive and anticausative voice constructions in NENA. In leaving the agent unexpressed, the question arises whether the construction is morphosyntactically still transitive or not.<sup>18</sup> Is the patient-like argument in (1) and (2) an instance of s or P? After having decided on that, we can address the question whether this should be analyzed as either ergative or passive, and in case we cannot decide, this phenomenon might not be classifiable using these categories.

#### 4.2.1 *The Importance of Zero*

##### 4.2.1.1 Typological Markedness

In linguistic typology, alignment patterns are further distinguished by overt vs. zero marking.<sup>19</sup> Various scholars<sup>20</sup> have argued that the ergative and accusative alignment systems each have their own unmarked case, which often has no overt nominal marking.

Functional typologists presuppose symmetric or asymmetric functional relationships between form and function. When at least one of the arguments in the transitive counterpart, i.e. A/P, is treated similarly to s, the relation between form and function is symmetric for an alignment system, where the morphologically and functionally unmarked properties of the form associated with s also apply to the argument, i.e. A/P, with which it is morphosyntactically grouped.<sup>21</sup> There are, however, also divergent patterns that lead to asymmetry, which are considered 'marked'.

The unmarked case is expected to be the nominative (s=A) for an accusative case system and the absolutive (s=P) for the ergative counterpart. Functionally, the unmarked case, i.e. nominative/absolutive, is used as the citation form, is more likely to be obligatory and express the topic of equational sentences, while the marked case, i.e. accusative/ergative, is more likely to be optional and have various additional functions, such as temporal or locative expressions or marking of goals or instruments (Dixon 1994; cf. Handschuh 2015). Formally, if an argument involves zero nominal coding, i.e.  $\emptyset$ , this is most likely the one grouped with s, i.e. nominative/absolutive, since it is more economical to overtly mark the isolated role (Comrie 1978).

18 Cf. Keenan and Dryer (2007, 330).

19 See Dixon (1979, 1994), Croft (1988, 2001, 138–146).

20 See *inter alia* Tsunoda (1981), Comrie (1989), Lazard (1998).

21 This does not apply to tripartite (S≠A≠P) or horizontal alignment (S≠A=P).

TABLE 22 Zero vs. overt case coding in the accusative type

	Nominative (S=A)	Accusative (≠P)	Gloss
Classical Arabic	<i>bayt-un</i>	<i>bayt-an</i>	'a house'
Gə'əz	<i>bet-∅</i>	<i>bet-a</i>	'house'
Harar Oromo	<i>sáree-n</i>	<i>sáree-∅</i>	'dog'

SOURCE: FOLLOWING TABLE 4.3 IN CROFT (2001, 139). HARAR OROMO DATA FROM COMRIE (2005, 398, ORIGINAL SOURCE CITED THEREIN)

TABLE 23 Distribution of zero vs. overt case coding in the ergative type

	Absolutive (S=P)	Ergative (≠A)	Gloss
Tongan	<i>'a he talavou</i>	<i>'e ha talavou</i>	'a young man'
Yup'ik	<i>nuna-∅</i>	<i>nuna-m</i>	'land'
Nias	<i>n-asu</i>	<i>∅-asu</i>	'dog'

SOURCE: TABLE FROM CROFT (2001, 140), SLIGHTLY ADAPTED, AND NIAS DATA FROM HANDSCHUH (2015, 31, EMPHASIS MINE, ORIGINAL SOURCES CITED THEREIN)

Table 22 offers examples from Classical Arabic and Gə'əz, i.e. Classical Ethiopic, which both have an accusative case system. The nominative and accusative may be equally unmarked formally, as displayed for Classical Arabic. The formally unmarked case in Gə'əz is the expected nominative. The reverse situation would be a marked nominative, a distinct subtype of accusative alignment, where P lacks overt coding and is used in citation. Comrie (2005, 398) offers an example from Harar Oromo, i.e. Cushitic, Ethiopia, represented schematically in the last row of Table 22.

This would be exactly the reverse in an ergative case system, illustrated by Tongan (Polynesian, Tonga) and Yup'ik (Eskimo, Alaska) in Table 23. The accusative and ergative alignment types are mirror each other in terms of markedness. Marked absolutive is thus far only found in Nias (Malayo-Polynesian, Indonesia), illustrated by the last row in Table 23, where it is the A that lacks overt coding and is used in citation (Handschuh 2015, 31).

TABLE 24 Marked intransitive/transitive alignment types

	MARKED NOMINATIVE			MARKED ABSOLUTIVE		
	S	A	P	P	S	A
NOMINAL MARKING	m	m	o	m	m	o
VERBAL PERSON MARKING	o	o	m	o	o	m

Markedness in verbal person marking is defined in terms of trigger potential and possible zero realization.<sup>22</sup> It is the presence of a person marker that correlates with the least marked argument. P is not overtly expressed in accusative verbal person marking, while A is not overtly expressed in ergative verbal person marking. In Classical Arabic, for example, full nominal Ps do not trigger cross-indexing. In Gəʿəz, indexing of full nominal Ps is conditioned, i.e. differential, while indexing of s and A is obligatory.

Conversely, obligatory indexing of A, but optional verbal person marking of P and s would be marked in an ergative agreement system. In phonological form, the set of indexes that more likely includes zero morphemes is s and A in the accusative type and s and P in the ergative type. Thus if indexing of P does occur, zero morphemes would be marked for the accusative grouping, while zero morphemes in the set of agent indexes would be marked in the ergative counterpart.

The marked patterns are given in Table 24 above, where 'o' represent the absence and 'm' the presence of overt marking (following Haspelmath 2005b).

It is the argument that is *not* grouped with s in marked systems that has zero nominal marking, but greater trigger potential for verbal person marking. One can observe how, strictly in terms of markedness, the P of the marked nominative exhibits the same properties as the P of the ergative and the A of the marked absolutive the same as the A of the accusative (both are outside of the gray area). In this sense, the marked alignment types are neither typically accusative nor typically ergative. The groupings, however, are clearly identifiable, and, for this reason, one tends to subsume 'marked nominative' as

22 See Dixon (1994, 67–68), Croft (1988, 2001, 140–141).

a subtype under accusative alignment ( $A=S\neq P$ ) and ‘marked absolutive’ under ergative alignment ( $A\neq S=P$ ).

#### 4.2.1.2 Ergative-Like Markedness in NENA?

In line with Dixon (1979), Doron and Khan (2012, 231–233) analyze the verbal person marking as given for dialects such as Jewish Challa and ‘Amedia as ‘extended ergative’. Relative markedness plays an important role in Dixon’s (1979, 1994) approach to ergativity. In his view, P is ideally most marked in accusative systems, and A in ergative systems. Dixon (1979) introduced the term “extended ergative” to describe a case system, where the case-marker of A may be extended to all instances of S against P that is functionally and morphologically the default form.<sup>23</sup>

#### (4) J. Challa (SE Turkey; Fassberg 2010)

a. *nšiq -a -le* (transitive)  
 see<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:3MS  
 ‘He saw her.’ (lit. Him saw she)

b. *dməx -le* (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3MS  
 ‘He went to sleep.’ (lit. Him slept)

Here P (i.e. the E-set) is less marked, while S is more marked like A (L-set). Similarly, Mengozzi (2002b, 45, fn. 144) refers to this pattern as theoretically “post-ergative”, although he admits “it cannot be regarded as ergative in itself”. Thus, the notions of ‘post-ergative’ or ‘extended ergative’ are mainly diachronically motivated and presumes that these dialects were once ergative, but have extended the L-suffixes that mark the agent to all intransitive verbs, thereby aligning A with S. Barotto (2015) suggests that we could also consider the type of inflection in these dialects a kind of ‘marked nominative’.

Later on, Dixon (1994, 64) preferred the less confusing label “marked nominative” over “extended ergative”, because the morphological distinction between S and P is clearly not typical of an ergative type. Moreover, P need not be unmarked, even when a formally ergative case-marker of A extends to S. For example, in the upper dialect of Waxi, an Iranian Pamir language described by Payne (1980, 180–181), the special marker of A not only extends to S, but P also has developed a dedicated case marker.

23 Cf. Payne (1980) for parallels in Eastern Iranian.

Synchronically, anything related to ‘nominative-accusative’ is preferable to ‘extended ergative’ or ‘post-ergative’ to characterize this system. The obvious reason for this is that the defining characteristic of an ergative system, namely that S and P are somehow treated alike, is not observed.<sup>24</sup> Adopting the term ‘ergative’, then, is rather misleading, at least from a synchronic perspective.

Moreover, it is often overlooked that Dixon (1994, 67–68) first and foremost applies these markedness principles to *nominal marking* and is reluctant to extend this to verbal person marking. For, as explained in the previous subsection, if P has less or no trigger potential for overt agreement as opposed to S and A, this is considered typical of accusative agreement. The reverse holds for a ‘marked nominative’ agreement system where S and A are not overtly indexed, but only P is. It is clear that these NENA dialects are typically accusative in this respect, since they exhibit differential object indexing (A=S≠P). It is the indexing of P that is more restricted and context-dependent against the indexing of A and S, which is also morphosyntactically grouped by means of the same set. These dialects, then, cannot be considered ‘marked nominative’ in this sense.

There is only one respect they could be: at the same time, Dixon (1994, 68) considers the paradigm that has most zero realizations an unmarked instance of the expression of S. Cross-linguistically, it is third person (singular) agreement marking that tends to be zero, especially in S and A role (Siewierska 2004, 24, 2005). This would be the 3ms. form of the E-set in NENA, which expresses P in the preterit in these dialects. Remarkably, the phonologically identical form is used for the inflection of intransitive verbs. Thus, this agreement system is only arguably ‘marked nominative’ in terms of possible zero realizations, since the L-set has no equivalent zero morpheme, e.g. J. Challa (SE Turkey; Fassberg 2010)

*grəš-∅-le* ‘He pulled him.’ : *dmax-le* ‘He slept.’  
*xze-∅-le* ‘He saw him.’ : *se-le* ‘He came.’

What is clear, however, is that ergativity in the strict sense of argument groupings (A≠S=P) does not characterize the pattern in (4) above.

24 Cf. Hoberman (1989, 91, fn. 2). See also Coghill (2016, 61–62) who arrives at a similar point of view.

TABLE 25 Passive vs. ergative

	Prototypical passive	Prototypical ergative
a) <b>Subject properties of the patient</b>	The patient has all or at least more behavioral properties of s than the agent	The patient has no or at least fewer behavioral properties of s than the agent
b) <b>Integration of the agent in clausal syntax</b>	The agent is indexed by the verb or obligatorily expressed to no, a minimal or at least lesser extent	The agent is indexed by the verb or obligatorily expressed to a maximal or at least greater extent
c) <b>Relative markedness</b>	Non-basic voice: less frequent, less productive, more complex, and more restricted.	Basic voice: more frequent, more productive, less complex, and less or not restricted.

BASED ON COMRIE (1988)

#### 4.2.2 *On Agent (De)focusing and Passive Typology*

##### 4.2.2.1 Passive-Ergative Continuum

Constructions can be characterized in terms of a continuum and considered passive-like or ergative-like. Comrie's (1988) criteria for the passive-ergative continuum are paraphrased in Table 25 above. The criteria allow for intermediate cases. Which criterion has greater weight, must be weighed on language-internal grounds.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, they are not sufficient conditions for considering a construction passive- or ergative-like, but rather constitute a continuum. That is, we do not always have to decide whether a construction is ultimately either passive or ergative; it could just as well be somewhere in between. The criteria are treated briefly below in the reverse order c)–a).

Generally speaking, a voice opposition is a requirement for a passive, as entailed by criterion c). In terms of voice, the passive is "less frequent, functionally specialized, not fully productive" *vis-à-vis* the active counterpart (Haspelmath 1990, 27). An ergative construction, being transitive, functions similarly to the active voice of an accusative type.<sup>26</sup>

25 From a diachronic point of view, the criteria may be ambiguous as well. For example, if the ergative transitive construction is ultimately passive in origin, there may well have been a point where c) the markedness opposition was lost.

26 s-like behavioral properties, such as equi-NP deletion of P in languages like Dyirbal, are rather passive-like, but irrelevant to languages where ergativity is only manifested morphologically and not in syntactic behavior. See Keenan and Comrie (1977), Comrie (1988,

The passive voice itself has not been uncontroversial, but it is generally characterized in terms of prototypicality, i.e. a relative degree of passive-likeness,<sup>27</sup> which includes a special intransitive verbal form (Keenan and Dryer 2007). The main pragmatic function is said to be to defocus the agent (Shibatani 1985, 2004, 2006, 248) as a result of inactivization (Haspelmath 1990). Cross-linguistically, the passive is a rather infrequent phenomenon (Siewierska 1984, 23), and its functional distribution differs widely across languages.

Nevertheless, interestingly, from a purely constructional perspective, passives are a rather uniform phenomenon. The subdued agent shifts in argument status from a core argument (A) to a peripheral one (OBL) or complete omission, while the patient is the s of the passive (Haspelmath 1990, 27).<sup>28</sup> Thus typically, in a passive construction, the P argument of the transitive construction is expressed as s in the intransitive construction, and A of the corresponding transitive construction, if expressed at all, is realized as oblique. The passive voice, therefore, is semantically transitive, but morphosyntactically intransitive.

It is the second criterion, however, that allows for most ambiguity. To what extent is the agent dispensable in languages like an oblique argument? The omission of A can still yield well-formed sentences where languages otherwise exhibit an ergative pattern.<sup>29</sup> Samoan, for instance, allows the absence of agent coding for most transitive verbs, such as ‘hit’ in (5) below (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992, 104). The agent of the corresponding active transitive clause is omitted in (5b), and the resulting construction is similar to the passive in that an impersonal agent may still be implied. The agent is thereby more loosely integrated in the clause and can be freely omitted and unspecified, much like oblique agents in the passive, but there is no special verbal morphology indicating a voice shift.

(5) **Samoan** (Polynesian, Samoa; Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992, 416, 421; glossing adapted)

- |   |                 |             |           |           |                  |
|---|-----------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| [V]                                       | [ERG→A]         | [P]         |           |           |                  |
| a. <i>Sā sasa e</i>                       | <i>le teine</i> | $\emptyset$ | <i>le</i> | <i>le</i> | <i>le maile.</i> |
| PST hit                                   | ERG             | the girl    | ABS       | the dog   |                  |
| ‘The girl hit the dog.’ (specified agent) |                 |             |           |           |                  |

12–15), Givón (1995, 256–267). Cf. Section 2.3. on syntactic ergativity and syntactic behavioral properties.

27 E.g. Givón (1984, 164), Shibatani (1985, 2004), Payne (1997, 204).

28 Cf. Siewierska (1984, 256), Dixon (1994, 146).

29 Cf. Keenan (1976, 313), Comrie (1988, 18–19).

- [V] [s/P?]  
 b. *Sā sasa* ∅ *le le maile*.  
 PST hit ABS the dog  
 'The dog was hit.' / 'Someone hit the dog.' (unspecified agent)  
 (lit. Dog hit)

Naturally, the coding is indistinct from the *s* in intransitive constructions, such as 'fall' in (5c), because of ergative alignment:

- [V] [s]  
 c. *Sā pa'ū* ∅ *le teine*  
 PST fall ABS the girl  
 'The girl fell.' (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992, 108)

Alternations of the kind in (5a) and (5b) would be a type of referential reduction of the agent, i.e. unspecified agent deletion, where possibly some impersonalization of the agent is intended.

Some properties of the transitive counterpart, however, are retained in intransitivization. This is generally true for impersonal subject or unspecified agent constructions that are similar to passives. Languages may employ a non-referential dummy subject, such as German *man* or French *on*, instead of a passive. Alternatively, the active verbal form and the coding of the agent and patient do not change, but the referentiality of A is reduced to a third person morpheme.

Complete omission of the agent (or subject) is also possible, while retaining some of the transitive coding (Givón 1990, 581–583). The unspecified agent is simply omitted or expressed as dummy NP or third person morphology. Ute, a Uto-Aztecan language, allows the agent/subject of any verb to be omitted (Givón 1990, 583). This is distinct from the passive prototype in that P retains object coding, and the agent cannot be expressed as oblique, for example:

- (6) Ute (Uto-Aztecan, United States, Colorado; Givón 1990, 581, glossing slightly modified)
- [A] [P] [V]  
 a. *ta'wá-ci síváqtu-ci pa'á-puga* (active)  
 man-SUBJ goat-OBJ kill-TENSE  
 'The man killed the goat.'

- [A] [P] [V-PASS]  
 b.  $\emptyset$  *siváqtu-ci* *pa xá-ta-puga* (passive)  
 goat-OBJ kill-PASS-TENSE  
 ‘Someone killed the goat.’ / ‘The goat was killed (by someone).’

Givón (1990, 581) shows that (third person) plural agreement of the agent can still be retained in the agentless construction. Some residual reference to the agent is maintained, so that (5d) effectively means ‘Some persons killed the goat.’

- [A] [P] [V-A]  
 c. *ta’wá-ci-u* *siváqtu-ci* *pa xá-qa-xá* (active)  
 man-SUBJ-PL goat-OBJ kill-PL-TENSE  
 ‘The men killed the goat.’

- [A] [P] [V-A-PASS]  
 d.  $\emptyset$  *siváqtu-ci* *pa xá-qa-ta-puga* (passive)  
 PL goat-OBJ kill-PL-PASS-TENSE  
 ‘Some persons killed the goat.’ / ‘The goat was killed (by some persons).’

A transitive interpretation with implied third person plural reference is also possible in past tense constructions in Badini Kurdish (Haig 2008, 262–268). In Northern Kurdish, a special so-called ‘oblique’ case expresses A in the past tense, while the verb agrees with P. In the Badini dialect A can also be omitted, but is contextually recoverable, yielding clauses that are still interpretable as transitive:

- (7) **Badini** (Northern Kurdish, Northwest Iranian; MacKenzie 1962, 320; Haig 2008, 267; glossing modified)  
 ( $\emptyset$ ) *sē paz kušt-in*  
 (A:PL) three sheep killed-3PL  
 ‘They killed the sheep.’ / ‘Three sheep were killed.’

The possible omission of the agent, therefore, is not a decisive criterion for the distinction between active ergative constructions from passives. Nevertheless, if a language employs ergative agreement, it is the patient that is marked with s-like agreement in both the passive and ergative (Givón 1990, 597–599). When the agent manifests itself in agreement, we more clearly diverge from the passive prototype. Agreement, if obligatory, unifies s and A, and sets s and A apart from other grammatical functions (P, T, R, OBL), where agreement is usually

optional and sensitive to definiteness, animacy, and other factors relating to prominence.

Thus in both the ergative and passive prototypes, the full nominal agent may be left unexpressed without agreement on the verb. In the passive prototype, the agent typically does not trigger agreement nor is the coding of the patient expected to be sensitive to differential object-like factors. Nevertheless, there are cases where some referential properties of the agent may be retained in impersonal/unspecified agent constructions, which, though defocusing the agent, treat the patient like an object.

#### 4.2.2.2 Optional Focal Agent Marking

Overt nominal marking can also have pragmatic conditions that are the very opposite of the passive, namely agent focalization. Overt and zero nominal marking of A can alternate in a type of optional ergative case marking. Overt nominal marking of A serves to contextualize unexpected arguments pragmatically and tends to be grammaticalized for agent focus and/or inanimate arguments.<sup>30</sup>

Several languages, especially of Australian languages, show special A-marking that is conditioned by role discrimination, animacy and focus. Overt nominal marking is employed to express the unexpectedness of the agent. Thus, the ergative alignment (A≠S=P) is optional and found for the focal counterpart only.

Moreover, Siewierska (2004, 160–162) observes that some languages may omit verbal person marking of A when A is focal. The Australian language Konjo, for example, employs dependent person markers for A only when it is not in focus, while the focalized A lacks agreement. The indexing of A is absent when A is focalized by means of fronting to preverbal position, and A may be additionally marked ergatively by *i-* (Friberg 1996, 142–147), for example:

(8) **Konjo** (Austronesian, South Sulawesi; glossing adapted to Siewierska 2004, 160)

[A-	V	-P]	[A]	[P]	
a. <i>Na-</i>	<i>kanre</i>	<i>-i</i>	<i>Amir</i>	<i>loka-ku</i>	(unmarked)
3A-	eat	-3S/P	Amir	banana-1	
	'Amir ate my banana.' (Friberg 1996, 141)				

30 See Givón (1985a), McGregor (2006, 2010), Fauconnier (2011a, 2012), Fauconnier and Verstraete (2014). This can also extend beyond a TAM-based split (Verbeke 2013a).

- [(ERG→)A] [V -P] [P]  
 b. (*I-*)*ali ang-kanre -i lamejaha-ta* (focal)  
 A-Ali TR-eat -3S/P sweet potatoes-2  
 ‘(It is) **Ali** (who) ate your sweet potatoes.’ (Friberg 1996, 146; answer to  
 ‘Who ate my sweet potatoes?’)

When we turn to NENA, it will become apparent that the passive-intransitive, unspecified agent constructions and optional agent marking are all connected with the agentless preterit, the omission of verbal person marking for A licensing different interpretations and construction types.

#### 4.2.3 *Passive-Like Properties and Anticausatives*

In some languages where ergative morphosyntax predominates (such as Lezgian, Haspelmath 1993a), there is no distinction in verbal morphology between verbs that freely omit the agent and spontaneous events. This also applies to the SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA for several weak verbs, but for most verbs a special verbal base is used in the intransitive valence pattern against the transitive, e.g. *pəlt-a-le* ‘He took her out’ vs. *plīt-a* ‘She went out’. As shown in Section 3.5, these verbal constructions with the E-suffix should be analyzed as inchoative, the E-suffix expressing s, whereas A is expressed by the L-set in the causative counterpart.

In the dialects concerned in this chapter, s and A arguments are always treated alike. Verbs generally alternate in valency by means of causativization. The transitive verb is modified by means of a distinct stem derivation of the verbal root, such as *plīt* ‘move out’ (stem II against I):

- (9) C. Upper Tiyari (SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 6.25)  
 a. *plət-le* (stem I, inchoative)  
 go.out<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He went out, left.’  
 b. *mpolt-a-le* (stem II, causative)  
 II:take.out<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>  
 ‘He took it<sub>F</sub> out.’

A few verbs, such as ‘break’ and ‘open’, which are well-known to be labile in languages of the world are also so in NENA (Mengozi 1998).<sup>31</sup> The coding of s and A does not diverge for labile verbs, such as ‘open’, e.g.

31 Cf. Göransson (2015) and Khan (2016:397–402).

(10) C. **Urmi** (NW Iran; Khan 2016)

- |    |                    |                     |            |              |
|----|--------------------|---------------------|------------|--------------|
|    | [S]                | [V                  | -S]        |              |
| a. | <i>+tarra</i>      | <i>plax</i>         | <i>-le</i> | (inchoative) |
|    | door:MS            | open <sub>PFV</sub> | -S:3MS     |              |
|    | 'The door opened.' |                     |            |              |

- |    |                       |                     |           |            |             |
|----|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
|    | [P]                   | [V                  | -P        | -A]        |             |
| b. | <i>+tarra</i>         | <i>plax</i>         | <i>-∅</i> | <i>-le</i> | (causative) |
|    | door:MS               | open <sub>PFV</sub> | -P:3MS    | -A:3MS     |             |
|    | 'He opened the door.' |                     |           |            |             |

A sentence like (10) is thus ambiguous.

Object indexing can serve a discriminatory function in valency alternations for verbs.<sup>32</sup> The cross-referencing of P definitively distinguishes between an intransitive or transitive valence pattern.<sup>33</sup>

(11) C. **Marga** (SE Turkey)

- |    |                      |            |               |              |
|----|----------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|
|    | [V                   | -S]        | [S]           |              |
| a. | <i>qte</i>           | <i>-la</i> | <i>šas-ew</i> | (inchoative) |
|    | cut <sub>PFV</sub>   | -S:3FS     | fever:FS-his  |              |
|    | 'His fever stopped.' |            |               |              |

- |    |                        |           |            |              |             |
|----|------------------------|-----------|------------|--------------|-------------|
|    | [V                     | -P        | -A]        | [P]          |             |
| b. | <i>qəty</i>            | <i>-a</i> | <i>-le</i> | <i>šas-i</i> | (causative) |
|    | cut <sub>PFV</sub>     | -P:3FS    | -A:3MS     | fever:FS-my  |             |
|    | 'He stopped my fever.' |           |            |              |             |

If no patient index is present and the gender and number of the patient and agent are identical, only the word order potentially discriminates between the transitive and intransitive valence pattern. In the intransitive valence pattern in (12a) below, the verb follows S. In the transitive valence pattern in (12b), the verb precedes P.

(12) C. **Barwar** (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 756)

- |    |   |                        |            |                         |
|----|---|------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
|    | [S]   | [V                     | -S]        |                         |
| a. | <i>bəta</i>                                       | <i>tlix</i>            | <i>-le</i> | (inchoative, S-V order) |
|    | house:MS  | destroy <sub>PFV</sub> | -S:3MS     |                         |
|    | 'The house collapsed.' (lit. The house destroyed) |                        |            |                         |

32 Cf. Mengozzi (2006).

33 Cf. Givón (1976, 168).

- |   |    |             |             |                        |
|---|----|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
| [V  | -P | -A]         | [P]         |                        |
| b. <i>tlix</i>                                | -∅ | - <i>le</i> | <i>bēta</i> | (causative, V-P order) |
| destroy <sub>PFV</sub> -P:3MS -A:3MS house:MS |    |             |             |                        |
| 'He destroyed the house.'                     |    |             |             |                        |

A causal phrase may also be added to the inchoative/anticausative verbs and is introduced by the source preposition *mən*- 'from', such as *mən 'ilāha* 'by/because of God' in (13) expressing the cause of *lqy* 'get punished', intransitive counterpart to transitive stem II *lqy* 'punish' (Mutzafi 2008a, 360):

- (13) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a, 314-571)
- |   |                   |  |
|---|-------------------|--|
| [V-S]   | [OBL]             |  |
| <i>lqe-lox</i>  | <i>mən 'ilāha</i> |  |
| be.punished <sub>PFV-S:2MS</sub> from God                                 |                   |  |
| 'You <sub>MS</sub> have been punished by God.' (lit. You punished by God) |                   |  |

To some extent, rearranging the word order of transitive valence patterns is sufficient to obtain an agent defocusing effect similar to a passive. Thus, postverbal position reduces the salience of the agent, while the preverbal definite patient controls agreement on the verb, e.g.

- (14) **C. Shaqlawa** (NE Iraq)
- |  |             |           |            |             |
|--|-------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| [P]  | [V-         | -P        | -A]        | [A]         |
| <i>'urba</i>   | <i>xil-</i> | <i>-a</i> | <i>-lu</i> | <i>dewe</i> |
| sheep:FS eat <sub>PFV</sub> -A:3FS -P:3PL wolf:PL                |             |           |            |             |
| 'The sheep was eaten by wolves.' (lit. The sheep the wolves ate) |             |           |            |             |

The passive voice is more typically expressed by various dedicated passive voice constructions in NENA dialects. These include:

- a) Impersonal 'they' passive
- b) Auxiliary 'come' and infinitive<sup>34</sup>
- c) Auxiliary 'become' and resultative participle
- d) Auxiliary 'be'/copula and resultative participle

Dialects may employ multiple passive voice constructions. Overt expression of the agent is rare, especially in type b) based on the infinitive. If the agent is

34 This is a pattern replication from Northern Kurdish (Badini). In Kurdish, the infinitive is based on a past stem (like Aramaic *qtil-*) and can have an inherently passive meaning.

overt, it tends to be expressed by means of several prepositions, particularly (*'əl*)/- which otherwise also marks the recipient, and *mən* 'from', for example:

- (15) C. *Baghdeda* (Qaraqosh, NW Iraq; Khan 2002a, 383)

[S]	[AUX-S	RPP-S]	[OBL]
<i>pəsra</i>	<i>pəš-le</i>	<i>xil-a</i>	<i>l-kalwə</i>

meat:MS become<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3MS eaten-MS DAT-dogs  
 'The meat was (lit. became) eaten **by dogs**.'

- (16) C. *Aradhin* (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982, 106.118)

[AUX-S	V-S]	[OBL]	
<i>t-pāyəs-Ø</i>	<i>dīš-a</i>	<i>mən</i>	<i>anne nāše</i>

SUBR-become<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3MS trodden -MS from DEM:PL people  
 '(My house) is being (lit. becomes) trodden **by these people**.'

- (17) C. *Baz* (Maha xtaya, SE Turkey; Mutzafi 2000, 311)

[S]	[RPP-S	-S]	[OBL]
<i>kawdanta</i>	<i>mxé-ta</i>	<i>-la</i>	<i>l-mār-aw</i>

she-mule:FS hit:RPP-S:FS -S:COP:3FS DAT-master:MS-her  
 'The she-mule has been (lit. is) beaten **by its master**.'

The resultative participle agrees with the subject in gender and number. Type d), the copula with resultative participle, is not productive in every dialect, as it has also grammaticalized into a compound perfect. Thus, such forms can have only an agent orientation,<sup>35</sup> e.g. C. Shaqlawa (NE Iraq),

*pəšra xil-ele*<sup>36</sup> 'He has eaten meat', not \*\*\*'The meat has been eaten'  
 (lit. He is eaten meat)

There can be morphological overlap between the prepositional object of the compound perfect and the agent complement of type d) passives. Forms like *qṭil-ε-le* 'He is killed' and *qṭila winwa* 'I<sub>M</sub> was killed' could equally mean 'He has killed' and 'I<sub>M</sub> had killed' when they combine with a nominal object, for example in C. Ashitha (NW Iraq; Borghero 2006, 176), illustrated below. The orientation of the participle is distinguished morphologically. In the patient-oriented, i.e. passive, construction, the copula follows the participle, and the

35 Cf. Khan (2016:403) on C. Urmi.

36 *xil-ele* < \**xila-ile*.

'*all*-series denoting the agent remain separate. In the agent-oriented, i.e. active, construction, the '*all*-series attaches immediately to the participle, denoting P.

(18) C. Ashitha (SE Turkey; Borghero 2005, 334–336)

ACTIVE		PASSIVE		
[V-P-A]		[V-S]		[OBL]
a. <i>q̄t̄il-əlla-le</i>		c. <i>q̄t̄il-ε-le</i>		' <i>əlla</i>
killed:MS-DAT:3FS-COP:3MS		killed-MS-COP:3MS		DAT:3FS
'He has killed <b>her</b> .'		'He was killed <b>by her</b> .'		
[V-P]	[A]	[V-S]	[S]	[OBL]
b. <i>q̄t̄il-əlle</i>	<i>winwa</i>	d. <i>q̄t̄il-a</i>	<i>winwa</i>	' <i>əlle</i>
killed:MS-DAT:3MS	PST:COP:1MS	killed-MS	PST:COP:1MS	DAT:3MS
'I <sub>M</sub> had killed <b>him</b> .'		'I <sub>M</sub> had been killed <b>by him</b> .'		

Remarkably, in several other NENA dialects, a construction similar in morphology to (18d) would correspond to the active (see § 2.2.5.2, e.g. C. Harbole (SE Turkey; Khan personal communication)

*holi q̄t̄ila 'əlle* 'I have killed him'

The most common type of passive in NENA, however, is the impersonal/unspecified agent construction based on the non-referential third plural. The coding does not change with respect to the active voice, but the referentiality of the agent is reduced by using the 3pl. The patient is highly topical. An example is given below from the Christian dialect of Aradhin (NW Iraq). Here the demonstrative *āwa* refers back to *bərzara* 'seed', and the verbal form *šawq-ī-le* is indistinct from the active, but the referential reduction of the agent indicates a type of passivization. The higher topicality of the patient also manifests itself in the differential indexing.

(19) C. Aradhin (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982, 76.27, transcription adapted)

*pāyīš-∅*                      *bərzara dax* <sup>+</sup>*barzare š-šišme*      *daqīqa u*  
 remain<sub>IPFV</sub>-3MS seed:MS like seed:MS LK-sesame tiny:MS and  
*šawq-ī-le*                      *āwa*      *mən čēri*      *hul baher*  
 store<sub>IPFV</sub>-A:3PL-P:3MS DEM:MS from autumn till spring  
 'The seed remains small like sesame seed, and **it is stored** (lit. they store it<sub>M</sub> that one) from fall to spring.'

Such agentless constructions can parallel the constructions above, but they are not typically intransitive. Unlike Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, a spontaneous reading is only available for verbs that inflects like *A*. This is illustrated by the following examples from Jewish Betanure for the verb *pq* ‘burst’. Both the specified agent acting on a patient in the transitive valence pattern in (20a), and the subject of the intransitive valence pattern of the spontaneous event in (20b) are expressed by means of the L-set. When the agent is unspecified, however, the patient in (20c), may also be encoded by means of the E-set, exactly like *P* in (20a).

(20) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a)

a. *pqi<sup>2</sup>-a-lu* (causative, specified agent)  
burst<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3PL</sub>  
‘They burst it<sub>F</sub>.’

b. *pqe<sup>2</sup>-la* (inchoative, spontaneous)  
burst<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
‘It<sub>F</sub> burst.’

c. *pqi<sup>2</sup>-a* (impersonal, unspecified agent)  
burst<sub>PFV-3FS</sub>  
‘It<sub>F</sub> was burst (by sb.).’

Although it involves no special verbal morphology, the agentless construction resembles a passive. The patient is topicalized to preverbal position like *s*, and the agent is postverbal and prepositional, compare:

(21) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a, 274.450, 286.487)

a. *ħambašāya xil -ā -le ‘e-’azza*  
ogre:MS eat<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:3MS DEM:FS-goat:FS  
‘The ogre ate **that** goat.’

b. *’ərwe xil -i l-dewe*  
sheep:PL eat<sub>PFV</sub> -3PL DAT-wolf:PL  
‘**The** sheep were eaten by wolves.’

In Jewish ‘Amedia, the patient NP, if made explicit, is regularly put before the verb like *s* (Hoberman 1989, 111–112). Unlike example (21b) above, when a topical patient occurs in preverbal position, no overt expression of the agent is possible.

The referentiality of the patient can also be reduced. In C. Barwar, the agentless preterit can lack indexing of the patient altogether, and the preverbal position of the patient is typical of the s of inchoatives (Khan 2008a, 750), compare:

- (22) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 749–750; cf. Doron and Khan 2012, 231)
- |            |  |                           |
|------------|--|---------------------------|
| [s]        | [v]                                    |                           |
| a. 'o-bɛta | tlix-le                                | (inchoative, agreement)   |
|            | the-house destroy <sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub> |                           |
|            | 'The house collapsed.'                 |                           |
| b. baxta   | qtil(-Ø)                               | (agentless, no agreement) |
|            | woman kill <sub>PFV(-3MS)</sub>        |                           |
|            | 'A/the woman was killed.'              |                           |

Thus the patient-like subject of the inchoatives (e.g. *tlix-le* 'it collapsed', *pqe<sup>2</sup>-le* 'it exploded') is treated as more agent-like than the patient of the agentless construction. At first glance, this may seem rather unexpected, since subjects of inchoatives are by definition least agent-like. The degree of saliency on the part of the patient could be expected to be higher for an anticausative intransitive type than for a passive, since the agent is not in view even implicitly in a spontaneous event (Croft 2001, 317). While this seems to hold for the South-eastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, e.g. *pəqy-a* 'it<sub>F</sub> exploded', this principle is not reflected in the person indexes in the dialects discussed here, e.g. *pəqe-la* 'it<sub>F</sub> exploded'.

On closer examination, however, agentless constructions can have certain properties that set them apart from passives.

#### 4.2.4 Ergative-Like Properties

There are a number of reasons to analyze agentless preterits as truncated *qtil-a-le* forms, rather different from the seemingly identical intransitive verbal forms in SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA. The patient retains certain object properties that set it apart from s. What we do not find is overt verbal *and* overt nominal marking of the agent<sup>37</sup> or independent prepositional agents and dependent L-suffixes, e.g.

- \*\**l-kalwe xil-a-lu* 'Dogs ate it<sub>F</sub>.'  
 \*\**lali xil-a-li* 'I ate it<sub>F</sub>'.

37 This occurs productively in ʤuroyo, see §5.1.2.

The absence of overt A agreement on transitive *q̄til-a-le* forms is permitted in the case of a strong implication of the agent in the immediate context. This absence is apparently obligatory to facilitate a particular focal status of the agent nominal, reminiscent of optional ergative marking. At the same time, not all agents are always compatible with agentless verbal person marking, which resembles the impersonal/unspecified agent constructions. This, as we have already observed,<sup>38</sup> is where passive and ergative can be difficult to tell apart. The special treatment of A in the preterit may be considered a type of ergative grouping (S≠A) with respect to trigger potential of agreement. When we examine the full expression of A, this will provide further evidence for treating at least some of such agentless clauses as active-transitive and thus ergative rather than (impersonal) passive.

#### 4.2.4.1 Referential Continuity

Agentless *q̄til*-forms can be analyzed as truncated transitive constructions. In J. Zaxho, this construction can entail an implicit reference to a third person (especially plural) agent just like the overt counterpart (Gutman 2008). Similarly in other literary varieties of NENA, lack of indexing of A is confined to the third person plural,<sup>39</sup> as illustrated in the following examples, where the agent reference is clear from the immediate context:

(23) C. Ashitha (Literary, SE Turkey; Polotsky 1996, 17, transcription mine)

[V	-S <sub>i</sub> ]	[V-P	-A <sub>i</sub> ]	[P]	[V
<i>te</i>	<i>-lay</i>	<i>šqil-a</i>	(-Ø)	<i>baxta</i>	<i>b-xurṭūṭa w-zəl</i>
come <sub>PFV</sub>	-S:3PL	take <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS	(-3PL)	woman:FS	by-force and-go <sub>PFV</sub>
	-S <sub>i</sub> ]				
	<i>-lay</i>				
	-S:3PL				

‘They came, **took the woman** by force and went.’

This also occurs in the recently documented dialect of Marga (SE Turkey). Two constructions alternate in the same story one after the other in the immediate context. In (24a), there is no indexing of A in the second verb, while it is expressed in (24b). In theory, one could interpret both as impersonal passives, i.e. They put/took her = She was put/taken.

<sup>38</sup> See § 4.1.2.

<sup>39</sup> Polotsky (1996, 17–18). All of his examples, are also confined to third person patients.

## (24) C. Marga (SE Turkey)

- a. *mot -a -wa -ney l-xaş-ət dāware ʔu-nubl -a*  
 put<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -P:3FS -PST -A:3PL on-back-of mule:PL took<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -3FS  
*-wa(-∅)*  
*-PST(-3PL)*
- b. *mot -a -ney l-xaş-ət dāware ʔu-nubl -a -ney*  
 put<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -P:3FS -A:3PL on-back-of mule:PL took<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -P:3FS -A:3PL  
 ‘They put her on the back of a mule and took her along.’

Sabar (1976, 48 fn. 101) considers such constructions a stacking of preterit forms in which only one of them takes L-suffixes, much like a serial verb construction. Nevertheless, the null marked agent can also be co-referential with *qatəl-* constructions (Polotsky 1996, 18), as illustrated in (25) below for J. ‘Amedia.

## (25) J. ‘Amedia (NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989, 111; glossing adapted)

- min ʔid-i šlip-a(-∅) g-əmr-i raḫt-ela*  
 from hand-my draw<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub>-3FS(-3PL) IND-say<sub>IP<sub>FV</sub></sub>-A:3PL big:FS-she.is  
 ‘(There was also a ring<sub>F</sub> on my hand;) **they drew** it<sub>F</sub> from my hand, **they said** (lit. say): It<sub>F</sub>’s big.’

A similar phenomenon is recorded for the enclitic copula.<sup>40</sup> It is not uncommon for the third person enclitic copula to be absent in transitive compound perfects, so that only participial agreement expresses A. The binding of the object pronominal in forms like *qətəlt-əlle* and *qətəlt-əbbe* denoting ‘She has killed him’ gives sufficient clarity to omit the agent copula. In general, a verbal form in the immediate vicinity takes the argument coding to introduce the referent, as for instance in the following example. It is not clear whether it is also possible for the first and second person copulas to be omitted. The /l/-based copula of the third person thus behaves similarly to the L-suffixes.

## (26) C. Lewen (SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 102.28)

- qım -əle awa šqil-u (-∅) o-naša*  
 risen -S:COP:3MS DEM:MS taken-P:MS (-A:3MS) DEM:MS-man:MS  
*mənn-u o-tərjumman w tiw-a (-∅) go ...*  
 with-him DEM:MS-translator:MS and seated-S:MS (-S:3MS) in  
 ‘He rose (and) took that man with him, that translator, and sat down in (his car).’

40 Cf. Khan (2008a, 670).

Unlike the compound perfect, however, the agentless preterit is always transitive. Thus one does not find truncated intransitive preterit counterparts to *tīwa* above, i.e. *\*\*tīw-∅* for ‘They sat’. The trigger potential for s and A is thus the same for the copula in the compound perfect, but not for the L-suffix in the preterit.

#### 4.2.4.2 Full Expression of the Agent

The overt expression of agent NPs can be indistinct from the transitive counterpart. An example from Gutman’s (2008) discussion of such forms in J. Zakho is given below. A zero-marked full nominal agent *xūrāse* ‘his friends’ is present, but the verb *fhm* ‘understand’ expresses agreement only with the patient:

(27) J. Zakho (NW Iraq; Gutman 2008, 74)

[A] <sub>i</sub>	[V-P]	[P]	[V-A] <sub>i</sub>
<i>xūrās-e</i>	<i>fhm-a(-∅)</i>	<i>zāya</i>	<i>ū-ngəz-lu ...</i>
friend:PL-his	understand <sub>PFV-3FS(-3PL)</sub>	matter:FS	and-bite <sub>PFV-A:3PL</sub>
‘His friends understood the matter, and bit (their lips).’			

Remarkably, the word order is A-V-P, as expected for a transitive clause.

In the following example from C. Marga, the full expression of the agent *qaša* ‘priest’ for *mburxan* ‘I<sub>F</sub> was wedded’ is postponed to the next clause, even when it is clear from the context that this is also the agent of the preceding event denoted by the agentless construction. The construction, then, seems similar to the English gerund, i.e. ‘∅<sub>i</sub> Having wedded me, the priest<sub>i</sub> went off.’

(28) C. Marga (SE Turkey)

[A] <sub>i</sub>	[V-P]	[S] <sub>i</sub>	[V-S]
<i>bas</i>	<i>∅ mburx-an(-∅)-u</i>	<i>qaša</i>	<i>xəš-le</i>
only	bless <sub>PFV-1FS(-3MS)-and</sub>	priest:MS	go <sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub>
‘The priest only wedded me and went off.’			
lit. ‘Only wedded me and the priest went off.’			

Thus while the intransitive verb *xəš-le* ‘went off’, as shown in (28), obligatorily shows a subject index from the L-set, an agent index can be absent on the preceding transitive verb with referential continuity, where the E-set expresses the patient. While s and P are evidently not grouped in phonological form, i.e. L-set vs. E-set, one could argue that this is an ergative grouping (A≠S=P) in terms of trigger potential: s and P trigger overt agreement, but A does not.

## 4.2.4.3 Focal Marking of the Agent

The restriction to third person (plural) agents does not appear to apply absolutely in contrastive focus (Gutman 2008, 75). In C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey), independent personal pronouns appear to be compatible with truncated *qil*-forms, e.g.

## (29) C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey)

[A]	[V-P]	[P]
a. <i>man gnîw-a</i>	<i>çant-î?</i>	
who steal <sub>PFV-3FS</sub>	bag:FS-my	
‘Who has stolen my bag?’		

[A]	[V-P]	[P]
b. <i>ahæt gnîw-a</i>	<i>çant-î?</i>	
you:SG steal <sub>PFV-3FS</sub>	bag:FS-my	
‘Have you <sub>SG</sub> stolen my bag?’		

The more common forms would obviously be *gnîw-a-le* and *gnîw-a-loh*, respectively. Lack of overt agreement, however, is compatible with focal agents that are non-prepositional, which clearly indicates that the agentless form is not typically passive.

Movement of the object and agent to preverbal position can also express focalization. Thus in the following example from J. Zakho, the agent NP *kalwe* is non-prepositional, yet the verb agrees only with the fronted object:

## (30) J. Zakho (NW Iraq; Sabar 2002, 193)

[P]	[A]	[V-P]
<i>xula dunye</i>	<i>(Ø-)<b>kalwe</b> xîl-a(-Ø)</i>	
Q world:FS dog:PL	eat <sub>PFV-3FS</sub>	
‘Is it so that the world was eaten <b>by dogs</b> (or: The world,— <b>dogs</b> ate it <sub>F</sub> )?’		

Agent verbal person marking is necessarily absent in NENA dialects that mark the agent by the preposition (*ʔal*)- in order to focalize it. Synchronically, the L-suffix is a verbal person marker, yet, diachronically, it is derived from the same preposition that introduces NPs and independent prepositional pronouns. Earlier grammatical treatments of mainly literary Neo-Aramaic<sup>41</sup> mention the use of this preposition, and, on its function, Rhétoré (1912, 220) already remarked

41 E.g. Rhétoré (1912, 220), Goldenberg (1992, 120–121), Pennacchietti (1994, 278, fn. 71).

that such prepositional marking is used to express the agent more assertively in the dialects of the Nineveh Plains and conveys agent focalization, e.g.

*lāli q̄tilā* 'It is *I* who killed her', lit. '*Me* she was killed'

Jastrow (1988, 152.432, 156.499) records several examples in the C. Artun dialect (Hertevin, SE Turkey), where the agent is marked by *l-*, e.g.

- (31) C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988, 152.432, 156.499)  
*l-ēt'-aḥ*                      *l-dewe*              *ḥellek*              *l-naše*              *q̄tellek*  
 NEG-know<sub>IPFV</sub>-A:1PL    DAT-wolves    eat<sub>PFV</sub>:3MS    DAT-people    kill<sub>PFV</sub>:3MS  
*l-debbabe ḥellek*  
 DAT-bears    eat<sub>PFV</sub>:3MS  
 'We do not know whether (**it was**) **wolves (who)** ate him (i.e. Joseph), **people (who)** killed him or **bears (who)** ate him.'

An equivalent construction where A is both prepositional *and* indexed on the verb is so far unattested for NENA. The absence of the L-suffix licenses its prepositional expression and its focalization. To illustrate, in C. Marga, the prepositional agent, such as 'alla 'by me' in (32b), can be contrasted with the L-suffix, such as *-li* in (32a). Only a form with overt agent agreement, such as *griš-a-li*, however, may freely combine with an independent *non-prepositional* personal pronoun 'ana, cp. (32d).

- (32) C. Marga (NW Iraq)
- a. ('ana) *griš*              *-a*              *-li*  
 (I)    pulled<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:1SG  
 'I pulled her.'
- b. 'alli *griš*              *-a*  
 me pulled<sub>PFV</sub> -3FS  
 '(It was) I (who) pulled her.' / '(It was) **By me** she was pulled.'
- c. \*\*'ana *griš*              *-a*  
 \*\*I    pulled<sub>PFV</sub> -3FS  
 Intended: 'I pulled her.'
- d. \*\*'alli *griš*              *-a*              *-li*  
 \*\*me pulled<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:1SG  
 Intended: 'I pulled her.'

The speakers of C. Marga favor the prepositional agent in preverbal position. In fact, in the rare occurrence of two full NPs, the patient precedes the agent, i.e. *xmarta 'alli q̄til-a* '(It was) I (who) killed the she-ass', rather than *'alli xmarta q̄til-a* or *xmarta q̄til-a 'alli*.

These prepositional agents can alternate with L-suffixes, while the remaining verbal predicate is not interpretable as intransitive. Thus, *lā xzē-Ø l-nāšā* in (33) below taken from early NENA poetry is not interpretable as intransitive i.e. 'What did not appear to anybody' but only transitive like the following *xzē-Ø-lē* 'He saw', which does have agreement.

- (33) **Early C. Alqosh** (Literary, NW Iraq; Mengozzi 2002a, 12 28.31c)  
*mā d-lā xzē-Ø l-nāšā xzē-Ø-lē*  
 what SUBR-NEG saw<sub>PFV</sub>-3MS DAT-anyone saw<sub>PFV</sub>-P:3MS-A:3MS  
 'He saw what **nobody** saw / was not seen by **anybody**.'

The agentless form can imply a certain degree of subordination to or interdependency with another verb that does take overt agreement. Mengozzi (2002b, 36) mentions several examples, where an active interpretation is also favored for prepositional agents. In the example below, the L-suffixes continue the same reference of the prepositional agent. They all belong to the third person plural:

- (34) **Early C. Alqosh** (Literary, NW Iraq; Mengozzi 2002a, J6 142.79d)  
*šq̄il-Ø l-māl[ā]'xē<sub>i</sub> w-nube-Ø-lay<sub>i</sub> drē-Ø-lay<sub>i</sub> b ...*  
 take<sub>PFV</sub>-3MS DAT-angel:PL and-carry<sub>PFV</sub>-3MS-3PL put<sub>PFV</sub>-3MS-3PL in  
 'He<sub>j</sub> was taken by **angels<sub>i</sub>** (or: **Angels<sub>i</sub>** took him<sub>i</sub>) and (**they<sub>i</sub>**/\*he<sub>j</sub>) carried him and put him in (Gehenna).'

While the position of the prepositional agent is not completely fixed, its typical preverbal position signifies an increase in prominence of the *l*-marked argument. Its association with the agent function is peculiar to its combination with *q̄til*-based morphology. At the same time, a full nominal patient typically precedes it, so that the favored order for this construction is P-A-V.

A similar phenomenon is found in compound verbal forms, where preverbal focalization usually occurs via a pseudo-cleft sentence. As mentioned elsewhere, the prepositional object and agent complement are expressed by the same preposition. The argument orientation is neutralized for the Christian dialect of Aradhin (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982). Binding of *l*-marked pronominals to the participle is only possible in their object function, e.g.

## (35) C. Aradhin (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982)

- | A-ORIENTATION |                              |                   | P-ORIENTATION |    |                                 |             |
|---------------|------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|----|---------------------------------|-------------|
| a.            | <i>ile</i>                   | <i>qṭil-a</i>     | <i>əlla</i>   | c. | <i>qṭil-a</i>                   | <i>əlla</i> |
|               | COP:3MS                      | killed-MS         | DAT:3FS       |    | killed-MS                       | DAT:3FS     |
|               | 'He has killed <b>her</b> .' |                   |               |    | 'He was killed <b>by her</b> .' |             |
| b.            | <i>iwən</i>                  | <i>qṭil-əlla</i>  |               |    |                                 |             |
|               | COP:1MS                      | killed:MS-DAT:3FS |               |    |                                 |             |
|               | 'I have killed <b>her</b> .' |                   |               |    |                                 |             |

When the agent is prepositional, as shown in (35c), the copula has to be omitted (Krotkoff 1982, 34, 39), and the patient has to be third person, so that constructions of the following type do not occur:

- d. **\*\**ile*** *qṭila* *əlla* 'He was killed by her.'  
**\*\**iwən*** *qṭila* *əlla* 'I was killed by her.'

When, however, the agent is in focus, such as *əlli* in (35e) below, the third person masculine singular copula is present as a focus marker and denotes an expletive subject only ('It is X who ...'):

- e. *əlli-le* *wid-a*  
 DAT:1SG-COP.3MS done-MS  
 'It is *I* (who) did it<sub>M</sub>.'

Krotkoff (1982, 34) states that his informants' interpretation fluctuates between active and passive. The first interpretation readily applies to independent person markers with agent focus occurring in preverbal position. This would otherwise be reserved for the unmarked independent person markers, i.e.

- āna iwən wid-əlle* 'I (am the one who) did it<sub>M</sub>.'

For the agent to be prepositional and focal, then, the copula must be omitted and the object cannot be prepositional.

Similarly in C. Barwar, the agent is expressed by the preposition (*'əl*)-, such as *l-dabba* 'by the bear' below. In terms of word order, the agent may be put before the verb, but will not precede the topical patient:

## (36) C. Barwar (NW Iraq)

- a. *xabuša šmoqa l-dább-εle xil-a*  
 apple:MS red:MS DAT-bear:MS-COP:3MS eaten-MS
- b. *\*\*l-dábbá xabuša šmóq-εle xil-a*  
 DAT-bear:MS apple:MS red:MS-COP:3MS eaten-MS  
 ‘The red apple has been eaten **by the bear**.’ (Khan 2008a, D2:65)

There is, however, an unusual feature in the marking of the agent in this type of construction. When it is fronted to preverbal position, the preposition *l-* may be absent (Khan 2008a, 752). The remaining agreement, therefore, is controlled by the patient, while the agent remains unmarked, such as *babi* ‘my father’ in (36c) below.

- c. *ʿayya yalaxta (∅-)babi-la zqir-ta*  
 DEM:FS handkerchief:FS father:MS:my-COP:3FS woven-FS  
 ‘This handkerchief has been woven (by) **my father**.’ (Khan 2008a, A37:12)

All else being equal, then, none of these features are typical of agents in NENA in general, and yet neither is it typical of prepositional arguments. These prepositional agents are restricted to constructions, where the remaining agreement is controlled by the patient. The fact that the agent is focalized and not obligatorily prepositional makes it less like passive and more like ergative morphosyntax.

## 4.2.4.4 Differential Object Marking

Finally, the same sensitivity to definiteness for objects may also be found for the patient in the agentless *qṭil-* form. This is for instance found in Christian Barwar. The indexing of the patient is conditioned by definiteness; contrast (37a) and (37b) below, compared with (37c) and (37d).

## (37) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 749–750; cf. Doron and Khan 2012, 231)

- a. *baxta qṭil-a* (definite patient)  
 woman kill<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub>-3FS  
 ‘The woman was killed.’
- b. *baxta qṭil* (indefinite/definite patient)  
 woman kill<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub>  
 ‘A/the woman was killed.’

- c. *qtil-a-le*                      *baxta*    (definite patient)  
     kill<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub> woman  
     ‘He killed the woman.’
- d. *qtil-le*                      *baxta*    (indefinite patient)  
     kill<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:3MS</sub> woman  
     ‘He killed a woman.’

Similarly, the truncated transitive form may be person-restricted like the corresponding full transitive<sup>42</sup> in dialects such as C. Barwar (Doron and Khan 2012, 232–233) and possibly also J. Zakho (Gutman 2008). This resembles the object indexes, compare:

- (38) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; cf. Khan 2008a, 749–750)  
     \*\**griš-ax-∅* ‘They pulled us.’ / ‘We were pulled.’                      (non-third person)  
     \*\**griš-ax-le* ‘They pulled us.’  
     *griš-a-∅* ‘They pulled her.’ / ‘She was pulled.’                      (third person)  
     *griš-a-le* ‘They pulled her.’

C. Barwar thus treats the patient in the truncated *qtil*-construction like P rather than s (Khan 2008a, 750). This does not apply to all dialects; in J. Betanure, a town in the Barwar region, the truncated form is compatible with first/second person patients, whereas the full form is not:

- (39) J. Betanure (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a, 68)  
     *griš-ax-∅* ‘We were pulled.’    (non-third person)  
     \*\**griš-ax-lu* ‘They pulled us.’  
     *griš-a-∅* ‘She was pulled.’    (third person)  
     *griš-a-lu* ‘They pulled her.’

In conclusion, while the agentless form may in itself be a rather marked construction in these dialects, it can be used as a truncated transitive construction. The verbal person marking can essentially only be treated as ergative in terms of trigger potential for a limited set of arguments (third person, definite NPs).

42 This does not apply to all dialects, for example J. Betanure *griš-ax* ‘We were pulled (= Somebody pulled us)’ (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a, 68). The restriction also does not apply to Trans-Zab Jewish varieties in general, compare J. Sulemaniya *griš-ax* ‘We got pulled’ (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a), where the construction is intransitive.

Ergative verbal person marking ( $A \neq S = P$ ) is not identifiable on the basis of other criteria (affix order, morphological marking).

### 4.3 Verb-Related Factors: Grammaticalization of Resultatives

Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA are the only dialects that have grammaticalized the original resultative-stative construction of *q̄til-* combined with E-suffixes to the expression of the perfective past.<sup>43</sup> A few Christian dialects of NENA as well as Jewish varieties other than Southeastern Trans-Zab have maintained this construction in the resultative or perfect. Novel compound perfects have largely replaced such simplex constructions in yet other dialects. These compound perfects, though originally resultative, have fully grammaticalized transitive coding; the respective outcome differs from dialect to dialect, however. There is a noteworthy tendency to harmonize the transitive verbal person marking of such compound verbal forms with that of *qaṭal-*.

#### 4.3.1 Tense-Aspect Associated Person Marking: *s* and *A*

Christian varieties in general and Jewish dialects in the West exhibit relics of a former distinction between the resultative or perfect and preterit in the inflection of *q̄til-*. Mengozzi (2002b, 38–39, 2005, 249–250; 2012), for instance, shows that the usage of E-suffixes to mark the subject co-existed alongside L-suffixes in the earliest Christian NENA textual witnesses in North Iraq (17th century), illustrated below.

- |     |                |                     |            |
|-----|----------------|---------------------|------------|
| (1) | <i>su-li</i>   | ‘I became old’      | (preterit) |
|     | <i>s̄iw-en</i> | ‘I have become old’ | (perfect)  |

The earliest Jewish NENA texts also retain examples of this type, e.g.

- |                      |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>’əty-a s̄ā’əd</i> | ‘The hour has come.’ | (Sabar 1976, fn. 56) |
| <i>la sn̄iq-∅</i>    | ‘It isn’t needed.’   | (Sabar 2002, 242a)   |

Indeed, there are traces of such dynamic-stative subject marking in the spoken dialects as well. Typically in *lishana deni* dialects like J. Betanure, for instance, only the intransitive verb *pyš* ‘remain’ retains an *s<sub>p</sub>* form expressing a perfect, e.g. (Mutzafi 2008a, 68).

43 See § 6.1.2. for a discussion.

*šop-ad kepe lá-piš-Ø* ‘No trace of stone has remained.’

The same formation of the verb *ʒl* ‘go’, e.g. *zil-a* ‘She is gone’, has grammaticalized into a proximative auxiliary ‘be about to’ in the Christian dialects of the Nineveh Plains from its resultative sense ‘be gone to’.<sup>44</sup> In Jewish Barzani (Mutzafi 2002a), such forms are found for the modal auxiliary *mšy* ‘be able’, e.g.

- (2) *mše-li* ‘I was able’ (preterit)  
*mšil-ən ~ ħmil-ən* ‘I<sub>M</sub> am able’ (present)

In Christian dialects, such active-stative s-marking is still productively found in the western periphery, such as C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988):

- (3) *dməħ-li* ‘I fell asleep’ (preterit)  
*dmih-en* ‘I have fallen asleep’ (perfect)

In C. Artun, the transitive counterparts are essentially differentiated by a preverbal TAM-marker (*hole*), optionally added to intransitives:<sup>45</sup>

- (4) C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey)

	PRETERIT	PERFECT
tr.	<i>qətəl-li</i>	<i>holi qətəl-li</i>
intr.	<i>qəm-li</i>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><i>(holi) qim-ən</i></span>

On closer examination, the E-suffixes are, to some extent, compatible with transitive verbs and transitive coding in C. Artun (Jastrow 1988, 58). In elicitation, speakers find the E-suffixes acceptable for certain transitive verbs, but not all of them, e.g. *susa rkiw-ən* ‘I<sub>M</sub> have mounted a horse’, *la mir-ən* ‘I<sub>M</sub> haven’t said’, *la ħil-ən* ‘I haven’t eaten’, but not *\*\*ptih-ən* ‘I<sub>M</sub> have opened’. Further research is required to examine their distribution and to assess whether this is merely contextually restricted or whether there is a categorical lexical restriction. In addition, C. Artun speakers also employ compound verbal forms, where the deictic copula is inflected and the participle agrees with s/A as opposed to the invariant 3ms. form *hole* used to express the perfect with *qətalle* or the progressive with *qətəl-*, e.g.

44 See Borghero (2008, 85), Coghill (2010, 375), Noorlander (2017). Cf. Rhétoré (1912, 156).

45 This is comparable to J. Rustaqa (NE Iraq), see § 3.4.3.

<i>hol-ən</i>	<i>šətya</i>	'I <sub>M</sub> have drunk'
<i>hole</i>	<i>šte-li</i>	'I have drunk'
<i>hole</i>	<i>šat-ən</i>	'I <sub>M</sub> am drinking'

A similar opposition exists further west in the Bohtan region (Fox 2009). The difference between preterit and perfect is entirely based on the set of person indexes attached to *q̄til-*. The L-set marks the preterit against the E-set for the perfect, both marking s and A:

(5) **C. Borb-Ruma** (Bohtan, SE Turkey)

	PRETERIT	PERFECT
tr.	<i>q̄təl-li</i>	<i>q̄til-ən</i>
intr.	<i>qəm-li</i>	<i>qim-ən</i>

Thus the default expression of s is identical to A in at least the preterit. An active-stative or rather dynamic perfective-stative resultative opposition in at least subject indexes exists throughout the NENA dialectal landscape.<sup>46</sup> Even the earliest documents from Iraq (Mengozzi 2002b, 38, 2005) bear witness to active-stative subject marking, whereby *q̄til-* could be used as a base for either L-suffixes expressing the dynamic perfective past or E-suffixes expressing a resultative-stative that eventually developed into a perfect. The difference lies solely in the set of person markers to express s. It is plausible that this co-existed in all dialects,<sup>47</sup> but was gradually lost and replaced by either preverbal TAM-marking, i.e. *hole qəm-li*, or a compound verbal form based on the resultative participle, i.e. *qime-wən*.

#### 4.3.2 *Transitivization of Compound Verbal Constructions*

The compound perfect based on the resultative participle goes back to a resultative construction. A resultative is a verbal construction typically derived from telic verbs that expresses an acquired state: a state that implicitly results from a previous event and directly or indirectly affects a subject (Nedjalkov 1988, 2001;

46 This includes the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties discussed in the previous chapter. See § 6.1.2. and Noorlander (forthcoming) for further argumentation.

47 See § 6.1.2. Noorlander (forthcoming; cf. Goldenberg 1992) considers the verbal systems in SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties to be innovative and also originating in such active-stative subject-marking. That is, originally resultative intransitive *qim-ən* 'I am arisen' existed alongside *qəm-li* 'I rose' from the beginning. The former grammaticalized into a preterit *qim-ən* 'I rose' and replaced *qəm-li* in these dialects, possibly due to convergence with local Iranian languages.

Haspelmath 1994). Resultatives are, strictly speaking, voice-neutral (Nedjalkov and Jaxontov 1988, 16) and can be patient-oriented, subject-oriented and agent-oriented. Subject orientations for result states are found for intransitive verbs, e.g. J. Dohok

<i>wən</i>	<i>tīwa</i>	'I <sub>M</sub> am seated'	(lit. 'am sat')
<i>wan</i>	<i>skənta</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> live'	(lit. 'am settled')

The predication of a result state is also found for transitive telic verbs that typically form agent orientations in resultative constructions, such as *dwq* 'hold', *šql* 'take', *lwš* 'wear, put on', *t'n* 'carry', *lyp* 'learn' (Noorlander forthcoming).<sup>48</sup> In J. Dohok, for instance, the resultative participle is mostly entirely confined to such possessive-like transitive verbs in this usage alongside intransitive verbs, e.g. *'ana heš wən dwiqa laxma bət-'idi* 'I am still holding (lit. held) bread in my hand'.

In several NENA dialects, the agent orientation is available for virtually all transitive verbs in the expression of the perfect and perfective past. The possible connotation of an anterior change of state in the implied event leading to the result restate in resultatives is made explicit in the perfect, compare English resultative *He is gone* and perfect *He has gone*, and the resultant state in the present is absent in the perfective past. The aspectual opposition between the intransitive stative-resultative and transitive perfect also correlates with their integration into the verbal system.<sup>49</sup> Thus for example, in C. Shaqlawa (NE Iraq), *pəšra xil-ele* (< \**xila-ile*) can have only a dynamic agent orientation denoting 'He has eaten meat', not \*\*'The meat has been eaten'.

Certain typical change-of-state verbs belonging to stem 1, however, are essentially voice-neutral in their resultative construction in several NENA dialects. Virtually any telic transitive verb is ambivalent, expressing both a dynamic-transitive perfect and stative-intransitive resultative. The orientation (subject/agent/patient) has to be contextualized. This is illustrated in the following examples from Christian Barwar.

48 See also Kapeliuk (2008). Cf. Nöldeke (1868, 308, § 150).

49 See Kapeliuk (2008). Cf. Mutzafi (2004a, 105–109), Khan (2008a, 653–659).

## (6) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a)

BASIC		DEICTIC	
<i>q̄t̄il</i>	-ε -le <sup>50</sup>	<i>ho-le</i>	<i>q̄t̄il-a</i>
killed -MS	-COP:3MS	DEIX:COP-3MS	killed-MS
a. 'He has killed.'		c. 'He has killed.'	(A, dynamic)
b. 'He is killed.'		d. 'He is killed.'	(S, stative)

The basic copula is generally enclitic, following the participle. It may also alternate with an independent deictic copula. The forms with the deictic copula are mainly used to express the perfect and pluperfect (Khan 2008a, 673–675). What applies to the construction based on the deictic copula, as illustrated in (6c) and (6d), generally also applies to other tense and modal categories based on the auxiliary *hwy* 'be'.

Speakers use different strategies as to how to resolve the ambiguity in orientation, namely the relative position of the copula, preverbal marking, the presence of an object and, finally, a greater degree of integration into the verbal system through adaptation of the unmarked transitive coding of *q̄at̄al-*; each of these will be examined in turn below.

## 4.3.2.1 Copula Position

Some dialects, mainly those in NW Iraq, can differentiate between a dynamic-transitive perfect and stative-intransitive resultative by the relative position of the basic copula. If the copula precedes the participle, the orientation is ambiguous, but when it follows, the construction is always intransitive. Thus in Jewish Betanure, for example,<sup>51</sup> postverbal position of the copula is impossible for the agent orientation:

## (7) J. Betanure (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a)

COP	PRED	PRED-COP	
<i>'ile</i>	<i>šqil-a</i>	<i>šqil-a-yle</i>	
COP:3MS	taken-MS	taken-MS-COP:3MS	
a. 'He has taken.'		c. **'He has taken'	(dynamic)
b. 'He is taken.'		d. 'He is taken.' (only)	(stative)

50 *q̄t̄il-ε-le* = *q̄t̄il-a* + *-ile*.

51 Cf. J. Challa (Fassberg 2010, 117).

## 4.3.2.2 Preverbal Marking

By contrast, dialects like C. Koy Sanjaq (NE Iraq) make a distinction by adding an invariant preverbal modifier (*lā*) to the stative-intransitive resultative, where in the case of the third person the copula is absent:

- (8) **C. Koy Sanjaq** (NE Iraq; Mutzafi 2004b)
- |                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (stative)                 | (dynamic)                   |
| <i>lā</i> PRED(-COP)      | PRED-COP                    |
| a. <i>lā skār-ta(-∅)</i>  | c. <i>skār-t-ela</i>        |
| PVB lost-FS               | lost-FS-COP:3FS             |
| ‘She has lost.’           | ‘She is lost.’              |
| <br>                      |                             |
| b. <i>lā skār-t-ewan</i>  | d. <i>skār-t-ewan</i>       |
| PVB lost-FS-COP:1FS       | lost-FS-COP:1FS             |
| ‘I <sub>F</sub> am lost.’ | ‘I <sub>F</sub> have lost.’ |

## 4.3.2.3 Object Marking

The ambiguity in orientation can also be remedied by the presence of an object. When the object is pronominal, it is expressed by attaching a pronoun of the *ʿall*-series. This is given for Christian Barwar below. The enclitic copula denoting A is attached to the preceding participle, and the *ʿall*-set denoting P is attached to the copula. If the copula is deictic and precedes the participle, the patient person form attaches immediately to the participle itself:

- (9) **C. Barwar** (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a)
- |                                 |           |           |              |                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| BASIC                           |           |           |              | DEICTIC                         |                    |
| a. <i>q̄t̄il</i>                | <i>-e</i> | <i>-l</i> | <i>-alle</i> | b. <i>ho-la</i>                 | <i>q̄t̄il-alle</i> |
| killed                          | -A:PL     | -A:COP:3  | -P:3MS       | DEIX-A:3PL                      | killed:NONFS-P:3MS |
| ‘They have killed <b>him</b> .’ |           |           |              | ‘They have killed <b>him</b> .’ |                    |
| (lit. They is killed him)       |           |           |              |                                 |                    |

The agent-marking enclitic copula is completely mobile and can move to the front, e.g. *ku-t-ile q̄t̄il-alle* ‘Each that **has** killed him’ (Khan 2008a, A24:43). The *ʿall*-series regularly attaches to the participle when the copula precedes it. Only when the copula is third person, and thus in form similar to the L-suffixes, it may also follow this series or be omitted entirely (Khan 2008a, 285, 782–783) A 3ms. form can therefore occur in the following forms (see further next subsection):

[V	-P]		
<i>q̄t̄il</i>	<i>-əlle</i>		‘He has killed him.’ (lit. He is killed him)
[V	-P	-A]	
<i>q̄t̄il</i>	<i>-əlle</i>	<i>-le</i>	
[V	-A	-P]	
<i>q̄t̄il</i>	<i>-ele</i>	<i>-le</i>	

When the clause contains two full NPs, the A function of the noun is typically indicated by agreement. When the gender and number differs between the arguments, the verbal construction always agrees with A as it does with s, and the respective roles are clear, for example:

[A]	[COP-A]	[RPP-A]	[P]
c. <i>ʔaw-naša</i>	<i>ho-le</i>	<i>dwiq-a</i>	<i>baxta</i>
DEM-man:MS	DEIX-A:3MS	seized-A:MS	woman:MS
‘The man has seized the woman.’ (Khan 2008a, 657)			

When the patient is differentially marked, this will automatically disambiguate between the roles of the arguments. Differential object marking can be via indexing, i.e. the *ʔəll*-series, or via prepositional marking, e.g. the dative preposition *ʔla-*, for example:

[A]-[COP:A]	[RPP:A-P]	[P]
d. <i>ʔat-it</i>	<i>q̄t̄il-əlle</i>	<i>xuwwe</i>
you-A:2MS	killed:A:MS-P:3MS	snake:MS
‘Are you (the one who) has killed (lit. him) the snake?’ (Khan 2008a, A24:45)		

[A]	[BE:A]	[RPP-A]	
e. <i>awwa</i>	<i>xuwwe</i>	<i>t-awe-Ø-wa</i>	<i>q̄t̄il-a</i>
DEM:MS	snake:MS	FUT-be <sub>1PFV</sub> -A:3MS-PST	killed-A:MS
[DOM→P]			
<i>ʔla-bron-i</i>			
DOM-son:MS-my			
‘The snake would have killed my son.’ (Khan 2008a, A9:6)			

The coding of either role may be completely absent, in which case the roles have to be inferred from the context. This applies when the two referents belong to the same gender and number and when the patient is not differentially marked. In (12a) below, the status of the argument *bron-i* is ambiguous,



inally enclitic copula and *'all*-series. The latter merge with the E-set and L-set of the *qaṭal*-constructions, but the convergence is only partial. The incidental outcome is a special treatment of transitive verbal clauses.

The transitive realis perfect and progressive is regularly formed by the copula and *'all*-series in NENA dialects. The coding of A and P by means of reduced variants, however, is partially merged with the E-suffixes and L-suffixes, for example in C. Barwar. The resultative participle expresses agreement with the agent like the subject, whereas reduced variants of the copula that are virtually identical to the E-set denote the agent. The patient can be expressed by L-suffixes or *'all*-series, markers attached to these reduced variants. Forms like \**qṭila-iwət 'alle* 'You<sub>MS</sub> have killed him' have evolved through contracted forms like *qṭil-ət-alle* into *qṭil-ət-le*.<sup>52</sup> The reduced enclitic copula is morphologically near-identical to the E-set and could hardly be considered a separate set, for example:

(11) **Perfect with reduced copula** (C. Barwar, NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 180, 280–281, 284)

	PERFECT		COPULA	E-SET
2ms.	<i>qṭil-ət-le</i>	'You <sub>MS</sub> killed him'	<i>-iwət</i>	<i>-ət</i>
2fs.	<i>qṭilt-ət-le</i>	'You <sub>FS</sub> have killed him'	<i>-iwət, -iwət</i>	<i>-at</i>
2pl.	<i>qṭile-tu-le</i>	etc.	<i>-iwetu, -iwitu</i>	<i>-itu</i>
1ms.	<i>qṭil-ən-ne</i>		<i>-iwən</i>	<i>-ən</i>
1fs.	<i>qṭilt-ən-ne</i>		<i>-iwan, -iwən</i>	<i>-an</i>
1pl.	<i>qṭil-əx-xe</i>		<i>-iwəx</i>	<i>-əx</i>

As seen in (11), the forms of the reduced copula are virtually identical to the E-set except for the third person. The third person copula can follow the *'all*-series, precede the L-set denoting the object or be omitted altogether. Their forms are identical to the L-suffixes, but when the affix order shifts to that of the present, P is expressed by means of L-suffixes as in the present.

	[V	-P	-A]		COPULA	L-SET
3ms	<i>qṭil</i>	<i>-alle</i>	<i>-le</i>	'He has killed him'	<i>-ile</i>	<i>-le</i>
3fs.	<i>qṭilt</i>	<i>-alle</i>	<i>-la</i>	'She has killed him'	<i>-ila</i>	<i>-la</i>
3pl.	<i>qṭil</i>	<i>-alle</i>	<i>-la</i>	'They have killed him'	<i>-ila, -ilə</i>	<i>-la, -lə</i>

52 The same holds for C. Ashitha (SE Turkey), see Borghero (2005).

	[V	-A	-P]		COPULA	L-SET
3ms.	<i>qtíle</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-le</i>	'He has killed him'	<i>-ile</i>	<i>-le</i>
3fs.	<i>qtílte</i>	<i>-la</i>	<i>-le</i>	'She has killed him'	<i>-ila</i>	<i>-la</i>
3pl.	<i>qtíle</i>	<i>-la</i>	<i>-le</i>	'They have killed him'	<i>-ila, -ilɛ</i>	<i>-la, -lɛ</i>

Non-reduced variants of the copula are used when no coalescence occurs, for example in the present and past tense:

(12) **E<sub>2</sub>-set and copula alternations** (Khan 2008a, 189–190)<sup>53</sup>

E <sub>2</sub> -SET		COPULA	
<i>priqt-ən</i>	~	<i>priqte-wən</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> have finished'
<i>prixt-ən-wa</i>	~	<i>prixtɛ-wənwa</i>	'I <sub>F</sub> had flown'

Where the copula is independent, such as the negative copula or deictic copula, the reduced variants are not used:

(13) **C. Barwar** (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 284, 286)

<i>l-ən qtíl-əlle</i>	'I <sub>M</sub> have not killed him'	(negative)
<i>ho-n qtíl-əlle</i>	'I <sub>M</sub> have killed him'	(deictic)

The enclitic copula and the (<sup>ʔ</sup>al)-series are hardly distinguishable from the E-set and L-set. Their inflection strongly resembles that of *qaʔəl-*. Compare the following transitive forms based on *qtíla* and *qaʔəl-*:

(14) **C. Barwar perfect and imperfective** (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 280–281, 284)

	PERFECT		: IMPERFECTIVE	
2ms.	<i>qtíl-ət-le</i>	'You <sub>MS</sub> killed him.'	<i>qaʔl-ət-le</i>	'You <sub>MS</sub> kill him.'
2fs.	<i>qtílt-ət-le</i>	'You <sub>FS</sub> have killed him.'	<i>qaʔla-t-le</i>	'You <sub>FS</sub> kill him.'
2pl.	<i>qtíle-tu-le</i>	etc.	<i>qaʔli-tu-le</i>	etc.
1ms.	<i>qtíl-ən-ne</i>		<i>qaʔl-ən-ne</i>	
1fs.	<i>qtílt-ən-ne</i>		<i>qaʔla-n-ne</i>	
1pl.	<i>qtíl-əx-xe</i>		<i>qaʔl-əx-xe</i>	

Presumably, originally uncontracted forms like \**qtíla-iwət ʔalle* 'You<sub>MS</sub> have killed him' evolved via contracted forms like *qtíl-ət-əlle* into *qtíl-ət-le* in analogy to the *qaʔəl-* in Christian dialects like Barwar.<sup>54</sup> If we consider the E-suffixes

53 Third person forms do not show this same alternation, e.g. *priqte-la* 'She has finished' and *prixta-wawa* alongside *prixtɛ-yawa* and *prixtɛ-wa* 'She had flown'.

54 The same holds for C. Ashitha (SE Turkey), see Borghero (2005).

*-a* and *-i* as expressions of gender in *qaṭəl-*, then they pattern exactly like the gender agreement of the resultative participle *qṭila*,<sup>55</sup> so that we obtain the following parallel:

	<i>qṭila</i>		<i>qaṭəl-</i>
MS	<i>qṭil-∅-</i>	:	<i>qaṭl-∅</i>
FS	<i>qṭil-t-</i>	:	<i>qaṭl-a-</i>
PL	<i>qṭil-e-</i>		<i>qaṭl-i-</i>

The same is true for the past tense with *-wa-*, compare:

	PERFECT		IMPERFECTIVE
(15)	<i>qṭil-t-ən-wa-le</i>	:	<i>qaṭl-á-n-wa-le</i>
	'I <sub>F</sub> had killed him.'		'I <sub>F</sub> would kill him.'

The stress pattern between the two forms is still distinct in C. Barwar. The participle *qṭila* still carries the main stress, treating the affixes like clitics.<sup>56</sup>

The processes of analogy and phonetic erosion can lead to considerable mixing. Khan (2008a, 284) shows that the reduced variants of the E<sub>2</sub>-series, for instance, can combine with either the 'əll-series or L-suffixes, i.e. *qṭil-ən-əlle* or *qṭil-ən-ne* for 'I<sub>M</sub> have killed him'. Even the third person copula set, namely fs. *-ila*, ms. *-ile*, pl. *-ilɛ*, may be, though rarely is, fully expressed before the L<sub>1</sub>-suffixes e.g. *qṭiltɛ-la-le* (< \**qṭilta* + *-ila* + *-le*) 'She has killed him'. The resulting third person indexes are morphologically identical, leading to a phonologically non-distinct verbal person marking pattern identical to the L-suffixes:

	A/S (PARTICIPLE)	A/S (< * COPULA)	P (< * 'əll-)
ms.	<i>qṭile-</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-le</i>
fs.	<i>qṭiltɛ-</i>	<i>-la</i>	<i>-la</i>
pl.	<i>qṭile-</i>	<i>-lɛ, -la</i>	<i>-lɛ, -la</i>

The third person forms derived from 3ms. *-ile*, 3fs. *-ila* and 3pl. *-ilɛ* are different, but also follow the V-A-P affix order of *qaṭəl-*. They are reduced to *əl-* before object suffixes in the transitive present perfect and also found in the past, with

55 Note that this agreement is absent in the corresponding analytical progressive based on an indeclinable verbal noun *qṭala* (Khan 2008a, 287), e.g. *qṭal-ət-le* 'You<sub>FS</sub> are killing him'.

56 Complete convergence between the compound perfect and progressive with *qaṭəl-* occurs in Jewish Urmi, see § 3.1.3.3.

-*wa*- between A and P, thereby merging the transitive coding partly with *qaṭəl-*, for example:

	PERFECT	:	IMPERFECTIVE
(16)	<i>qṭíl-təl-le</i>	:	<i>qaṭl-a-le</i>
	'She has killed him.'		'She kills him.'
	<i>qṭíl-təl-wa-le</i>	:	<i>qaṭl-á-wa-le</i>
	'She had killed him.'		'She used to kill him.'

Furthermore, the analogy between *qaṭəl-* and the compound verbal constructions creates an interesting split between transitive and intransitive constructions. This is illustrated by the pluperfect in C. Barwar below. Every verb *without* object indexes can freely use the full form of the past copula, but a verb *with* object indexes adapts to the past *qaṭəl-*,<sup>57</sup> for example:

(18) **Split in transitivity coding** (Khan 2008a, 190, 284–286)

a. [-P]	<i>príxa-wət-wa ~ príx-ət-wa</i>	'You <sub>MS</sub> had flown'
[P: fNP]	<i>ptíxa-wət-wa (tāra)</i> <i>~ ptíx-ət-wa (tāra)</i>	'You <sub>MS</sub> had opened (a door)'
[P: PRO]	<i>ptíx-ət-wa-le</i>	'You <sub>MS</sub> had opened it <sub>M</sub> '

These constructions therefore make a subtle difference between clauses with only full nominals and independent pronouns and clauses with dependent person markers. There is a fundamental distinction between A with and A without a P index. The omission or independent expression of P favors a different construction. The verb adapts morphologically to the inflection of *qaṭəl-* particularly when P is a dependent person form.

Moreover, the difference between intransitive and transitive coding is even stronger for third person referents, where A can display special properties distinct from s. They are as follows:

b. [-P]	<i>príxta-wawa</i> <sup>58</sup> ~ <i>prixte-wa</i>	'She had flown'
[P: fNP]	<i>qṭílt-əl-wa (gawra)</i>	'She had killed (a man)'
[P: PRO]	<i>qṭílt-əl-wa-le</i>	'She had killed him'

57 Only an intransitive verb can take a reduced form of the past copula, cf. *príxewa* 'He had flown', *príxətwa* 'You<sub>MS</sub> had flown' (Khan 2008a, 190).

58 Also *prixte-yawa*.

While, third person copula forms are reduced to *-əl-* before *-wa-* and/or an L-suffix, this the same agent marking *-əl-* is analogically restored for transitive verbs without an object index. Hence, one obtains the form *q̄t̄ilt-əl-wa* instead of *q̄t̄ilta-wawa* on the basis of *q̄t̄ilt-əl-wa-le* for *q̄t̄ilta-wawa* 'alle. Such object indexes are absent, for example, in contexts, where P is an indefinite full nominal:

- (19) *ʔay šwīq -t -əl -wa majma tama*  
 she left:RPP -A:FS -A:3 -PST tray there  
 'She **had left** a tray there.' (Khan 2008a, A4:53)

And nevertheless, we do not find this morphology on an intransitive verb, so that forms like *\*\*p̄rixt-əl-wa* for 'She had flown' are impossible. Here, s is treated differently from both A and P.

In conclusion, A is treated remarkably different from s, and while this is exactly what we would expect for an ergative pattern (see § 4.4.1.1.), namely a higher degree of morphosyntactic transitivity triggering marking of A distinct from s, we do not observe morphological ergativity. Gender and number participial agreement always groups s and A. In phonological form, indexing is also accusative for first/second persons but varies for the third person: s, A and P can be either identical to each other or distinct from each other. Verbal person marking involving both A and P is prone to approximate that of the more frequent, unmarked transitive *qaṭəl-*forms due to cross-system harmony, and, consequently, only transitive clauses are treated differently. This cross-system harmonization is also observed in transitive perfective past clauses, which is the topic of the next section.

#### 4.4 Argument-Related Factors: Harmonizing the Object

In the majority of dialects, NENA speakers have multiple strategies for transitive verbal person marking (Pennacchietti 1994).<sup>59</sup> The inverted perfective past construction *q̄til-a-le* is generally person-restricted. Several constructions listed in (1) below serve as alternatives for *q̄til-a-le*, which will be discussed one by one in the subsequent sections.

59 See Mengozzi (2012) for the distribution of these forms in early Christian poetry written in the NENA of Iraq, dated from 17th to 20th century.

TABLE 26 Transitive constructions that parallel *qaʔəl-*

Alternative I: prepositional object	e.g. 'You saw me'	<i>grəš-lox ʔalli</i>
Alternative II: L-suffix + L-suffix		<i>grəš-lux-li</i>
Alternative III: L-E-suffix + L-suffix		<i>grəš-l-ət-ti</i>
Alternative IV: <i>qam-</i> + <i>qaʔəl-</i>		<i>qam-garš-ət-ti</i>
<i>qaʔəl</i>	e.g. 'You see me'	<i>k-garš-ət-ti</i>

Dialects can use more than one of these strategies. Ditransitive constructions presumably served as a model for alternatives I–II, since this is to what they are confined in several other dialects. Alternatives II–IV, and presumably to some extent also Alternative I, are attempts to harmonize at least the object marking in analogy to *qaʔəl-*. The absence or presence of an additional object index, therefore, is central to our discussion, and its presence may even affect the marking of A. The differences in coding strategies incidentally result in person splits, often third vs. first/second, as well as splits between clauses containing full nominal objects and pronominal objects.

#### 4.4.1 *Person-Role Constraints*

4.4.1.1 Ergativity, Co-argument Sensitivity and Person-Role Associations  
The *relative* ranking of A and P on a prominence scale can be a determining factor for alignment splits, also known as “hierarchical alignment” (Siewierska 2003, 2004, 55). Not merely one argument type, but both a particular argument type, i.e. 1st/2nd vs. 3rd person or pronoun vs. full NP, and associated role, i.e. A vs. P or R vs. T, are higher or lower in ranking. Such hierarchy effects show cross-linguistic tendencies for treating clauses differently when either A or P is higher in prominence (and balanced rankings as possibilities in between).

Person role inverse constructions are, among others, a typical trait of Native American languages and a few Tibeto-Burman languages (e.g. DeLancey 1981). The construction where A outranks P along the prominence hierarchy is called ‘direct’, while constructions that deviate from this are called ‘inverse’, and this is highlighted by special verbal morphology. DeLancey (1981, 642) offers the following example from Jyarong, a Tibetan language, spoken in the Sichuan Province of China, where ergative case morphology and verbal person marking are conditioned by the highest person reference. The ergative postposition, *-kə* in (1b), occurs only when A is of lower ranking in person than P. The third person does not trigger agreement, only the non-third person (*-ng*). At the same time, the verb indexes the highest ranking person and takes a special, so-called

inverse form (*u-*) to indicate that the patient is associated with the highest ranking person instead of the expected agent, i.e. P outranks A in person.

(1) **Jyarong** (Tibeto-Burman, Sichuan, China; DeLancey 1981, 642)

[A: 1] [P: 3] [V-A: 1]

- a. *nga mə nasno-ng* (A > P)  
 I he scold-1st  
 'I will scold him.'

[A: 3] [P: 1] [V-P: 1]

- b. *mə-kə nga u-nasno-ng* (P > A)  
 he-ERG I INV-scold-1st  
 'He will scold me.'

Witzlack-Makarevich et al. (2016) argue that what has been called hierarchical alignment does *not* represent a single special alignment type, but represents two basic alignment types conditioned by particular referential properties. Following previous literature, they distinguish between hierarchical agreement and co-argument sensitivity. In co-argument sensitivity, the properties of another argument determine the marking of a particular grammatical function. Importantly, this is first and foremost a construction-specific property and not necessarily the morphosyntax nor alignment pattern as a whole.<sup>60</sup> In this different approach, the system above is not a hierarchical type, but one that can be characterized as either ergative or non-ergative depending on the properties of *either* or *both* arguments. Thus in the example of Jyarong above A is only overtly marked ergatively when P is first/second person; otherwise the marking is neutral. They also mention that P can be marked accusatively only if A has certain properties, for example only when A is third person in Ik, a Kuliak language (Nilo-Saharan, Uganda); otherwise it is marked in the nominative. In Finnish, P is only overtly marked accusatively when A is a full nominal; otherwise the marking is neutral. Comrie (1975) argues that nominal marking in languages like Finnish serves to discriminate arguments, distinguishing A from P. It is the presence of full nominal As that trigger distinct coding of P, in order to distinguish P from A.

Languages with ergative alignment can also show differences in the morphosyntax of clauses where the referentiality of the patient is reduced. The

60 Compound verbal forms also show these effects of co-argument sensitivity with respect to person in J. Koy Sanjaq, see Subsection 3.4.4., and gender in J. Sulemaniyya, see Subsection 3.4.6.

antipassive is a case in point, which expresses the agent distinctly from the ergative and is typically used when the object is less individuated (Hopper and Thompson 1980).<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Dalabon, an Australian language (Northern Territory), is reported to manifest only overt (ergative) case-marking of A when A and P are of equal ranking in animacy (Silverstein 1976, 129; Comrie 1978, 386–387). A few languages with ergative morphosyntax employ the ergative case only when a full nominal object is expressed (Woolford 2015, 509–513). In fact, several languages that exhibit ergative morphology only mark the agent distinctly when a *definite* object is present. When the object is indefinite, the verbal person marking is distinct from intransitive clauses. In Selayarese, an Austronesian language of the Selayar Islands in Indonesia, for instance, a special set of agent prefixes is used only when the object is definite, while A is marked indistinctly from S by means of suffixes in the corresponding clause with an indefinite object; contrast *ku-* in (2c) below with *-a* in (2b) and *-i* in (2a) and (2c).

- (2) **Selayarese** (Austronesian, Indonesia; Mithun 1991, 171, 175, glossing modified)

[V-S] [V]

- a. *máŋe-i n-río* (S of intransitive)  
 go-3:S INTR-bathe  
 'He went to take a bath.'

[V-A] [P]

- b. *m-máli-a sápo* (P is indefinite, A=S)  
 INTR-buy-1A house  
 'I bought a house.'

[A-V-P] [P]

- c. *ku-hállí-i sapor-ñjo* (P is definite, P=S)  
 1:A-buy-3:P house-the  
 'I bought the house.'

The properties associated with A and P, therefore, are pertinent to such alignment splits. Haspelmath (2007), following Zúñiga (2002), distinguishes the following four major possible combinations of person and associated A or P role rankings:

61 See Subsection 3.5.2.

- a) canonical: A > P.
- b) clustering I: both A and P are high;
- c) clustering II: both A and P are low;
- d) crossing: P > A.

Such person-role associations for A and P are partly inspired by corresponding phenomena in ditransitive constructions with the theme (T) and recipient (R). It is well known from studies of ditransitive constructions that combinations of two independent pronouns expressing both T and R are cross-linguistically rare and that first/second person favors independent expression in the combination of two dependent pronouns.<sup>62</sup> Such independent pronouns typically only express R when dependent person markers are not available. This is consistent with the relative argument salience. The recipient is typically highly animate and definite and independent pronouns by themselves are generally confined to human and definite referents, while the opposite applies to themes. A ditransitive person-role constraint thus typically applies to clauses, where T outranks R in person.

This tendency also holds for NENA dialects that allow for two object indexes to occur in verbal person marking, such as (3a) in J. Dohok. When the theme is non-third person, the verb cannot take more than two L-suffixes, i.e. two object person indexes, as intended in (3b) and it is the recipient that is expressed independently by means of an independent prepositional pronoun as given in (3c).

(3) J. Dohok

- |               |   |         |
|---------------|---|---------|
|               | [V        -A    -T    -R]                               |         |
| a. <i>b</i>   | <i>-yaw    -ən    -nu    -lox</i>                       | (R > T) |
|               | FUT -give <sub>IPFV</sub> -1MS -3PL -2MS                |         |
|               | ‘I <sub>MS</sub> will give them to you <sub>MS</sub> .’ |         |
|               |   |         |
| b. <i>**b</i> | <i>-yaw    -ən    -nox    -lu</i>                       | (T > R) |
|               | FUT -give <sub>IPFV</sub> -1MS -2FS -3PL                |         |
|               | (Intended) ‘I will give you <sub>MS</sub> to them.’     |         |
|               |   |         |
|               | [V        -A    -T]    [DAT→R]                          |         |
| c. <i>b</i>   | <i>-yaw    -ən    -nax    ʔal-u</i>                     | (T > R) |
|               | FUT -give <sub>IPFV</sub> -1MS -2FS to-3PL              |         |
|               | ‘I <sub>MS</sub> will give you <sub>FS</sub> to them.’  |         |

62 See Siewierska (2004, 60–61) and Malchukov et al. (2010)

Similarly, (4c) is not necessary when T is a full nominal, such as *zuze* ‘money’ in (4d) below. The L-suffix on the verb expresses R, as the dependent person marker becomes available:

	[V	-A	-R]	[T]	
d. <i>b</i>	-yaw	-ən	-nax	<i>zuze</i>	(R > T)
	FUT	-give <sub>IPFV</sub>	-1MS	-2FS	money
	‘I <sub>MS</sub> will give you <sub>FS</sub> money.’				

Languages naturally differ in this respect: first/second dependent person markers are, for instance, impossible to cluster in French (*\*\*Elle te me donne*), while Spanish allows, but disfavors such clusters.<sup>63</sup> But where T outranks R in person, both languages favor a prepositional R, like J. Dohok above. We could expect the same to apply to languages where person-role constraints occur in monotransitive clauses such as the NENA varieties, which we discuss in the next section. An important difference, though, is that the co-occurrence of first/second person themes and recipients in ditransitive clauses is generally pragmatically restricted, but this is much less the case in monotransitive clauses. While ditransitive clauses, like *He showed me to you*, may well be restricted or impossible in a language, there is no reason this should equally apply to equivalent monotransitive clauses, like *I saw you*. Nevertheless, there are languages where such combinations of dependent person markers cause the same restrictions.

Thus, Haspelmath (2007) argues that when P outranks A on the prominence hierarchy and thereby a crossing association of role and argument ranking applies, a more complex construction tends to be used. The so-called canonical pattern represents a harmonic person-role association. Clustering associations are balanced, but not ‘canonical’. They are considered less harmonic, while the crossing association, i.e. P > A, is completely disharmonic, and therefore the more disharmonic a person-role association, the more likely the construction will involve special verbal morphology, overt marking of the A function and/or independent person markers (Haspelmath 2007).

#### 4.4.1.2 Person-Role Constraints in Transitive Verbal Forms

The transitive perfective past constructions express various person splits in NENA. The E-suffixes used to express P in *qtıl*-constructions are restricted in the vast majority of dialects. There seems to be at least a patient-related person scale peculiar to the verbal person marking of *qtıl*-, and the restriction on

63 See Haspelmath (2004b) and Bonet (2008) for a discussion.

patient-marking appears to follow a hierarchy from 1,2  $\supset$  3ms.  $\supset$  3pl.  $\supset$  3fs. There are indications we are dealing with a gradual loss of a particular paradigm.<sup>64</sup>

Complete marking of all persons is found only in a few Christian and Jewish dialects in NW Iraq, such as C. Umra d-Shish, C. Bebede, J. ‘Amedia, J. Aradhin and J. Barzan, as well as SE Turkey, such as J. Challa, C. Ashitha, C. Harbole, C. Marga, C. Billin and C. Bne-Matha, and Christian varieties of Hawdiyan (NE Iraq), Urmi and Salmas (NW Iran).<sup>65</sup> It is also documented in the earliest NENA literature, such as Jewish texts from Nerwa (15th–16th c. NW Iraq; Sabar 1976). Except for J. Nerwa and Challa, speakers of these NENA dialects, especially the younger generation, have alternatives to express transitive perfective past clauses. The further southeast, the more likely a dialect will not have a full paradigm and, if it all, only a person-restricted form.

We should take into account that, when a particular paradigm can or cannot be elicited, this does not always indicate whether a speaker uses this or not. A linguist may well not be able to elicit a particular form of *q̄til-*, but then stumble upon it in a text (see below). Moreover, when speakers become puzzled during elicitation, this does not always mean they cannot deal with such forms in a clear context and more routine-driven usage. Another factor to take into account is that language attrition may also affect production and simplification of forms.

Constructions like *q̄til-a-le* are thus confined to the third person in the vast majority of dialects, so that forms like *\*\*q̄til-ax-lu* ‘They killed us’ do not occur. This does not necessarily mean all these dialects once had a full paradigm, though. It does indicate that a particular combination of dependent person markers is disfavored or categorically disallowed.<sup>66</sup> There is no such constraint in the same sequence of morphemes attached to *qaṭal-*, where these roles follow the unmarked affix order (e.g. *°našq-at-te* ‘You<sub>FS</sub> kiss him’). The restriction minimally targets the first and second person in their P function. Thus, if P references the highest ranking person, it cannot be marked by means of the E-series and must be marked differently, for instance independently of the verb, yielding a split in the marking of persons.

Generally speaking, while the ranking of the A role, which is expressed by means of the L-set, is not relevant in all dialects, relative ranking of persons

64 For the gradual loss of these forms in early Christian poetry, see Mengozzi (2012).

65 Maclean (1895, 135–139) also mentions the Christian dialects of Tkuma, Upper Tyari and Shemsdin in SE Turkey and Alqosh in NE Iraq.

66 For a generativist perspective on this person-role constraint in NENA, see Doron and Khan (2012).

does seem to play a role. In her description of the NENA (Judi) Christian dialect of Beşpen (SE Turkey), Sinha (2000, 142) mentions that, apart from the third person markers, only the first masculine singular is attested in the P function. In her text sample, she records the following forms with a 1ms. E-suffix marking the object.

(4) C. Beşpen (SE Turkey; Sinha 2000, 182.10, 192.65)

a. *ala hiw-ən-ne-ž danye*  
 God:MS give<sub>PFV</sub>-P:1MS-A:3MS-ADD world  
 ‘God gave **me<sub>M</sub>** the world (i.e. I was born).’

b. *qəm-lε matt-ən-nehen b-gawəd tarzyuta*  
 rise<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3PL put<sub>PFV</sub>-P:1MS-A:3PL in-inside.of tailoring  
 ‘Then they put **me<sub>M</sub>** inside the tailor’s workplace.’

c. *lá- mšoder-ən-nehen l-nawba pləx-li tama*  
 NEG II:send<sub>PFV</sub>-P:1MS-A:3PL to-patrol work<sub>PFV</sub>-S:1SG there  
 ‘They didn’t send **me<sub>M</sub>** on patrol. I worked there.’

Similarly, the first plural E-suffix is used sporadically in a Lower Tyari dialect (SE Turkey). Talay (2008a, 317–318) does not mention this, but it is undoubtedly also an exceptional case in an otherwise person-restricted construction, for example:

(5) C. Sarspido (Lower Tyari, SE Turkey; Talay 2009, 142.29)

a. *siq-la axni šqil-ix-la mən tama*  
 go.up<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3FS we take<sub>PFV</sub>-P:1PL-A:3FS from there  
 ‘She came (and) took **us** away from there.’

b. *moṭ-ix-la l-qaşra diyy-a*  
 bring<sub>PFV</sub>-P:1PL-A:3FS DAT-castle POSS-3FS  
 ‘She brought **us** to her castle.’

Interestingly, what these sporadic exceptions have in common—and what I believe is not incidental, but possibly could be—is the fact that P outranks A, i.e. the person-role association is crossed. One possibility to consider here is obviously that third person will be more common in narrative texts in any case and the inverted *qṭil*-construction serves particular discourse functions in narrative chains of events. Nevertheless, there are reasons to think such examples are not incidental. Elicitation from a Christian speaker from Bne-Matha (SE

Turkey) revealed that he accepted such clauses with lower ranking As, but not with higher ranking As. e.g.

<i>xəzy</i>	<i>-an</i>	<i>-na</i>	'She saw me <sub>F</sub> '	(crossing)
** <i>xəzy</i>	<i>-at</i>	<i>-ti</i>	'I saw you <sub>FS</sub> '	(clustering II)

Recently, Khan (2016<sub>II</sub>:248–249) came to the same conclusion regarding C. Urmi (NW Iran), given that most of his informants more readily accept third person agents rather than first and/or second person ones, e.g.

<i>xəzy</i>	<i>-ən</i>	<i>-nə</i>	'He saw me <sub>M</sub> '	(crossing)
(**) <i>xəzy</i>	<i>-ən</i>	<i>-nux</i>	'You saw me <sub>M</sub> '	(clustering II)

Informants for C. Marga (SE Turkey) similarly become puzzled by higher ranking persons in both A and P function, but the crossing situation ( $P > A$ ) is perfectly acceptable in narrative texts.

These observations indicate that when P outranks A in person, *q̄til-a-le* seems to be more acceptable in several dialects, whereas when both A and P are non-third person, the construction is avoided altogether. If this is correct, the reference of A is significant, and the relative ranking may have contributed to the conventionalization of the person split in NENA dialects. The prominence scale, however, does not account for this, as it is the crossing situation that is more acceptable than the clustering II situation where both arguments rank high on the person scale. After all, when both A and P rank low and are thus equally potentially ambiguous, the *q̄til-a-le* is generally available, e.g. C. Urmi:

*xəzy -a -lə* 'He saw her'

Moreover, one would expect that when P outranks A in topicworthiness, verbal morphology other than the canonical ranking, i.e.  $A > P$ , would be favored, but this is not the case, the harmonic and disharmonic person-role associations have the same coding strategies e.g. C. Urmi

*xəzy -a -li* 'I saw her'

Be that as it may, another conceivable reason why the inverted forms are disfavored could be the V-P-A affix order that stands out with respect to the dominant morphosyntax of *qaṭəl-*. While affix order is likely to be involved in the cross-harmonization, V-P-A order *per se* does not seem to be a problem for speakers. It is the inversion between *qaṭəl-* and *q̄til-* in particular that is dis-

favored by speakers, not V-P-A order *per se*. Evidence for this comes from the compound verbal forms. In C. Shaqlawa, for instance, the V-P-A order is available for all persons in both the compound progressive and compound perfect, e.g.

(6) C. Shaqlawa (NE Iraq)

[V            -P    -A]

a. *b-gráš*    -*ux*   -*iwan*  
in-pulling -2MS -COP:1FS  
'I<sub>F</sub> am pulling you<sub>MS</sub>'

b. *gráš-t*    -*ux*   -*iwan*  
pulled-FS -2MS -COP:3FS  
'I<sub>F</sub> have pulled you<sub>MS</sub>'

The inverted *q̄til*-form, however, is limited to third person feminine singular objects, e.g.

[V        -P    -A]

c. *griš*    -*a*    -*le*  
pull<sub>PFV</sub> -3FS -3MS  
'He pulled her'

d. *\*\*griš*    -*ət*   -*ti*  
*\*\*pull*<sub>PFV</sub> -2MS -1SG  
Intended: 'I pulled you<sub>MS</sub>'

In addition, the *'əll*-series may cliticize to the preceding form of the infinitive or resultative participle, occurring before the copula. The resulting relative V-A-P order of dependent markers mimics that of *qaṭəl*- and is distinct form that of the equivalent compound verbal constructions, e.g. C. Ashitha *q̄til-əllən-ile* 'He killed us', that follow the same pattern as that of *q̄til-ax-le* 'He killed us' (Borgero 2005, 197).

The rather unrestricted usage of *q̄til-a-le* occurs only when s and A are grouped systematically in some way (e.g. *dməx-lan* 'We slept': *nšiq-ax-lu* 'They kissed us').<sup>67</sup> There is thus far not a single dialect where forms like *q̄til-ən-nux* are common within coherently ergative verbal person marking, while it does

67 Cf. Golbenberg (1992, 125).

occur in coherently accusative ones like Jewish Challa. Nevertheless, there is no direct connection between its restricted usage and ergativity. The person-role constraint occurs in all dialects irrespective of alignment.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, as we will see, it is not ergativity in itself that is being avoided, but rather the parallelism with the unmarked *qaṭəl*-constructions that is favored for transitive clauses in general.

#### 4.4.2 *Alternative 1: Independent Object Pronouns*

Dialects differ in the way and the extent to which they express pronominal objects independently. There are several dialects that, like the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA (see § 3.1.2.2.), use independent prepositional pronominal objects as an alternative to the dependent E-set. Hence, although the independent object person markers are optional in other clauses, they are necessary in *qṭil*-constructions to refer to at least the first and second person in person-restricted contexts. This suggests that the wide array of object sets does not have the same status for each inflectional system. The independent object person markers are mainly acceptable in *qṭil*-based morphosyntax and are favored as an alternative to the E-suffixes dialects with person-restricted constructions. Finally, if pronominal objects are based on a preposition, this need not necessarily but sometimes may also entail that definite nominal objects are also differentially marked by means of this preposition. The nominal marking, therefore, is similarly accusative or otherwise neutral, i.e. flagging is absent altogether.

##### 4.4.2.1 Another Series of Person Markers

While unmarked independent personal pronouns are generally used to express S and A, they are not ‘subject’ pronouns in the strict sense (see § 2.3.1.2.), as they can express other grammatical functions as well, namely P. If they do so, they generally require additional person marking on the verb, such as (8a) in C. Barwar. It is rarely the case, however, that both A and P are expressed by such unmarked pronouns, and in my interaction with speakers in northern Iraq this has never been accepted upon elicitation. Example (8b) below from C. Barwar is a notable exception.

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68 It is always found in Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, and it is also found in compound verbal constructions that pattern accusatively, cf. § 3.3.1 and § 3.3.2.

- (7) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a, 881, transcription slightly modified)

[V-A-P]	[P]
a. <i>qa-t-nabl-an-ne</i>	<i>'ap-'aw</i>
to-SUBR-take <sub>1PFV-A:1MS-P:3MS</sub> ADD-he	
'so that I take also <i>him</i> .' (lit. I take him also he)	

[A]	[P]	[V-A]
b. <i>'ana 'ati</i>	<i>bay-ən</i>	
I	you:SG	want <sub>1PFV-A:1MS</sub>
'I want you.'		

Such independent pronouns can also serve to mark P in *qtil*-based constructions:

- (8) C. Hawdiyan (NE Iraq)

<i>'ana xz</i>	<i>-ən</i>	<i>-nux ju-bazar</i>
I	see <sub>PFV</sub>	-P:1MS -A:2MS in-market
'You saw <b>me</b> at the market.' (lit. Your saw I at the market)		

Nevertheless, it is more common for speakers to resort to prepositional object pronouns, like the *'əll*-series, especially when other means to express a pronominal object are unavailable, e.g.

- (9) C. Ashitha (SE Turkey; Borghero 2006, 192)

<i>xze-li</i>	<i>'əll</i>	<i>-ax</i>
see <sub>PFV-A:1SG</sub>	OBJ	-2FS
'I saw <b>you</b> <sub>FS</sub> .' (lit. Me saw to-you <sub>FS</sub> )		

- (10) C. Sardarid (NW Iran; Younansardaroud 2001, 205, 232.4, transcription modified)

a. <i>+avva purəq-lə</i>	<i>qa yala</i>	<i>mən mota</i>
DEM:MS II:rescue <sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>	DOM boy:MS	from death:MS
'He saved <b>the boy</b> from death.' (lit. Him saved to-boy)		

b. <i>may xzi-lə</i>	<i>qa- dīy-+ux</i>	<i>ju pəlxana?</i>
who see <sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>	OBJ-	LK-2MS in work
'Who saw <b>you</b> <sub>MS</sub> during work?' (lit. Him saw to-you <sub>MS</sub> )		

Several NENA dialects employ prepositional pronominal objects<sup>69</sup> as an alternative to the dependent E-set or as the only means to express pronominal objects in the preterit. The areal distribution of this is presented in Map 4 at the end of this chapter, including the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, discussed in Chapter 3. Prepositional objects are thus not only found in the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, but also in Jewish Barzan, C. ‘Ankawa, Western Christian varieties in SE Turkey and Northern Christian varieties in NW Iran. The use of the inverted preterit alongside this strategy becomes less common towards the east. In C. Sardarid (NW Iran; Younansardaroud 2001), the preposition *qa-* is the only means to express pronominal objects in the preterit. Contrasting with the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, however, such prepositional objects are only common for the perfective past, and not readily available for *qaṭəl-*, where L-suffixes are used instead.<sup>70</sup>

#### 4.4.2.2 Splits in Ditransitive Clauses

The independent pronominal objects are ultimately derived from goal markers. In *lishana deni* dialects like J. ‘Amedia, where independent pronominal objects are avoided, a prepositional object is used with certain verbs as an alternative to *qṭil-a-le* to express the goal or recipient, such as the addressee of *’mr* ‘say’:

(11) J. ‘Amedia (person-unrestricted, NW Iraq; Greenblatt 2011, 336.8, 336.5)

- a. *mīr- ṭt -ti*  
 say<sub>PfV</sub> -R:2MS -A:1SG
- b. *mār -ri ṭṭ-ux*  
 say<sub>PfV</sub> -A:1SG R:to-2MS  
 ‘I told you<sub>MS</sub>’

The same pattern is found for *qaṭəl-* where *ṭṭ-* is an alternative to the L-suffixes, respectively

- g-emār-Ø -re* ‘He tells him’  
*g-emār-Ø ṭṭ-u*

69 See § 4.1.1.2.

70 An extreme opposite case are the Jewish dialects in Iranian Azerbaijan that freely express the pronominal object independently for all verbal constructions treating them like full nominal objects, e.g. *əll-án dah-i-wa* ‘They would beat us’, *əll-i əmbəl-lu* ‘They took me’ (Khan 2008b, 300, 445); see Subsection 3.1.2.

Generally speaking, it would seem that if a dialect tolerates, uses or favors independent pronominal objects, it will tend to avoid this for *qaṭəl*-constructions, the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects being a noteworthy exception.<sup>71</sup> This can even lead to the differential treatment of the theme-object in ditransitive constructions. Khan (2016<sub>II</sub>:385), for instance, observes for C. Urmi that the person markers based on the preposition *qa-* mark the recipient throughout the system, but they only mark the patient in *qtil*-based constructions and, importantly, they can never mark the theme of ditransitive verbs.

This can be contrasted with C. Ashitha. Consider the following examples in (12). The prepositional argument in (13a–c) does not express the theme, but the recipient irrespective of person, NP type or TAM.

(12) C. Ashitha (SE Turkey; Borghero 2006, 200–202)

[V-A            -T]    [ʔəll→R]  
 a. *yawəl-∅*        *-lux*    *ʔəll-a*  
 give<sub>IPFV-A:3MS</sub> -T:2MS OBJ-3FS  
 'He gives you<sub>MS</sub> to her.'

[V-T            -A]    [ʔəll→R]  
 b. *hiw-at*        *-la*    *ʔəll-e*  
 give<sub>PFV-T:2FS</sub> -A:3FS OBJ-3MS  
 'She gave you<sub>FS</sub> to him.'

[V-A]            [ʔəll→R] [T]  
 c. *hiw-le*        *ʔəll-i*    *mexulta*  
 give<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub> OBJ-1SG food:FS  
 'He gave me food.'

Nevertheless, *ʔəll-* is not the only preposition used to indicate recipients. The preposition dedicated to the recipient can vary freely within a single dialect. When one of these prepositions is also dedicated to the patient (and possibly the theme), another preposition *ṭla* lends itself to further differentiation in C. Ashitha:

[V-T            -A]    [ṭla→R]  
 d. *hiw-a*        *-li*    *ṭlal-əxu*  
 give<sub>PFV-T:2FS</sub> -A:3FS to-2PL  
 'I gave it<sub>F</sub> to you<sub>PL</sub>.'

71 See footnote above.

When the *'əll*-series is combined with a *q̄til*-form, it can also mark the theme in C. Ashitha. The recipient is marked differently by another preposition, in this case *ʔla*-:

[V-A]	[ <i>'əll</i> →T]	[ <i>ʔla</i> →R]
e. <i>hiw-le</i>	<i>'əll-a</i>	<i>ʔlal-ux</i>
give <sub>PFV</sub> -A:3SG	OBJ-3FS	to-2MS
‘He gave it <sub>F</sub> to you <sub>MS</sub> .’		

What we do not seem to observe in C. Ashitha are examples like the following, where the theme and recipient are marked by the same preposition:

	[ <i>'əll</i> →T]	[ <i>'əll</i> →R]
f. <i>**hiw-le</i>	<i>'əll-a</i>	<i>'əll-ux</i>
give <sub>PFV</sub> -A:3SG	OBJ-3FS	OBJ-2MS
‘He gave it <sub>F</sub> you <sub>MS</sub> .’		

Such a double object construction with two identical independent object person markers is avoided. This differentiation in the coding of the recipient seems to be a feature peculiar to the preterit. Indeed, *qaʔəl*-forms do not seem to combine with the *'əll*-series in such constructions at all, so that

*\*\*yawəl-∅ əll-a ʔlal-ux* ‘He gives her to you<sub>MS</sub>.’

is not possible. The following diverging patterns unfold for ditransitive constructions based on *qaʔəl*- against those based on *q̄til*- in C. Ashitha:

	A	O	R
<i>yawəl-</i>	-E	-L	<i>'əll- / ʔla(l)-</i>
<i>hiw-</i>	-L	<i>'əll-</i>	<i>ʔla(l)-</i>
<i>xze-</i>	-L	<i>'əll-</i>	

The perfective past is therefore characterized by a type of differential marking of R. In C. Van (Hawshesur, SE Turkey), the same preposition *ʔla*- dedicated to R in Ashitha is used to express P in the preterit, like R. This can even be used to express T, though the latter is rarely expressed as pronoun, but if it is, R must be marked differently, e.g.

## (13) C. Van (Hawshesur, SE Turkey; Noorlander field notes)

- [V-A]                    [tla→P]  
 a. *ğzi-l*                    *tal-ox*  
 see<sub>PV</sub>-A:3MS OBJ-2MS  
 'He saw **you**<sub>MS</sub>.'
- [V-A]                    [tla→R] [T]  
 b. *məğzi-l*                    *tal-i ktava*  
 show<sub>PV</sub>-A:3MS OBJ-1SG book:MS  
 'He showed **me** the book.'
- [V-A]                    [tla→T] [ʔal→R]  
 c. *məğzi-l*                    *tal-i ʔal-ox*  
 show<sub>PV</sub>-A:3MS OBJ-1SG on-2MS  
 'He showed **me** to **you**<sub>MS</sub>.'

All of this points to a constructional split between *qaṭəl-* and *qṭil-* in the treatment of independent pronominal objects. The L-suffixes are still favored as object indexes in *qaṭəl-* and the independent prepositional pronouns as recipient markers, whereas independent prepositional pronominal objects are more readily available in *qṭil-* and tend to be blocked from the recipient function in clauses with two pronominal arguments.

#### 4.4.3 *Alternative II: Stacking of L-suffixes*

Stacking of L-suffixes in constructions like *xzə-le-la* 'He saw her' is attested in several NENA dialects, presented on Map 5 at the end of this chapter, which are the Jewish dialects of Azerbaijan,<sup>72</sup> such as J. Urmi, and Christian dialects in Turkey, including the so-called *h*-dialects Umṛa (Hobrack 2000), Jinnet (Noorlander field notes) and Artun (Hertevin, Jastrow 1988) as well as Borb-Ruma (Bohtan; Fox 2009), Haşşan (Hassane, Jastrow 1997), Beşpen (Sinha 2001), Harbole (Khan field notes) and dialects in the Khabur valley originating in Turkey (Talay 2011, 63).<sup>73</sup> It is arguably analogical to the same use of L-suffixes in *qaṭəl-*,<sup>74</sup> and the basis for this analogical extension would have been

72 See § 3.3.2.1.

73 The third person objects can have distinct morphemes in some dialects, resulting in an accusative pattern, see § 4.1.1.3. It also occurs further to the west in Turoyo and Mlahsó, discussed in Chapter 5.

74 Cf. Pennacchietti (1994).

ditransitive constructions, presumably in order to neutralize object marking across *q̄til-/qaṭal-*.

Coghill (2016, 64–65) subsumes patterns with constructions like *q̄ṭál-la-le* ‘She killed him’ in NENA under accusative alignment because of the fixed V-A-P affix order and because the second L-suffix occupies a slot distinct from the first. There are nevertheless a number of reasons to still consider the stacking of L-suffixes to be a type distinct from the rest and not simply accusative. I would be reluctant to consider a potentially English pattern like *Her saw her* and *Her slept* to be simply the same as *She saw her* and *She slept*? Though the fixed word order would contribute to argument discrimination, clearly not the identical morphological marking. Thus, although the fixed affix order in this construction in NENA helps distinguish A from P,<sup>75</sup> it should not be subsumed under accusative alignment in terms of morphological marking.

Other viewpoints found in the literature are ambiguous. Barotto (2015, 242–243), for instance, considers this a system that “tends towards accusative alignment”, since the L-suffixes “function as accusative markers” alongside “a marked ergative subject”. Similarly, Khan (2017, 891) speaks in terms of “ergative verbs”, where the pronominal object is expressed “by attaching a second L-suffix after the L-suffix that expresses the ergative subject”. Both point to the fact that the inverted preterit is generally limited to the third person, as would be predicted for the ergative type according to the prominence hierarchy. The person restrictions on the inverted preterit, however, should not be considered evidence of ergative alignment in accordance with the prominence hierarchy. The second L-suffix is conditioned by the higher ranking properties of the object, while the L-suffixes denoting S and A are obligatory for agreement in general. This point has been raised repeatedly: due to differential object marking, the trigger potential is primarily accusative in all Neo-Aramaic dialects, even for the inverted preterit, albeit limited to the third person.

#### 4.4.3.1 From Ditransitive to Monotransitive Verbs?

As will be shown, the properties of the second L-suffix are indeed similar to those of the L-suffix added to the *qaṭal-*base.

Constructions like *xzé-le-la* ‘He saw you’ are restricted to recipient-like arguments in several Jewish and Christian varieties,<sup>76</sup> also indicated on Map 5, e.g.

75 See § 2.3.2.3. for why affix order is not considered a determinant of argument grouping in this approach.

76 See Noorlander (2021).

*hú -li -lax* ‘I gave to you<sub>FS</sub>’

One finds such stacking also in *qatəl-* at least in the Jewish *lishana deni* varieties, e.g. Zakho (NW Iraq; cf. Cohen 2012, 163–165) and Dohok (Molin 2021) as well as in the Christian dialects in Turkey, such as Artun (Hertervin, SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988, 63), Marga (SE Turkey) and the Khabur valley (Talay 2008, 316). They regularly allow such stacking of L-suffixes in a double object construction for the themes that refer to the third person. The first L-suffixes always denote the theme, the second one always the recipient:

(14) J. Dohok (NW Iraq)

[-A -T -R]  
*bə-yāw -śn -nu -lox*  
 FUT-give<sub>IPFV</sub> -1MS -3PL -2MS  
 ‘I<sub>M</sub> will give them to you<sub>MS</sub>.’

Christian dialects like Marga and Jewish *lishana deni* dialects, such as Dohok, Zakho and ‘Amedia, can also avail themselves of a similar construction, where the *q̄til-* form of the ditransitive verb takes two L-suffixes. The supplementary L-suffix can be used to encode only R. It can never encode T or P; compare:

(15) Stacked L-suffixes (J. Dohok, NW Iraq; cf. Hoberman 1989, 108–109)

- a. *hu-le -li*  
 give<sub>PFV</sub>-A:3MS -R:1SG  
 ‘He gave to me (R).’
- b. *\*\*hú-le -lu*  
 give<sub>PFV</sub>-A:3MS -T:3PL  
 ‘He gave them (T) (to sb.)’
- c. *\*\*šme’-lu -li*  
 hear<sub>PFV</sub>-A:3PL -P:1SG  
 ‘They heard me (P).’

In person-unrestricted constructions, as those found in J. ‘Amedia, the stacked L-suffixes are used with ditransitive verbs as an alternative to *q̄til-a-le*, to express the goal or recipient, such as the addressee of *’mr* ‘say’:

## (16) J. ‘Amedia (person-unrestricted, NW Iraq; Greenblatt 2011, 336.8, 336.5)

[V    -R    -A]  
 a. *mir*    -*ət*    -*tī*  
 say<sub>PFV</sub> -R:2MS -A:1SG

[V    -A    -R]  
 b. *már*    -*ri*    -*lux*  
 say<sub>PFV</sub> -A:1SG -R:2MS  
 ‘I told you<sub>MS</sub>.’

The second L-suffix is specified for R as well as R-like participants (Noorlander 2021).<sup>77</sup> Adding an L-suffix to a *qətəl-le* verbal form is constrained by its recipient-like function, as other kinds of objects cannot be marked in this way. A, S, and R may thus be marked by the L-set, so that it is not P or T that aligns with A and S, but R.

The L-suffix, therefore, marks recipients consistently throughout the inflectional systems in these dialects. Verbal inflection based on *qətəl-* can take one object L-suffix that refer to either T or R, e.g. *b-γawəl-Ø-le* ‘He gives him’ conveys ‘He gives him (something)’ or ‘He gives him (to somebody)’. The object L-suffix in *qətəl-* may refer only to R, e.g. *hú-le-le* ‘He gives him (something)’.

Object L-suffixes are generally used for P in several NENA dialects in SE Turkey and NW Iran, however. An additional L-set that encodes only R in the aforementioned dialects also expresses P and T by means of the same set as that for S and A. If the second L-suffix expresses T, R is prepositional, e.g. *lal-an* ‘to us’ in (17c).

## (17) C. Haşsan (SE Turkey; Damsma forthcoming)

a. *dməx*    -*la*    (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS  
 ‘She went to bed.’ (lit. Her went to bed)

b. *xzé*    -*le*    -*la*    (monotransitive)  
 see<sub>PFV</sub> -A:3MS -P:3FS  
 ‘He saw her (P).’ (lit. Him saw her)

77 This stacking of L-suffixes appears to be part of an archaic layer in NENA, as witnessed by the earliest texts (16th–17th c.), e.g. *mər-rī-lu* ‘I told them (R)’ (Sabar 1976, xxxix, 53.10:16).

TABLE 27 Imperfective–perfective parallelism of object marking L-suffixes

	A	R		A	P
<i>qaṭəl-</i>	E <i>yaw-a</i> 'She gives	L <i>-lux</i> (to) you <sub>MS</sub> '	::	E <i>qaṭl-a</i> 'She kills	L <i>-lux</i> you <sub>MS</sub> '
<i>qṭil-</i>	L <i>wəl-la</i> 'She gave	L <i>-lux</i> to you <sub>MS</sub> '	:: ::	L <i>qṭəl-la</i> 'She killed	L <i>-lux</i> you <sub>MS</sub> '

DATA BASED ON DAMSMA (FORTHCOMING)

- c. *mór -re -la lal-an* (ditransitive)  
 say<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -A:3MS -T:3FS R:to-1PL  
 'He told it<sub>F</sub> to us.' (lit. Him said her to-us)

S, A, P, T and R are therefore morphologically neutralized in systems like the one exemplified for C. Haşşan above. The object-marking L-suffixes neatly align with each other across the *qaṭəl-* and *qṭil-* constructions. Compare the forms in Table 27 above. The arrow indicates the direction of the analogy from *qaṭəl-* to *qṭil-*. The parallel would have been first available in the person indexes denoting the recipient and then extended to all objects.

It seems plausible, therefore, that *xzé-le-la* 'He saw her' at least partly developed in analogy to the *qaṭəl-* forms, where the L-suffixes specifically mark objects and spread from ditransitives to monotransitives.

#### 4.4.3.2 Agent Marking Sensitive to Aspect

When we turn to Christian dialect of Borb-Ruma (Bohtan, SE Turkey; Fox 2009), marking s and A by means of the same set as P is part of an additional tense-aspect sensitive constructional split. The E-set is used to mark the realis perfect for both intransitive and transitive verbs, for example:

- (18) C. Borb-Ruma (Bohtan, SE Turkey; Fox 2002, 72, 73.3, 2009)
- |                             |                                     |         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| a. <i>qəm-li</i>            | 'I got up, rose.'                   | (L-set) |
| b. <i>qim-ən</i>            | 'I <sub>M</sub> am up, have risen.' | (E-set) |
| c. <i>ğze-Ø-wa xa xalma</i> | 'He had seen a dream.'              | (E-set) |

The L-set is used as object indexes in the perfect:

- d. *ǰz-ən-na* (< *-ən + -la*) 'I<sub>M</sub> have seen **her**.'  
 e. *mutw-əx-la* 'We have put **her**.'

Objects are regularly marked by the L-set in both *qatəl-* and *qtil-* based verbal forms in the Borb-Ruma dialect, e.g.

- f. *xoz-ən-na* (< *-ən + -la*) 'I see her.' (present)

Indeed, the E-set never marks the object; it only expresses s and A. Even the third person forms that would express the object in the majority of NENA denote the agent (Fox 2009, 52–54):

- g. *ptix-i-le* '**They** have opened it<sub>M</sub>.'  
 (≠ \*\*'He has opened **them**'')

Christian Borb-Ruma is unique in this respect: the person-role inversion is totally absent and the choice of inflection for subject agreement is completely tense-aspect-sensitive, treating both intransitive and transitive verbs alike. No person-role split exists, because there is no role inversion: the *qtil-* perfect patterns exactly like *qatəl-*.

The object marking is stable throughout. The two subsystems are represented in (19) and (20) below.

(19) **Preterit: Neutral morphological marking**

- a. *qəm-li* (intransitive)  
 rise<sub>PFV-S:1SG</sub>  
 'I rose.'
- b. *ǰzé-li-la* (transitive)  
 see<sub>PFV-A:1SG-P:3FS</sub>  
 'I saw **her**.'

(20) **Realis perfect: Accusative morphological marking**

- a. *qim-en* (intransitive)  
 rise<sub>PFV-S:1MS</sub>  
 'I have risen.'

- b. *gʒ-ən-na* (transitive)  
 see<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:1MS-P:3FS</sub>  
 ‘I<sub>M</sub> have seen her.’

Object marking has been levelled in C. Borb-Ruma, while maintaining the aspectual distinction in subject and agent indexes between *qʦil-ən-na* ‘I have killed her’ and *qʦəl-li-la* ‘I killed her’.

Therefore, while using the L-set for P throughout seems to be primary, this incidentally leads to the identical marking of S, A and P by means of the same set in the perfective past, where only the affix order serves to discriminate grammatical functions.

#### 4.4.4 *Alternative III: Mixing of L- and E-suffixes*

The stacking of L-suffixes in the preterit neutralizes grammatical distinctions, with S, A and P all being marked by means of the same L-suffixes. Some Christian dialects in SE Turkey, most notably Artun (Hertevin; Jastrow 1988), but also Umṛa (Hobrack 2000) and Jinnet,<sup>78</sup> use a distinct set to mark A. Since this is modelled on the E-set in transitive *qaʦəl*-based constructions, Coghill (2016, 64–65) subsumes this under accusative alignment, while Barotto (2015, 224–245) and Khan (2017, 891) argue for partial adaptation to accusative alignment for the first and second person. In fact, observing that “ergative” L-suffixes mark S, Barotto (2015, 244) maintains the “3rd person shows the higher degree of ergativity”, and, similarly, Khan (2017, 891) maintains the L-suffixes of the 3rd person reflect the ergative subject. The special suffixes used for the first and second person are considered to reflect a tendency towards accusative alignment in accordance with the prominence hierarchy.

By contrast, I will demonstrate that this morphology cannot be simply regarded as an accusative type of verbal person marking. In fact, the partial convergence with the transitive *qaʦəl*-model incidentally results in special marking of A and thus ergative alignment, albeit confined to the first and second person rather than the third, and conditioned by the presence of a co-argument, namely an object index; both contrary to the expectations of the prominence hierarchy. Finally, none of these varieties seem to have additional flagging of definite objects, so that the nominal marking pattern is neutral.

78 See Pennacchietti (1991; 1994, 274–275) and Mengozzi (2012, 31) for examples throughout literary texts from NW Iraq, which suggest that this construction is not necessarily a recent development and used to be more common.

TABLE 28 Three types of transitive perfective past constructions

<i>qtil-</i>	P	A	
E-SET + L-SET	[-1,2;3MS] -E	[1,2] -L	<i>baḥti ḥəzy-a-li</i> 'I saw my wife.'
<i>qtil-</i>	A	P	
L-E-SET + L-SET	[+1,2] -L-E	[1,2] -L	<i>ḥzé-l-án-na baḥtoḥ</i> 'I <sub>M</sub> saw your <sub>MS</sub> wife.'
L-SET + L-SET	[-1,2] -L	[1,2] -L	<i>ḥzé-le-la baḥtoḥ</i> 'He saw your <sub>MS</sub> wife.'

DATA BASED ON JASTROW (1988) AND NOORLANDER FIELD NOTES

#### 4.4.4.1 Multiple Transitive Constructions

There are several constructions available and each of them person-restricted: a typical inverted *qtil*-construction confined to third person Ps (*ḥəzy-a-le* 'He saw her'), stacking of L-suffixes confined to third person As (*ḥzé-le-la* 'He saw her') and a mixture of the two confined to first and second person As (see Table 28 above). The argument belongs to a particular person category and this absolute ranking determines the choice of construction. Only A and P are affected, while s is not. In actual transitive clauses, different combinations of person markers are possible.

First of all, object indexes from the E-set are limited<sup>79</sup> to 3pl. and 3fs. in C. Artun, for example:

[V(-P)-A] [P]  
 (21) *ḥze-li baḥta*  
 'I saw a woman.'

(22) *ḥəzy-a-li baḥti*  
 'I saw my wife.'

79 They can also mark the subject in the realis perfect (e.g. *dmiḥ-en* 'I have slept'), see § 4.3.1.

Forms like *hze-le* can mean only 'He saw', not *\*\*hze-Ø-le* 'He saw **him**'. Jastrow (1988, 63) states that *qtil-a-le* is mainly used in differential object indexing in P-V word order; nevertheless, this form is certainly not excluded to this postverbal position. Clauses that omit P or include full indefinite nominal Ps are treated similarly to intransitive clauses. Definite NPs like *bahti* 'my wife' above may be indexed by means of the E-set, reflecting an accusative pattern.

Secondly, additional L-suffixes express P for all persons, e.g.

- (23) *hze-le-le* 'He saw **him**.'  
*hze-le-li* 'He saw **me**.'

Remarkably, the person restriction on stacking of L-suffixes in monotransitive verbs is also found ditransitive verbs. Two consecutive L-suffixes are also employed in ditransitive constructions other than *qtil*. Thus, unlike the majority of NENA dialects, C. Artun allows stacking in *qaṭal*- as well as the imperative, e.g. *hal-le-li* 'Give **them** to me' (*hal* 'give!' + *-lehən* 'them' + *li* 'me'). This is limited to a third person theme index and parallels the restriction to third person agents immediately following *qtil*. (24) offers a schema for comparison.<sup>80</sup>

- (24) C. Artun (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988, 63)

	[A]	[P]	
	[3]	[1,2,3]	
a. <i>hze</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-li</i>	'They saw me.'
see <sub>PV</sub>	A:3PL	P:1SG	
	[T]	[R]	
	[3]	[1,2,3]	
b. <i>hal</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-li</i>	'Give <b>them</b> to me!'
give:IMPV	T:3PL	R:1SG	

In light of this, it would seem that at least for C. Artun, stacking of L-suffixes is principally avoided depending on person reference and not a particular participant role by itself, since this is disfavored for both themes as well as agents in combinations of dependent person markers.

For first and second person agents, C. Artun blends the L- and E-suffixes to a separate set, which we shall refer to as the *L-E-suffixes*, for example:

80 In other contexts, R is expressed by means of the preposition (*la*)- 'to, for', e.g. *mat'en-nenna lal-ew* 'I<sub>M</sub> loaded it **for him**' (Jastrow 1988, 112.59).

- (25) *h̄z̄é-l-áh-lehon* 'We saw you<sub>PL</sub>' (\*\**h̄ze-lan-lehon*)  
*h̄z̄é-l-át-ti* 'You<sub>MS</sub> saw me' (\*\**h̄ze-loh-li*)

A closer examination reveals that the expression of A differs for the non-third person forms, but is partly identical to *qaṭəl*. The shape and order of the E-suffixes (such as *-ən* 1MS) followed by L-suffixes (such as *-lah* 2FS) are exactly the same (e.g. *-ən-nah* < *-ən* + *-lah*), but an /l/-element intrudes between the *q̄til*- and person marking. We can schematize this as follows:

- (26) *h̄az*                    *-ən*    *-lah*    *h̄azənnah* 'I<sub>M</sub> see you<sub>FS</sub>'  
 IPFV                    A            P  
 BASE-                    E-SET    L-SET  
 PFV-                    ↓L↓-    A            P  
*h̄ze-*    *l-*    *ən*    *-lah*    *h̄z̄élənnah* 'I<sub>M</sub> saw you<sub>FS</sub>'

This transitive perfective construction therefore shows a peculiar case of blending of both the E- and L-suffixes to what we could term 'L-E-suffixes'. These 'L-E-suffixes' are of a binary 'L-' and 'E-' nature; they can be treated either like E-suffixes or like L-suffixes. They generally align with the L-suffixes, where they pattern like stacked L-suffixes, where *-wa* is inserted before the L-suffixes to form the pluperfect, e.g.

- (27) **L-E suffixes after past convertor** (Jastrow 1988, 61)  
*h̄ze-*    *-wa*    *-le*    *-la*    *h̄z̄əwələ* 'He had seen her'  
 BASE    -PAST    -L(-E)    -L  
*h̄ze-*    *-wa-*    *-l-ən*    *-la*    *h̄z̄əwələnna* 'I<sub>M</sub> had seen her'

Occasionally, however, they align with the E-suffixes in *qaṭəl*- where they precede *-wa-*:

- (28) **L-E suffixes before past convertor** (Jastrow 1988, 62)  
*h̄az*    *-ən*    *-wa*    *-lah*    *h̄azənwalah* 'I<sub>M</sub> saw you<sub>FS</sub>'  
 BASE    (L)-E    -PAST    -L  
*h̄ze*    *-l-ən*    *-wa*    *-lah*    *h̄z̄ələnwalah* 'I<sub>M</sub> had seen you<sub>FS</sub>'

The L-E-series are possibly an attempt to harmonize argument encoding across transitive constructions. This also includes the predicative possessor, also marked by L-suffixes in NENA dialects. The same L-E-set is employed, if an L-suffix indexing the object possessum follows, e.g. *lāt-la haye m-tu mändi* 'She has no knowledge about anything', *lāt-l-áh-le* (*lāt-lan* + *-le*) *haye* 'We have no

knowledge of that' (Jastrow 1988, 66–67). Similarly, intransitive verbs that take a B-series of affixes derived from the preposition *b-* follow this pattern, e.g. *nṭár-r-án-be* 'I<sub>M</sub> looked at him'.

The same L-E-suffixes also occur in the deictic copula based on *ho-* to express an observable result state, e.g. *ho-l-ən tíwa* 'I<sub>M</sub> am seated', corresponding to both *ho-lí tíwa* and *how-ən tíwa* in other NENA varieties. This is the only context where they can occur with the object affix.

#### 4.4.4.2 Ergativity and Split Agent-Marking

Speakers of Artun thus make use of several constructions to express the perfective past. The three that include a pronominal object are sensitive person-role effects. The L-E-suffixes occur only together with object indexes. They cannot be used to encode S or A without an index of P. Constructions like *\*\*dməḥ-l-ən* 'I<sub>M</sub> slept' with subject coding instead of simply *dməḥ-lí* are impossible. Agent coding without a patient index is not possible either: *\*\*ḥze-l-ən (ḥá)-baḥta* 'I<sub>M</sub> saw a woman'. When there is no patient index, S and A are treated alike by means of the L-suffixes (*dməḥ-lí, ḥze-lí*). When P is indexed, however, the whole construction changes depending on the person of P and/or A.

Dialects like C. Artun, therefore, not only have a person-driven differential marking of P (*gníw-a-lí* 'I stole it<sub>F</sub>' vs. *ḥzé-la-lí* 'She saw me'), but also a person-driven differential marking of A (*ḥzé-le-la* 'He saw her' vs. *ḥzé-l-án-na* 'I<sub>M</sub> saw her'). The use of the E-set as patient indexes for third person forms (*gníw-a-le* 'I stole it<sub>F</sub>') mirrors its incorporation as agent indexes in the L-E-set for first and second person forms (*ḥzé-l-án-na* 'I<sub>M</sub> saw her').

Consequently, while the convergence with the *qaṭəl-*construction is evident,<sup>81</sup> this leads to an unmistakably ergative alignment pattern due to the special marking of A, to illustrate:

#### (29) Ergative pattern for non-third person reference in C. Artun (SE Turkey;

Jastrow 1988)

a. *dməḥ-leḥon* (intransitive)

sleep<sub>PFV-S:2PL</sub>

'You<sub>PL</sub> fell asleep.'

b. *ḥzé-l-áḥ-leḥon* (transitive)

see<sub>PFV-A:1PL-P:2PL</sub>

'We saw you<sub>PL</sub>.'

81 See Pennacchietti (1994), Barotto (2015, 244–245) and Coghill (2016, 63, 65), subsume Artun (Hertevin) under dialects with accusative alignment.

The L-series groups S and P ergatively, while the L-E-series only marks A. Neutral morphology would be found in most other contexts, where S, A and P are all marked by the L-set (*hze-le-la* ‘He saw her’).<sup>82</sup> In C. Artun, then, the ergative alignment in the preterit is sensitive to the person reference of A,<sup>83</sup> which only incidentally emerges due to cross-system harmonization.

This cross-system harmonization is only partial in closely related dialects in Turkey, starting with the third feminine singular. One can already observe the convergence in C. Borb-Ruma, where a shift from *a* to *o* occurs in the 3fs. L-suffix, when another L-suffix marking P is added, i.e. *xze-la* ‘She saw’ → *xze-lo-le* ‘She saw him’. This shift incidentally also occurs in the corresponding *qaṭəl*-form, e.g. *xazy-a* ‘She sees’ → *xazy-o-le* ‘She sees him’. This is because stressed *á* in an open syllable shifted to *o* in C. Borb-Ruma. The same phenomenon exists in Jinnet, but, here, the second person singulars are harmonized, so that *hzi-lo-le* ‘She saw him’ occurs beside *hzi-lət-ti* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> saw me’. The dialects of Umṛa did not undergo the vowel shift, but the second person singulars do have a special marker in the transitive preterit, e.g. *hze-lət-ti* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> saw me’, similarly to Jinnet. This could indicate that the harmonization was triggered by an analogy between the 3fs. L-suffix *-la* and the 3fs. E-suffix *-a*, the first could be analyzed as composed of an *l*-element and the E-suffix, i.e. *xze-l-a-le* ‘She saw him’.

#### 4.4.5 *Alternative IV: qam-qaṭəl-construction*

The convergence with or analogy to the unmarked transitive *qaṭəl*-inflection is complete in the so-called *qam-qaṭəl*-formation, which is by far the most common cross-dialectally.<sup>84</sup> Essentially, the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction is an attempt to maintain the L-suffixes for the primary set for object indexes similarly to the alternatives II and III. Since this transitive verbal form is completely based on *qaṭəl*-, Barotto (2015, 240–241) and Coghill (2016, 64–65) subsume this under accusative alignment, and, though not stated explicitly, Khan (2017, 891–892) mentions this in his discussion of a shift towards the accusative type. Chyet (1995, 245) adopts the term “pseudo-ergative” to refer to the dialects that use the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit. He prefers this term, because transitive and intransitive verbs are treated differently.

82 This is apart from the alternative pattern for 3fs. and 3pl. where P may be marked by the E-set (*həzy-a-le* ‘He saw her’).

83 By contrast, the ergative alignment found for the preterit in Jewish Trans-Zab dialects is sensitive to the person reference of P; see § 3.3.1.1.

84 On the distribution of this construction in Christian poetry of Iraq, see Mengozzi (2012, 33).

As we will see, however, the main distinction is not between transitive and intransitive verbs *per se*, but the presence or absence of two dependent person markers in transitive verbal person marking. Moreover, for similar reasons to the L-E-series discussed in the previous sections, one cannot regard this type as simply showing accusative morphology because its inflectional morphemes attach to *qaṭəl*. Alignment is identified primarily on the basis of a relationship between s and another argument. The relationship between *qam-qaṭəl*-constructions and intransitives makes sense only when one considers it part of the system of the perfective past together with *qṭil*. Although the *qam-qaṭəl*-stem is based on the transitive morphosyntax of *qaṭəl*, it is confined to transitive perfective past clauses and functions as the equivalent to *qṭəl-le* with an object index. Thus, as we will see, *pace* the aforementioned authors, this relationship incidentally leads to an additional distinction between s and A but overlap between s and P. Consequently, this is best understood as a type of ergative verbal person marking, which, in turn, is conditioned by the presence of a co-argument, namely an object index.

#### 4.4.5.1 Two Basic Transitive Constructions

The *qam-qaṭəl*-construction (see § 4.1.1.1.) is found in the majority of Jewish and Christian dialects, which otherwise group s and A in the preterit by means of the L-suffixes, and it serves to indicate the preterit of transitive clauses with an object index without inversion (*qaṭəl-A-P*). It alternates and competes with the inverted preterit based on *qṭil* (*qṭil-P-A*). We can refer to the two types as *qam-qaṭəl-le* and *qṭil-a-le*, respectively. Map 6 at the end of this chapter shows the areal distribution of the relevant splits between *qam-qaṭəl-le* for at least the first and second person and person-restricted or unrestricted *qṭil-a-le* in the various NENA dialects surveyed here. Whereas person-unrestricted constructions, as those found in J. ‘Amedia, would seem to have two constructions that co-vary, *qam-qaṭəl-le* is in complementary distribution with *qṭil-a-le* in person-restricted constructions. The person restriction confines *qṭil-a-le* to third person objects in, for instance, J. Zakho (NW Iraq; Cohen 2012), so that constructions like *\*\*qṭil-ax-lu* ‘They killed us’ do not occur, but the *qam-qaṭəl*-formation is required instead, e.g. *qam-qaṭl-i-lan*.

Furthermore, *qṭəl-∅-le* ‘He killed **him**’ cannot be interpreted as having a zero morpheme expression for the 3ms. object in several dialects, such as C. Baghdeda (Qaraqosh, NW Iraq; Khan 2002a, 140) and C. Aradhin (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982, 28). The *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit is the only means to express a 3ms. object, which marginalizes *qṭil-a-le* even further, for example C. Aradhin

3fs.	<i>xəzy</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>-li</i>	'I saw her'
3pl.	<i>xəzy</i>	<i>-i</i>	<i>-li</i>	'I saw them'
3ms.	<i>qam-xāz-</i>	<i>ən</i>	<i>-ne</i>	'I saw him'

In fact, *\*\*q̄til-a-le* is completely obsolete in numerous dialects, including C. Nerwa (NW Iraq), C. Koy Sanjaq (NE Iraq) and C. Sanandaj (W Iran), where the *qam-qat̄əl*-construction is the only means of expressing transitive verbal person marking in the perfective past, i.e. *qam-xaz-ən-na* 'I saw her', but *\*\*xəzy-a-li* is impossible.

The two transitive preterits correlate with respect to the person-role constraint and are at the same time paradigmatically linked. *qam-qat̄əl-le* is a transitive perfective past construction dedicated to mark the object differently for dialect-dependent reasons.

A number of scholars, namely Hoberman (1989, 52–53) for J. 'Amedia (NW Iraq), Fox (1997, 83) for C. Jilu (SE Turkey), Cohen (2012, 238) for J. Zakho (NW Iraq) have argued that *q̄til-a-le* is favored in the differential indexing of object NPS, while *qam-qat̄əl-le* is largely confined to the expression of pronominal objects.<sup>85</sup> This can be illustrated by the following sentences from J. 'Amedia:

(30) J. 'Amedia (NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989, 186.3)

[V-S]	[S]	[V- A	-P]			
a. <i>te-le</i>	<i>bab-e</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>qam-xaze</i>	<i>-Ø</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>bə-bxaya</i>
come <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3MS	father-his	and	PFV-see	-A:3MS	-P:3MS	in-crying
'His father came and saw him crying.'						

[V	-P	-A]	[P]		
b. <i>xze</i>	<i>-Ø</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>bron-e</i>	<i>bə-bxaya</i>	
see <sub>PFV</sub>	-P:3MS	-A:3MS	son-his	in-crying	
'He saw his son crying.'					

Thus *qam-qat̄əl-le* is not always used in the same contexts, as illustrated for J. 'Amedia below.

(31) J. 'Amedia (NW Iraq; adapted from Hoberman 1989; Greenblatt 2011)

<i>q̄t̄əl-le</i>	<i>qam-qat̄əl-le</i>
a. <i>šmi'-a-lu</i>	c. <i>qam-šam'-i-la</i>
'They heard her.'	

85 Cf. also Cohen (2012, 238) for J. Zakho.

TABLE 29 Distribution of *qam-qaṭəl-le* and *qṭil-a-le* within texts

	J. 'Amedia		J. Betanure		C. Barwar	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
<i>qam-qaṭəl-le</i>	103	76	218	71	234	70
<i>qṭil-a-le</i>	33	24	94	29	101	30
TOTAL	136	100	308	100	335	100

b. *šmi<sup>2</sup>-a-lu baxta*

'They heard the woman.'

d. (\*\*)*qam-šam<sup>2</sup>-i-la baxta*

This suggests that, when both are available, *qam-qaṭəl-le* is only secondarily included in the differential indexing of definite NPs.

A more recent description of J. 'Amedia (Greenblatt 2011), however, indicates that both forms can be used in differential object indexing. Thus, both preterits are used in differential object indexing and their distribution seems to be free, except for the following factors. Noorlander and Molin (2020) show that about 25–30% of the transitive preterits involve *qṭil-a-le* against about a 70–75% majority of *qam-qaṭəl-le* in narrative texts from J. 'Amedia (Greenblatt 2011),<sup>86</sup> J. Betanure (Mutzafi 2008a) and C. Barwar (Khan 2008a), as shown in Table 29 above. This is irrespective of person restrictions, since J. 'Amedia shows no person restrictions. These are indications that a verbal paradigm is gradually being replaced by another.

This replacement can presumably be attributed to the influence of Iraqi *koine* in some Christian communities. Among my younger informants of C. Marga (SE Turkey), who have grown up in Iraq, *qam-qaṭəl-le* is preferred in general, while older informants originally from Turkey prefer to use *qṭil-a-le* for all persons. The same seems to hold for other villages, e.g. C. Bebede (NW Iraq), where the younger speakers favor *qam-qaṭəl-le*.

The *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit does not appear to be combinable with prepositional arguments that take s-like subjects. Forms like \*\**qam-ra<sup>2</sup>əš-Ø 'əbbi* 'He noticed me' do not appear to be possible, only *r<sup>2</sup>əš-le 'əbbi* 'He noticed me'. Consequently primary transitive verbs, such as *xzy* 'see', are treated differently:

86 This also includes first and second person objects in J. 'Amedia.

(32) J. Zakho (NW Iraq; Cohen 2012)

- |    |                  |     |       |    |              |    |     |     |
|----|------------------|-----|-------|----|--------------|----|-----|-----|
|    | [V               | -S] | [OBL] |    | [V           |    | -A  | -P] |
| a. | r'əš             | -le | 'əbbi | b. | qam-xaze     | -∅ | -li |     |
|    | 'He noticed me.' |     |       |    | 'He saw me.' |    |     |     |

Clauses with an indefinite full NP, therefore, are indistinct from intransitive predicates, to illustrate:

- |    |                    |     |           |
|----|--------------------|-----|-----------|
|    | [V                 | -A] | [full NP] |
| c. | xze                | -le | xmara     |
|    | 'He saw a donkey.' |     |           |

Such sensitivity to transitivity is largely morphological and lexical.

It is noteworthy that dialects tend to favor *qtil-a-le* for intransitive verbs with a dummy, non-referential object that display transitive morphology, e.g. *'riq-a-le* 'He fled (lit. fled it<sub>F</sub>)' (Noorlander and Molin 2020). It has been reported that such verbs are not always excluded altogether from the *qam-qatəl*-formation, such as J. Zakho *qam-gamš-ī-la* 'They smiled', lit. 'They smiled (lit. it<sub>F</sub>)' (Cohen 2012, 142). Nevertheless, Noorlander and Molin found no such examples in the texts for J. 'Amedia, J. Betanure, C. Barwar, C. Urmi and C. Marga. Moreover, *qtil-a-le* is by far the more common expression for object indexing of the reflexive pronoun *gyan-*. This seems to be the source of the dummy 3fs. object coding, e.g. *'riq-a-le* 'He fled (lit. fled it<sub>F</sub>)', originating in *'riq-a-le gyan-e* lit. 'He fled himself'.

Similarly, ditransitive verbs, such as *'mr* 'say', are used differently in these dialects. The dialects without person restrictions, like J. 'Amedia, freely use the E-suffix to express also recipients of the first/second person, e.g. *mīr-ət-ti* 'I told you<sub>MS</sub>'. In person-restricted constructions this would not be possible, and alternative expressions must be used, e.g. J. Betanure *mār-ri t̄alox* 'I told you<sub>MS</sub>'. Consequently, ditransitive constructions like *qam-'əmr-ən-nox* 'I told you<sub>MS</sub>' are less common than the free form *mār-ri* in such dialects, because only the latter combines with prepositional objects.

#### 4.4.5.2 Ergativity and Split Agent-Marking

The *qam-qatəl-le*-construction is the most extreme case of adapting transitive coding to the *qatəl*-model of unmarked transitive clauses. There is a constructional split between clauses where all arguments are marked by dependent person markers and those where only A is dependent. Full nominal objects are thus treated differently. Like the L-E-series discussed in the previous section, this does not lead to accusative person marking, but arguably something closer to ergative morphology.

A fundamental difference between the two type of preterits is that *qam-qaṭəl-le* obligatorily takes patient indexes, while *qṭəl-le* need not, as the following examples show: (33e) P is not expressible, (33f) is omitted or (33g) its referentiality is reduced to an indefinite NP, so that *qam-qaṭəl-le* cannot be used.

- (33) J. 'Amedia (NW Iraq, person-unrestricted; adapted from Hoberman 1989)
- | <i>qṭəl-le</i>            | <i>qam-qaṭəl-le</i>            |              |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| a. <i>dməx-lu</i>         | e. ** <i>qam-damx-i</i>        | (no P)       |
| 'They went to sleep.'     |                                |              |
| b. <i>xəl-lu</i>          | f. ** <i>qam-ʔaxl-i</i>        | (implicit P) |
| 'They ate.'               |                                |              |
| c. <i>xil-i-lu xabuše</i> | g. ** <i>qam-ʔaxl-i xabuše</i> | (indef P)    |
| 'They ate apples.'        |                                |              |
| d. <i>xil-i-lu</i>        | h. <i>qam-ʔaxl-i-lu</i>        | (pron P)     |
| 'They ate <b>them</b> .'  |                                |              |

There is no *a priori* morphological reason why objectless forms, like \*\**qam-ʔaxl-i* 'They ate', or intransitive verbs, such as \*\**qam-damx-i* 'They slept', should be avoided. The *qaṭəl*-form without an object L-suffix ('*ʔaxl-i* 'They eat') could, in theory, serve as base for any similar perfective derivation (*qam-ʔaxl-i* 'They ate'), but it is not readily used as such. Polotsky (1961, 21 fn.), referring to C. Urmi, mentions that such objectless forms sporadically do occur. It seems that such forms occur alongside another *qam-qaṭəl*-construction that does have object coding, e.g. *qam-doq-a* (∅) *l-ḥa mənne qam-maḥy-a-lə l-arra* 'She seized one of them (and) hit him to the ground' (C. Urmi, Socin 1882 67.10; transcription simplified). Examples such as these indicate the possibility of omitting an object suffix at least when implied in the immediate context, but they are not possible for a corresponding intransitive valence, when the patient is unexpressed (e.g. \*\**qam-ʔaxl-i* 'They ate').

*qam-qaṭəl-le*, then, is a transitive perfective past construction dedicated to two dependent person markers, serving as a device to mark the object differently in the preterit. Thus, *qam-qaṭəl-le* constitutes an integral part of the paradigm of *qṭəl-le*, just as much as *qṭil-a-le*. *qam-qaṭəl-le* is not an integral part of the other inflections based on *qaṭəl-*, but should be considered a separate stem for transitive coding as a suppletive alternant of *qṭil-*. Transitive clauses involving transitive verbal person marking are thus treated differently from intransitives. This affects transitivity alternations: compare the verb *pṭx* 'open' in (34a) and (34b) taken from the closely related dialect of Betanure. *qṭəl-le* always expresses the intransitive valence pattern, while *qam-qaṭəl-le* is used when the same referent *tar'a* 'the door' is indexed differentially.

## (34) J. Betanure (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a, 256.399, 266.426)

- |    |                                 |                                       |              |                             |
|----|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
|    | [S]                             | [V-S]                                 |              |                             |
| a. | <i>tar'a</i>                    | <i>ptax-le</i>                        |              | (intr., <i>qtil</i> -pret.) |
|    | door:MS                         | open <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3MS            |              |                             |
|    | 'The door opened.'              |                                       |              |                             |
|    | [P]                             | [V-A-P]                               |              |                             |
| b. | <i>tar'a</i>                    | <i>qam-pātx-i-le</i>                  | <i>tal-u</i> | (tr., <i>qam</i> -pret.)    |
|    | door:MS                         | PFV-open <sub>IPFV</sub> -A:3PL-P:3MS | DAT-3MS      |                             |
|    | 'They opened the door for him.' |                                       |              |                             |

The *qaṭəl*-base is the lesser marked for TAM of the two inflectional bases, while *qtil*- is more marked for such properties. The presence of *qam*- as well as two distinct verbal person markers of A and P indicates that the clause is transitive as well as perfective past. This is consistent with the tendency for agreement affixes to become devices to differentiate between intransitive and transitive verbs (Givón 1976, 168). In NENA, the TAM-marker *qam* is thus specified for perfective pastness as well as two-argument clauses. Prioritizing the transitive morphology of *qaṭəl*- comes at the cost of indirectly also affecting the encoding of A in the same paradigm, just like the L-E series in C. Artun.

The distinction between transitive and intransitive clauses is even more conventionalized in varieties, where *\*\*qtil-a-le* is completely absent.<sup>87</sup> The perfective TAM-marker *qam*- is combined with *qaṭəl*- as the *only* expression of the perfective past with a P index. A form like *xze-le* 'He saw' cannot be combined with an object person form of any kind (neither E-set, *\*\*xəzy-a-le*, nor L-set, *\*\*xzé-le-la*), but shifts to a form like *qəm-xaze-Ø-le* 'He saw him' instead. We can illustrate this system with the following examples from C. Nerwa (NW Iraq):

## (35) C. Nerwa (NW Iraq)

- |    |                   |                 |                    |             |
|----|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|
|    | [V-S]             | [S]             |                    |             |
| a. | <i>dməx-la</i>    | <i>baxta</i>    | 'The woman slept.' | (S = L-set) |
|    | [V-A]             | [P: fNP]        |                    |             |
| b. | <i>xze-le</i>     | <i>xa baxta</i> | 'He saw a woman.'  | (A = L-set) |
|    | [V-A-P]           |                 |                    |             |
| c. | <i>qəm-xaze-Ø</i> | <i>-li</i>      | 'He saw me.'       | (P = L-set) |

87 cf. Mengozzi (2002b, 42).

- d. *qəm-xaze-∅ -la* 'He saw **her**.'  
 e. *qəm-xaze-∅ -la baxti* 'He saw **my wife**.'

Although *qam-qaṭəl-le* is obviously partly parasitic on the morphosyntax of *qaṭəl-* due to its inflectional base, there is a conspicuous morphosyntactic division in the inflectional paradigm of the perfective past based on the transitive coding, which, strictly speaking, does not unambiguously select a particular set of grammatical functions, but a combination thereof. The L-set is used to mark S and A for a *qṭil*-based form only and at the same time only P for a *qam-qaṭəl*-based form. It is the A that is treated differently in a particular context, while S and P remain unaffected. We can approach the split between the two preterits from the perspective of co-argument sensitivity (Witzlack-Makarevich et al. 2016). The morphosyntax splits along two distinct constructions, of which one is associated with A in the presence of an object index, i.e. *qam-qaṭəl-le*, and another with all other clause types. The L-suffixes serve to signal the more salient argument in both constructions. As *qṭəl-le* is confined to clauses with *one* dependent person marker and *qam-qaṭəl-le* to clauses with *two* dependent person markers. There is a neat split between accusative and arguably ergative alignment due to special marking of A, which, in turn, is conditioned by referential properties of P.

This is precisely what we would expect for an ergative pattern (see § 4.4.1.1.): a higher degree of morphosyntactic transitivity, namely the presence of a type of object, triggers distinct marking of A, illustrated in Table 30 below. When there is no object agreement or P is low in ranking, such as indefinite full nominals, S and A are grouped together accusatively by means of the L-set, hence *dməx-le* and *qṭəl-le*. The P role is isolated in not being coded overtly on the verb. When there is morphosyntactically a pronominal object and/or P is high in ranking, such as first/second person and definite full nominals, S and P are arguably grouped together ergatively by means of the L-set, hence *dməx-lux* 'You<sub>MS</sub> slept' and *qəm-xaz-ax-lux* 'We saw you<sub>MS</sub>'. The A function is isolated in being coded by the E-set (*qəm-xaz-ax-lux* 'We saw you<sub>MS</sub>'). What is grouped together in both domains, is marked by the L-set.

Furthermore, a few dialects on the Nineveh Plains, such as C. Telkepe, combine differential object indexing with differential object flagging, as illustrated in (36) below. Here, the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction is also invoked when the object requires prepositional marking. This differential treatment of P in flagging thus combines with a special construction, which incidentally also results into special indexing of A distinct from S, so that the nominal marking is accusative, but the cross-indexing is ergative in its morphology.

TABLE 30 Verbal person marking alignment in the preterit for *qam-qaṭəl-*

ACCUSATIVE	[P = full NP]	intr.	<i>qṭil-</i>	S L-set	P ∅
		tr.	<i>qṭil-</i>		
ERGATIVE	[P = pronoun]	intr.	<i>qṭil-</i>	S L-set	P L-set
		tr.	<i>qam-qaṭəl-</i>		

(36) **C. Telkepe** (NW Iraq; Coghill 2010, 231, glossing slightly modified)

a. *gorv npəl -lə* (s)

man:MS fall<sub>PFV</sub> A:3MS

'The/a man fell.' (lit. Him fell)

b. *qṭəl -lə gorv* (A and indef. P)

kill<sub>PFV</sub> A:3MS man:MS

'He killed a man.' (lit. Him killed a man)

c. *kəm-qāṭəl -∅ -lə ta- gorv* (A and def. P)

PFV-kill- -A:3MS -P:3MS DOM man:MS

'He killed the man.' (lit. He killed him to-man)

In conclusion, the complete adaptation of transitive verbal person marking from *qaṭəl-* into the perfective past results incidentally in the special treatment of clauses where both A and P are dependent person markers, i.e. cross-indexes. The resulting ergative person marking is similar to the L-E-series of Artun (Hertevin) (see § 4.4.4) and manifests ergativity under conditions opposite to those found in the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties (see § 3.3.1.), namely, in this case, higher ranking persons.

#### 4.5 Conclusion: Cross-System Harmonization

It is a common assumption<sup>88</sup> that NENA started out with an ergative alignment pattern in the perfective past. The dialectal microvariation is said to display a development from ‘split ergative’ in the direction of fully accusative alignment, as predicted by the prominence scale, which is grounded on the functional view of typology that, in an alignment split conditioned by referential properties, lower ranking arguments will pattern ergatively, but higher ranking ones will not (Silverstein 1976; Dixon 1995, 83–94). Thus, where there is a person restriction, some Aramaicists tend to attribute this to ergativity, and where the morphology is adjusted to the ‘imperfective’ transitive morphosyntax of *qaṭal-*, they speak of a shift towards accusative alignment.

The basic assumptions that the inverted *qṭil-a-le* is an ergative construction—because of a presumed coherent ergative original—and that constructions that are influenced by *qaṭal-*, by definition, display accusative morphology have obscured clearly observable facts about NENA alignment typology. After all, when alignment is identified on the basis of the similar or distinct treatment of S, A and P, *qṭil-a-le* cannot be simply characterized as ergative, nor the L-E-series in C. Artun (Hertevin) and the *qam-qaṭal*-construction as accusative. If this is correct, this has important repercussions for how the NENA data are to be understood typologically as well as historically. If these strategies to adjust the morphology to that of the unmarked morphosyntax incidentally lead to ergative verbal person marking, they cannot be said to promote accusative morphological alignment nor to comply with the prominence scales for alignment splits. The ergative morphological marking is thus an incidental outcome of dialect-specific contingencies, where the NENA microvariation is driven by other factors such as cross-system harmonization, and not by the prominence hierarchy.

In the end, S, A and P may each ‘lead a life of their own’ in NENA. Variation and change, therefore, are strictly based on the interaction of intransitive constructions and transitive constructions by means of verbal person marking, nominal marking, independent pronouns and system-internal factors, which are largely independent of how one classifies the entire arrangement as a whole. Overall, it is not always possible to group S, A and P in a general and/or coherent fashion. The same person marking sets can express the very opposite grammatical function depending on the dialect, e.g. Borb-Ruma *qṭil-i-le* ‘They have killed him’

88 See Section 1.5. and Mengozzi (2005), Khan (2007a; 2017), Doron and Khan (2012), Barotto (2015, 237).

vs. the rest of NENA *q̄til-i-le* 'He killed them'. Sometimes originally independent sets of person markers can hardly be kept apart from the dependent markers, because they have almost entirely fallen together by phonological changes.

All of the dialects discussed in this chapter group s and A in some respect, and when dialects use *q̄til-a-le* for transitive coding alongside *q̄təl-le* for transitive and intransitives alike, no ergative grouping is manifested in phonological form. P (i.e. the E-set) is distinct from s and A (i.e. the L-set). Person marking syntax is in general non-distinct from the corresponding *q̄təl*-constructions apart from the role reference inversion.

Indeed, it is the role reference inversion that tends to be avoided for dependent first and second person markers, irrespective of alignment type. System-internal factors particularly target transitive verbal person marking and incidentally result in the special treatment of transitive verbal person marking. Several constructions, listed in Table 31 below, serve as alternatives for *q̄til-a-le*, displaying an increasing adjustment to the unmarked morphosyntax of *q̄təl*-.

These transitive constructions appear to have one basic principle in common: they make the pronominal object that occurs in postverbal position the regular expression of object indexes, which in the case of the L-suffixes becomes the same throughout the verbal system. This is modelled on the unmarked verbal forms based on *q̄təl*-, while maintaining whatever coding of the agent adjacent to the verbal base, i.e. V-A-P affix order. The transitive coding becomes closer to the more basic and dominant morphosyntax of *q̄təl*- in increasing adaptation of the verbal coding of A and P.

However one would analyze these constructions in terms of alignment, a higher degree of morphosyntactic transitivity triggering marking of A distinct from s is evidently not what we would expect for an accusative pattern. As it is only two-argument verbal person marking that is affected, the intransitive constructions remain independent of this cross-system harmonization. This was also observed for the compound verbal forms in dialects where the copula and 'əll-series fall together with the E-suffixes and L-suffixes in transitive clauses with two dependent person markers. Similarly, the resulting alignment patterns in the simplex verbal forms, i.e. perfective past and/or perfect, are thus the incidental outcomes of this harmonization of transitive clauses with two cross-indexes across the system as a whole. Yet it would be misleading to say that such system-internal pressure from the main inflectional system therefore also results in the demise of ergativity. As we have seen, it is not ergativity or any other alignment type in itself that is being avoided, but rather the parallelism with the unmarked *q̄təl*-constructions that is favored for transitive clauses in general and first/second person As in particular.

TABLE 31 Transitive constructions that parallel *qatəl-*

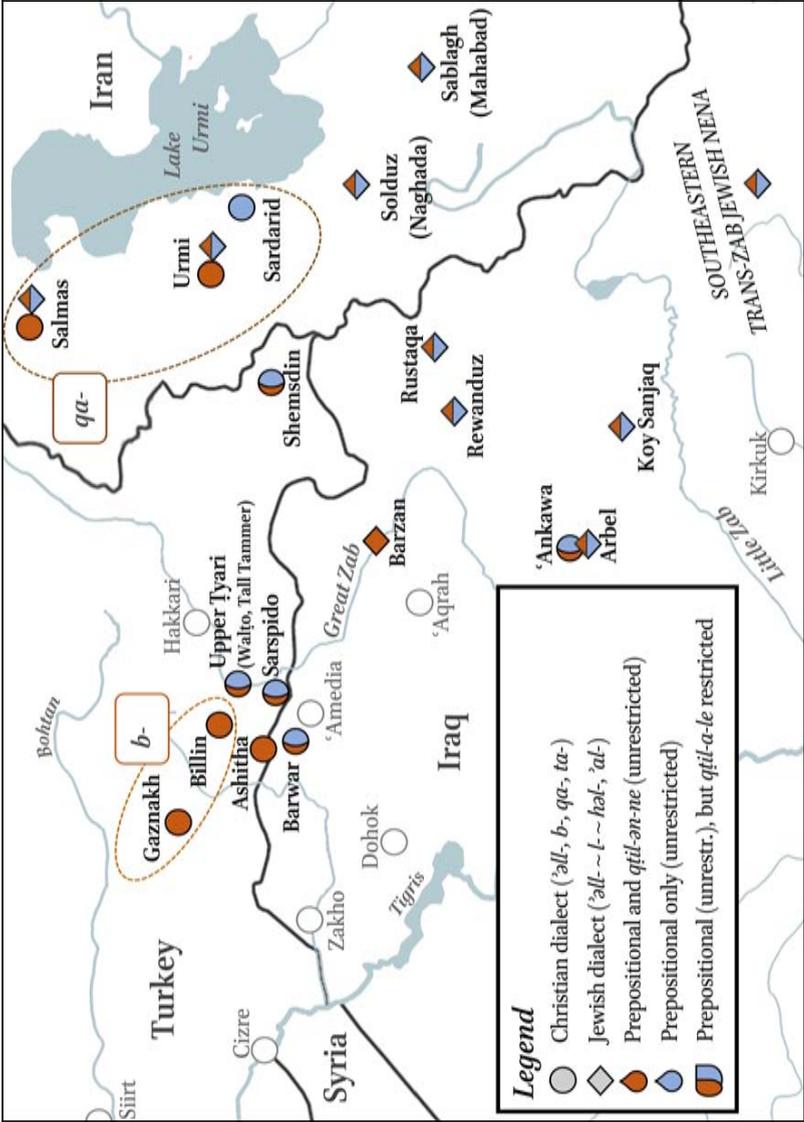
	P	A		'You <sub>MS</sub> saw me'
<i>qtil</i>	-E	-L	inverted role marking	<i>griš-ən-nux</i>
		A	P	'You <sub>MS</sub> saw me'
<i>qtil</i>		-L	PP	prepositional object <i>gráš-lux 'alli</i>
<i>qtil</i>		-L	-L	stacking of L-suffixes <i>gráš-lux-li</i>
<i>qtil</i>	-l	-E	-L	mixing <i>gráš-l-át-ti</i>
<i>qtil</i>	-E	-L		transitive realis perfect (= 'You <sub>MS</sub> have seen me')
<i>qam-qatəl</i>	-E	-L		perfective past preverb <i>qam-garš-ət-ti</i>
<i>°qatəl</i>	-E	-L		unmarked verbal inflection (= 'You <sub>MS</sub> see me')

An additional complicating sociolinguistic factor in Iraq that one has to consider is dialect mixture due to displacement. New generations of speakers are adapting their speech to Iraqi *koine*, which favors the *qam-qatəl*-construction, or alternatively use prepositional objects. Areal factors are also to be considered, since it is possible the person-role constraints in the perfective past and their relationship to the affix order are due to parallels in neighboring Iranian languages, reflecting distinct contact situations in the history of the NENA dialects. A case in point is the inverted *qtil-a-le*, which parallels the same inversion of person markers and V-P-A order in Gorani (Stilo 1981), presumably an old contact language of at least some of the NENA varieties, whereas relatively more recent contact languages are notably different. Central Kurdish, for instance, exhibits V-A-P order, except for the combinations where A is third person (Mackenzie 1961, 113; Öpengin 2013). A systematic study could reveal whether there is a connection with similar preferences in NENA dialects. Also the fact that the agentless *qtil*-construction and prepositional agent constructions are interpretable as transitive is possibly at least partially due to influence from the Badini Kurdish agentless and ergative constructions (Haig 2008,

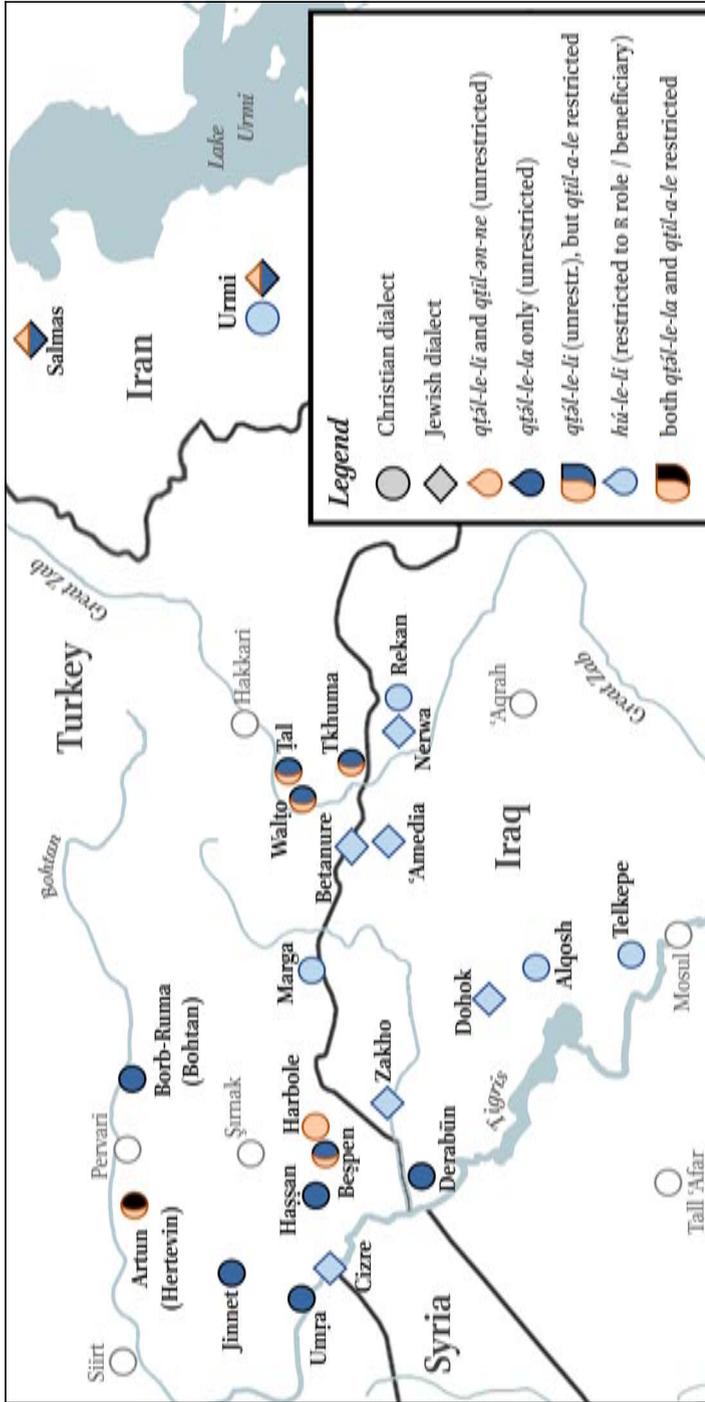
262–268), although, of course, the intransitive constructions in these dialects of NENA are rather distinct from Kurdish.

The agentless *qtil*-forms could be considered a restricted type of ergativity for definite nouns in trigger potential only, though, since the absence of agent indexing seems to be pragmatically conditioned, its distinction from the impersonal passive is not always clear. The truncated transitive *qtil*-form is not typically passive, presumably because the patient indexes are the same for the object in the fully transitive coding, but distinct from *s*. The pragmatically conditioned agentless coding correlates with agent focalization and prepositional marking, which is not only an important difference from the majority of NENA, where agent agreement is obligatory, but also from the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, where the same morphological marking expresses fully intransitive morphosyntax.

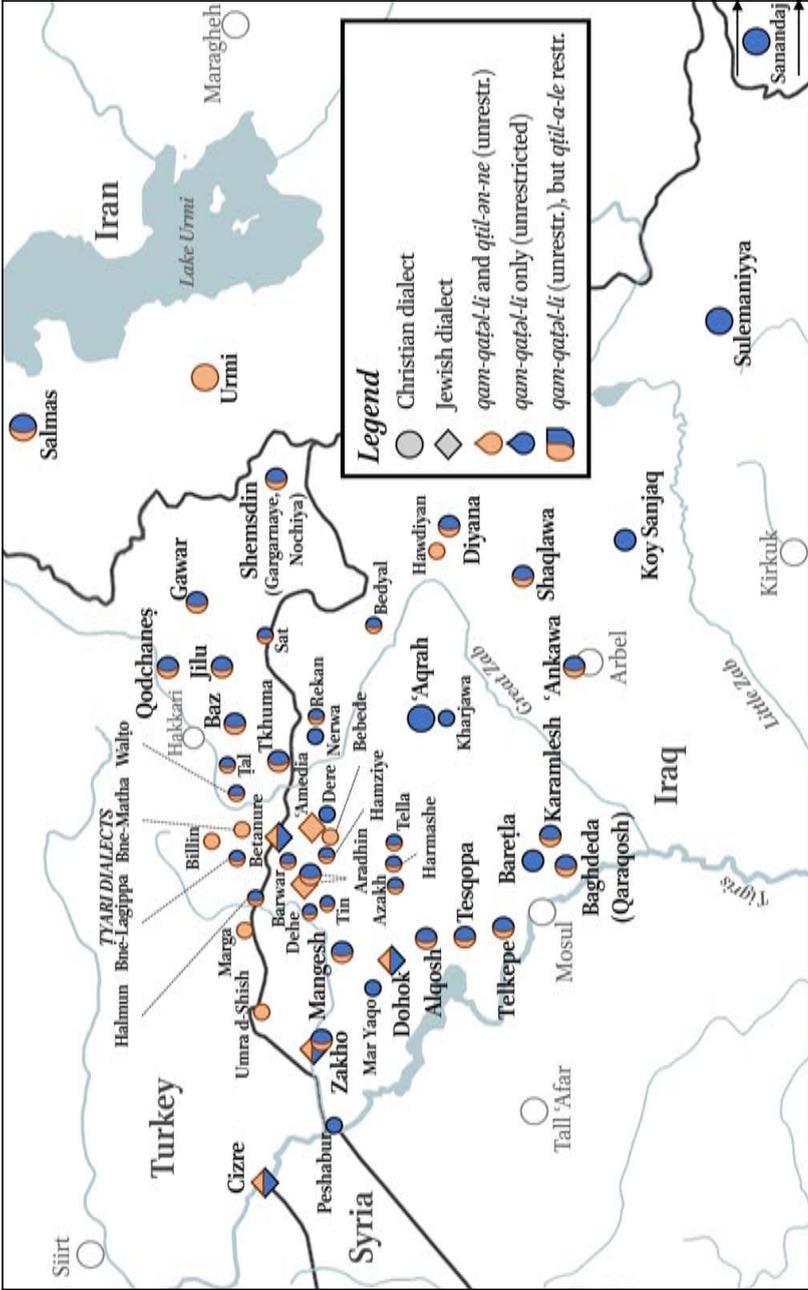
Meeting NENA from the west on the other side of the river Tigris, we will see in the following chapter that the Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin are typologically distinct from all these NENA dialects, in showing both ergative verbal person marking and (optional) ergative prepositional marking, but they do have features in common with the Western Christian dialects of NENA as well as, interestingly, the easternmost outposts of NENA, namely the Trans-Zab Jewish subgroup.



MAP 4 The distribution of prepositional pronominal objects alongside the inverted preterit  
 COPYRIGHT: PAUL M. NOORLANDER



MAP 5 The distribution of *qıl-le-li* (neutral) alongside *qıl-a-le* (inverted preterit)  
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MAP 6 The location of NENA dialects that have the *qam-qaṭal*-construction  
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## Below the Tigris: The Neo-Aramaic Dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin and Mlaḥsó

The Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin (‘Ṭuroyo’) and Mlaḥsó constitute a separate subgroup in Southeast Turkey called Central Neo-Aramaic. In terms of alignment, dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin are typologically similar to the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA. The now extinct dialect of Mlaḥsó, in turn, is similar to Christian NENA dialects in SE Turkey such as Borb-Ruma (Bohtan) as well as Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan, such as J. Urmi. Ṭur ‘Abdin Neo-Aramaic dialects are much less diverse than their Northeastern Neo-Aramaic kin, but there are some notable differences among them. We will contrast them with the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA and conclude with a comparison of Mlaḥsó with Ṭur ‘Abdin and NENA dialects in general.

A major difference between Central and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic is found in the verbal stems and derivations, since Central Neo-Aramaic is characterized by an extensive system of verbal derivations. Each stem derivation (I–IV) has its own mediopassive pendant ( $I_M$ – $IV_M$ ), e.g. stem  $I_M$  *məfšoḥ-o* ‘She is happy’. In addition, stem I verbs also include a special ‘perfective’ pattern *CaCiC*, i.e. *qaṭil-*, e.g. *damix-o* ‘She slept’, which will be represented by its historical origin *\*qaṭṭil-* for *\*CaCCiC*, e.g. *damixo* < *\*dammikā*, to avoid confusing with the NENA *qaṭəl-* base, which corresponds to Central *qoṭəl-*. The Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin and Mlaḥsó differ greatly in the usage of these bases.

Hemmauer and Waltisberg (2006) and, recently in more detail, Waltisberg (2016) argue that the preterit in Ṭuroyo is essentially tripartite. The distinction in verbal stems between intransitive and transitive clauses plays a key role in their argumentation. A more nuanced view will be offered here: ergative alignment is indeed manifested in Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin, at least in terms of pro-indexes and, to some extent, also prepositional marking. The latter is more distinctly ergative than what is found in NENA. Recently, Coghill (2016, 84–90) and Khan (2017, 894–895) also briefly treated alignment in Ṭuroyo and Mlaḥsó in comparison with NENA, and their observations are comparable to mine.

TABLE 32 The ʤuroyo stem derivations

Active		Mediopassive		
IPFV		PFV		IPFV
<b>Ia:</b>	<i>qoʤəl-</i>	<i>qʤil-</i>	<i>qʤil-</i>	<i>mə-qʤol-</i>
<b>Ib:</b>	<i>doməx-</i>	<i>damix-</i>		
<b>II:</b>	<i>m-zabən-</i>	<i>m-zabən-</i>	<i>m-zabən-</i>	<i>mi-zabən-</i>
<b>III:</b>	<i>m-a-dməx-</i>	<i>m-a-dməx-</i>	<i>m-t-a-dməx-</i>	<i>mi-t-a-dməx-</i>
<b>IV:</b>	<i>m-farqəʕ-</i>	<i>m-farqəʕ-</i>	<i>m-farqəʕ-</i>	<i>mi-farqəʕ-</i>

Notes: *dmx* 'sleep', *zbn* 'sell', *frq* 'burst'. Stems in shaded cells take *L*-suffixes to express A. Data based on Jastrow (1985).

## 5.1 Morphosyntactic Traits of Central Neo-Aramaic

### 5.1.1 Stems Disengaged: \*məqʤol- vs. \*qoʤəl-

Central Neo-Aramaic is noteworthy in comparison to NENA for having mediopassive stem derivations. The system is represented for the dialects of ʤur ʕabdin in Table 32 above.

'Imperfective' (IPFV) bases corresponding to *qoʤəl-* are given on the left and right and 'perfective' (PFV) bases corresponding to *qʤil-* in the middle of the table. This arrangement serves to show the convergence between the two voice systems in the perfective past. The active and mediopassive are differentiated only by inflectional base in the 'imperfective', *qoʤəl-* vs. *məqʤol-*. The inflectional bases for the 'perfective' are generally the same for both active and mediopassive with the following exceptions:

- verbs belonging to what is called class 'Ib' of stem I, which distinctively has active *CaCiC-* and only possibly *CCiC-* in the mediopassive;
- verbs having a mediopassive of stem III with a typical *-t*-infix (*mtaCCaC-*). Stem I verbs may be divided into two distinct classes: (Ia) takes *CCiC-* and (Ib) follows *CaCiC-*, which are, respectively, *qʤil-* and \**qattil-*,<sup>1</sup> but the 'imperfective'

1 *q-t-l*, although as a lexical root meaning 'kill', is purely a dummy here to illustrate the conso-

TABLE 33 The Mlaḥsó stem derivations

	Active			Mediopassive	
	PRS		PRET	PRS	
	PERF	IPFV	PFV	IPFV	
<b>I:</b>	<i>qatil-</i>	<i>qoṭel-</i>	<i>qṭil-</i>	<i>me-qṭel-</i>	<i>me-qṭel-</i>
<b>II:</b>	/	<i>zaben-</i>	<i>zaben-</i>	<i>m-zaben-</i>	<i>m-zaben-</i>
<b>III:</b>		<i>m-a-dmex-</i>	<i>m-a-dmex-</i>	<i>m-t-a-šoj-</i>	<i>m-t-a-šoj-</i>
<b>IV:</b>		<i>qarve<sup>ε</sup>-</i>	<i>qarve<sup>ε</sup>-</i>	/	

Notes: *zbn* 'sell', *dmx* 'sleep', *šyḡ* 'wash', *qr<sup>v</sup>* 'chase away'. Stems in gray shade take L-suffixes. Stem III<sub>M</sub> is only attested for weak verbs. Source: Data from Jastrow (1994, 33–34).

base of both of these is CoCəC, i.e. *qoṭəl-*. Otherwise, what applies to stem Ia verbs generally also applies to derivational stems. The shaded area indicates forms that take agent (or subject) indexes of the L-set. The rest takes subject (and/or agent) indexes of the E-set.

Overall, voice is marked differently in the verbal morphology of the 'perfective' and 'imperfective'. The 'imperfective' anticausative pendants consist of distinct mediopassive stem derivations. As we will see, the 'perfective', by contrast, shows valency alternations similar to what is observed for Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA.

Mlaḥsó distinguishes approximately the same stem derivations as Ṭuroyo. The stem derivations are represented in Table 33 above. The shaded area indicates, where the L-suffixes are employed as subject and agent indexes. Interestingly, we find more or less the distribution opposite of Ṭuroyo (see Jastrow 1996).

As Table 33 illustrates, mediopassive stem derivations, such as *meqṭel-* 'be killed' and *mtašoj-* 'be washed', correspond to the 'imperfective' (IPFV) in both the preterit and present. This is unlike Ṭuroyo, where, apart from stem III, the

nantal template for sound verbs, but does not occur in this class. The gemination and asterisk indicate its historical origin to avoid confusion with NENA *qatəl-* that corresponds to Ṭuroyo *qoṭəl-*.

mediopassive merges with the active in the ‘perfective’, e.g. *qṭil-* for the preterit of both *qoṭəl-* ‘kill’ and *məqṭəl-* ‘be killed’, which will be further discussed in § 5.3.2.

### 5.1.2 *Stems Entangled: Phonological Reduction*

Vowel reduction leads to slight differences in the inflection of the ‘imperfective’ base *qoṭəl-*. First of all, as a rule, *ə* is lost before a CV-sequence and turns to *a* before a closed syllable, so that *°doməx-* ‘sleep’ with *-no* of the 1ms. becomes *°domax-no* ‘I<sub>M</sub> sleep’. Furthermore, rural dialects, such as Miden, have long *i* [i:] and *o* [o:] in verbal forms, these are shortened and neutralized to *ə* [ɪ] or *ũ* [u] in urban dialects in and around Midyat in an unstressed open syllable directly before the stressed syllable. Compare the following verbal forms:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) ‘I<sub>M</sub> sleep’      ‘I<sub>F</sub> went to sleep’  
       *°domax-no*    *damix-ono* (rural)  
       *°dũmax-no*   *daməx-ono* (urban)

Miden, in turn, has almost completely merged the short vowel *ũ* with *ə*. The differences in vowel reduction lead to the following paradigms in comparison to Mlaḥsó:

(2)		<b>Miden</b>		<b>Midyat</b>		<b>Mlaḥsó</b>		
	1ms.	‘I <sub>M</sub> go to sleep’	<i>domax</i>	<i>-no</i>	<i>dũmax</i>	<i>-no</i>	<i>domex</i>	<i>-no</i>
	1fs.	‘I <sub>F</sub> go to sleep’	<i>dəmx</i>	<i>-ono</i>	<i>dũmx</i>	<i>-an</i>	<i>domx</i>	<i>-ono</i>
	3ms.	‘He goes to sleep’	<i>doməx</i>	<i>-∅</i>	<i>doməx</i>	<i>-∅</i>	<i>doméx</i>	<i>-∅</i>

Consonant clusters with *ə* can be readjusted in the Midyat dialect, whereby ‘perfective’ *nšəq-o-le* ‘He kissed her’ alternates with *nəšq-o-le* against Miden *nšiq-o-le* (Ritter 1990, 63).

Phonological phenomena such as the *ə*-deletion rule and role reference inversion can yield ambiguous forms, whereby the ‘perfective’ and ‘imperfective’ bases are identical (Jastrow 1985, 144–145). While *ə* becomes *a* before suffixes with an initial consonant, it is normally deleted in an open syllable. Since the subjunctive is the unmarked ‘imperfective’ form, this leads to ambiguity for stem II and IV verbs, for example II *ḥlq* ‘throw’ in (3). Similarly, a transitive form like *mḥalq-i-le* (stem II) can be either subjunctive or preterit. This resem-

2 A resulting sequence *əw* contracts to *u*. Compare Midyat *ktuwole* (for *\*ktəwole*) ‘He wrote it.’ and Miden *ktiwole* ‘id.’.

bles the situation in the NENA dialect C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988, 38) where the ‘perfective’ and ‘imperfective’ bases are identical for such verbal derivations.

	SUBJUNCTIVE	PRETERIT
(3)	<i>mḥalaq-no</i> ‘that I throw’	‘I was thrown’
	<i>mḥalq-i</i> ‘that they throw’	‘They were thrown’
	<i>mḥalq-i-le</i> ‘that they throw him’	‘He threw them’

Moreover, the difference between the two inflectional bases is neutralized for final-/y/ verbs belonging to stem 1a in rural dialects like Miden, which merge *ū* with *a*. This may be illustrated by a comparison to NENA:

	Ṭuroyo (Miden)	NENA (C. Artun)
(4)	SUBJUNCTIVE $\emptyset$ - <i>ḥazy-o-li</i> (< * <i>ḥūzy-</i> < * <i>ḥozy-</i> )	$\emptyset$ - <i>ḥazy-a-li</i>
	PRETERIT <i>ḥazy-o-li</i>	<i>ḥazy-a-li</i>

The ambiguity does not apply when the verb does not take both agent and object indexes, but only subject indexes. In that case, the choice of affixes distinguishes subjunctive from preterit, for example in the intransitive verb *hlx* ‘walk’ belonging to stem II:

(5)	SUBJUNCTIVE $\emptyset$ - <i>mhalax-no</i>	‘that I <sub>M</sub> walk’
	PRETERIT <i>mhalax-li</i>	‘I walked’

### 5.1.3 Unmarked and Prepositional Pronouns

Table 34 below provides an overview of the unmarked and dative independent pronouns in Central Neo-Aramaic dialect. The Midyat prepositional pronouns are based on the unmarked independent ones rather than pronominal suffixes, as elsewhere in Neo-Aramaic, i.e. *l-* ‘to’ + *ūno* ‘I’, *l-* ‘to’ + *huwe* ‘he’, in analogy to demonstrative pronouns, e.g. *l-ano* from *l-* ‘to’ + *hano* ‘this’, *l-ani* from *l-* ‘to’ + *hani* ‘these’. In the second person, we also find the forms *l-ūxat* for the masculine singular and *l-ūxatu* for the plural (Ritter 1990, 3), which appear to be contaminations of expected *l-ox* and *l-oxu*, and the independent pronouns *hat* and *hatu*. In Mlaḥso, the first person plural is *eḷana* throughout, and the 3ms. dative is different from Miden, inflected with the suffix *-av* and distinct from the L-suffix *-le*.

TABLE 34 Independent pronouns in Central Neo-Aramaic

	Miden		Midyat		Mlaḥsó	
1sg.	<i>ono</i>	<i>el-i</i>	<i>ǔno</i>	<i>l-ǔno</i>	<i>onó</i>	<i>l-i, el-í</i>
1pl.	<i>aḥna</i>	<i>el-an</i>	<i>aḥna</i>	<i>l-aḥna</i>	<i>el-əna</i>	<i>el-əna</i>
2ms.	<i>hat</i>	<i>el-ǔx</i>	<i>hat</i>	<i>l-ox</i>	<i>hat</i>	<i>el-óx</i>
2fs.	<i>hat</i>	<i>el-ax</i>	<i>hat</i>	<i>l-ex</i>	<i>hat</i>	<i>el-éx</i>
2pl.	<i>hatu</i>	<i>al-xu</i>	<i>hatu</i>	<i>l-oxu</i>	<i>hatun</i>	<i>el-ekun</i>
3ms.	<i>hiye</i>	<i>el-e</i>	<i>huwe</i>	<i>l-uwe</i>	<i>hiye</i>	<i>el-áv</i>
3fs.	<i>hiya</i>	<i>el-a</i>	<i>hiya</i>	<i>l-iya</i>	<i>hiya</i>	<i>el-á</i>
3pl.	<i>hənnək</i>	<i>al-le</i>	<i>hənne</i>	<i>l-ənne</i>	<i>hiyen</i>	<i>el-én</i>

DATA BASED ON JASTROW (1992, 1994) AND RITTER (1990)

#### 5.1.4 Differential Object Marking and Word Order

Generally speaking, object NPs follow the verb in Ṭuroyo, but precede the verb in Mlaḥsó, compare:

- (6) Ṭuroyo (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 71/51)

[V] [P]  
*qtəl-le tloṭ- arb'ó- sowe*  
 kill<sub>PFV-A:3PL</sub> three four old:PL  
 'They killed three, four elderly people.'

- (7) Mlaḥsó (Jastrow 1994, 126.123)

[P] [V]  
*ḥamšó predé qṭi-len*  
 five people:PL kill<sub>PFV-A:3PL</sub>  
 'They killed five people.'

The Neo-Aramaic dialects of Mlaḥsó and Ṭur ʿAbdin may use differential prepositional marking of objects, although it is largely optional in the latter, as a result of which definite object NPs generally remain unmarked. Contrast (8) with (9) below. The nominal marking can thus remain largely neutral in Ṭuroyo.

(8) **Ṭuroyo** (‘Iwardo)

- [V] [P]  
 a. *d-qūṭl-ina* *ád-dew-ani*  
 SBJV-kill<sub>IPFV-A:1PL</sub> the-wolf-DEM:PL  
 ‘... so that we may kill these wolves.’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 91/24)

- [V] [P]  
 b. *qṭi-lan* *í-kūrf-ayd-an*  
 kill<sub>PFV-A:3PL</sub> the-snake:FS-LK-our  
 ‘We killed our snake.’ (ibid. 92/50)

(9) **Mlahsó** (Jastrow 1994, 148.18)

- [V] [DOM→P]  
 a. *hoze-∅* *l-a-ro‘ye*  
 see<sub>IPFV-A:3MS</sub> DOM-the-shepherd:PL  
 ‘He sees **the shepherds**.’ (Jastrow 1994, 88.93)

- [DOM→P] [V]  
 b. *l-a-gavre* *qṭi-len*  
 DOM-the-man:PL kill<sub>PFV-A3PL</sub>  
 ‘They killed **the men**.’ (Jastrow 1994, 77.1)

Ṭuroyo speakers from the village of Rayite as represented in texts 95–113 of Ritter (1967–1971) constitute a notable exception, which prepositionally mark definite object NPS; both patients and themes.<sup>3</sup> This holds for both *qoṭal-* and *qṭil-*, for example:

(10) **Ṭuroyo** (Rayite)

- [V-A] [DOM→P]  
 a. *g-ḥoze-∅* *l-í-dāvāre*  
 FUT-see<sub>IPFV-A:3MS</sub> DOM-the-breach:FS  
 ‘He will find (lit. see) **the breach** (in the wall).’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 107/90)

- b. *ḥze-li* *l-ú-tadbir* *did-ūx*  
 see<sub>PFV-A:1SG</sub> DOM-the-measure:MS LK-your:MS  
 ‘I saw **your measurements**.’ (ibid. 104/44)

3 See Waltisberg (2016, 186 ff.) for more examples. An example of the prepositional marking of themes: *gd-obe-n-ūx l-í-bartaydi* ‘I will give you<sub>MS</sub> **my daughter**’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 107/84).

## 5.2 The Neo-Aramaic Dialects of Ṭur ʿAbdin

While comparable to South-Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA, such as Sanandaj and Saqiz in western Iran (see Chapter 3, especially § 3.3.1.1.), the Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ʿAbdin are typologically more straightforward. The ergative and non-ergative alignment types are complementary in Ṭuroyo, each confined to the third or non-third person category. The neat combination of ergative verbal person marking and ergative prepositional marking is only found in this subgroup.

### 5.2.1 Patient-Related Factors

#### 5.2.1.1 Monotransitive Person Marking: Ergative and Horizontal

Morphological ergative person marking is confined to third in the inflection of *qtil-* in Ṭuroyo and alternates with horizontal person marking for the first/second persons.

As in the majority of NENA dialects, the E-set of person markers groups s and p for third person markers only, for example:

#### (1) Ergative alignment of pro-indexes (third person only)

a. *damix-o* (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
 'She went to sleep.'

b. *ħəzy-o-le* (transitive)  
 see<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub>  
 'He saw her.' (lit. Him saw she)

Generally, since differential object indexing does not occur as frequently as in NENA, person markers only serve as cross-indexes for s and A. When the E-set marks p, it is strictly speaking a pro-index:<sup>4</sup>

#### (2) Miden

a. *ftəħ-le*                      ʿayn-e                      (no cross-indexing of definite p)  
 open<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub> eye-his  
 'He opened his eyes.' (Ritter 1967–1971, 81/18)

<sup>4</sup> See § 2.3.2.2. for this functional distinction.

- b. *ʼayne d-ú-babo ftih-i* (cross-indexing of definite s)  
 eyes of-the-father open<sub>PFV-S:3PL</sub>  
 'Father's eyes opened.' (ibid., 57/237)
- c. *ʼəm-le ʼayn-e u ftih -i -le* (pro-index P)  
 close<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub> eye-his and open<sub>PFV -P:3PL -A:3MS</sub>  
 'He closed his eyes and opened **them** (again).' (73/400)
- d. *ftih-i* (pro-index s)  
 open<sub>PFV-S:3PL</sub>  
 'They opened.'

Ergativity is thereby confined to pro-indexes in ʼuroyo, as illustrated for the labile verb *ftih* 'open' in (2) above. The trigger potential for agreement is higher for s and A (A=S≠P): they always trigger cross-indexing.

Cross-indexing of P is possible, but rare: a form without object indexes like *ftəh-le* 'He opened' in (2a) is generally preferred at least in the Miden dialect (Jastrow 1985, 137). Nevertheless, differential cross-indexing of definite full nominal objects is occasionally also found,<sup>5</sup> for example:

- (3) [A] [V-P-A] [P]  
*hăma Ałoho sim-o-le mujiza*  
 but God:MS do<sub>PFV-P:3FS-A:3MS</sub> miracle:fs  
*hate* (diff. indexing of P)  
 DEM:FS  
 'But God performed **this** miracle.' (Miden, Talay 2004, 128.335)

First/second person markers, however, pattern horizontally (S≠A=P). The L-series groups both A and P, as exemplified and schematized below.

- (4) **Horizontal alignment for non-third person arguments**  
 a. *damix-ono* (intransitive)  
 sleep<sub>PFV-S:1FS</sub>  
 'I<sub>F</sub> went to sleep.'

5 See Waltisberg (2016, 188–190) for more examples.

TABLE 35 Person-conditioned alignment in ʤuroyo (Miden)

s = E-set		P = E-set				
<i>daməx-∅</i>	‘He slept’	<i>grəš-∅-la</i>	‘She	pulled	‘him’	[3rd]
<i>damix-o</i>	‘She slept’	<i>griš-o-la</i>	‘She		‘her’	
<i>damix-i</i>	‘They slept’	<i>griš-i-la</i>	‘She		‘them’	
s = E-set		P = L-set				
<i>damix-ət</i>	‘You <sub>MS</sub> slept’	<i>grəš-li-lüx</i>	‘I <sub>F</sub>	pulled	‘you <sub>MS</sub> ’	[1st/2nd]
<i>damix-at</i>	‘You <sub>FS</sub> slept’	<i>grəš-li-lax</i>	‘I <sub>M</sub>		‘you <sub>FS</sub> ’	
<i>damix-utu</i>	‘You <sub>PL</sub> slept’	<i>grəš-lan-lalxu</i>	‘We		‘you <sub>PL</sub> ’	
<i>daməx-no</i>	‘I <sub>MS</sub> slept’	<i>grəš-lax-li</i>	‘You <sub>FS</sub>		‘me <sub>M</sub> ’	
<i>damix-ono</i>	‘I <sub>FS</sub> slept’	<i>grəš-lüx-li</i>	‘You <sub>MS</sub>		‘me <sub>F</sub> ’	
<i>damix-ina</i>	‘We slept’	<i>grəš-xül-lan</i>	‘You <sub>PL</sub>		‘us’	

b. *hze-li-lax* (transitive)see<sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A:1SG-P:2FS</sub>‘I saw you<sub>FS</sub>’ (lit. Me saw your)

The object affix always follows the agent affix in stacking of L-suffixes. Since the order and role designation of the two L-suffixes is fixed, there is no ambiguity.

The two alignment types are complementary, both are restricted by a person category as third vs. first/second person. Table 35 above illustrates the distinct strategies in object marking conditioned by person.<sup>6</sup>

In actual transitive clauses, the coding of the agent is stable and does not vary depending on person, e.g. *griš-o-lan* ‘We pulled her’, *grəš-la-lan* ‘She pulled us’ (Jastrow 1985, 38–139).

From a comparative perspective, horizontal verbal person marking is rare in the NENA subgroup,<sup>7</sup> although stacking of L-suffixes does occur, particularly in

6 The 2pl. and 3pl. L-suffixes have idiosyncratic allomorphs (Jastrow 1985, 138) due to historical retentions, which are not discussed here.

7 Horizontal alignment features in Jewish Saqiz for the first and second person (see §3.3.1.2). Possibly, the realis perfect in C. Artun (Hertevin) also shows horizontal alignment for the third person, e.g. *hole wed-le-lehen* ‘He has made them’, where A and P are grouped, against (*hole dmih-∅* ‘He has slept’ (see §4.3.1. and §4.4.4.).

SE Turkey (see § 4.4.3.). In the Trans-Zab Jewish bundle, the *'all*-series is preferred for the first and second person, e.g. *xze-li 'əll-ax* ~ *xzé-li-llax* 'I saw you<sub>FS</sub>'; and in several Christian dialects of NENA, mainly in Turkey, the L-suffixes can be used instead, e.g. C. Jinnet *ħzí-le-laħ* 'They saw you<sub>FS</sub>'.

NENA constructions conditioned by the person of P are somewhat different in distribution from Turoyo. Third person markers are generally available in both alignment patterns, but the first and second only in the non-ergative pattern. Nevertheless, in Turoyo, forms like *grăš-la-le* cannot be used to denote 'She pulled him'.

Some intransitive verbs are compatible with A-like coding in Turoyo, such as *nwəħ-le* 'It<sub>M</sub> barked', depending on semantic and/or morphological factors. Conversely, some two-argument state verbs such as *šm* 'hear' are incompatible with A-like coding and have transitive coding exactly like *qotəl-*, e.g. *šamí'-o-le* 'She heard him' (see § 5.2.3.).

Hemmauer and Waltisberg (2006) argue that the preterit is only superficially ergative and that a tripartite system points to an underlying accusative pattern similar to *qotəl-*. Recently, Waltisberg (2016, 20, 176) denied any manifestation of ergativity in Turoyo and emphasizes that the alignment is essentially tripartite.

First of all, our approach does not differentiate between deep and superficial alignment and no alignment pattern is subsumed under another. It does differentiate agreement in terms of morphological marking and trigger potential, which Hemmauer and Waltisberg seem to conflate. They rightly show that agent and (especially) subject agreement are ultimately primary to the verbal system.

As expected for Aramaic, in terms of trigger potential, the indexing of full NPs is indeed accusative in Turoyo, in most varieties even similarly to Classical Arabic. When full nominals are considered, subject NPs and agent NPs each take morphologically distinct sets (mainly E-set vs. L-set), while object NPs generally do not trigger overt indexing ( $\emptyset$ ) and, if they do, this is conditioned by definiteness. Since S and A are still distinguished morphologically, this is a tripartite type of verbal person marking ( $A \neq S \neq P$ ).

Nevertheless, ergative verbal person marking may still incidentally be observed for definite NPs, where definite objects do trigger the same overt morphology as subjects. Such overt coding of P is taken as starting point for the basic characterization of an alignment type in my approach.<sup>8</sup> And when we consider the person category and its morphological marking, the verbal per-

8 See § 3.2.2. for a discussion and compare Comrie (2005) and Malchukov (et al. 2010).

son marking is unmistakably ergative for the third person and horizontal for the first and second person.

Coghill (2016, 85–87) reaches a similar conclusion. In her model, however, the fixed V-A-P order of the two L-suffixes leads her to characterize the first/second person as tripartite.<sup>9</sup> Affix order is only considered in our approach when prefixes are contrasted with suffixes (see § 2.3.2.3.). In his critique of Coghill (2016), Waltisberg (2016, 20, 176) points to the important fact that the inflectional base of certain intransitive verbs (*CaCiC-* as in *damix-o* ‘She fell asleep’) differs from that of transitive verbs (*CCiC-* as in *ftih-o-la* ‘She opened it<sub>F</sub>’) in the perfective past, arguing that one cannot consider this system therefore to be ergative. Nevertheless, there is no reason why the same stem would be required nor why a different stem would hinder the identification of the same set of person markers for S and P functions of arguments in one and the same clause type. Irrespective of the shape of the stem, it is the same E-set that expresses the properties of S and P; the inflectional base, though it correlates with transitivity, does not express the syntactic roles of arguments. It does confirm that verbal person marking alignment in Neo-Aramaic is primarily structurally dependent on the type of inflectional base (*qtil-*), and not perfective aspect *per se* (see § 5.2.3.).

In essence, the observations for Ṭuroyo are rather similar to those for South-eastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA. All else being equal, S and A always trigger indexing irrespective of person reference in both *qtil-* and *qotəl-*. Object indexes come in two sets depending on person: the E-set for third person aligning ergatively with P and the L-set for the other persons aligning horizontally with A. Moreover, the two sets of object indexes (E-set vs. L-set) are complementary in Ṭuroyo, while in NENA third person object indexes generally occurs in both the E-set and an alternative strategy, of which there are several.

#### 5.2.1.2 Ditransitive Person Marking

Unlike NENA, a second L-suffix cannot express third person patients, so that forms like *\*\*ftəh-la-le* for ‘She opened it<sub>M</sub> (i.e. the door)’ are disallowed. This restriction is germane to their function as indicators of the patient (Jastrow 1985, 137–138) while L-suffixes are favored to express recipients across the system.

When third person markers do feature in stacked L-suffixes, the second L-suffix expresses the pronominal recipient or beneficiary, for example:

<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Coghill (2016, 64–65) subsumes constructions like *qtəl-la-le* ‘She killed him’ in NENA under accusative alignment. See § 4.4.3. for a discussion of such forms in NENA.



also Noorlander 2021), but this is not dependent on person (see § 4.4.3.2.). Neutralization of all functions, including P and T, for all persons, occurs in NENA dialects nearby ʤur ʻAbdin as well as Jewish varieties of NW Iran (see § 4.4.3.1.). In C. Artun (Hertevin; SE Turkey), however, the situation is exactly the reverse of ʤuroyo: stacking of L-suffixes (*hze-le-le*) is confined to third person *agents* (see § 4.4.4.).

Another person-role constraint is found in the inflection of object indexes attached to the imperative in ʤuroyo (Jastrow 1985, 140–143, 1992, 128–130). A special set, namely 3ms. *-e*, 3fs. *-a* and 3pl. *-ene*, marks third person PS, e.g. *graš-e* ‘Pull it<sub>M</sub>!’ (\*\**graš-le*). Themes are marked in this same way when R is a prepositional full nominal. To illustrate:

- (9) [V-T: PRO]                    [DAT→R: fNP]  
*haw-e*                    *l-Başuş*  
 give:IMPV-T:3MS R:DAT-PRN  
 ‘Give it<sub>M</sub> to Başuş!’ (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 115/283)

This is exactly like the E-suffixes for *qtil-*, for example:

- (10) [V-T: PRO]                    [DAT→R: fNP]  
*hiv-o-le*                    *l-Šallīṭa*  
 give<sub>PV</sub>-T:3FS-A:3MS R:DAT-PRN  
 ‘He gave it<sub>F</sub> to Šallīṭa.’ (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 86/27)

The L-suffixes always express R, such as *-le* in the following example, when the theme is a full nominal:

- (11) [V-R: PRO]                    [T: fNP]  
*haw-le*                    *məlyun*  
 give:IMPV-R:3MS million  
 ‘Give him a million!’ (Miden, Talay 2004, 114.266)

When both arguments are pronominal, the object suffix expresses T, while R is expressed independently as a prepositional argument (the *el-*series), for example:

- (12) [V-T]                    [R]  
*hú-le-lan*    *el-e / al-xu*  
 ‘He gave us to him/to you<sub>PL</sub>.’

Thus, the L-suffixes express all objects for non-third person markers, synthesizing P, T and R. First/second person indexes therefore follow the object coding of *qoʔəl-* in the entire verbal system. This is a striking difference from NENA dialects, where the E-set may equally synthesize P, T and R. That is, forms like *mir-a-li* could be interpreted as ‘I told **her** (R)’ just like *mir-ət-ti-* (< \**mir-ət-li*) is interpreted as ‘I told you<sub>MS</sub>’ (see § 4.4.3.2.). By contrast, ʤuroyo distinguishes between *mir-o-li* ‘I told it<sub>F</sub> (T)’ and *máʔ-li-la* (< *már-li-la*) ‘I told you<sub>MS</sub> (R)’. In clusters of dependent pronouns, however, third person themes are distinguished from the patient by means of the enclitic set, e.g. *hú-le-la-yo* ‘He gave it<sub>M</sub> to her’ as opposed to *grəš-Ø-le* ‘He pulled it<sub>M</sub>’.<sup>10</sup>

In conclusion, R is marked in the same way for all persons throughout the verbal system, while it is third person pronouns that are marked differently depending on their syntactic role (P, T and/or R). It is furthermore noteworthy that only A and R are marked by the same L-set (A=R) in the third persons, while the L-set can be used to mark all functions for the first/second persons (P, T and R) just as it does for *qoʔəl-*.

### 5.2.2 Agent-Related Factors: Optional Flagging

Turning to independent pronouns and full nominals, speakers of rural and urban dialects in ʤur ‘Abdin can choose to mark such arguments prepositionally in A function, and sometimes also P function.

#### 5.2.2.1 Optional Prepositional Marking of Objects and Agents

Generally, a definite object NP remains unmarked in ʤuroyo dialects. Prepositional marking and cross-indexing are occasionally observed for *qoʔəl-* only, for example:

(13) **Miden** (Ritter 1967–1971, 81/49)

[V	-A	-P]	[DOM→P]
<i>k-üđ'</i>	<i>-i</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>l-ú-zlām</i>

IND-know<sub>1PFV</sub> -A:3PL -P:3MS DOM-the-man:MS

‘They know **the man**.’

Across ʤuroyo dialects, the same preposition can be used to mark the agent only in *qil-*, for example:<sup>11</sup>

10 See also Jastrow (1985, 137–138) and Waltisberg (2016, 296). This is a tripartite type of ditransitive verbal person marking (T≠P≠R) that correlates with ergative verbal person marking (A≠S=P).

11 Cf. Ritter (1990, 65) and Diem (2012, 43–45).

(14) **Iwardo** (Ritter 1967–1971: 33/34.37, 55/25)

- |   |                    |                  |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| [V-A]   | [ERG→A]            | [P]              |
| a. <i>ḥze-le</i>  | <i>l-ú-Ṭay-awo</i> | <i>ú-med-ano</i> |
| see <sub>PFV</sub> -A:3MS DAT-the-Muslim-DEM:MS the-thing:MS-DEM:MS |                    |                  |
| ‘That Muslim saw this thing.’                                       |                    |                  |

The same holds for independent pronouns, including demonstratives, of the *el*-series, for example:

- |  |             |          |           |                      |                   |
|--|-------------|----------|-----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| b. <i>lo</i>   | <i>el-i</i> | <i>u</i> | <i>lo</i> | <i>l-ú-ḥawr-aydi</i> | <i>lú-ḥze-lan</i> |
| NEG DAT-1SG and NEG DAT-the-friend:MS-my NEG-see <sub>PFV</sub> -A:1PL |             |          |           |                      |                   |
| <i>ú-mede d-əmm-at</i>   |             |          |           |                      |                   |
| the-thing SUBR-say <sub>1PFV</sub> -A:2SG                              |             |          |           |                      |                   |
| ‘Neither I nor my friend found the thing you <sub>SG</sub> speak of.’  |             |          |           |                      |                   |

One may contrast this with *s*, which does not get marked as such:

- |   |                |              |                                 |
|---|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| [V-S]   | [S]            |              |                                 |
| c. <i>ati-∅</i>                               | <i>ú-Malke</i> | <i>aʿm-a</i> | (no overt marking of <i>s</i> ) |
| come <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3MS the-PRN:M with-3FS |                |              |                                 |
| ‘Malke came with her.’                        |                |              |                                 |

The subject NP (*Malke*) of a basic intransitive verb like *ṭy* ‘come’ in (14b) is indexed, but not marked prepositionally. A similar NP in A-function can be marked both prepositionally (*l-*) and verbally (L-suffixes), while P is zero-marked, as shown in (14a). This is a type of optional ergative nominal marking, especially when the agent is focal.<sup>12</sup>

Only intransitive verbs that take L-suffixes are compatible with such flagging (Waltisberg 2016, 176). For example, the subject of the stem III verb *hlx* ‘walk’:

- |   |                 |                                     |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| (15) <i>l-Nari</i>                                | <i>malax-le</i> | (flagging of <i>s<sub>A</sub></i> ) |
| DAT- PRN:MS walk <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3MS            |                 |                                     |
| ‘Nari walked.’ (Rayite; Ritter 1967–1971, 96/229) |                 |                                     |

The optional prepositional marking is always conjoined with indexing of A. The prepositional argument functions as A and is syntactically equivalent to the subject in, for instance, cross-clausal anaphoric deletion, e.g.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Coghill (2016, 87–90).

- (16) *l-ani*, *h̄jəm* *-me* *a'l-ayye*, *u* (∅)<sub>i</sub> *falit-i* *a'l-*  
 DAT-DEM:PL attack<sub>PFV</sub> -A:3PL on-them and (s) fall<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3PL on-  
*ayye b-ax-xanejər*  
 3PL with-the-dagger:PL  
 'These attacked them and (∅) fell on them with daggers.' (Iwardo; Ritter  
 1967–1971, 33/32)

There is no construction in Turoyo equivalent to those in NENA dialects where the agent is prepositional but not overtly indexed, e.g.

*xze-∅ l-naša* 'It<sub>M</sub> was seen by somebody' / 'Somebody saw it<sub>M</sub>'.

A construction that would potentially parallel this is exemplified below. The verb *h̄zy* is intransitive denoting a spontaneous event ('appear') and the prepositional noun expresses a recipient-like argument rather than the agent.

- (17) **Flagging, but no indexing** (Midyat; Ritter 1967–1971, 11/107)  
 [S] [V-S] [OBL]  
*Malaxo Gábriyel b-ú-h̄ülmo h̄ze-∅ l-Mor Šəmſon*  
 angel:MS PRN in-the-dream:MS see<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3MS DAT-HON PRN  
 'The angel Gabriel appeared to Lord Simon in the dream.'

The optional A-marking thus does not appear to occur in passives, where instead the preposition *me(n)-* is used. However, it is possible that in fronting a topical patient this type of ergative marking can be included in constructions that are seemingly equivalent to a passive, such as (18) below.

- (18) **Kfarze** (Lahdo 2013, 210.14)  
*ú-mšihoy-ayđox šluw-we l-áy-yəđoye*  
 the-anointed:MS-your:MS crucify<sub>PFV</sub>-A:3PL DAT-the-Jews  
 'But your Christ was killed by the Jews.'

The ergative prepositional marking of NPs may combine with the ergative indexing of NPs, as illustrated in the following examples. The word order often seems to be P-V-A. The full nominal *aḥḥetani* 'this wheat' and demonstrative pronoun *hate* 'this' are indexed by the E-set, like *s*, and the agent NP is marked differently both nominally and verbally.

(19) **Ṭwardo** (Ritter 1967–1971, 55/11, 46/25)

- |    |                                     |                                 |                   |
|----|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
|    | [P]                                 | [V-P-A]                         | [ERG→A]           |
| a. | <i>áh-ḥet-ani</i>                   | <i>xil-i-le</i>                 | <i>l-ú-moro</i>   |
|    | the-wheat:PL-DEM:PL                 | eat <sub>PFV</sub> -P:3PL-A:3MS | DAT-the-master:MS |
|    | ‘The owner ate <b>this wheat</b> .’ |                                 |                   |

- |    |  |                                |                  |
|----|--|--------------------------------|------------------|
| b. | <i>hate</i>                              | <i>sim-o-le</i>                | <i>l-ú-Qanda</i> |
|    | DEM:FS                                   | do <sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS-A:3MS | DAT-the-PRN      |
|    | ‘(It was) Qanda (who) did <b>this</b> .’ |                                |                  |

Ṭuroyo varieties such as the dialect of the village Rayite which employ differential prepositional marking of P, may also use this dative agent construction, as shown in (20a–b). The resulting prepositional marking alignment pattern is horizontal (S≠A=P).

(20) **Rayite** (Ritter 1967–1971, 107/85, 116)

- |    |   |               |                          |
|----|---|---------------|--------------------------|
|    | [V-A]                                       | [DAT→P]       |                          |
| a. | <i>mad'al-le</i>                            | <i>l-‘Ali</i> | <i>a‘m-e</i> (P flagged) |
|    | take <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3MS                  | DOM-PRN:M     | with-3MS                 |
|    | ‘He (i.e. the son) took along <b>Ali</b> .’ |               |                          |

- |    |                                       |                            |                  |                   |
|----|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|    | [DAT→A]                               | [V-A]                      | [DAT→P]          |                   |
| b. | <i>l-‘Ali</i>                         | <i>grəš-le</i>             | <i>l-ú-sayfo</i> | (A and P flagged) |
|    | DAT- PRN:MS                           | pull <sub>PFV</sub> -A:3MS | DOM-the-sword:MS |                   |
|    | ‘ <b>Ali</b> drew <b>the sword</b> .’ |                            |                  |                   |

Waltisberg (2016, 177–180) points out that salient and highly referential arguments are marked by *l-*, and Diem (2012, 45) that prepositional As tend to favor post-verbal position. Recently, Kuzin (2018) explored the correlation between word order as well as argument referential properties and the presence or absence of prepositional marking of A in a corpus study of Ritter’s (1971) texts. His results indicate that there is a weak correlation with word order, but not with animacy or definiteness *per se*. Thus, while word order cannot predict the occurrence of optional A-marking, the post-verbal (V-A) order seems to be favored for prepositional As, but preverbal (A-V) order for unmarked As.

Optional overt marking of unexpected agents is well-known in typology.<sup>13</sup> In the Australian Aboriginal language, Warrwa, for example, ergative case-

13 See § 4.2.2.2. Cf. Givón (1985a), McGregor (2006, 2010), Fauconnier (2012), Verbeke (2013a).

marking is optional and not predictable, but manifests itself by means of distinct coding depending on focus and the degree of agentivity (McGregor 2006). Zero-marking of A is what defocuses it, signaling an expected actor with little impact. Overt flagging of A is diffused across an ordinary ergative marker and a focal ergative marking. The former adds no significance to A, while the latter adds salience to A, highlighting it as being counter to expectation and having an exceptionally powerful impact on P.

Prepositional marking in Țuroyo seems to be parallel to this. It generally increases the agent focus, enhancing the sense of responsibility and unexpectedness, as illustrated in the following examples.

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| (21) | URBAN<br>(Prym-Socin 1888, 133.9–10)  | RURAL<br>(Ritter 1967–1971, 59/41)  |
|      | a. <i>xlo l-ũno qti-li bab-ox</i><br>‘Do you think <i>I</i> killed your <sub>MS</sub><br>killed your <sub>MF</sub> wife.’ | b. <i>lo el-i qti-li í-ħürmaydǔx</i><br>‘(It was) not I (who) killed<br>your <sub>MS</sub> father?’ |

It also typically occurs in the situation where two agents are contrasted (i.e. X on the hand, Y on the other hand), for example:

- (22) *l-uwe mamté-le-lan u-l-ano qti-Ø-le xanejār*  
‘That one brought us (here) attacked them, but this one slayed him.’  
(ibid. 33/32)

Independent pronominalization of a focal constituent is common for Neo-Aramaic in general. Depending on the dialect, this may be accompanied by additional person marking on the verb (see § 2.3.1.2.).

While the indexing is obligatory in Țuroyo, the prepositional marking is optional. The unmarked counterpart of full nominals and independent pronouns is also available, but it is not specific to the A role. The unmarked independent pronouns may also express focus and freely alternate with a prepositional counterpart. Compare, for example, *el-ũx* and *hat* below.

- (23) **Pronominal A** (Iwardo, Ritter 1967–1971, 48/60.48)  
 [(ERG→)A] [V-A]  
 a. *ma lo el-ũx mǎl-Ø-ħǔx? qay ġbin-at!*  
 Q NEG DAT-2MS say<sub>PV-T:3MS-A:2MS</sub> why be.angry-S:2SG  
 ‘But didn’t you<sub>MS</sub> yourself say so? Why! Are you<sub>SG</sub> angry?’

- b. *ma lo hat məl-Ø-lǿx ... ma ġbin-at?*  
 Q NEG you<sub>MS</sub> say<sub>PfV</sub>-T:3MS-A:2MS Q be.angry-S:2SG  
 ‘Did **you**<sub>MS</sub> not say so? Are you angry?’

Unmarked full NPs may equally alternate with a prepositional pendant in A-function, compare *l-babi* and *babi* in the following examples:

(24) Full nominal A (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 73/106)

- |    |   |            |                                       |  |              |
|----|---|------------|---------------------------------------|--|--------------|
|    | [ERG→A]   |            | [V-A]                                 |  |              |
| a. | <i>l-bab-i</i>                                    |            | <i>lo-moláf-le-li</i>                 |  |              |
|    | DAT-father:MS-my                                  |            | NEG-teach <sub>PfV</sub> -A:3MS-R:1SG |  |              |
|    | ‘My father did not teach me (to do it that way).’ |            |                                       |  |              |
|    |   |            | [V-A]                                 |  | [A]          |
| b. | <i>hate</i>                                       | <i>ono</i> | <i>hawxa moláf-le-li</i>              |  | <i>bab-i</i> |
|    | DEM:FS I  | thus       | teach <sub>PfV</sub> -A:3MS-R:1SG     |  | father:MS-my |
|    | ‘This (is) how my father taught me (to do it).’   |            |                                       |  |              |

It is difficult to pinpoint an exact semantic difference between the absence and presence of the prepositional marking of the agent. An increase in agentivity seems to be more readily implied by the use of the preposition *l-*, but this is not always apparent. Nevertheless, it would be mistaken to consider the differential flagging of A in the ‘perfective’ functionally equivalent to the differential flagging of P in the ‘imperfective’.

The distinct patterns in the interaction of indexing and flagging observed thus far are recapitulated in Table 36 below. P aligns with S ergatively mainly in terms of indexing. Flagging may target either A or P, as well as both A and P. The unmarked instances of both agent and object NPs are most common, while prepositional marking of both is least common: either ergative or accusative flagging, then, appears to be favored. The combination of both indexing and flagging of salient objects in *qǿl-* does not appear to occur. This would require further study to be ruled out completely.

Ṭur ‘Abdin dialects, therefore, concur with the cross-linguistic tendency to avoid the combination of ergative person markers with accusative nominal marking (Dixon 1979, 92; 1994, 95; see § 3.3.2.). Moreover, even from a language-internal perspective, it is likely that there is an additional morphological factor for why this combination is avoided. The dative prepositional marking by means of the preposition (*e*)*l-* correlates with the L-suffixes in marking the same role. This can be observed not only in the differential marking of P in *qoǿl-* in (13) above, but also in the following constructions.

TABLE 36 Indexing and prepositional marking of A and P

S					
E-set	∅			<i>maty-o í-kalo</i>	‘The bride arrived.’
L-set				<i>mhalax-la í-kalo</i>	‘The bride walked.’
	<i>l</i> -NP			<i>mhalax-la l-í-kalo*</i>	
A		P			
L-set	∅	∅	∅	<i>nšəq-le ú-ḥatno í-kalo</i>	‘The groom kissed the bride.’
	<i>l</i> -NP			<i>nšəq-le l-ú-ḥatno í-kalo</i>	
	∅		<i>l</i> -NP	<i>nšəq-le ú-ḥatno l-í-kalo</i>	
		E-sfx	∅	<i>nšiq-o-le ú-ḥatno í-kalo</i>	
	<i>l</i> -NP			<i>nšiq-o-le l-ú-ḥatno í-kalo</i>	
		∅	<i>l</i> -NP	<i>nšəq-le l-ú-ḥatno l-í-kalo</i>	

These sentences serve as hypothetical examples of the relevant pattern. \*<sub>S<sub>A</sub></sub> verbs only.

### 5.2.2.2 On *l*- and L-suffixes Elsewhere: Agent-Recipient Parallels

Prepositional objects are typically marked by (*e*)*l*- independently of the verb or, if a dependent person marker, as an L-suffix attached to the verb. Certain verbs, such as *qry* ‘call (for)’ and *’mr* ‘say, tell’ always takes such a complement. Indexing and prepositional marking may also be combined:

- (25) **Rayite** (Ritter 1967–1971, 99/6, 96/207)
- qre-le l-ú-abro navoyo* ‘He called for his middle son.’
  - qré-le-le* ‘He called for him.’
  - qré-le-le l-ú-malko* ‘He called for the king.’

Similarly, recipients marked by *l*- can trigger additional suffixes, such as the addressee of the verb *’mr* ‘say’:

- [A]            [V-A-R]        [DAT→R]  
 (26) *u-zlām mál-!e-le l-u-z'uro*  
 'The man said to the little one.' (Miden, *ibid.* 76/65)

The coding of focalized agents as such is identical to the differential marking of recipient NPs in *q̄til-*. Thus, a construction involving a prepositional full nominal recipient such as *mər-!e l-NP* based on 'mr 'say' is ambiguous to the role of the dative argument, it can either denote R 'He said to NP' or A 'NP said', for example:

- (27) **Iwardo** (Ritter 1967–1971, 35/35, 40)  
 R: *mər-le l-ú-mūstašārayde* 'He said to his counselor'  
 A: *mər-le l-ú-'mīro* 'The emir said'

The two are not mutually exclusive and can even co-occur, for example:

- [(DAT→)A]            [V-A-R]            [DAT→R]  
 (28) a. *ú-šūltono mál-!e-le l-ú-wazir-ayde*  
 the-overlord:MS say<sub>PFV-A:3MS-R:3MS</sub> DAT-the-vizier-his  
 'The sultan said to his vizier.' (Anḥəl, *ibid.* 64/2)

- b. *l-ú-šūltono mál-!e-le l-ú-waziro*  
 DAT-the-overlord:MS say<sub>PFV-A:3MS-R:3MS</sub> DAT-the-vizier  
 'The sultan said to the vizier.' (Anḥəl, *ibid.* 64/12)

The key difference is that the flagging of A is optional, while the R of a ditransitive verb like 'mr 'say' is always marked prepositionally. Moreover, *l*-marked recipients are not necessarily additionally indexed by L-suffixes, while the *l*-marked agent is always marked as such.

There is a stronger parallel with the *l*-marked possessor in predicative possession based on the existential marker *kət-* or the suppletive verb *hwy* 'be'. The possessum/possessee remains unmarked. In example (29), prepositional marking of the possessor is variable, but, here, the L-suffix always indexes the possessor. Thus, L-suffixes marking A cannot be omitted in ʒuroyo, similarly to the L-suffixes expressing the possessor.

- (29) **Predicative possessor** ('Iwardo, Ritter 1967–1971, 58/3, 57/12)  
 [PSSR]            [EXIST-PSSR]    [PSSM]  
 a. *ú-zlām-ano kát-way-le arb'i kalote*  
 the-man-DEM:MS EXST-PST-3MS forty daughter-in-law:PL  
 'This man had forty daughters-in-law.'

- [PSSM] [EXST-PSSR] [DAT→PSSR]  
 b. *ma kət-le l-ú-malk-ano*  
 Q EXST-3MS DAT-the-king-DEM:MS  
 ‘What does **the king** have?’

The combination of L-suffixes and *l*-marking is readily found elsewhere within the language (see Noorlander 2021), except for P in *qtil*-. It is only in *qtil*-, then, that differential prepositional marking of P by means of *l*- cannot be combined with L-suffixes. Presumably, the combination is morphosyntactically linked with the use of a morphologically or at least historically related similar set of dependent person markers. The preposition (*e*)/*l*- links an—often focal A—in the perfective past with the same marking typical of the predicative possessor, recipients and other prepositional arguments.

### 5.2.3 *Voice and Other Verb-Related Factors: \*qtil- vs. \*qaṭṭil-*

The verbal person marking is part of a larger system of stem derivations. When we examine the valency alternations in Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin, there are close parallels with NENA varieties, especially the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, as well as major differences among them, primarily in verbal stems. Ṭuroyo makes a two-dimensional split in the inflection of intransitive verbs: one with respect to the type of subject indexes (E-set/L-set) and another with respect to the morphological class for stem I verbs (*qtil*-/ *\*qaṭṭil*-).

#### 5.2.3.1 Ergative and ‘Neuter’ Verbs

Virtually all transitive verbs of stem Ia can be ambivalent in a causative/inchoative alternation in Ṭuroyo (cf. Ritter 1990, 124). We can, however, only speak of labiality (i.e. no change in basic morphology), for the ‘perfective’. The mediopassive generally expresses the inchoative of the equivalent causative. Consider, for example, the verb *fth* ‘open’ in the following alternation. The inchoative marks the subject like an object, while the causative takes an agent index from the L-set.

#### (30) Labile alternation

- [s] [v-s]  
 a. *‘ayne d-ú-babo fth-i* (inchoative, no agent)  
 eye:PL LK-the-father open<sub>PV</sub>-S:3PL  
 ‘Father’s eyes opened.’ (lit. they opened) (Miden; Ritter 1967–1971, 81/18)

- |    |  |               |                              |
|----|--|---------------|------------------------------|
|    | [V-A]  | [P]           |                              |
| b. | <i>ftəḥ-le</i>   | <i>ʿayn-e</i> | (causative, specified agent) |
|    | open <sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>                              | eye-his       |                              |
|    | ‘He opened his eyes.’ (lit. Him opened) (ibid. 57/237) |               |                              |

We can compare this to SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA such as J. Sulemaniyya. The verbs *pqy* in NENA and *frq* IV in Ṭuroyo pattern alike:

- |       |                               |                            |             |
|-------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| (31)  | <b>Ṭuroyo</b> (Miden)         | <b>J. Sulemaniyya</b>      |             |
|       | (Jastrow 1985, 112)           | (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 297) |             |
| tr.   | <i>mfarqa-le</i>              | <i>pqe-le</i>              | (A = L-set) |
|       | ‘He burst (sth.)’             | ‘id.’                      |             |
| intr. | <i>mfarq-o</i>                | <i>pəqy-a</i>              | (S = E-set) |
|       | ‘It <sub>F</sub> (was) burst’ | ‘id.’                      |             |

A cause may be expressed overtly by the preposition *me* ‘from’, as illustrated in (32). *me* may also simply express the cause in other intransitive constructions, for example:

- (32) **Ṭuroyo** (Qamishli, NE Syria)
- |    |  |                                 |           |                  |              |
|----|--|---------------------------------|-----------|------------------|--------------|
| a. | <i>u-tar’o</i>   | <i>ftəḥ-Ø</i>                   | <i>me</i> | <i>hawa</i>      | <i>qwito</i> |
|    | the-door:MS  | open <sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub>       | from      | wind:FS          | strong:FS    |
|    | ‘The door opened <b>because of</b> (or: was opened by) <b>a strong wind</b> .’ |                                 |           |                  |              |
| b. | <i>i-dawmo</i>   | <i>qayit-o</i>                  |           | <i>b-i-nuro</i>  |              |
|    | the-tree:FS  | start.burn <sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub> |           | with-the-fire:FS |              |
|    | <b><i>m-u-barqo</i></b>  |                                 |           |                  |              |
|    | from-the-lightening:MS   |                                 |           |                  |              |
|    | ‘The tree caught fire <b>because of the lightning</b> .’                       |                                 |           |                  |              |

Anticausatives are known to be compatible with causal phrases, but the implication is not as strong as that of the passive prototype.

What we have seen thus far is similar to NENA, but there are also noteworthy differences. First of all, the inchoative/causative alternation is not labile in the valency alternation in the ‘imperfective’. A distinct anticausative stem is used, i.e. *məqtol-*, for the intransitive valence pattern, while transitive valence patterns are morphologically distinguished only by choice of argument coding in the ‘perfective’:

(33) Valency alternations: *məqʔol-* vs. *qoʔəl-*

	PERFECTIVE	IMPERFECTIVE	
tr.	<i>ftəh-la</i>	<i>ʔəth-o</i>	(causative)
	‘She opened (sth.)’	‘She opens (sth.)’	
intr.	<i>ftih-o</i>	<i>ʔməftoh-o</i>	(inchoative)
	‘It <sub>F</sub> (was) opened’	‘It <sub>F</sub> opens, is being opened’	

The ‘imperfective’ therefore maintains a voice distinction at the level of inflectional base only, whereas the ‘perfective’ does so at the level of verbal person marking.

Some stem I verbs such as *fšh* ‘be(come) glad’ are middle only (<sub>I<sub>M</sub></sub>), e.g. *fših-Ø* ‘He was/became glad’. They evince no labile alternation (e.g. *\*fšəh-le* ‘He gladdened’). This also parallels SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, although NENA has no corresponding separate mediopassive base in the ‘imperfective’. Compare the cognate verb *pšx* in Jewish Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 523):

## (34) Emotive response middle in ʤuroyo and NENA

	ʤuroyo		J. Sanandaj
PFV	<i>fših-Ø</i>		<i>pšix-Ø</i>
	‘He rejoiced’		‘id.’
IPFV	<i>ʔməfšəh-Ø</i>	(≠ <i>qoʔəl-</i> )	<i>pəšax-Ø</i> (= <i>qəʔəl-</i> )
	‘He rejoices’		‘id.’

When we consider object omission, ʤuroyo does not show distinctions in the marking of the agent. A verb like *šty* ‘drink’ can freely occur without the object and the coding of the agent does not alter:

## (35) Miden

	[V-A]		[P]
a.	<i>štalle</i>		<i>i-qəhw-atte</i>
	drink <sub>PFV:A:3PL</sub>		the-coffee:FS-DEM:FS
	‘They drank the coffee.’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 115/63)		
b.	<i>štalle</i>	(Ø)	<i>maqraʔ-te</i>
	drink <sub>PFV:A:3PL</sub>		III:breakfast <sub>PFV-S:3PL</sub>
	‘They drank (and) had breakfast.’ (73/113)		

An antipassive, where A becomes s and P becomes oblique, is not found in ʤuroyo. Nevertheless, there is a class of verbs that evinces some features of antipassive typology. Stem I verbs come in two subclasses depending on their pattern

for the ‘perfective’: (1a) *q̄til-* and (1b) *\*qatt̄il-*. The verbs of (1b) the *\*qatt̄il-*-class are mainly intransitive and mostly do not occur in labile alternations. Jastrow (1985, 71) refers to them as “neutrische Verben” (‘neuter verbs’), i.e. belonging to neither the passive nor active voice. The E-set is used as subject indexes. The transitive valence pattern is derived, for example the verb *t̄ym* ‘finish’ in the following alternation:

## (36) Causative alternation

- |  |                            |                       |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| [S]  | [V-S]                      |                       |
| a. <i>í-mäsäl-ayd-an</i>                             | <i>tayim-o</i>             | (inchoative, stem 1b) |
| the-story:FS-LK-our                                  | finish <sub>PV-S:3FS</sub> |                       |
| ‘Our thing is finished.’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 115/149) |                            |                       |
|  |                            |                       |
| [V-A]  | [P]                        |                       |
| b. <i>matəm-le</i>                                   | <i>ú-šǔǵl-ayd-e</i>        |                       |
| finish <sub>PV-A:3MS</sub>                           | the-business:MS-LK-his     |                       |
| [A]  |                            |                       |
| <i>ú-malko</i>                                       |                            | (causative, stem III) |
| the-king:MS  |                            |                       |
| ‘The king finished his business.’ (77/21)            |                            |                       |

The causative counterparts mainly belong to either stem III or II as shown for a few verbs, given below.

INCHOATIVE (1b)	CAUSATIVE
<i>damax-∅</i> ‘sleep, fall asleep’	III <i>madmax-le</i> ‘put to sleep’
<i>bašel-∅</i> ‘cook’ (intr.)	II <i>mbaše-le</i> ‘cook’ (tr.)
<i>barəm-∅</i> ‘turn’ (intr.)	IA <i>brəm-le</i> ‘turn’ (tr.)
<i>mali-∅</i> ‘be(come) full’	IA <i>mle-le</i> ‘fill’ (rare)

Only rarely do verbs alternate between stem IA and stem 1b, but it is possible, such as 1b *mali-∅* ‘be(come) full’ (intr.) and IA *mle-le* (tr.) ‘fill’ below. However, the ‘perfective’ of I<sub>M</sub> (*māftoh-* : *ftih-∅*) merges with 1b in final-y verbs in some villages,<sup>14</sup> e.g. Ritter (1990, 378)

IMPERFECTIVE	PERFECTIVE
<i>məmle</i>	: <i>mle</i>
<i>məmle</i>	: <i>mali</i>

14 This form, e.g. *hazi-∅* ‘he was seen’, developed within ʦuroyo by analogy with the fs. forms

Stem *ib* verbs generally express only one argument. They can be combined with a prepositional complement, e.g. *krx* ‘search’ in

*karəx-∅ aʃla* ‘He looked for her.’

Generally, ‘neuter’ verbs do not display a distinction in the coding of transitivity. Unlike in NENA, the verb *yʃf* ‘learn’ shows no difference for the transitive and intransitive valence patterns:

(37) **Intransitive and transitive CaCiC-‘perfective’**

a. *yalaʃ-no towo* (intransitive)  
 learn<sub>PFV-1MS</sub> good:MS  
 ‘I learnt well.’ (Iwardo, Ritter 1967–1971, 37/11)

b. *yalaʃ-∅ ʕəlam* (transitive)  
 learn<sub>PFV-3MS</sub> science  
 ‘He learnt science.’ (Midyat, ibid. 24/257)

Thus, a few stem *ib* verbs can be morphosyntactically transitive, even though lexically speaking they are not transitive (see further below). These transitive ‘neuter’ verbs may take clausal complements, full nominal objects and object indexes from the L-set, which is indistinct from the transitive coding in the ‘imperfective’, for example:

(38) **Miden**

a. *í-naqla d-i-qrito šamiʕ-i*  
 the-moment:FS SUBR-the-village:FS hear<sub>PFV-1PL</sub>  
*ú-xabr-ano*  
 the-word:MS-DEM:MS  
 ‘When the people of the village heard **the news**.’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 71/16)

b. *čirok-áte-ze ʕsrí-kore šamiʕ-ína-la*  
 story-DEM:FS-ADD twenty-times hear<sub>PFV-1PL-3FS</sub>  
 ‘This story, too, we (already) heard **it**<sub>F</sub> twenty times.’ (115/14)

These transitive verbs typically express two-argument experiencer predicates, such as *šaməʕ-∅* ‘hear’ and *aʃəʕ-∅* ‘know’ (Jastrow 1985, 71; Furman and

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of the intransitive final-y verbs: *baxyono* ‘I (f.) wept’: *ħazyono* ‘I (f.) was seen’, *baxyo* ‘she wept’: *ħazyo* ‘she was seen’, *baxi* ‘he wept’: *x*; *x = ħazi* ‘he was seen’.

Loesov 2014). Semantically speaking, they are not primary transitive verbs, for the agent-like argument is not an actual instance of A in the same sense as primary verbs like *qtl* ‘kill’ or *twr* ‘break’ but rather an experiencer. These two-argument experiencer states are not compatible with the A-like coding of transitive verbs, and one could compare this to the antipassive in some languages where ergative morphosyntax predominates. The Polynesian language Samoan, for instance, employs ergative alignment for primary transitive verbs. Some stative verbs, especially two-argument experiencer verbs, such as ‘love’, always occur in the antipassive, while action verbs never do (Comrie 1978, 373). Here in the Neo-Aramaic dialects of ʤur ʕabdin, we observe that two-argument states take identical transitive coding across the *qotəl-/qtil*-split:

PERFECTIVE	IMPERFECTIVE
<i>yaliḫ-o-le</i> ‘She learned it.’	<i>ʕəlf-o-le</i> ‘She is learning it.’
<i>yaliḫ-o</i> ‘She learned (quickly).’	<i>ʕəlf-o</i> ‘She is learning (quickly).’

In the unlikely case when roots occur in two classes, there is often a subtle semantic shift accompanying detransitivization, e.g. Ritter (1990, 51)

intr.	tr.
ib <i>qatəʕ-∅</i> ‘He crossed’	ia <i>qatəʕ-le</i> ‘He cut through’
ib <i>naṭər-∅</i> ‘He waited’	ia <i>naṭər-le</i> ‘He guarded’

The fact that these verbs belong to the largely intransitive neuter class could be because they do not (as strongly) imply an effect on a patient-like argument. This is what makes them similar to the antipassive, a voice that generally serves to decrease the effect implicature (Cooreman 1994).

### 5.2.3.2 Personal and Impersonal Alternations

Contrasting with NENA, the agentless *qtil*-form is also compatible with two-argument state verbs and even intransitive verbs (Ritter 1990, 124). Verbs denoting a state, such as *ḫzy* ‘see’ in (39) below, may occur in a labile alternation. The intransitive valence pattern has a spontaneous reading.

#### (39) Labile alternation for *ḫzy* ‘see’ (Midyat)

[S]	[V-S]	[OBL]
a. <i>Malaxo Gábriyel b-ú-ḫülmo</i>	<i>ḫze-∅</i>	<i>l-Mor Šəmʕon</i>
angel:MS PRN in-the-dream:MS	see <sub>PFV-S</sub> :3MS	DAT-HON PRN
‘The angel Gabriel appeared to Lord Simon in a dream.’ (Ritter 1967–1971, 11/107)		

- [V-A]            [P]  
 b. *hze-li*        *b-hülm-i*        *ha*        *k-omər-Ø*  
 see<sub>PFV-A:1SG</sub> in-dream:MS-my one:MS IND-say<sub>IPFV-A:3MS</sub>  
 'I saw in my dream one saying...' (23/9)

Transitive verbs belonging to stem 1b that take a *\*qat̥til*-base in the 'perfective' can have a mediopassive counterpart (<sub>I<sub>M</sub></sub>), even though there is no corresponding form in stem 1b. The mediopassive (<sub>I<sub>M</sub></sub>) *idi*<sup>◌</sup>-Ø 'be renowned' is for example reported to exist for (1b) *adə*<sup>◌</sup>-Ø 'know' for the verb 'd' 'know' (Jastrow 1985, 76; Ritter 1990, 727), but there is no (1a) verb *\*\*idi*<sup>◌</sup>-*le* 'know'.

The mediopassive may also be used to express an impersonal passive. A causal origin is more strongly implied for a verb, such as *qtl* 'kill' in (40b) below, but the verb does not cross-index the object and takes the unmarked 3ms. form. Thus, the perfective is characterized by a type of impersonal labile alternation.

(40) **Miden**

- a. *q̣əl-le*        *tlọto* *gawre*    *mən-aye*  
 kill<sub>PFV-A:3PL</sub> three man:MPL from-3PL  
 'They killed three men of them.' (Ritter 1967–1971, 85/22)  
 lit. 'Them killed three men of them.'
- b. *q̣il*    *tlọto* *gawre*    *me-Midən*  
 kill<sub>PFV</sub> three man:MPL from-Miden  
 'Three men from Miden were killed.' (85/12)  
 lit. 'Three men from Miden killed.'

A major difference between NENA and Turoyo is that even intransitive verbs may be impersonalized (Ritter 1990, 124 ff.). This is illustrated for *dmx* 'sleep' and *r'm* 'come together' below. The verb *dmx* 'sleep' belongs to stem 1b (*\*qat̥til*-) and the impersonalization involves a change in inflectional base and absence of indexing.

(41) **Impersonalization in Turoyo** (Ritter 1990, 124–125, 127)

- a. *damax*-Ø            'He fell asleep.'            (*\*qat̥til*-, intransitive)  
 b. *dmix*(-Ø) *larwal* 'People (lit. It<sub>M</sub>) slept there.'<sup>15</sup>            (*q̣til*-, impersonal)

15 Compare the German original (ibid.): "es wurde (auf dem Dache) geschlafen".

An ambitransitive verb, such as *rʿim* ‘come together’, however, is labile in both personal and impersonal contexts:

- c. *rʿim-i*                      *ám-maye*    (*qʦil*-, inchoative)  
gather<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3PL the-water:PL  
‘The water (pl.) accumulated.’
- d. *rʿim(-∅)* *harke šəšwone*    (*qʦil*-, impersonal)  
gather<sub>PFV</sub> here ant:PL  
‘(It<sub>M</sub>) swarmed here (with) ants.’

Here, for (41d), a construction *with* subject indexing, e.g. *rʿim-i harke šəšwone* ‘Ants swarmed here’, would theoretically also have been available. What restrictions there are to this impersonalization in ʦuroyo requires further investigation, but nothing like (41b) or (41d) is attested in NENA.

### 5.2.3.3 Lexical Transitivity and Intransitivity

Only those verbs that take a *qʦil*-form in the ‘perfective’ show a split in patient-like or agent-like subject indexes. The subject marking split parallels that of SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties. Subjects are always coded in a patient-like fashion in the \**qattil*-class. Table 37 below illustrates the main semantic classes and respective coding that are compared with NENA below.

Although it is impossible to predict exactly on the basis of semantics what type of coding is preferred, there are notable tendencies.

Similarly to Jewish dialects like Sulemaniyya, it is noteworthy that, from a cross-linguistic perspective, the semantically most agent-like class of verbs denoting controlled activities (Croft 1998, 52–53) includes many verbs that do not take *s<sub>A</sub>* coding, such as *raqəḏ-∅* ‘dance’ and *šəgəl-∅* ‘work’ and *čik-∅* ‘sneak in’.

Interestingly, the verb *šiy* ‘swim; bathe, wash’ and other controlled activities do take *s<sub>A</sub>* coding in ʦuroyo (*šhe-le*), while the cognate verb *sxy* in Jewish Sulemaniyya does not (*səxe-∅*). A semantically similar verb is *hayəf-∅* ‘wash (oneself)’ in ʦuroyo, which does not take *s<sub>A</sub>* coding, e.g. *hayif-i an-noše eba* ‘The people washed with it<sub>F</sub>’ (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 78/213). Similarly to NENA, reflexives relating to dress and grooming, such as *hwš* ‘dress’, show agent-like coding and may also take an object, e.g. *hwš-še əj-julatte* ‘They put on their clothes’ (Miden, Ritter 1967–1971, 76/33).

The agentless counterpart of transitive verbs, which receive patient-like subject coding generally belong to the mediopassive stem derivations. There are only few exceptions. An example is the verb *xš* ‘save, escape’, which has a

TABLE 37 Patient-like or agent-like marking of s in Turoyo

Lexical class	s	<i>q̄til-</i>	<i>*q̄t̄til-</i>
state, (dis)position	E-set	<i>ḡbin-Ø</i> 'be angry'	<i>zayəʻ-Ø</i> 'fear'
change of state, (dis)position	(S <sub>P</sub> )	<i>ṭniḥ-Ø</i> 'rest'	<i>yatu-Ø</i> 'sit'
uncontrolled process		<i>ḥniq-Ø</i> 'suffocate'	<i>naḡəl-Ø</i> 'fall'
		<i>čik-Ø</i> 'sneak in'	<i>ʻabər-Ø</i> 'enter'
controlled activity		<i>šḥe-le</i> 'swim'	<i>raqəd-Ø</i> 'dance'
		<i>zmər-le</i> 'sing'	<i>šagəl-Ø</i> 'work'
reflexive		<i>lwəš-le</i> 'dress'	<i>ḥayəf-Ø</i> 'wash'
		<i>šləḥ-le</i> 'undress'	<i>gawər-Ø</i> 'marry'
sound emission	(S <sub>A</sub> )	<i>nwəḥ-le</i> 'bark'	
object omission	L-set	<i>xi-le</i> 'eat'	<i>yaləf-Ø</i> 'learn'

DATA BASED ON JASTROW (1985); RITTER (1990); NOORLANDER'S FIELD NOTES

'perfective' form *xaləš-Ø* 'be saved'.<sup>16</sup> Verbs expressing uncontrolled processes generally do not take S<sub>A</sub> coding, irrespective of morphological class: either a *q̄til-* or *\*q̄t̄til-* base, and this situation corresponds to NENA, as given in (42) and (43) below. The verb *yaqəd-Ø* 'burn', for example, belongs to stem 1b and has a derived causative. Essentially, the *q̄t̄til-* base is used to decrease the effect implicature and centralize a state or entering into a state affecting the subject (see § 5.2.3.1.).

16 A sense of 'escape; become safe' may also be in view (Ritter 1990, 219 ff.).

(42) Derived causative (\**qatṭil*-class)

<b>ʤuroyo</b>		<b>J. Sulemaniyya</b> (Khan 2004a)
‘burn’		
intr. <i>yaqəd-Ø</i>	intr. <i>qil-Ø</i> (~ <i>yəliq-Ø</i> )	
tr. <i>moqəd-le</i>	tr. <i>mqəl-le</i>	

(43) Labile (*qtīl*-class)

a. ‘break’		
intr. <i>twir-Ø</i>	intr. <i>twir-Ø</i>	
tr. <i>twəl-le</i>	tr. <i>twər-re</i>	
b. ‘suffocate’		
intr. <i>hniq-Ø</i>	intr. <i>hniq-Ø</i>	
tr. <i>hnəq-le</i>	tr. <i>hnəq-le</i>	

NENA and ʤur ʿAbdin dialects diverge more strongly when it comes to the agent-like coding of subjects, as illustrated in (44) below. Verbs that denote a controlled event are treated differently, whereby *šəgəl-Ø* ‘work’ and *gawər-Ø* ‘marry’ do not take A-like coding in ʤuroyo, but they do in NENA, whereas *šhe-le* ‘swim; bathe, wash’ takes A-like coding in ʤuroyo, but it does not in NENA. Moreover, there is an exceptional group of transitive verbs belonging to subclass 1b (\**qatṭil*-) that mainly expresses mental states, where the experiencer subject is (indirectly) affected by some mental experience, including more controlled mental activities, such as *yaləf-Ø* ‘learn’ (instigating) and uncontrolled mental processes, such as *taʿi-Ø* ‘forget’ (non-instigating) (Jastrow 1985, 72; Ritter 1990, 93; Furman and Loesov 2014). These correspond to S<sub>A</sub> forms in NENA, as shown by the comparison with Jewish Sanandaj below.

## (44) Subject coding in ʤuroyo and Jewish Sanandaj

<b>ʤuroyo</b>		<b>J. Sanandaj</b> (Khan 2009)
a. <i>raqəd-Ø</i> ‘dance’	=	<i>rqil-Ø</i>
b. <i>yaləf-Ø</i> ‘learn’	≠	<i>yləp-le</i> <sup>17</sup>
c. <i>šhe-le</i> ‘swim’	≠	<i>səxe-Ø</i> (also ‘wash’)
d. <i>šəgəl-Ø</i> ‘work’ (< Ar.)	≠	<i>ħəštá wi-le</i> (< Ir.) <sup>18</sup>
e. <i>gawər-Ø</i> ‘marry’	≠	<i>gəwr-e</i> (< * <i>gwər- + -le</i> )

17 The intransitive form in J. Sanandaj *yəlip-Ø* conveys ‘learn’ in the sense of knowledge reception (less control) rather than acquisition (more control), i.e. being taught by somebody else.

18 *ħəštá* ‘work’, *wil-* ‘do’ + *-le*.

f. <i>adə<sup>c</sup>-∅</i>	'know'	≠	<i>'li-le</i>
g. <i>šamə<sup>c</sup>-∅</i>	'hear'	≠	<i>šmi-le</i> <sup>19</sup>

There are several verbs that have similar semantic characteristics as the (1b) subclass taking a *\*qattil*-base but belong to the (1a) subclass taking a *qtil*-base and transitive coding (Ritter 1990, 733), for example *hzy* 'see' and *b'y* 'want':

<i>qtil</i> -		<i>*qattil</i> -	
(45) <i>hze-le</i>	'see'	vs. <i>šamə<sup>c</sup>-∅</i>	'hear'
<i>b'e-le</i>	'want' <sup>20</sup>	vs. <i>abə<sup>c</sup>-∅</i>	'want' (roots <i>b'y</i> vs. <i>∅b'</i> )

This is consistent with the cross-linguistic tendency for 'see' to be the most salient of perception verbs (Viberg 1983) and receive transitive coding more likely than 'hear' (Haspelmath 2015).

Conversely, some middle-only verbs belonging to stem I<sub>M</sub>, e.g. *tnih-∅* 'rest', are similar to class 1b (*\*qattil*-) in terms of semantics (stative, experiencer), but occur in a derived causative alternation (Jastrow 1985, 77, 92), for example:

(46) intr.	I <sub>M</sub>	<i>fših-∅</i>	'be(come) glad'
tr.	III	<i>maššah-le</i>	'gladden'

Moreover, there are intransitive verbs belonging to other stem derivations than stem I that receive agent-like subject coding, such as II *hlx* 'walk', e.g. *mhalax-le* (alongside 1b *rahəṭ-∅* 'run') and III *syw* 'become old', e.g. *masu-le*.

Verbs from class (1b) have also been attested in class (1a), e.g. *šmə<sup>c</sup>-le* 'He heard' instead of *šamə<sup>c</sup>* (Furman and Loesov 2014), thus showing an alternation between 1a, *qtil*- + L-set and 1b, *\*qattil*- + E-set. Ritter (1990, 15, 85, 619) offers examples of the following kind:

(47) <i>kafən-∅</i>	'er hungerte'	<i>kfəl-le</i> <sup>21</sup>	'er bekam hunger'
<i>fahəm-∅</i>	'er begriff'	<i>fhəm-le</i>	'er verstand'
<i>hawi-∅</i>	'geschehen'	<i>hwe-le</i>	'entstehen'

19 It is possible that the intransitive coding in local Arabic cognates has influenced a few verbs belonging to subclass 1b: Arabic stative *samə<sup>c</sup>-tu* 'I heard' and mediopassives *f-t-aham-∅* 'He understood' and *aš-t-ağal-tu* 'I worked' (Mardin, SE Turkey; Grigore 2007) correspond to Turoyo *šamə<sup>c</sup>-no*, *fahəm-∅* and *šəğəl-no*.

20 This root seems to be obsolete in Turoyo today and is retained only in the impersonal expression *kə-b'e* 'must' (Ritter 1990, 733).

21 *kfəlle* < *\*kfən-le*.

The semantic difference between the two variants does not seem to be very obvious, but Ritter (1990, 85) hints at an aspectual distinction of punctuality, noting that forms like *šmāʿ-le* and *dmāx-le* are used “when one wants to emphasize the sudden occurrence of the event or its completed nature”.<sup>22</sup> It seems to me that Ritter is referring to punctuality, which could be comparable to the role of punctuality in subject coding in, for instance, the Jewish dialect of Sulemaniyya (Khan 2004a, 301; see § 3.5.). There is no indication this is a productive process, however. Nevertheless, the fact that both transitive and intransitive verbs can occur in this alternation could suggest that we are not simply dealing with a dominant verbal form encroaching on others’ domain, as if speakers make errors and generalize stem (1a) verbs, although it is conceivable that the anticipation of a transitive verbal form could trigger morphological adaptation to such a form, as in the following case, e.g. Ritter (1967–1971: 29/172)

*qəm-la*      *í-kačke*      *nšəq-la,*      *bene*      *ʿayn-e*  
 rise<sub>PFV-A:3FS</sub> the-girl:FS kiss<sub>PFV-A:3FS</sub> between eye:PL-hiss  
 ‘The girl rose (and) kissed him on the forehead.’

This alternation could be comparable to an ‘antipassive’, which can be conditioned by aspect (e.g. Hopper and Thompson 1980). The form based on the intransitive construction, such as *fahəm-Ø*, is durative, meaning ‘He knew, was able to perceive’, while the one based on the transitive, e.g. *fhəm-le*, is punctual, meaning ‘He realized’. It is possible that *yaləf-Ø* in (48a) below, for example, is used to focus on the learning process over time, while the agent-like form *iləf-la* in (48b) focuses on the moment of its completion and reaching a concrete effect (Ritter’s “completed nature”), even though both are perfective in terms of grammatical aspect (Ritter 1990, 656);<sup>23</sup> this is also a distinction in the coding of transitivity.

(48) **Punctuality vs. durativity** (Midyat; Prym-Socin 1881, 157.25, 201.6)

a. *yaləf-Ø*      *ú-kürrəko qroyo,*      *msək-le*  
 learn<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub> the-boy read:INF seize<sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>  
*ás-saḥrat*      *b-í-qrayto*  
 the-magical.power:PL PRP-the-reading  
 ‘The boy learnt to read, (and) acquired magical powers through reading.’

22 German original (ibid.): “wenn man das plötzliche Eintreten des Geschehens, oder seinen abgeschlossenen Charakter hervorheben will”.

23 Ritter (1990, 656) hints at such a subtle aspectual difference by his comment to (48b) “die Lehre ist abgeschlossen”.

- b. *ilaf-la*            *qroyo?*    *omər*    *ilaf-la*,            *mayit-o*  
 learn<sub>PFV-A:3FS</sub> read:INF he.says learn<sub>PFV-A:3FS</sub> die<sub>PFV-S:3FS</sub>  
 ‘Did she (i.e. the camel<sub>F</sub>) finally become able to read? He said: She did  
 (and) died.’

It is possible that an additional semantic difference in dynamism plays a role, as observed for Jewish Sulemaniyya (see § 3.5.1 and § 3.5.2.). This is compared in (49a–b) below. A verb like *tym* ‘finish’ would focus on the cessation of an action and is more stative and endpoint-oriented than a verb like *bdy* ‘begin’, which implies a dynamic initiation.

(49) **Dynamic vs. stative**

	Ṭuroyo (SE Turkey)		J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a)	
a. ‘finish’				
tr.	<i>matəm-le</i>	tr.	<i>mtim-le</i>	(stem III, L-set)
intr.	<i>tayəm-∅</i>	intr.	<i>tim-∅</i>	(stem Ib, stative, E-set)
b. ‘begin’				
intr.	<i>bde-le</i>	intr.	<i>bde-le</i>	(stem Ia, dynamic, L-set)

However, one equally finds lexical alternatives that are not triggered by this semantic difference, such as *xlš* for ‘finish’ in examples like *maxlaš-li ú-müklo* ‘I finished eating’ (Ritter 1990, 221).

Four main lexical classes thus interact and overlap, as summarized in Table 38 below. Each may attract other verbs of similar semantics or derivational patterns.

The \**qattil*-form stands out system-internally. It is largely confined to basic single argument verbs that hardly occur in a labile alternations and to two-argument verbs denoting mental situations. In other respects, split subject-marking in Ṭuroyo shows strong similarities to that in NENA. *s<sub>A</sub>* coding (i.e. the L-set) becomes increasingly more likely under semantic conditions similar to those found in NENA (cf. Khan 2004a, 304–305), where an effect is more strongly implied and the event is punctual and dynamic. Nevertheless, lexicalization largely obscures these tendencies.

TABLE 38 ʤuroyo stem I subclasses in the ‘perfective’

	<i>q̣til</i> -base		<i>*qattil</i> -base	
tr.	<i>hze-le</i> (Ia)	‘see’	<i>šamə</i> <sup>c</sup> -∅ (Ib)	‘hear’
intr.	<i>šhe-le</i>	‘swim’	<i>raqəd</i> -∅	‘dance’
intr.	<i>fših</i> -∅ (I <sub>M</sub> )	‘be(come) glad’	<i>saməq</i> -∅	‘be(come) red’

### 5.3 The Neo-Aramaic Dialect of Mlaḥsó

Mlaḥsó is rather distinct from the dialects of ʤur ‘Abdin and similar to peripheral NENA dialects in SE Turkey. The neutral indexing and differential flagging of P are also comparable to Jewish dialects in Iranian Azerbaijan. Passive and anticausative voice phenomena in Mlaḥsó are different from all other dialects. Finally, the realis perfect is based on the *\*qattil*-form regardless of lexical semantics and comparable to the situation in Christian Borb-Ruma.

#### 5.3.1 *Alignment of Person Marking*

Mlaḥsó groups all grammatical functions under the L-set in the perfective past, treating S, A and P alike in morphological marking.<sup>24</sup> The E-set is never used as object indexes in Mlaḥsó. This is similar to Christian NENA dialects in SE Turkey, particularly C. Borb-Ruma (Bohtan, SE Turkey; Fox 2009), but also to the Northwest Iranian Jewish dialects, such as Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2008b). Example (1) offers a comparison for the verbs ‘take’ and ‘rise’ between Mlaḥsó and C. Borb-Ruma:

#### (1) Neutral alignment

Mlaḥsó	C. Borb-Ruma
(Jastrow 1994, 146.10)	(SE Turkey; Fox 2009)
a. <i>šíd-len-li</i>	c. <i>šád-lan-ni</i>
‘They took me.’	‘They took me.’
b. <i>qim-li</i>	d. <i>qəm-li</i>
‘I rose.’	‘I rose.’

24 For a different view, see Coghill (2016, 90) who considers this “fully accusative alignment”, presumably because she identifies alignment on the basis of affix order rather than phonological form. See § 2.3.2.3. for why I do not consider that determinative here.

An (*e*)-*l*-series of independent object person markers is treated like full nominals and occurs in preverbal position (Jastrow 1994, 14). It may also alternate with the L-set as dependent person marker,<sup>25</sup> which is comparable to the *ʿall*-series in NENA.

### Mlaḥsó

e. *l-i šid-len*

‘They took **me**.’

The distinction between dependent and independent person markers is marginal in Mlaḥsó. The difference between the L-set and (*e*)-*l*-series is most conspicuous in the 3ms. and 1pl. where the preposition takes the distinct suffixes *-áv* and *-əna*. Compare (2a) and (2b) below.

(2) Mlaḥsó (Jastrow 1994, 96.164,167)

a. *hiv-le el-áv mo dahvé* (independent)  
 give<sub>PFV</sub>-A:3MS R:DAT-3MS hundred gold:PL

b. *hív-le-le mo dahvé* (dependent)  
 give<sub>PFV</sub>-A:3MS-R:3MS hundred gold:PL  
 ‘He gave **him** one hundred pieces of gold.’

Pronominal objects are limited in general in Mlaḥsó. An object index is not obligatory and is frequently lacking when the referent is considered to be clear enough from the context. It is generally only expressed once and not continued by other constructions with the same referent (Jastrow 1994, 56).

Finally, agents are not marked prepositionally as in *Ṭuroyo*, except for the first person plural. The first person plural does not distinguish between dative and unmarked independent person markers. While other persons distinguish between unmarked and dative forms, such as the first person singular *ono* ‘I’, as opposed to (*e*)-*li* ‘me’ and third masculine singular *hiye* ‘he’ as opposed to *eláv*

25 Jastrow (1994, 54–56), however, suggests that, since his Turkish informants (Diyarbakır) predominantly use independent person markers instead, the higher frequency of object L-suffixes in the speech of his Syrian informant (Qamishli) is due to interference from *Ṭuroyo*. Although her speech probably does contain hybrid forms of *Ṭuroyo* and Mlaḥsó (Jastrow 1994, 35), one could conversely argue that the prevalence of independent person markers in the speech of Jastrow’s other informants is due to an overall stronger interference of Kurmanji Kurdish in Turkey, where such person forms are independent. Since the two co-existing object marking strategies are common to all his informants, I will not treat one as more genuinely Mlaḥsó over the other.

‘him’, the first person plural is *eləna* throughout and can also mark S or A even in the ‘imperfective’ (compare ʦuroyo *aḥna* and *elan*) (Jastrow 1994, 28, 63). It is based on the dative preposition (*e*)- and the first person plural ‘possessive’ suffix *-əna*. Thus unlike other independent person markers, the 1pl. *eləna* is completely neutral to its syntactic role, merging S, A, P, T and R (Jastrow 1994, 63),<sup>26</sup> for example:

- (3) **First person plural pronoun in Mlaḥsó**<sup>27</sup>
- |                             |                          |     |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| a. <i>eləna pišlan tamo</i> | ‘We stayed there.’       | (S) |
| b. <i>eləna emirlan</i>     | ‘We said.’               | (A) |
| c. <i>eləna mapletlen</i>   | ‘They helped us escape.’ | (P) |
| d. <i>eləna mobele</i>      | ‘He brought us there.’   | (T) |
| e. <i>eləna hivlen</i>      | ‘They gave to us.’       | (R) |

Generally speaking, then, Mlaḥsó prepositional marking is accusative (A=S≠P), but neutral for the first person plural (A=S=P). Indexing is morphologically neutral. Differential indexing and prepositional marking of arguments does not appear to be combined.

### 5.3.2 *Neutralizing Subject Coding: Mediopassive with L-suffixes*

Transitive and intransitive verbs inflect alike in the ‘perfective’ in Mlaḥsó. Mlaḥsó makes no distinction between the coding of S or A, for example:

- (4) *dmix-lan* ‘We slept.’  
*ḥze-lan* ‘We saw.’  
*šmiʿ-lan* ‘We heard.’

The E-set does not occur in combination with *qtil-* under any conditions.

The L-set marks S in all intransitive constructions alike, including the passive. Only a few anticausatives remain in the active stem I that correspond to verbs belonging to stem 1b (*\*qattil-*) in ʦuroyo, for example *ḥrv* ‘destroy’, whose corresponding causative is stem III:

26 It appears, however, that a biform exists for its object-marking function on the basis of ‘al-’ ‘on, upon’, e.g. *ʿaləna šədlən* ‘They took us (captive)’ (Jastrow 1994, 104.2).

27 Examples from Jastrow (1994, 104.2, 132.149, 104.11, 124.116.121).

## (5) The verb ‘destroy’ in Mlaḥsó and Ṭuroyo

<b>Mlaḥsó</b> <sup>28</sup>		<b>Ṭuroyo</b>	
intr.	<i>beyt-í ḥriv-le</i>	intr.	<i>bayt-i ḥaru-Ø</i> (stem I)
	‘My house got destroyed.’		‘id.’
tr.	<i>maḥrev-le</i>	tr.	<i>maḥru-le</i> (stem III)
	‘He destroyed (sth.).’		‘id.’

The *s* of a passive is similarly marked by the L-set. The *-t*-infix is the only morphological difference between the active and mediopassive of stem III verbs, such as *Øḥt* ‘put’:

- (6) tr. III *maḥet-le* ‘He put (sth.).’  
 intr. III<sub>M</sub> *mtaḥet-le* ‘He was put.’

Voice distinctions, therefore, are completely attuned to the type of stem in Mlaḥsó (Jastrow 1994, 41). In Ṭuroyo, by contrast, this is mainly dependent on verbal person marking. We can contrast this stem neutralization in Mlaḥsó to the voice distinctions in Ṭuroyo for the labile stem I verb ‘open’ and the transitive stem III verb ‘sell’ (cf. Jastrow 1996). The inflectional base is modified depending on TAM in Ṭuroyo, but on valency in Mlaḥsó.

## (7) Stem neutralization in Mlaḥsó (Adapted from Jastrow 1994, 83.53–54, 88.99; 1996)

<b>Mlaḥsó</b>		<b>Ṭuroyo</b>	
a.	<i>tar’ó</i> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">mepseh</span> -Ø	f.	<i>ko-</i> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">māftəḥ</span> <i>-Ø tar’ó</i> (present)
	‘A door opens.’		‘id.’
b.	<i>tar’ó</i> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">mepseh</span> - <i>le</i>	g.	<i>fṭiḥ-Ø tar’ó</i> (preterit)
	‘A door opened.’		‘id.’
c.	<i>tar’ó psiḥ-le</i>	h.	<i>fṭəḥ-le tar’ó</i> (active, preterit)
	‘He opened a door.’		‘id.’
d.	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">mzaban</span> - <i>no</i>	i.	<i>ko-mizaban-no</i> (passive, present)
	‘I am sold.’		‘id.’
e.	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">mzaban</span> - <i>li</i>	j.	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 0 2px;">mzaban</span> - <i>no</i> (passive, preterit)
	‘I was sold.’		‘id.’

28 Examples from Jastrow (1994, 118.85, 158).

The examples in (7) show that the Mlaḥsó mediopassive makes no distinction between ‘perfective’ and ‘imperfective’ inflectional bases.<sup>29</sup> The mediopassive base (e.g. I<sub>M</sub> *mepseh-*, III<sub>M</sub> *mzaben-*) is stable throughout, but the subject and agent coding is entirely tense-aspect-sensitive (e.g. E-set in the present vs. L-set in the preterit) irrespective of lexical semantics. The levelling of mediopassive stems in Mlaḥsó is presumably analogical to the active counterparts of stem II and IV verbs (Jastrow 1996, 57). These similarly merge the ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’ in ʦuroyo active forms,<sup>30</sup> for example:

<b>Mlaḥsó</b> k. <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">zaben</span> -no ‘I sell.’	<b>ʦuroyo</b> m. <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">ko-mzaban</span> -no ‘id.’	(present)
l. <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">zaben</span> -li ‘I sold.’	n. <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">mzabal</span> -li (< <i>mzaban-li</i> ) ‘id.’	(preterit)

In the end, the crucial difference from ʦuroyo is the complete mixing of stems in Mlaḥsó by extending the ‘imperfective’ bases to the expression of the perfective past. The single L-set, otherwise associated with agent coding in ʦuroyo and NENA, covers the entire voice spectrum ranging from causative to passive, functioning as the main TAM marker (preterit) against the E-set (present).

### 5.3.3 *Special Perfect Forms Based on \*qattil-*

The E-suffixes never express objects in Mlaḥsó, as they do in ʦuroyo and numerous NENA dialects (see § 2.3.3.). As person markers of both s and A, they are not only found in the ‘imperfective’ forms of all verbs, but also in the perfect, only attested for stem I. The perfect is formed with the *\*qattil-* base, for example:

(8) <b>Mlaḥsó</b> (Jastrow 1994)		
a. <i>dmix-le</i>	‘He fell asleep.’	(preterit, L-set)
b. <i>damix-∅</i>	‘He has fallen asleep.’	(perfect, E-set)
c. <i>qim-le</i>	‘He rose.’	(preterit, L-set)
d. <i>qaym-∅</i> (< <i>*qayyim-</i> )	‘He has risen.’	(perfect, E-set)

29 The distinction between ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’ is also levelled in the *ims.* conjugation of hollow verbs belonging to stem I, cp. *sim-no* (~ *səm-no*) ‘I make (sth.)’ and *sim-li* ‘I made (sth.)’ (Jastrow 1994, 36).

30 There may also be another connection. It is possible to inflect certain ‘perfective’ forms of a mediopassive by means of L-suffixes to express a recipient referent in ʦuroyo, e.g.

The \**qaṭtil*-forms can also be used to express result states, e.g. *kla rumo kali* ‘Look there, a soldier is standing’ (Jastrow 1994, 142.36).

These perfect forms as such, however, are not restricted to intransitive and lowly transitive verbs in Mlaḥsó. All verbs, even transitives, which do not feature in the so-called \**qaṭtil*-subclass in Țuroyo, such as *ḥze-le* ‘see’ against *šamə-∅* ‘hear’, can be conjugated in the same way in Mlaḥsó, e.g. *šmi-le* ‘He heard’ against *šami-∅* ‘He has heard’.

This situation is similar to our observations for C. Borb-Ruma (SE Turkey) in NENA (see § 4.4.3.2.), although NENA does not show a change in inflectional base. (9) below offers a comparison of the verbs ‘see’ and ‘give’.

(9) Transitive realis perfect in Mlaḥsó and C. Borb-Ruma

Mlaḥsó (Jastrow 1994)	C. Borb-Ruma (Fox 2009)	
a. <i>ḥze-li</i> ‘I saw.’	e. <i>ḡze-li</i> ‘id.’	(preterit, L-set)
b. <i>ḥazi-no</i> ‘I <sub>M</sub> have seen.’	f. <i>ḡz-ən</i> ‘id.’	(perfect, E-set)
c. <i>hiv-le</i> ‘He gave.’	g. <i>hu-li</i> ‘id.’	(preterit, L-set)
d. <i>ḥayv-∅</i> ‘He has given.’	h. <i>hu-∅</i> ‘id.’	(perfect, E-set)

The difference between Mlaḥsó and C. Borb-Ruma mainly hinges on the two verbal bases for stem I verbs, \**qaṭtil*- for the realis perfect against *q̣til*- for the preterit. In both dialects, the perfect and preterit are distinguished by a distinct set of verbal person markers. The perfect is transitive and readily combines with object NPs in the same fashion as the ‘imperfective’, for example:

- (10) a.  $[P]$  *ḥelm-ano*  $[V-A]$  *ḥazi-no*  
dream:M-DEM:MS see:PERF-A:1SG  
‘I saw **that dream**.’ (Jastrow 1994, 130.139)

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*mtawmər-ře* (< *mtawmər-* + *-le*) *tə-mede* ‘He (lit. him) was told nothing’ (Jastrow 1992, 85.15).

[A]			[V	-A	-P]
b. <i>em-i</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>ov-i</i>	<i>naʦir</i>	<i>-a</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>-li</i>
mother:F-my and father:M-my look.after:PERF -A:3PL -P:1SG					
'My parents looked after me.' (ibid. 94.157)					

Verbal forms that otherwise denote the perfective past can also express the present perfect or a result state in ʦuroyo just as in NENA, e.g. *adi'-at-li?* 'Do you<sub>SG</sub> still know me?', and *ftih-i ayn-a* 'Her eyes were open' (Midyat, Prym-Socin 1881, 88.21). Nevertheless, it is possible to mark the realis perfect by means of the actualizing preverb *ko-*, which may also be enhanced by additional particles *ga* and *kal*, for example:

- (11) ʦuroyo (cf. Jastrow 1985, 153–154)
- |                                   |                        |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| a. (∅-) <i>qti-le</i>             | 'He killed (him).'     | (preterit) |
| b. <i>ko-qti-le</i>               | 'He has killed (him).' | (perfect)  |
| c. (∅-) <i>qayəm-∅</i>            | 'He rose.'             | (preterit) |
| d. <i>ko-qayəm-∅</i>              | 'He has risen.'        | (perfect)  |
| e. (∅-) <i>šamə<sup>c</sup>-∅</i> | 'He heard.'            | (preterit) |
| f. <i>ko-šamə<sup>c</sup>-∅</i>   | 'He has heard.'        | (perfect)  |

This system, where the only morphological distinction between preterit and perfect is preverbal TAM-marking, has nevertheless parallels in NENA.<sup>32</sup>

By contrast, the choice between the L-set or E-set in subject and agent coding depends wholly on aspect in Mlahsó similarly to NENA dialects, such as C. Borb-Ruma (SE Turkey). The *\*qattil*-form is less grammaticalized along the path from resultative to perfective past, while the *qtil*-form with L-suffixes has fully grammaticalized. In other respects, the *\*qattil*-form in ʦuroyo is less grammaticalized. Only two-argument state verbs belonging to stem (1b) may take objects, so that the *qattil*-form has not grammaticalized fully to also include highly transitive verbs. This also confirms an earlier grammaticalization of the *qtil*-form with L-suffixes, as this form, by contrast, is compatible with all types of verbs, including the primary transitive ones and sometimes even stem (1b) verbs, whereas the other way around does not apply.

31 It should be noted that the 3pl. index of the Mlahsó perfect is distinctly *-a* instead of *-i*, which thus far defies explanation.

32 Compare the discussions in §§3.4.2, 3.4.3, 4.1.2.2. and 4.3.1.

## 5.4 The Primacy of Intransitive Coding

The mediopassive inflectional base, e.g. \**məqtəl-*, is extended from the ‘imperfective’ to the expression of the preterit, i.e. perfective past, in Mlaḥsó. This morphological adaptation proceeds in the opposite direction in NENA found in the preterit, where the *transitive* coding is analogical to the ‘imperfective’.

First of all, as we saw in the previous section, the E- and L-series are tense-aspect-conditioned subject and agent markers in Mlaḥsó. Remarkably, in some respects, the Mlaḥsó verbal system mirrors the transitive *qam-qatəl-* construction found in NENA dialects (see §4.4.5.). While several NENA dialects use a dedicated transitive construction based on the ‘imperfective’, Mlaḥsó uses a dedicated intransitive construction on the basis of an ‘imperfective’ base. It is only the set of person markers that expresses the TAM distinction:

	INTRANSITIVE		TRANSITIVE	
(1)	<i>mepseh -o</i>	‘It <sub>F</sub> opens.’	<i>posh-o-le</i>	‘She opens it <sub>M</sub> .’
	<i>mepseh -la</i>	‘It <sub>F</sub> opened.’	<i>psih-la-le</i>	‘She opened it <sub>M</sub> .’

The *qatəl-* base is extended from the present to the preterit in NENA, while the *məqtəl-* base of the intransitive pendant is extended from the present to the preterit in Mlaḥsó. The direction of morphological adaptation is schematized in (2) below.

### (2) Mlaḥsó

	PRET	PRS
	PFV-BASE	IPFV-BASE
tr.	<i>psih-la-le</i>	<i>posh-o-le</i>
		←
intr.	<i>mepseh-la</i>	<i>mepseh-o</i>

Ṭuroyo finds itself in the middle. Consider the following examples.

- (3) *ko*-IPFV-E-L    *ko-*    *madamx-o-li* ‘She lulls me to sleep.’  
 (∅-)-PFV-E-L    (∅-)    *madamx-o-li* ‘I lulled her to sleep.’
- (4) *ko*-IPFV-E    *ko-*    *madmax-no* ‘I<sub>M</sub> lull to sleep.’  
 PFV+L                                    *madmax-li* ‘I lulled to sleep.’

To some extent, the adoption of the stem from the ‘imperfective’ into the preterit is also found among speakers of the Neo-Aramaic dialect of Midyat,

for example the stem I<sub>M</sub> verb *jǧl* ‘speak’, e.g. *ko-mǧǧəl-Ø* ‘He is speaking’, *jǧil-Ø* ‘He spoke’ like *ko-mǧfšəḥ-Ø* ‘He is glad’, *fših-Ø* ‘He became glad’. *maqṭəl*-forms of the following kind can be found instead of expected *qṭil*-forms, and with the additional L-suffix to indicate the distinction in TAM:

(5) Ṭuroyo (Midyat; cf. Ritter 1967–1971, 11/297)

	PRET	PRS
	PFV-BASE	IPFV-BASE
unmodified	<i>jǧil-Ø</i>	<i>ʾmǧǧəl-Ø</i>
adapted	<i>mǧǧe-le</i>	<i>←mǧǧəl-Ø</i>

Preverbal TAM-marking (*ko-*) is significant to differentiate between forms that are morphologically identical, such as stem III verbs like *madmāx-* ‘lull to sleep’. Preterit and actual present are differentiated by the prefix *ko-* only when third person coding from the E-set (e.g. 3fs. *-o*) immediately follows the verbal base. When argument coding other than third person immediately follows the verbal base, no such ambiguity would arise due to the person role constraint.

The E-set (*-no*) and L-set (*-li*) arguably signal a shift in tense-aspect comparable to Mlaḥsó, where *ko-* practically serves only to distinguish the realis present from the subjunctive. Mlaḥsó uses the *x*-preverb only with initial weak verbs. The distinct set of verbal person markers is sufficient to keep the tense-aspect apart.

The system in Mlaḥsó, therefore, is not only grounded in the levelling of inflectional bases by means of morphological identity and analogy (Jastrow 1996, 57), but it is also facilitated by the TAM marking function of the respective sets of suffixes.<sup>33</sup>

## 5.5 Summary from Stem to Stern

Central Neo-Aramaic has much in common with Northeastern Neo-Aramaic. With respect to alignment, Ṭuroyo and Mlaḥsó are especially similar to the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA. Ṭuroyo is similar to Jewish dialects of Iraqi and Iranian Kurdistan. Mlaḥsó is similar to Christian dialects in SE Turkey such as Borb-Ruma (Bohtan) as well as Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan. What sets them apart from these NENA varieties is the use of mediopassive stem

33 Ironically when I asked (educated) Ṭuroyo speakers (from Qamishli) whether forms like *\*\*nšiq-at-li* ‘I kissed you<sub>FS</sub>’ were possible, they replied with disapproval and told me I was confusing tenses.

derivations and a distinct ‘perfective’ base *\*qattil-*, whose original resultative-stative intransitive semantics lingers on and is reflected in different ways.

Object-marking is person-restricted for *qtil-* in Turoyo as in the majority of NENA. The E-set is limited to the third person, grouping S and P ergatively, while first and second person are marked by the L-set, grouping A and P horizontally. The alignment of dependent person markers is phonologically non-distinct for Mlaḥsó, where the E-series is unavailable to mark objects:

(1)	<b>Ṭuroyo</b>		<b>Mlaḥsó</b>	
	P[-1,2]	P[+1,2]	P[-1,2]	P[+1,2]
tr.	<i>ftih-o-le</i>	<i>ftəḥ-le-li</i>	<i>psih-le-la</i>	<i>psih-le-li</i>
intr.	<i>ftih-o</i>		<i>mepseh-la</i>	

Differential prepositional marking as well as a series of independent object person markers are based on the preposition (*e*)-. Although nouns are normally unmarked in Turoyo, differential prepositional marking does occur. Turoyo is unique in using (*e*)- also to mark optionally A together with indexing (the L-suffixes). This yields an ergative prepositional marking pattern alongside ergative indexing of full NPs, e.g. *haṭe xil-o-le l-u-kalwo* ‘The dog ate this’. The optional prepositional marking of the agent parallels the possessor in predicative possessor constructions, e.g. *abro kət-le l-u-malko* ‘The king has a son.’<sup>34</sup> The possible prepositional marking patterns are illustrated below for the phrases ‘The king opened the door’ and ‘The door opened’. Differential object marking and optional A-marking are not mutually exclusive. In at least the dialect of Rayite, they may be combined, manifesting horizontal alignment (like first and second person markers). Ergative indexing appears to be combined only with ergative prepositional marking and never horizontal prepositional marking.

(2)	<b>Ṭuroyo</b>		
a.	(A=S=P) NEUTRAL	(A≠S=P) ERGATIVE	
tr.	<i>u-malko ftəḥ-le u-tar’o</i>	<i>l-u-malko ftəḥ-le u-tar’o</i>	
intr.	<i>u-tar’o ftih-∅</i>	<i>u-tar’o ftih-∅</i>	
b.	(A=S≠P) ACCUSATIVE	(S≠A=P) HORIZONTAL	
tr.	<i>u-malko ftəḥ-le l-u-tar’o</i>	<i>l-u-malko ftəḥ-le l-u-tar’o</i>	
intr.	<i>u-tar’o ftih-∅</i>	<i>u-tar’o ftih-∅</i>	

34 On this parallelism, see Diem (2012) and Noorlander (2021; forthcoming).

The dialects of ʦur ʿAbdin have various verbal classes, in which the compatibility with A-like coding primarily hinges on the verbal base and not the verbal semantics. Basic verbs known as ‘neuter verbs’ generally do not occur in labile alternations and have a special *\*qaṭṭil*-base in the ‘perfective’ in ʦuroyo, e.g. *damix-o* ‘She fell asleep’ as opposed to *fiḥ-o* ‘It<sub>F</sub> opened’, particularly verbs whose subject is an affectee registering a state or change of state. Semantically, single argument states, change-of-state verbs and uncontrolled processes are typically incompatible with S<sub>A</sub> marking, while verbs with a stronger implication of a dynamic effect, such as sound emission verbs, e.g. *mwəḥ-le* ‘He barked’, typically take the L-suffixes like A. Many situation types, however, such as controlled activities are variably categorized in ʦuroyo, e.g. *raqəḏ-Ø* ‘dance’ vs. *zmər-le* ‘sing’. A few transitive verbs that generally express two-argument mental states and activities, such as *šmʿ* ‘hear’ and *ylf* ‘learn’ are incompatible with A-like coding, and take transitive person marking similarly to that of the ‘imperfective’, e.g. *šamiʿ-o-li* ‘She heard me’: *šəmʿ-o-li* ‘She hears me’. Primary transitives never occur in the *\*qaṭṭil*-form as such, but some verbs of class (1b) occasionally occur in the inflection of class (1a), whereby *šməʿ-le* ‘He heard’ and *dməx-le* ‘He slept’ have been attested alongside *šaməʿ-Ø* and *daməx-Ø*. The difference between the two is not always semantically obvious, but it may reflect a relic of fluid-subject marking that once existed in ʦur ʿAbdin, as it did in NENA.

Mlaḥsó, in turn, has a fully productive distinction between preterit and perfect depending on both inflectional base (*qṭil*- vs. *\*qaṭṭil*-) and related agent and subject indexes (L-set vs. E-set). The *qṭil*-form combines with the L-set to express the preterit, e.g. *dmix-le* ‘He fell asleep’, *šmiʿ-le* ‘He heard’, *qṭile* ‘He killed’, but the *\*qaṭṭil*-form combines with the E-set to express the perfect, e.g. *damix-Ø* ‘He has fallen asleep, is asleep’, *šamiʿ-Ø* ‘He has heard’, *qaṭil-Ø* ‘He has killed’. Preterit and perfect are distinguished by the TAM-preverb *ko-* in ʦuroyo, compare:

(3)	<b>ʦuroyo</b>		<b>Mlaḥsó</b>	
	PRETERIT	PERFECT	PRETERIT	PERFECT
tr.	<i>ftəḥ-le</i>	<i>ko-ftəḥ-li</i>	<i>psiḥ-le</i>	<i>paṣiḥ-Ø</i>
intr.	<i>daməx-Ø</i>	<i>ko-daməx-Ø</i>	<i>dmix-le</i>	<i>damix-Ø</i>

Finally, Central Neo-Aramaic shows a more complex verbal derivation system than NENA. ʦuroyo and Mlaḥsó diverge significantly here as well: the set of person markers is essentially valency-conditioned in ʦuroyo, but tense-aspect-conditioned in Mlaḥsó, so that for the verb ‘open’ we observe:

(4)		<b>Ṭuroyo</b>		<b>Mlaḥsó</b>	
		PRET	PRS	PRET	PRS
	CAUSATIVE	<i>ftəḥ-le</i>	<i>ko-fotəḥ-∅</i>	<i>psih-le</i>	<i>poseḥ-∅</i>
	INCHOATIVE	<i>ftih-∅</i>	<i>ko-məftəḥ-∅</i>	<i>mepseḥ-le</i>	<i>mepseḥ-∅</i>

In comparison to NENA (cf. Mengozzi 1998, 84), the *qatəl*-base has a wider functional distribution in NENA, because of the lack of special anticausative morphology in the ‘imperfective’, as contrasted in (5) below.

(5) Inchoative ‘open’ in Central Neo-Aramaic and NENA

	<b>Ṭuroyo</b>	<b>Mlaḥsó</b>	<b>J. Sanandaj</b>	<b>C. Jinnet</b>
	(SE Turkey)	(SE Turkey)	(W Iran)	(SE Turkey)
PFV	<i>ftih-∅</i>	<i>mepseḥ-le</i>	<i>plix-∅</i>	<i>ptəḥ-le</i>
IPFV	<i>°məftəḥ-∅</i>	<i>mepseḥ-∅</i>	<i>päləx-∅</i>	<i>potəḥ-∅</i>

Another important difference from NENA is that the agentless *qṭil*-form (cf. Gutman 2008) may be used to express the impersonal passive of both transitive and intransitive verbs in Ṭuroyo, e.g.

(6)	<b>Ṭuroyo</b>			
	<i>ftih-i-le</i>	<i>at-tar‘e</i>	‘He opened them—the doors.’	(causative)
	<i>ftih-i</i>	<i>at-tar‘e</i>	‘The doors opened.’	(inchoative)
	<i>ftih</i>	<i>tar‘e</i>	‘People opened doors.’	(impersonal)

## Cross-Dialectal Synopsis of the Morphosyntax

Constructional splits have been a recurrent theme in the discussions of the distinct dialect groups of Neo-Aramaic in the previous chapters, each of which are conditioned by features that have been pertinent to the question of ergativity in linguistic typology. On closer examination, however, these features, though some of them consistent with typological traits of ‘split ergativity’, need not reflect ergativity nor split alignment in general. While the dialectal diversity of Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic shows a staggering degree of morphosyntactic microvariation, there are general motifs in the construction-specific and dialect-specific constraints that merit a separate chapter to compare these cross-dialectally.

Moreover, splits on some level do not preclude splits on another, so that sometimes subsystems may be observed within constructional splits, including those conditioned by TAM (Section 6.1), morphological coding (Section 6.2), (in) transitivity (Section 6.3.) and referential properties (Section 6.4). In all of this, the morphology of arguments shows the highest degree of variation, always at least in some way linked to the historically resultative participle *qtīl-*, but not exclusively, whereas the general syntax of arguments is largely consistent across space and time. Differential object marking, for instance, is an essential component of the morphosyntax, which seems to be completely blind to the alignment typology of a given dialect, but does seem to favor different combinations of coding strategies depending on the dialect, thus sometimes manifesting morphological splits. The coding of *s*, in turn, is typically manifested in verbal person marking and correlates with the additional expression of TAM in verbal inflection more strongly than the coding of *p*. Moreover, the coding of *s* largely also depends on the lexicalization of transitivity, i.e. whether the intransitive verb or clause in question is compatible with transitive morphology, thereby sometimes resulting in split intransitivity. The L-suffixes are more grammaticalized as indicators of A in the expression of the transitive perfective past, while the E-suffixes as indicators of *s* tend to ‘lag behind’ in the grammaticalization of the intransitive resultative. In addition, the marking of A can be dependent on the properties of its co-argument, *p*, i.e. the presence or absence of a pronominal object. Thus, perfective past clauses with A and *p* sometimes show a degree of markedness greater than all other types of clauses.

## 6.1 Tense-Aspect-Sensitive Splits

TAM can be expressed on three levels of morphological abstraction in Neo-Aramaic, namely:

- a) the preverbal modifier, such as *hole*, *la* or *na* in NENA (see § 3.4.2., § 4.1.2.2., § 4.3.1.) or *ko* in ʿTuroyo (§ 5.3.3.);
- b) the inflectional base, such as *q̄til-* vs. *qaṭal-* representing the reflexes of the historical resultative and active participle, respectively;
- c) the set of person markers, such as L-suffixes vs. E-suffixes (see § 3.4.3., § 4.3.1., § 4.4.3.2., § 5.4.).

Cross-linguistic surveys of implicational TAM scales for alignment splits conditioned by TAM (e.g. Malchukov 2015) predict that resultative and perfect are the most likely to pattern ergatively against the perfective past and especially the imperfective present and imperative. When the perfective past patterns ergatively, the perfect and resultative are expected to do so as well (see § 3.2.1.2.).

TAM splits in NENA are further complicated by the fact that the two sets of person suffixes, the E-set and L-set, can both be attached to *q̄til-* in denoting S and/or A in different tense-aspect constructions. They have been built into the TAM system as a means to distinguish TAM categories and reflect different degrees of grammaticalization along the tense-aspect scale of resultative, perfect and preterit, which represents diachronically the grammaticalization from stative-resultative to perfective past (e.g. Bybee and Dahl 1989):

- (1) stative > resultative > perfect > perfective past (preterit)

### 6.1.1 *The Tense-Aspect-Mood Scale*

First of all, the TAM-conditioned split in Neo-Aramaic represents first and foremost a constructional split, which is the end result of specific diachronic developments. The splits in Neo-Aramaic mainly depend on inflectional base: *q̄til-* as opposed to *qaṭal-* (or *qoṭal-* in Central Neo-Aramaic), going back historically to the resultative and active participles respectively. Synchronically, imperfective and perfective aspect are secondary, as verbal constructions are strictly speaking not always dedicated to a single TAM category.

Moreover, the alignment for *q̄til-*, i.e. the ‘perfective’, may not be different from that of *qaṭal-*, i.e. the ‘imperfective’, but the constructional split is generally characterized by a role reference inversion. Whether this leads to an additional distinction in alignment depends primarily on variation in the coding of S in the relevant dialect(s). Alignment types other than accusative and ergative are conditioned by these inflectional bases; even ditransitive coding was found to be dependent on them (see § 4.4.2.2. and § 5.2.1.2.). When there is

a split, however, the accusative is favored in the imperative and irrealis imperfective present constructions.

The ‘imperfective’, i.e. *qaṭal-*, is accusatively aligned, while the ‘perfective’, i.e. *qṭil-*, patterns ergatively for the third person in SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, both of which are compared below (see § 3.3.1.).

(2) J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a, 2007a)

ERGATIVE		ACCUSATIVE	
PERFECTIVE (PRETERIT)		IMPERFECTIVE (PRESENT)	
[P]	[V-P-A]	[P]	[V-A-P]
a. <i>baxtāké xəzy-a-le</i>		c. <i>baxtāké xaze-Ø-la</i>	
‘He pulled the woman.’		‘He sees the woman.’	
PERFECTIVE (PRETERIT)		IMPERFECTIVE (PRESENT)	
[S]	[V-S]	[S]	[V-S]
b. <i>baxtāké qim-a</i>		d. <i>baxtāké qem-á</i>	
‘The woman rose.’		‘The woman rises.’	

It is mainly the transitive construction that is treated differently, while s is consistent. On the other hand, some subjects of intransitive verbs are compatible with A-like person marking in *qṭil-* (see § 3.5.):

[S]	[V-S]	[S]	[V-S]
e. <i>baxtaké tṗal-la</i>		f. <i>baxtaké tṗal-á</i>	
‘The woman sneezed.’		‘The woman sneezes.’	

The differential treatment of intransitive clauses like (2e) above is apparent only in the perfective past. There is no *a priori* reason, however, to consider the ‘imperfective’ counterpart in (2f.) less transitive in morphosyntax than that in (2e), since there is no morphological device to distinguish A apart from s. Intransitive verbs such as *tṗl* ‘sneeze’ are therefore arguably compatible with transitive coding in both ‘perfective’ and ‘imperfective’ clauses.

SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties are thus consistent with the implicational TAM scale. If the ergative verbal person marking occurs in the perfective past, it also occurs—albeit to different degrees depending on the dialect—in the realis and irrealis perfect as well as the resultative aspect, which are generally expressed by constructions based on the copula or *hwy* ‘be’ and the resultative participle. The same holds for third person pro-indexes in the Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin, although there the intransitive ‘perfective’ may show a distinct inflectional base, e.g. *damix-o* ‘She slept’ as opposed *ftiḥo* ‘It<sub>F</sub> opened’. Third person

accusative agreement in the perfective past, but ergative agreement in the perfect is possibly found in the Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA (see § 3.4.5.). The feminine participial agreement arguably points to special marking of A. This is only found in the perfect based on the resultative participle *q̄tila*.

The Trans-Zab Jewish dialect of Rustaqa and Rewanduz, however, run counter to the TAM scale (see § 3.4.3): the same type of ergative marking as shown in (2a–b) is confined to the resultative and perfect based on *q̄til-*. The perfective past shows an accusative grouping of verbal person marking distinct from this. This is an incidental effect of the gradual grammaticalization from resultative to preterit (see further below).

This notwithstanding, the majority of NENA dialects show a purely constructional split, where s and A are grouped with distinct affixes. This, in turn, is confined to the third person in the majority of those dialects (see § 4.4.1.). Intransitive ‘perfective’ clauses are completely distinct from the ‘imperfective’ only in dialects that systematically group s and A by the L-suffixes, as illustrated below. Consequently, accusative alignment as such prevails across TAM categories in the majority of dialects, albeit often limited to the third person.

(3) C. Marga

ACCUSATIVE PERFECTIVE (PRETERIT)	ACCUSATIVE IMPERFECTIVE (PRESENT)
[V-P] [-A] [P]	[V-A] [-P] [P]
a. <i>xəzy-a -la baxta</i> ‘She saw the woman.’	c. <i>xazy-a -la baxta</i> ‘She saw the woman.’
[V] [-s] [s]	[v-s] [s]
b. <i>qəm -la baxta</i> ‘The woman rose.’	d. <i>qaym-a baxta</i> ‘The woman rises.’

A few Christian dialects in SE Turkey and Northern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties in Iran express the object with L-suffixes in both the ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’ (see § 4.4.3.). The primary distinction between the two inflectional systems or TAM constructions, respectively, is the distinct coding of s and A, for example:

(4) J. Urmī (NW Iran; Garbell 1965; Khan 2008b)

NEUTRAL PERFECTIVE (PRETERIT)	ACCUSATIVE IMPERFECTIVE (PRESENT)
[P] [V-A-P]	[P] [V-A-P]
a. <i>baxtá xzé-la-la</i> ‘She saw the woman.’	c. <i>baxtá xazy-a-la</i> ‘She sees the woman.’

- |                        |       |                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| [s]                    | [v-s] | [s]                    | [v-s] |
| b. <i>baxtá qəm-la</i> |       | d. <i>baxtá qaym-a</i> |       |
| ‘The woman rose.’      |       | ‘The woman rises.’     |       |

By contrast, the main difference between the ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’ can be confined to intransitive verbs. The special marking of A by means of the L-E series in Western Christian *h*-dialects of NENA in SE Turkey shows partial overlap with the inflection of the ‘imperfective’ (see § 4.4.4.). Special marking of A by means of the *qam-qatəl*-construction is found across NENA dialects (see § 4.4.5.). This is completely based on the inflectional base *qatəl-* to express the perfective past. All that is changed is the preverbal TAM-marking, while the morphology specific to *qatəl-* is kept intact, as shown in the comparison below.

(5) J. Dohok (NW Iraq; Molin 2021)

- |                                |     |                              |       |     |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|-------|-----|-----|
| ERGATIVE                       |     | ACCUSATIVE                   |       |     |     |
| PERFECTIVE (PRETERIT)          |     | IMPERFECTIVE (PRESENT)       |       |     |     |
| [V-A                           | -P] | [P]                          | [V-A  | -P] | [P] |
| a. <i>qam-xazy-a -la baxta</i> |     | c. <i>k-xazy-a -la baxta</i> |       |     |     |
| ‘She saw the woman.’           |     | ‘She sees the woman.’        |       |     |     |
| [v                             | -s] | [s]                          | [v-s] | [s] |     |
| b. <i>qəm -la baxta</i>        |     | d. <i>qəm-a baxta</i>        |       |     |     |
| ‘The woman rose.’              |     | ‘The woman rises.’           |       |     |     |

6.1.2 From Stative-Resultative to Preterit

Northern and Western Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA and C. Artun and Borb-Ruma in SE Turkey show subject marking that is conditioned by an opposition between resultative or perfect against the perfective past. The alternation between L-set and E-set depends on the inflectional base *qtil-*, as this is not found elsewhere, e.g. for *qatəl-*. With respect to the third persons, fluid-s marking is observed: s<sub>A</sub> for the perfective aspect, but s<sub>P</sub> for the realis perfect, for example:

(6) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Garbell 1965; Khan 2008b)

- |                               |                    |                    |                       |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| [v                            | -P                 | -A]                |                       |
| a. <i>xəzy -a -la</i>         |                    |                    | (transitive preterit) |
| see <sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> | -P:3 <sub>FS</sub> | -A:3 <sub>FS</sub> |                       |
| ‘She saw her.’                | (lit. Her saw she) |                    |                       |

- b.  $+dm\acute{a}x$   $-la$  (S<sub>A</sub> intransitive preterit)  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS  
 ‘She went to sleep.’ (lit. Her slept)
- c.  $+dmix$   $-a$  (S<sub>P</sub> intransitive realis perfect)  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS  
 ‘She has gone to sleep.’ (lit. She slept)

The opposition between result-state and dynamic action focus of the intransitive situations correlates with their degree of grammaticalization from resultative to preterit. Intransitive resultative and/or perfect patient-like forms like *dmix-a* interact with resultative and/or perfect forms based on the enclitic copula and resultative participle. By and large, the patient-like form, i.e. the E-set, will never be higher on the grammaticalization scale from resultative-stative to preterit than the agent-like form, i.e. L-set. There are only subtle differences between dialects in terms of aspect: in Jewish Rustaqa (NE Iraq), both the participial (*q̄tila*) and the patient-like *q̄til*-construction express an intransitive resultative-stative, whereas in Jewish Urmi (NW Iran) only the participial construction with the copula can be used to express resultative-statives and the patient-like form denotes the realis perfect (see § 3.4.).

The difference in subject coding is the result of the slower grammaticalization of *q̄til*- + E-set, thereby creating a gap for a transitive realis perfect corresponding to the intransitive resultative/perfect:

(7)		PRETERIT		PERFECT
	tr.	<i>q̄təl-le</i>	‘He killed’	<input type="text"/> ‘He has killed’
	intr.	<i>qim-le</i>	‘He rose’	<i>qim-∅</i> ‘He is/has risen’

The gap may also be filled by a derivation of the ‘perfective’ by means of pre-verbal TAM-modification. The TAM marker *lā* together with the S<sub>P</sub> form expresses the resultative-intransitive in J. Rustaqa (NE Iraq). The corresponding transitive perfect is based on *q̄til-le*, as given below (see § 3.4.3.).

(8)	J. Rustaqa (NE Iraq)				
	PRETERIT		PERFECT/RESULTATIVE		
	tr.	<i>q̄til-le</i>	‘He killed’	<i>lā q̄til-le</i>	‘He has killed’
	intr.	<i>qim-le</i>	‘He rose’	<i>lā qim-∅</i>	‘He is up, risen’

The difference may be entirely based on the set of person indexes attached to the ‘perfective’ (*q̄til*): A and S are grouped by the E-set in the perfect similarly

to *qaṭal-* in C. Borb-Ruma, illustrated below (see § 4.4.3.2.). A similar pattern is documented for Mlaḥsó, although the perfect is distinguished from the preterit by a special inflectional base with a *CaCiC*-template, *qaṭil-Ø* ‘He has killed’ (see § 5.3.3.).

(9) C. Borb-Ruma (Bohtan, SE Turkey; Fox 2009)

	PRETERIT		PERFECT	
intr.	<i>qam-le</i>	‘He rose’	<i>qim-Ø</i>	‘He has risen’
tr.	<i>qṭal-le</i>	‘He killed’	<i>qṭil-Ø</i>	‘He has killed’
	<i>qṭál-le-lā</i>	‘He killed them’	<i>qṭil-i-le</i>	‘They have killed him’
	<i>qṭál-li-lux</i>	‘I killed you <sub>MS</sub> ’	<i>qṭil-ət-li</i>	‘You <sub>MS</sub> killed me’

In addition, the L-set is used to express object indexes throughout the inflectional system. Consequently, one cannot speak of either a patient-like form or role reference inversion in this dialect, as only the marking of s and A are distinguished. The differential expression of A (and s) is unique to *qṭil-*: the E-set expresses A and s in the realis perfect as it does in *qaṭal-* (e.g. *xil-a-le* ‘She has eaten it<sub>M</sub>’, *ǧz-ən-nux* ‘I<sub>M</sub> have seen you<sub>MS</sub>’), but the L-set expresses all core functions in the perfective past (e.g. *ǧzé-li-lux* ‘I<sub>M</sub> saw you<sub>MS</sub>’).

The L-E-suffixes in the *ḥ*-varieties in SE Turkey closely related to Borb-Ruma (see § 4.3.1 and § 4.4.4.) function similarly to these agent markers in the expression of the perfective past. The insertion of the *l*-morpheme incidentally maintains a distinction between transitive perfect forms like *qbil-ət-ti* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> have received me’ and transitive perfective past *qbəl-l-ət-ti* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> received me’ in C. Artun (Hertevin). The transitive perfect, however, seems to be less grammaticalized than in C. Borb-Ruma and patient-oriented perfects are more common, e.g. *ḥil-a* ‘It<sub>F</sub> was eaten’. This occurs alongside the inverted ‘perfective’ limited to third person objects, e.g. *ḥil-a-le* ‘He ate it<sub>F</sub>’.

On the whole, the differences in subject coding seem to reflect the degree of grammaticalization from intransitive resultative to perfective past via the perfect (e.g. Bybee and Dahl 1989). The use of the E-set as subject indexes tends to be closely associated with the resultative-stative and/or perfect of the imperfective aspect more so than the use of the L-set as agent indexes to express the perfective past. Khan (2004, 2008b, 2013)<sup>1</sup> argues that this grammatical split is ultimately derived from the lexical split displayed by the aforementioned split-s dialects. Goldenberg (1992, 129–130), however, already suggested that the tense-aspectual split is older than the lexical split in SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties.

1 See also Mengozzi (2005), Doron and Khan (2010, 2012), Barotto (2015), Coghill (2016).

Khan revised his view in the course of time, so that Khan (2017) is much more in line with the conclusions made here. Following Goldenberg, it seems more plausible to me<sup>2</sup> that the resulting incoherence is simply levelled out differently in the respective dialects by the innovation of new transitive realis perfects. Even for the SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, it is plausible that the patient-like intransitive resultative (*qim-∅* ‘He is up’) grammaticalized via the perfect (‘He has risen’) to preterit (‘He rose’), replacing the preterit, in which *s* inflected like *A* (*qim-le* ‘He rose’). The *S<sub>A</sub>* forms in these dialects, such as *ye-le* ‘He was’, *pšax-le* ‘He rejoiced’, are relics of such a former distinction. Language contact with local Iranian languages that show ergative morphosyntax and innovative compound verbal constructions expressing the resultative and/or perfect could have pushed the intransitive resultative into the perfective past. This seems more plausible to me than that the forms with E-suffixes in the preterit ‘degrammaticalized’ to a resultative (*qim-∅* ‘He rose’ > ‘He is up, has risen’). There is no independent evidence for this and the development is in itself not straightforward.

## 6.2 Morphological Splits

As across languages of the world and the Semitic family in general, accusative alignment prevails in Neo-Aramaic. The accusative grouping is preferred in both flagging and indexing, but not to the same degree for each coding strategy. The verbal person marking can differ greatly in type and complexity from prepositional marking: alignment splits are rather common in verbal agreement, while prepositional marking patterns accusatively in the majority of dialects. This is most likely connected with the historical development of the morphology: the TAM split in general is the incidental outcome of different sources, whereby the person marking for *qtil-* originated in the adjectival agreement of an originally resultative participle and developed suffixal person markers, similarly to the corresponding active participle that continues in *qaṭal-* (see Noorlander forthcoming). In like manner, the possibility of the marking of the agent nominal with the preposition *l-*, albeit rather differently in NENA than in Turoyo, and its close link to the L-suffixes only in *qtil-* is consistent with this unique historical development from a resultative participle with a wide array of argument orientations.<sup>2</sup> The parallels with L-suffixes in other con-

<sup>2</sup> See Noorlander (forthcoming) for further references and argumentation.

structions, such as ditransitives, can similarly be connected with the historical dative (see Noorlander 2021).

### 6.2.1 *Prepositional and Verbal Person Marking Entangled*

Independent prepositional object person markers are generally included in the flagging system, which also includes full object NPs (see § 3.1.2. and § 4.1.1.2.) Pronominal Ps can be prepositional, sometimes even obligatorily in the perfective past, while it is sometimes impossible for salient nominal Ps to be flagged in the same way. Independent objects, and distinct strategies of object marking in general, are required when dependent equivalents are not available,<sup>3</sup> irrespective of alignment type. In Neo-Aramaic studies, this has been connected with a decline of originally ergative alignment, but it has been demonstrated in the previous chapters that, synchronically, there is no connection with a particular alignment pattern *per se*. There is, however, a connection with a usage decline of the E-set attached to *qtil-*, which may be completely obsolete as object markers (see § 4.4.1.2.), and a usage increase of alternative expressions. Restrictions on object coding, however, are not peculiar to *qtil-*: it also affects for example a set of object indexes related to the ‘possessive suffixes’ in the imperative in Turoyo (SE Turkey), as discussed in § 5.2.1.2., and the ‘possessive suffixes’ in the compound perfect or progressive in J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq), as discussed in § 3.3.2.1.

Similarly, only dependent person markers qualify for cross-indexing,<sup>4</sup> i.e. those person markers that are attached to the verb can index a coreferential nominal, although some of these are, like the L-suffixes, derived from prepositional pronouns and thus flagged argument indexes having become cross-indexes. In particular the *ʿall-*series, originally fully independent like full NPs, may be phonetically reduced and attach to an immediately preceding verb, becoming increasingly dependent on it (e.g. *ǰzéllox-ʿlleu* ‘You<sub>MS</sub> saw him’ for *ǰzéllox ʿalléu* in J. Arbel), which is also irrespective of alignment type (see § 3.1.2.2. and § 4.4.2.). As dependent person markers, they may be used in the indexing of masculine singular NPs in *qtil-* alongside the E-set for the feminine singular and common plural, if available. The third person  $\emptyset$ -morpheme from the E-set, for example, is not used in Jewish Arbel, but the corresponding person form of the *ʿall-*series is the only means to index a masculine singular NP.

3 Universal G. in Haspelmath (2013, 222).

4 Universals A. and B. in *ibid*.

TABLE 39 Splits with prepositional marking of P in the perfective past

Flagging of NP	Indexing of NP	Dialects
(A=S=P) neutral / (A=S≠P) accusative	(A=S≠P) accusative	most of NENA (e.g. J. 'Amedia, C. Ashitha)
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A=S=P) neutral	Northern Trans-Zab Jewish NENA (e.g. J. Urmi), Christian dialects in SE Turkey (e.g. C. Borb-Ruma), Mlaḥsó
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S=P) ergative	Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish NENA (e.g. J. Sulemaniyya)
(A=S=P) neutral / (A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S≠P) tripartite / (A≠S=P) ergative	Ṭuroyo
(A=S=P) neutral	(A≠S=P) ergative	The majority of NENA dialects with the <i>qam-qaṭəl</i> -construction
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S=P) ergative	A few NENA dialects with the <i>qam-qaṭəl</i> -construction (e.g. C. Telkepe)

Consistent with cross-linguistic tendencies, therefore, flagging and indexing of full NPs usually converge, but some combinations are contrary to this tendency. This is summarized in Table 39 above for splits with object flagging and in Table 40 below for splits with optional agent flagging, respectively; the object marking is conditioned by definiteness in all combinations.

From this we conclude that accusative cross-indexing of full NPs is readily found alongside or combined with accusative flagging in NENA, much like Aramaic in general. Ergative cross-indexing may also be combined with ergative prepositional marking in the 'perfective' in Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur 'Abdin (see § 5.2.2.). To illustrate: the E-set *-i* in (10) below indexes P, and the full nominal is zero-marked like S, while the preposition (*e*)/- and the L-set mark A; this prepositional marking of A is optional and often focalizes it.

(10) Ṭuroyo (Iwardo, SE Turkey; Ritter 1967–1971, 55/11)

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| [S]                   | [V-S]                                  |
| a. <i>áh-ḥete</i>     | <i>naḥiq-i</i>                         |
| the-wheat:PL          | go.out <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S:3PL</sub> |
| 'The wheat went out.' |  |

TABLE 40 Splits with prepositional marking of A (and P) in the perfective past

Flagging of NP	Indexing of NP	Dialects
(A≠S=P) ergative	(A≠S≠P) tripartite	The restricted agentless perfective in several NENA dialects, mostly NW Iraq
(A=S=P) neutral / (A≠S=P) ergative	(A≠S≠P) tripartite / (A≠S=P) ergative	Both rural and urban Neo-Aramaic dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin
(A≠S=P) ergative / (S≠A=P) horizontal	(A≠S≠P) tripartite	The Neo-Aramaic dialect of Rayite in Ṭur ‘Abdin

[P] [V -P -A] [ERG→A]  
 b. *áḥ-ḥeṭ-ani* *xil -i -le* *l-ú-moro*  
 the-wheat:PL-DEM:PL eat<sub>PV</sub> -P:3PL -A:3MS DAT-the-master:MS  
 ‘The owner ate this wheat.’

Flagging and indexing can also diverge with respect to alignment. If they do, the person marking is expected to be accusative and the nominal marking to be ergative, while the other way around, i.e. accusative nominal marking but ergative person marking, is virtually non-existent (Comrie 1978, 340; Dixon 1979, 92, 1994, 95–96) (see § 3.2.2.).

Across NENA dialects, especially those of early literary texts, which normally group S and A accusatively by the L-set, a focalized agent NP may be marked by *l-* or its dialect-specific allomorphs, in which the verbal *qṭil*-form regularly shows an index of P but never of A (see § 4.2.). Depending on the dialect, such agent focalization constructions are generally interpretable as transitive, although agentless *qṭil*-forms can also be impersonal like impersonal passives. The independent prepositional pronoun in the transitive construction in (11) below, for example, is not indexed on the verb (\*\**lālox qṭil-ēna-lox*). The person marking is only ergative in trigger potential, as there is no indexing of A. It is tripartite in morphological marking, however, since S and P are morphologically distinct.

(11) Early J. Nerwa (Literary, NW Iraq; Goldenberg 1992, 121)  
 [ERG→A] [V -P]  
 a. *lāl-ox* *qṭil -ēna*  
 DAT-2MS kill<sub>PV</sub> -P:1MS  
 ‘(It is) you<sub>MS</sub> (who) killed me.’

- [s] [v -s]  
 b. *'āhət qīm -lox*  
 you:MS rise<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -S:2MS  
 '(It is) you<sub>MS</sub> (who) rose.'

In the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, the prepositional marking is always accusative and never ergative. The cross-indexing may be ergative, grouping s and p by the E-set in the third person (see § 3.3.1.). Both represent two distinct strategies of differential object marking that combine only exceptionally. In Jewish Sulemaniyya, accusative prepositional marking and ergative indexing of full NPs can thus be exceptionally combined in differential object marking:

(12) J. Sulemaniyya (W Iran; Khan 2004a, 326)

- [s] [v -s]  
 a. *yalé zil -i ta-baǧdád*  
 child:PL go<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -S:3PL DAT-PRN  
 'The children went to Baghdad.'
- [DOM→P] [v -P<sup>5</sup> -A]  
 b. *lǎ-yalé lǎbl -i -le ta-baǧdád*  
 DOM-child:PL take<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -T:3PL -A:3MS DAT-PRN  
 'He took the children to Baghdad.'

Neutral, i.e. morphologically non-distinct person marking by the same L-set, also combines with accusative prepositional marking, for example in Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects:

(13) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Garbell 1965, 178)

- [s] [v -s]  
 a. *+šǔltaná +dmáx -le*  
 'The king slept.'
- [A] [DOM→P] [v -A -P]  
 b. *+šǔltaná 'əl-brön-éw nšáq -le -le*  
 king:MS DOM-son:MS-his kiss<sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -A:3MS -P:3MS  
 'The king kissed his son.'

5 Note that, strictly speaking, the verb is ditransitive and *yalé* 'children' is a theme, but it serves to show the possible combination of ergative indexing and accusative case-marking.

Finally, horizontal prepositional marking by the preposition *(e)l-* occurs in the village of Rayite in *Ṭur* ‘Abdin (SE Turkey) (see §5.2.2.), but this does not appear to combine with indexing, presumably because of the close structural—and historical—link between the L-set and the preposition *l-*, which typically both mark a full nominal in other constructions such as recipients, predicative possessors, experiencers, alongside definite objects in the ‘imperfective’ (see Noorlander 2021).

Verbal person marking can be identified by different criteria, namely morphological marking, i.e. identical person marker sets; relative position, i.e. prefixal or suffixal; and trigger potential, i.e. absent, conditioned or unconditioned. There is a clear preference for accusative alignment in this respect, but the alignment in trigger potential may diverge from that in form. For instance, the ergative grouping of s and p in terms of trigger potential is not always consistent with the morphological marking, as shown in the rather exceptional agent focalization in (11) above. The verbal person marking in the preterit in SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, by contrast, is accusative in trigger potential, like the rest of the verbal system, such as *qaṭal-*, and only ergative in its morphological marking. The indexing of full nominal ps is overall more restricted and context-dependent than the unconditional indexing of s and A, for example:

(14) J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; illustration based on Khan 2004a, 2007a, 148–149, 154)

	[A]	[P]	[V(-P)	-A]	
a.	<i>goraké</i>	<i>baxtaké</i>	<i>nəšq-a</i>	<i>-le</i>	(definite P)
	man:DEF:MS	woman:DEF:FS	kiss <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS	-3MS	
b.	<i>gora</i>	<i>baxta</i>	<i>nšəq(-∅)</i>	<i>-le</i>	(indefinite P)
	man:MS	woman:FS	kiss <sub>PFV</sub>	-3MS	
			‘A man kissed a woman.’		
		[S]	[V-S]		
c.		<i>baxtaké</i>	<i>qim-a</i>		(definite s)
		woman:DEF:FS	rise <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS		
		‘The woman rose.’			
d.		<i>baxta</i>	<i>qim-a</i>		(indefinite s)
		woman:FS	rise <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS		
		‘A woman rose.’			

In the final analysis, there are no clear-cut distribution patterns in usage of either object flagging and/or indexing, and the two coding strategies do not appear to be mutually exclusive in monotransitive constructions. First/second person objects may be preferably independent and prepositional, like demonstrative pronouns and full nominals, leading to a person-role constraint in *q̄til*-. Agent flagging, however, is always combined with agent indexing in Ṭuroyo, while this combination seems to be impossible in NENA.

### 6.2.2 *Ergative-Like Markedness*

Alignment types are sometimes further differentiated by their relative morphological and functional markedness (see § 4.2.1.). The isolated argument distinct from *s* in typologically marked systems is realized as  $\emptyset$  and/or has a greater potential to trigger overt agreement. The so-called ‘marked nominative’ and ‘marked absolutive’ types go against this tendency.

Marked alignment types of prepositional marking have not been observed for neither Northeastern nor Central Neo-Aramaic, since *s* is, on the whole, never prepositional. The one exception is Ṭuroyo, where the *s* of a few intransitive verbs may be compatible with *(e)l*-, exactly like *A*, thereby treating some intransitive verbs as transitive, but this is always accompanied by indexing. Otherwise, the isolated argument, i.e. *P* or *A*, is overtly marked in either accusative or ergative prepositional marking, and only rarely both *A* and *P* in horizontal prepositional marking.

Markedness considerations could be made with respect to agreement. The possible zero realization and the trigger potential for overt agreement are the main factors in the markedness of agreement. The set of person markers that has most zero realizations is considered an unmarked instance of the expression of *s*. In Neo-Aramaic, the potential candidate for this would be the *E*-set, where the 3ms. form is  $\emptyset$ , since the *L*-set does not have any zero realizations. In addition, the trigger potential for overt indexing of person, number and/or gender is the highest for *s* and the lowest for *P* throughout the verbal system in all dialects, with *A* coming in between, albeit most often equivalent to *s*.

Thus, ergative grouping of *s* and *P* by the *E*-set is typically only manifested in third person cross-indexes in SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA and third person pro-indexes in Ṭuroyo. This is in accordance with expectations of the functional markedness, as the zero realization is only found for the third masculine singular *s* and *P*:

## (15) J. Saqiz (W Iran; based on Israel 1998)

[v-S]

a. *dmix-Ø* (intransitive)sleep<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3SMS

'He slept.' (lit. Slept)

[v-P -A]

b. *nšiq-Ø -la* (transitive)kiss<sub>PFV</sub>-P:3MS -A:3FS'She kissed **him**.' (lit. Her kissed)

The verb indexes only s and P in compound perfects in Jewish dialects of Iranian Kurdistan, as illustrated in (16) below (see § 3.4.7). The indexing of P is conditioned by definiteness, while A never triggers agreement, which is typical of ergative systems; the reference of A in this construction is also limited to the third person. Without differential object marking, the clause would be potentially ambiguous, although the P-v word order contributes to argument disambiguation.

## (16) J. Saqiz (W Iran; Israeli 1998, 100–101)

[s] [v-S]

a. *blan-ú dmix-én*

daughter:PL-his slept:NONFS-S:3PL

'His daughters slept.' (lit. are slept)

[A] [P] [v-P]

b. *bronaké ilé bab-év nəšq-én*

son:MS:DEF hand:PL father:MS-his kissed:NONFS-P:3PL

'The son kissed the hands of his father.' (lit. are kissed)

The overt vs. zero marking also plays a role in the participial agreement in the compound perfect of Jewish Sulemaniyya (and Ḥalabja) conditioned by gender (see § 3.4.6.). Unlike the closely related Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects like J. Saqiz above, the person markers always pattern accusatively: the enclitic copula expresses s and A, whereas P is expressed by a different set, namely the 'əll-series or the 'possessive suffixes'. The main distinction is between overt agreement for the feminine singular (*qtəl-t-*) against zero for the plural and the masculine singular (*qətl-Ø-*). In transitive clauses, the feminine singular triggers participial agreement, irrespective of the A or P function of the argument. Thus, ergative alignment is manifested when P is non-feminine singular and A is

feminine singular, while accusative alignment is manifested when P is feminine and A is non-feminine singular.

(17) J. Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq; based on Khan 2004a)

a. *nšəq-t-aw-ye* (ergative agreement with P)

kissed-P:FS-P:3FS-A:3MS

‘He has kissed **her**.’

b. *nšəq-t-ew-ya* (accusative agreement with A)

kissed-A:FS-P:3MS-A:3FS

‘**She** has kissed him.’

c. *šmix-ta-ya* (agreement with s)

watied-S:FS-S:3FS

‘**She** has waited.’

Here, the trigger potential for person and number coding is the same for all grammatical functions, but the overt agreement in gender and number on the participle shifts in the direction of the morphologically marked category, the feminine singular, regardless of the role. The s and the non-participial coding, i.e. the copula and the ‘possessive’ suffixes, remain unaffected, while A is arguably more marked than P, except when there is ergative agreement, which is consistent with functional markedness.

A contrasting phenomenon results in special marking of A in the compound perfect of Northern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties such as J. Urmi (see §3.4.5.). Only the feminine singular A evinces an additional /t/-element in participial agreement, while other arguments, including feminine singular objects, do not show this morphology. The overt agreement is not just conditioned by gender and number, as it is in Jewish Sulemaniyya, but also conditioned by the A function. If this analysis is correct, the feminine ergative agreement reflects a marked ergative pattern, since only A triggers such agreement morphology. The reason for the absence of such morphology for s in intransitive constructions is that it has a distinct historical development, being grounded in *qtil-* and not in the resultative participle *qtila*.

Secondly, the accusative alignment of dependent person markers in NENA, as illustrated below has been analyzed as ‘marked nominative’ (Barotto 2015) or ‘extended ergative’ (Doron and Khan 2012; cf. Mengozzi 2002b, 45, fn. 144) due to a conflation of nominal marking and person marking typology. Clearly, these NENA dialects are typically accusative in terms of trigger potential, but arguably ‘marked nominative’ in terms of phonological form only because of the  $\emptyset$  morpheme of the 3ms. (see §4.2.1.2.), as shown below.

(18) J. 'Amedia (NW Iraq; adapted from Hoberman 1989, 36, Greenblatt 2011, 101)

	[v	(∅)	-s]	
a. <i>dmix</i>	(∅)	-le		(intransitive)
	sleep <sub>PFV</sub>	(P:3MS)	-S:3MS	
	'He slept.' (lit. Him slept)			

	[v	-P	-A]	
b. <i>nšiq</i>	-∅	-le		(transitive)
	kiss <sub>PFV</sub>	-P:3MS	-A:3MS	
	'He kissed him.' (lit. Him kissed)			

In general the E-set, as object indexes, is more restricted in usage than the L-set in the majority of NENA dialects and may even be confined to the 3pl. (-i) and 3fs. (-a), so that the zero realization of a third masculine singular object person form is impossible. Perfective past forms like *xze-la* could only mean 'She saw' and not *\*\*xze-∅-la* 'She saw him'. Other strategies to express such objects have to be used, such as the 'all-series in Jewish Arbel *ǧze-le ʿalléu* 'He saw him' (NE Iraq; Khan 1999, 119) or the *qam-qaṭal*-construction in C. Aradhin *qam-xāz-ə-ne* 'I saw him' (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982, 28).

In a few NENA dialects that group s and A with the L-set, it is possible for the agent NP to be overtly expressed without triggering indexing (Gutman 2008; see § 4.2.). Overt indexing of A is favored in most contexts, whereas absence thereof creates a special truncated transitive construction for dialect-dependent purposes, illustrated in (19) below. Although this is a rather marginal phenomenon, the L-suffixes that encode A may be omitted without violating the P status of the patient. The agent receives no coding reference to its role, while a prominent P may still trigger cross-indexing, as exemplified below. The expression of A in this construction is limited and generally restricted to the third person, especially third person plural, much like the impersonal passive.

(19) J. Zaxo (NW Iraq)

	[s]	[v-s]
a. (∅-) <i>xūrās-e</i>	<i>se-lu</i>	
	friend:PL-his	come <sub>PFV</sub> -3PL
	'His friends came.'	

- |   |                                     |              |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| [A]   | [V-P(-A)]                           | [P]          |
| b. (Ø-)xūrās-e  | fhūm-a(-Ø)                          | (Ø-)zāya ... |
| friend:PL-his   | understand <sub>PFV-3FS(-3PL)</sub> | matter:FS    |
| ‘His friends understood the matter ...’ (Gutman 2008, 74) |                                     |              |

This omission does not apply to s, and often another verb in the immediate context expresses the same topical referent, for example:

- (20) C. **Ashitha** (Literary, NW Iran; Polotsky 1996, 17, transcription modified)
- |   |                               |              |                                    |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>te-lay</i>   | <i>šqil-a(-Ø)</i>             | <i>baxta</i> | <i>b-xurṭūta w-zal-lay</i>         |
| come <sub>PFV-3PL</sub>                               | take <sub>PFV-3FS(-3PL)</sub> | woman:FS     | by-force and-go <sub>PFV-3PL</sub> |
| ‘They came, <b>took</b> the woman by force and went.’ |                               |              |                                    |

In these phenomena s and P are evidently not grouped in morphological marking, i.e. L-set vs. E-set. One could argue that this is an ergative grouping (A≠S=P) only in terms of trigger potential, since only s and P are overtly cross-indexed, but not A. The overt indexing of s and P but zero indexing of A is restricted in these dialects with respect to transitive constructions that do show overt agent indexing: A needs to be contextually identifiable, for instance by another preceding or following verbal construction.

Finally, a similar case of absence of overt agreement with the agent in otherwise accusatively aligned constructions is the participial predicate of the compound perfect, where the copula and the participle agree with s and A, but the third person enclitic copula may also be omitted entirely, so that the participial inflection is the only remaining agent (or subject) coding, e.g.

- (21) C. **Barwar** (NW Iraq)
- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| a. <i>qṭil-a(-Ø)</i>  | <i>xá-neriye</i> |
| killed-MS(-3MS)   | a-goat:MS        |
| ‘He has killed a male goat.’ / ‘A male goat has been killed.’ <sup>6</sup> (lit. A-goat killed) (Khan 2008a, A31:4) |                  |

The same compound verbal form can also express the passive, so that when the two referents belong to the same gender and number and the patient is not differentially marked, the functions of the arguments have to be inferred from the context. Naturally when the two referents are of distinct gender and number, there is no ambiguity, since A controls the agreement, and word order

<sup>6</sup> Or, in theory, ‘A male goat has killed (sb.)’

may contribute to role disambiguation but is not sufficient. Although the agent regularly precedes the verb in A-V-P order, the patient may be focalized to preverbal position (Khan 2008a, 752). The remaining agreement is generally controlled by the agent in P-V-A order, but when the agent also precedes the verb (P-A-V), agreement may be controlled by the patient like the subject, the agent being zero-marked. This resembles the ergative agreement in the compound perfect of the Jewish varieties of Iranian Kurdistan, illustrated in (16).

- |                         |                     |                |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| [P]                     | [A][-COP:P]         | [RPP-P]        |
| b. <i>'ayya yaləxta</i> | (∅-) <i>babi-la</i> | <i>zqir-ta</i> |
| DEM:FS                  | handskerchief:FS    | father:MS-3FS  |
|                         | woven-FS            |                |
- 'This handkerchief has been woven **by my father**.'<sup>7</sup> (lit. This handkerchief my father is woven) (Khan 2008a, A37:12)

On the whole, s and A are higher in trigger potential than other functions: agreement with s is always obligatory, and it is mainly third person agents that do not necessarily trigger overt agreement, while this may be impossible or disfavored for the first/second person. The feminine singular is morphologically most salient, and this may even be the sole trigger of agreement irrespective of the argument's function. The masculine singular is generally the least marked of the third person, possibly realized as ∅, and often identical to the default form when there is no cross-indexing of P.

### 6.2.3 *Role Reference Inversion*

The relative position of A and P in the affix order is essential to the role reference inversion in *qaṭəl-/qṭil-*. In transitive constructions, the E-set marks A in *qaṭəl-*, but P in *qṭil-*, and the other way around for the L-set. The morphemes occur in the same order, but their cross-reference is reversed: the affix order of *qaṭəl-* is V-A-P, but the reverse, i.e. V-P-A, for *qṭil-*. While a V-P-A order is more common for suffixal person markers that morphologically align accusatively (Siewierska 2004, 167), this is still found for the third person ergative person marking in the SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects and Turoyo, alongside accusative person marking in NENA dialects elsewhere. This notwithstanding, there might be a correlation between the V-P-A order and accusative alignment in NENA: it is precisely in those dialects where *qṭil-* groups s and A by the L-set that the V-P-A order in *qṭil-* is not restricted by person, so that the role reference inversion is complete only in those dialects that are accusative throughout (see § 4.4.1.).

<sup>7</sup> Or, in theory, 'This handkerchief has woven my father.'

There are indications that the affix order may be analogically extended to other verbal constructions, where P is distinctly marked. Where a person-role constraint restricts V-P-A affix order in *qtil-*, this may also be found in compound verbal forms denoting the perfect or progressive. In Christian Urmi, the V-P-A order is unrestricted by person in both the preterit and the compound perfect (and progressive), as illustrated in (22a) and (22b) below. Contrast this with Jewish Sulemaniyya in (22c–d), where the V-P-A order is confined to third person objects for both the preterit and the compound perfect (and progressive). Although the preterit distinguishes S from A in J. Sulemaniyya, the progressive does not do so and shows an accusative grouping. Thus, the sequence does not correlate with an alignment type in this respect.

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| (22) | <b>C. Urmi</b><br>(Literary, NW Iran;<br>Marogulov 1979, 58)<br>PRETERIT<br>[V-P-A]<br>a. <i>šqil-ət-li</i><br>take <sub>PFV</sub> -2MS-1SG<br>‘I took you <sub>MS</sub> .’<br><br>COMPOUND PERFECT<br>[V-P-A]<br>b. <i>šqil-ux-vən</i><br>taken-2MS-1MS<br>‘I <sub>M</sub> have taken you <sub>MS</sub> .’ | <b>J. Sulemaniyya</b><br>(NE Iraq;<br>based on Khan 2004a)<br>PRETERIT<br>[V-P-A]<br>c. <i>gərš-a-le</i><br>pull <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS-3MS<br>‘He pulled her.’<br><br>COMPOUND PERFECT<br>[V-P-A]<br>d. <i>grəšt-aw-ye</i><br>pulled:FS-3FS-3MS<br>‘He has pulled her.’ |
|------|---|---|

A direct correlation for affix order cannot be established, however, since in other dialects, such as C. Shaqlawa (NE Iraq), the inverted V-P-A order is confined to 3fs. for the preterit, but compound verbal constructions with V-P-A order show no such restrictions. The divergent person role constraints could be accounted for by the different diachronic developments, since the person restrictions on P in *qtil-* could be motivated by the historical origins of the third person E-set in the participial agreement of an often impersonal construction. This is different from the other strategies, which, for instance, reflect original adnominal possessive suffixes.

The inflection of *qaṭəl-* penetrates the inflection of *qtil-*, promoting a V-A-P sequence in several dialects (cf. Mengozzi 2002b, 46). We observed a possible tendency to normalize the use of the E-set or L-set at the cost of either of the two to encode a specific grammatical function (S, A, P) by morpho-

logically adapting transitive coding in analogy to *qaṭəl-*, i.e. the predominant morphosyntax, so that *qṭil-* and *qaṭəl-*morphology become mixed. Stacked L-suffixes, the L-E-series and the *qam-qaṭəl-*construction are alternatives to the E-set analogical to *qaṭəl-* and seem to be geared to make the L-suffixes in the same V-A-P sequence as that of *qaṭəl-* the regular expression of pronominal Ps throughout the verbal system, as illustrated in (23) (see § 4.4.)

(23) **Alternative strategies to mark P**

	P	A		
a. <i>qṭil</i>	-E	-L	inverted role marking	(§§ 2.3.3.3, 3.3.1.1., 4.4.1, 5.1.2.)
	A	P		
b. <i>qṭil</i>	-L	PP	prepositional object	(§§ 3.3.2.1., 4.4.2, 5.4.1)
c. <i>qṭil</i>	-L	-L	stacking of L-suffixes	(§§ 4.4.3, 5.2.1., 5.3.1.)
d. <i>qṭil</i>	-L	-E	-L	mixing (§ 4.4.4.)
e. <i>qṭil</i>	-E	-L	transitive realis perfect	(§§ 4.4.3.2, 5.3.3.)
f. <i>qam-qaṭəl</i>	-E	-L	perfective past preverb	(§ 4.4.5.)
g. ° <i>qaṭəl</i>	-E	-L	(unmarked verbal inflection)	(§ 2.1.)

These constructions, however, are not necessarily promoting accusative morphosyntax for dependent person markers,<sup>8</sup> since s, for example, is not affected and generally remains expressed by the L-set. Stacked L-suffixes, for example, manifests a type of neutral alignment, i.e. phonologically non-distinct sets. The L-E-series rather manifests ergative alignment, albeit confined to first/second person agents, and the use of the *qam-qaṭəl-*construction alongside *qṭil-* results in a pattern that cannot be characterized as accusative either, but we would expect such morphosyntactic transitivity to trigger special marking of A in an ergative system.

This analogy also inspires morphological adaptation of the compound progressive and perfect on the basis of the morphological parallelism between the first/second person enclitic copulas and the E-set and between the 'all-series and the L-set, respectively. The third person enclitic copula, by contrast, may merge with the L-suffixes. The phonetically reduced forms assimilate more fully to the 'imperfective' when they occur in transitive clauses with two dependent

8 For different analyses, see Mengozzi (2002b, 2005). Khan (2013, 2017), Barotto (2015), Coghill (2016).

person markers, which incidentally results in the expression of A by morphology distinct from s (see § 3.4.5. and § 4.3.2.4.).

In the end, the morphological split between *qaṭəl-* and *qṭil-* is the incidental outcome of the original sources: the active and resultative participle, respectively. The inversion reminds us of the active and passive diathesis, because the result state focus of the historical resultative participle \**qṭil-* would often, though not always, have been predicated of the patient. The adoption of a patient-oriented resultative construction into the passive voice system is therefore straightforward, and we still see this reflected in the agentless preterits and possible dative marking of A in several NENA dialects (see § 4.2.). Nevertheless, there are notable differences between these two constructions or participles. While prepositional argument indexes in both fused into L-suffixes synchronically, the historical status of P in the active participle construction and that of A in the resultative construction were rather different, and the grammaticalization of these constructions would not have proceeded at the same pace: *qṭil-* has lagged behind on *qaṭəl-* in its grammaticalization and thus transitivity. The prepositional P of the active participle was a differential object marker, while the prepositional A of the resultative a non-canonical subject marker. Consequently, like other non-canonical subject constructions affected by transitivity, this leads to the gradual loss of agreement with the other, potentially s-like argument in favor of the non-canonical subject.<sup>9</sup>

#### 6.2.4 What about Ditransitives?

There is a possibly incidental connection between monotransitives and ditransitive constructions in the combination of dependent person markers across the major constructional split between *qṭil-* and *qaṭəl-*.

The L-suffixes represent a set of person markers that correlate with the historically dative preposition (*əl/e*)-, which can still be used to mark goals and recipients. In *qaṭəl-* and similar verbal constructions such as the imperative, compound progressive etc., the L-set is used to express objects, i.e. P, T, R. In *qṭil-*, however, it is generally confined to the expression of R, depending on the dialect (see § 4.4.3.2.). The use of the L-set to express R or related affectee roles, such as predicative possessors and experiencers, is therefore independent of this split and may be found across the verbal system,<sup>10</sup> whereas its use as A indexes remains peculiar to *qṭil-*. Consequently, the coding of A and R are identical only in *qṭil-*, and never elsewhere:

<sup>9</sup> See Noorlander (2021, forthcoming) for further references and argumentation.

<sup>10</sup> See further Noorlander (2021).

(24) J. ‘Amedia (NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989, 108)

[V-A	-R]	[T]	
<i>hú-le</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>pare</i>	
give <sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -A:3MS	-R:1SG	money	
‘He gave me money.’			

In several dialects of NENA in Northwest Iraq and Southeast Turkey, this stacking of L-suffixes is possible only in ditransitive constructions, whereby the second L-suffix denotes only R, even in *qaṭal*-forms that take two object indexes from the L-set: the first L-set denotes the theme, the second the recipient. The first L-set, however, is restricted to third person Ts. The stacking of L-suffixes is more pervasive in dialects with identical morphological marking of A and P, where the second L-suffixes mark all object types, e.g. *ḥzí-le-li* ‘They saw me’ (C. Jinnet, SE Turkey), which is presumably an extension of its application in *qaṭal*-. In general, such monotransitive constructions do not display person restrictions on A. Remarkably in C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey), however, this same person restriction on the first L-set occurs everywhere else, where the L-set is stacked, perhaps indicating that there is a connection between the two. Here, the restriction of third person agent indexes before patient indexes parallels the restriction of third person themes before recipient indexes:

(25) C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988, 63)

	[A]	[P]	
	[3]	[1,2,3]	
a. <i>ḥzé</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-li</i>	‘They saw me.’
see <sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub>	3PL	1SG	
	[T]	[R]	
	[3]	[1,2,3]	
b. <i>hál</i>	<i>-le</i>	<i>-li</i>	‘Give them to me!’
give:IMPV	3PL	1SG	

This restriction depends entirely on person reference and not on a particular function by itself, as is often the case, since it disfavors both Ts and As, which is a rather unusual combination. Conversely, stacking of L-suffixes is incompatible with third person *patients* in Turoyo. The second L-suffix of the third person can refer only to R; thus a form like *ftáh-li-le* conveys ‘I opened for him’, not ‘I opened it<sub>M</sub>’. This is connected with the preference of horizontal alignment for the first/second persons in *qtil*- where the L-suffix does merge all objects.

i.e. *hʒé-li-lax* ‘I saw you<sub>FS</sub>’ = *hú-li-lax* ‘I gave (to) you<sub>FS</sub>’. Only first and second person referents therefore can be treated like R (see § 5.2.1.2.).

In a comparable fashion, independent pronominal objects parallel prepositional recipients (see § 4.4.2.2.). An independent series of object person markers may be used in *q̄til-* derived from a dative preposition to express both P and R, such as (<sup>ʔ</sup>əl)*l-*:

(26) C. Ashitha (SE Turkey; Borghero 2006, 193, 200–202)

[V-A]	[R/P]	[T]
a. <i>hiw-le</i>	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>əl-i</i>	<i>mexulta</i>
give <sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>	DAT-1SG	food:FS
‘He gave me food.’		

b. <i>xze-le</i>	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>əl-i</i>
see <sub>PFV-A:3MS</sub>	DAT-1SG
‘He saw me.’	

[V-A-T]	[R]
c. <i>yawəl-Ø-le</i>	<sup>ʔ</sup> <i>əl-i</i>
see <sub>IPFV-A:3MS-T:3MS</sub>	DAT-1SG
‘He gives it <sub>M</sub> to me.’	

Here, also the inflectional systems differ, since the prepositional object is the favored expression of P only in *q̄til-* but still that of R in *qat̄əl-*, in which the L-set remains preferred for P.

Finally, the same preposition *l-* that marks agents in the preterit in Turoyo also marks recipients, predicative possessors and experiencers elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> The *l-*marking of A is optional and may indicate additional agent focus, possibly combined with tripartite or ergative person indexing. The identical prepositional marking of both A and P is avoided, similarly to the identical prepositional marking of both T and R, so that the distribution of indexing of P and flagging of A is similar to the indexing of T and flagging of R in the ditransitive constructions. Nevertheless, remarkably, identical marking of A and R is not avoided, which is arguably the situation that would lead to the greatest degree of ambiguity, as both A and R tend to be human/animate. The Neo-Aramaic dialect of Rayite, however, is the exception: in this dialect, A, P, T and R can all be marked by the same preposition, similarly to the aforementioned strategies,

<sup>11</sup> This could point to a parallel historical development, see Noorlander (2021; forthcoming).

but there seems to be no additional indexing of P or T (see § 5.2.2.1.), as is usually the case in other Neo-Aramaic dialects of ʿAbdin. The first person plural in Mlaḥsó is even prepositional in all its functions across the whole system (see § 5.3.1.).

### 6.3 Splits and Transitivity Alternations

Several Neo-Aramaic languages can employ an agentless form of *qtil-*, where the agent is not expressed on the verb, but the E-set is used to denote the patient. This construction was analyzed differently depending on dialect group. The verbal form should be interpreted as intransitive in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA and dialects with dynamic-stative fluid-s marking (see § 3.5.), where no agent can be contextualized, but as transitive in other dialects of NENA, where the agent can still be contextualized (see § 4.2.). The morphosyntactic variation reflects the various orientations of the original resultative participle, ranging from subject and patient to agent. The fact that person role restrictions can be uplifted in NENA, when the agent is omitted or becomes prepositional, reflects the original patient orientation of the participle and oblique nature of the agent. In ʿuroyo, this agentless form of *qtil-* mainly constitutes an impersonal construction and treats transitive and intransitive verbs alike, being even possible with intransitive verbs (see § 5.2.3.2.). Differences in the omission of the patient, in turn, are reflected only in dialects where s may be distinctly marked from A or where clauses with full object nominals show morphosyntax distinct from those without. Moreover, sometimes intransitive verbs can be compatible with transitive coding in the Neo-Aramaic dialects of ʿAbdin and Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA as well as in the compound verbal forms found in Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA.

#### 6.3.1 Contextualizing the Agent

Virtually all basic effective transitive verbs are ambitransitive in the SE Jewish Trans-Zab varieties of NENA. The agentless *qtil-* form expresses s and not P, so that constructions like *xil-∅* 'It<sub>M</sub> got eaten' or *qtil-∅* 'He got killed' should be ultimately understood as intransitive constructions instantiating an uncontrolled process, just like inchoatives *plix-∅* 'It<sub>M</sub> opened' and *twir-∅* 'It<sub>M</sub> broke'.

Similarly, in NENA varieties that betray dynamic-stative fluid-s marking, the agentless form of *qtil-* should be understood as intransitive. In the Christian dialect of Borb-Ruma (SE Turkey), however, such a patient orientation is never available and an agent orientation is always preferred in order to express the

perfect, e.g. *xil-∅* ‘He has eaten’, *ptix-∅* ‘He has opened’. In the Christian dialect of Artun (Hertevin; SE Turkey), the situation appears to be mixed, and some verbs may allow an agent orientation.

Where ambitransitivity is found in most other dialects of NENA as well as Mlaḥsó, this is generally not distinct from the accusative pattern in *qaṭəl-*. If no object index is present, there is no morphosyntactic distinction between a transitive or intransitive valence pattern apart from differential object marking and, in the west, possibly also word order tendencies.

There is also a tendency for object indexes to become a means to differentiate the transitive from the intransitive valence patterns (cf. Givón 1976, 168). For example, when a dialect can avail itself of the *qam-qaṭəl-* construction for perfective transitive clauses with object indexes, the intransitive valence pattern is always expressed by a *qṭil-*-based form, while the transitive valence pattern is ultimately based on *qaṭəl-* to index P, as illustrated for ‘open’ in J. Betanure below.

(27) J. Betanure (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a, 256.399, 266.426)

- |   |                           |                            |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| [S]                                       | [V-S]                     |                            |
| a. <i>tar’a</i>                           | <i>pṭəx-le</i>            | (intransitive, inchoative) |
| door:MS                                   | open <sub>PFV-S:3MS</sub> |                            |
| ‘The door opened.’ (lit. him opened)      |                           |                            |
|   |                           |                            |
| [V-A-P]                                   |                           | [P]                        |
| b. <i>qam-pāṭx-i-le</i>                   |                           | <i>tar’a</i>               |
|   |                           | (transitive, causative)    |
| PFV-open <sub>IPFV-A:3PL-P:3MS</sub>      |                           | door:MS                    |
| ‘They opened the door.’ (lit. opened him) |                           |                            |

The coding of the intransitive valence pattern can also traverse the TAM split. The intransitive coding is morphologically adapted on the level of stem morphology for passive and anticausatives in the dialect Mlaḥsó, which displays morphologically non-distinct agreement in the preterit and uses a dedicated intransitive construction on the basis of an ‘imperfective’ mediopassive stem, e.g. *mepseh-le* ‘It<sub>M</sub> opened’ vs. *psiḥ-le* ‘He opened’. What expresses the difference in TAM is the choice of the E-set or L-set of person markers (cf. *mepseh-∅* ‘It<sub>M</sub> opens’). Consequently, special anticausative voice morphology, i.e. *meCCeC-*, is used to express the patient orientation in Mlaḥsó:

- |              |               |            |                       |                        |
|--------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>tar’ó</i> | <i>psiḥ</i>   | <i>-le</i> | ‘He opened the door.’ | (lit. him opened)      |
| <i>tar’ó</i> | <i>mepseh</i> | <i>-le</i> | ‘The door opened.’    | (lit. him became open) |

Complete omission of an agent L-suffix is possible only in dialects that minimally group s and A with L-suffixes (see § 4.2.). It can result in the retention of the transitive coding, sometimes in a type of impersonal passive. This agentless *qtil*-form expresses the event from the bare viewpoint of the endpoint, as a relic of a formerly patient-oriented resultative that is synchronically a truncated transitive construction (cf. Gutman 2008). The agent’s recoverability from the context is decisive in identifying an agent and retaining object coding. It is also possible for this to be a pattern replication from the equivalent agentless and ergative construction in Kurdish.

Ṭuroyo dialects differ from NENA in this respect. Virtually all verbs, including intransitives, can occur in a type of impersonalization in the mediopassive voice, in which the *qtil*-form is used in the perfective past of stem I verbs (see § 5.2.3.2.). Thus, even subject coding may be simply left unexpressed in the *qtil*-form for verbs belonging to the (1b) \**qattil*-class, e.g. *dmix(-∅) harke* ‘People (lit. it<sub>M</sub>) slept here’ vs. *damix-∅ harke* ‘He slept here’, while the agent is never overtly expressed in such impersonal constructions. At the same time, Ṭuroyo personal labile alternations manifest third person ergative morphology, thus *ftih-∅* ‘It<sub>M</sub> opened’ or ‘People opened it<sub>M</sub>’, occurring alongside *ftəh-∅-le* ‘He opened it<sub>M</sub>’.

The agent may also be omitted in the compound perfect, where the agreement with the agent is generally expressed by the copula and—usually also—the resultative participle. Insofar as speakers perceive a patient-like argument to be more salient, the construction will not be agent-oriented and the agreement controlled by the patient (see § 4.2.3.). Indeed, the agreement with the patient and lack of agreement with the agent is crucial to distinction in orientation. The agent can be overtly expressed, and may be morphologically identical to P in the corresponding active with the dative preposition (*’ə/*)-. A greater structural cohesion between P and the verb are decisive for the active as opposed to passive interpretation, as illustrated below for C. Ashitha.

(28) C. Ashitha (NW Iraq; Borghero 2005, 334–336)

	[V-A]	[COP:A]	[V-S]	[COP:S]	
a.	<i>qtil-a</i>	<i>winwa</i>	c. <i>qtil-a</i>	<i>winwa</i>	
	killed-MS	PST:COP:1MS	killed-MS	PST:COP:1MS	
	‘I <sub>M</sub> had killed (sb.)’		‘I <sub>M</sub> had been killed (by sb.)’		
					[DAT→
	[V-DAT→P]	[COP:A]	[V-S]	[COP:S]	OBL]
b.	<i>qtil-’alle</i>	<i>winwa</i>	d. <i>qtil-a</i>	<i>winwa</i>	<i>’alle</i>
	killed:MS-DAT:3MS	PST:COP:1MS	killed-MS	PST:COP:1MS	DAT:3MS
	‘I <sub>M</sub> had killed him.’		‘I <sub>M</sub> had been killed by him.’		

There is one respect in which the compound perfect with a patient orientation resembles ergative alignment. When the agent NP precedes the verb, it may be zero-marked like A in some varieties, while the participle and copula still agree with the patient, e.g. C. Barwar *baxta* ( $\emptyset$ -) *babi-la q̄tilta* ‘The woman has been killed by my father.’<sup>12</sup> It is the marked voice opposition that suggests it is passive.

### 6.3.2 *Recovering the Patient*

Most transitive verbs maintain an agent orientation and show no shift in the coding of the agent in object omission constructions. The agent remains expressed by the L-set. In the Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties that show split subject marking, the stronger implication of an effect generally results in transitive coding.

Similarly, there are intransitive verbs that occur in an anti-impersonal construction expressing dummy, non-referential (3fs.) object coding. When these verbs combine with a patient-like argument, the subject is coded like A. Light verb constructions reminiscent of noun incorporation in languages with ergative alignment also occur where the intransitive or transitive verb takes a dummy nominal object element, most of which are transferred from Persian and/or Kurdish combining with *wl* ‘do’ or *xØr* ‘become’ (e.g. Khan 2009, 153). This is different from other languages that evince ergative alignment, where non-referential dummy objects favor intransitive coding (Givón 1985a).

A few verbs, however, do display a difference reminiscent of antipassive voice constructions typical of certain languages with ergative alignment (see §3.5.2.), where a semantically agent-like s is expressed distinct from A. The antipassive-like construction tends to express situations with semantically reduced transitivity. In NENA, the antipassive-like intransitive construction involves a decrease in the degree of affectedness on the part of the patient-like argument, and may also be used to express reflexives. In terms of aspect, the intransitive (‘antipassive’) verbal forms can express a durative activity, while the transitive (‘active’/‘ergative’) refers to a punctual activity. The durative aspect correlates with the imperfective aspect constructions, where A and s are also marked by the E-set.

Non-human agents are not always compatible with the A function, for which the antipassive-like form is preferred. The antipassive may be enhanced with a patient-like argument coded as oblique:

<sup>12</sup> Or, in theory, ‘The woman has killed my father.’

## (29) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 522)

- |    |                     |  |              |            |
|----|---------------------|--|--------------|------------|
|    | [A]                 | [V-A]                                  | [P]          |            |
| a. | <i>hangǎké</i>      | <i>nqas-la</i>                         | <i>'əl-í</i> | (ergative) |
|    | bee:FS:DEF          | prick <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A</sub> :3FS | OBJ-1SG      |            |
|    | 'The bee stung me.' |  |              |            |

- |    |                       |  |  |                           |
|----|-----------------------|--|--|---------------------------|
|    | [s]                   | [v-s]                                  |  |                           |
| b. | <i>xmatá</i>          | <i>nqis-a</i>                          |  | (patientless antipassive) |
|    | needle:FS:DEF         | prick <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S</sub> :3FS |  |                           |
|    | 'The needle pricked.' |  |  |                           |

- |    |   |  |                 |               |
|----|---|--|-----------------|---------------|
|    | [s]                                     | [v-s]                                  | [OBL]           |               |
| c. | <i>xmatá</i>                            | <i>nqis-a</i>                          | <i>ga-'il-í</i> | (antipassive) |
|    | needle:FS:DEF                           | prick <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S</sub> :3FS | at-hand-my      |               |
|    | 'The needle pricked (lit. at) my hand.' |  |                 |               |

Similarly, human agents can be coded like A in both constructions, but when the human agent does not act deliberately, it is not always compatible with A-like coding, which shows that the degree of control is a contributing factor to compatibility with transitive coding. Thus, sporadically an alternation may occur where the A-like coding entails that the human argument deliberately initiated an action, while absence thereof rather conveys that something happened to the human argument, e.g.

## (30) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 304, 543)

- |    |                                       |  |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|
| a. | <i>ó rába mǎndixané ylap-le</i>       | (controlled, more A-like)              |
|    | he many thing:PL                      | learn <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-A</sub> :3MS |
|    | 'He learnt many things (by himself).' |  |

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| b. | <i>ó rába mǎndixané yǎlip-Ø</i>                         | (uncontrolled, not A-like)             |
|    | he many thing:PL  | learn <sub>P<sub>FV</sub>-S</sub> :3MS |
|    | 'He learnt many things (when taught by somebody else).' |  |

Ṭuroyo differs in several respects from NENA (see § 5.2.). In Ṭuroyo, several so-called 'neuter' verbs can combine with a P in the same way as the 'imperfective', e.g. *šami'-o-le* 'She heard him', but differently from primary transitive verbs such as *qtl* 'kill' and *twr* 'break', which more strongly imply an effect, e.g. *twir-o-le* 'He broke it<sub>F</sub>'. Primary transitive verbs may be incompatible with the antipassive in other languages, such as Samoan, where ergative morphosyntax predominates: the antipassive, where the agent is distinct from A, is lexicalized for

verbs not belonging to the primary effective class. The agent-like argument in this *CaCiC*-perfective in Turoyo is strictly speaking not an A either, but more commonly an affectee of some kind that can be analyzed as an instance of s, although the pattern in itself can occur with controlled activities, e.g. *šagil-o* ‘She worked’, *raqid-o* ‘She danced’, *yalif-o* ‘She learned’. These ‘neuter’ verbs rarely alternate with primary transitive verbs, do not express a passive orientation of a corresponding transitive and never seem to have a strong implication of a patient-like effect. They constitute a special subclass of lexically intransitive verbs, sometimes compatible with transitive morphology, but generally not the A-like coding of primary transitives. Thus, while third person ergative alignment is used only with primary transitive verbs in Turoyo, a subclass of verbs can never occur with such coding and require a *CaCiC*-perfective, even when there is an object, i.e. the intransitive coding is primary. A few of such ‘neuter’ verbs in Turoyo, however, may sporadically also be found to be compatible with A-like coding depending on what appears to be punctuality, in which case the A-like coding seems to be preferred for the punctual reading.

At the same time, this system in Turoyo could indicate an instance where it is the intransitive coding that overrides alignment splits. In some languages where the alignment is split conditioned by TAM, the (ergative) transitive coding is preferred for primary transitive verbs, such as ‘break’, even in the TAM constructions where other transitive verbs would follow a different (non-ergative) pattern (Givón 1984a). In Turoyo, it would be the other way around: the primacy of an *intransitive* verbal class favors non-ergative coding irrespective of TAM (see § 5.4.).

By contrast, most strategies to mark P differently from the E-set in *qtil-* are morphologically parallel with *qaṭal-* in NENA. In some cases, the coding of the agent is also modified. An extreme case we discussed is the *qam-qaṭal-* construction, *not* found in the Trans-Zab Jewish dialect bundle nor Central Neo-Aramaic, which also correlates with transitivity alternations (see § 4.4.5.). In contradistinction to the above, this construction is not dependent on verbal class, but on the nature of object coding and thus morphological transitivity. Reviewed below, the *qam-qaṭal-* construction combines with a pronominal object and is used in dialects where s and A are grouped by the L-set in the perfective past:

- (31) J. Betanure (NW Iraq; based on Mutzafi 2008a, compare p. 266.426 and 239.440)
- |                                      |            |                |
|--------------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| [v                                   | -s]        |                |
| a. <i>xal</i>                        | <i>-le</i> | (intransitive) |
| eat <sub>P<sub>FV</sub></sub> -S:3MS |            |                |
| ‘He ate.’                            |            |                |

- [V    -A]    [P]  
 b. *xəl*    *-le*    *xabūša*    (tr. but identical to intr.)  
 eat<sub>PFV</sub> -A:3MS apple:FS  
 'He ate an apple.'

- [V-A                    -P]    [P]  
 c. *qam-ʔaxəl-∅*    *-la*    *xabūša*    (tr. but distinct from intr.)  
 PFV-eat<sub>1PFV</sub>-A:3MS -P:3FS apple:FS  
 'He ate the apple.'

This is the opposite of an antipassive voice construction and reminiscent of the applicative voice, where the patient is—in this case *has to be*—promoted to object status. In the antipassive, the coding of the agent is typically distinct from the A of the transitive valence pattern in the absence of a certain object type. In the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction, the coding of the agent is necessarily distinct from s in the presence of an object index, while the agent in the *qṭalle* counterpart is necessarily the same as s in the absence of such an object index. It indirectly results in a major distinction in the coding of the agent when P is expressed by an object index. The morphosyntax of transitive clauses without an object index is not distinguishable from intransitive clauses. Nevertheless, transitive clauses that include an object index are morphologically adapted to the transitive coding of *qaṭəl*-. Therefore, the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction is arguably the more transitive one in being incompatible with object omission constructions, so that here, in theory, it is *qṭalle* that could be said to parallel the antipassive.

### 6.3.3 *Split Intransitivity*

In Turoyo, the (1b) subclass never takes A-like coding, but only other classes can combine with A-like coding, including those semantically intransitive. Only in Turoyo this also affects the optional flagging of s, treating it like the A of a primary transitive perfective past construction, as illustrated below.

(32) Turoyo (Rayite, SE Turkey)

- a. (∅-) *Ḥasan Paša mayəṭ-∅*  
 PRN:MS                    die<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3MS  
 'Ḥasan Paša died.' (Ritter 1967–1971, 96/26)
- b. *l-Nari*                    *malax-le*  
 DAT-PRN:MS walk<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3MS  
 'Nari walked.' (ibid. l. 229)

Generally, the intransitive verbs that are incompatible with transitive coding are those that typically denote an affectee of a state or uncontrolled process, such as ‘die’, but there are noteworthy exceptions, for instance the copula verb *hwy* ‘be, become’ in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA, e.g. *-yele* ‘he was’, and in the Neo-Aramaic dialect of Midyat, e.g. *hwele* ‘it arose’, *-we* (< \**hwele*) ‘he was’.

Semantic factors play only a partial role, since by and large when a transitive verb denotes a semantically less transitive event, but still strongly implies some effect and denotes a punctual and dynamic event, the construction remains morphosyntactically transitive, even when no patient-like effect is expressed explicitly. Semelfactives, especially animal sound emissions, such as ‘bark’, and more or less controllable bodily emissions and reactions, such as ‘sneeze’ and ‘laugh’, generally prefer transitive coding, which is typical of some languages with ergative alignment (cf. Lazard 1998, 136–139; see § 3.5.).

Causal factors pertaining to agentivity sometimes play a role in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA in western Iran. Control or animacy may sometimes determine compatibility with  $s_A$  coding, where a lesser degree of control is not always considered compatible with  $s_A$  coding for the verbs ‘sneeze’ and ‘cough’; compare:

- (33) J. Qarah Ḥasan (W Iran; Khan 2009, 306)
- |                  |                           |                     |
|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| a. <i>nox-le</i> | ‘It <sub>M</sub> barked.’ | (S=A, controlled)   |
| b. <i>tpil-∅</i> | ‘He sneezed.’             | (S=P, uncontrolled) |

An inanimate subject, such as a natural force, is also not always compatible with  $s_A$  coding either:

- (34) J. Sanandaj (W Iran; Khan 2009, 294, 304–306)
- |                 |                                      |                  |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| [s]             | [v- $s_A$ ]                          |                  |
| a. <i>xmara</i> | <i>sre-le</i>                        | (S=A, animate)   |
|                 | donkey:MS bray <sub>PFV</sub> -3MS   |                  |
|                 | ‘The donkey brayed.’                 |                  |
|                 |                                      |                  |
| [s]             | [v- $s_P$ ]                          |                  |
| b. <i>’ewá</i>  | <i>gərgám-∅</i>                      | (S=P, inanimate) |
|                 | cloud:MS thunder <sub>PFV</sub> -3MS |                  |
|                 | ‘The cloud thundered.’               |                  |

Verbs that denote controlled activities show notable differences. When the verb can combine with a P, the agent-oriented construction, where P is omitted and

not expressed explicitly, generally takes the same A-like coding. When verbs of dress and grooming are used intransitively, the meaning can be reflexive without distinction in subject coding (e.g. *lwəš-le* 'He dressed'). Typologically speaking, such controlled activities would be expected to be  $S_A$  verbs (Croft 2001, 162–165). Nevertheless, numerous intransitive verbs that denote controlled activities are incompatible with such transitive coding, such as 'dance' and 'laugh'. Turoyo and NENA closely resemble each other in this respect: only a few of such activities, such as 'swim', take  $S_A$  coding in Turoyo (*šhe-le*), but do not take this in NENA (*səxe-Ø*). The overall similar distribution in Turoyo and NENA (see §5.2.3.) is likely not incidental and parallels the categorization of stative and middle verbs in other Aramaic and Semitic languages.

Aspectual factors also play an important role. Durative and stative situations are in general not compatible with transitive coding, while punctual and dynamic situations may more readily be compatible. Telicity does not appear to be a significant trigger. An intransitive verb like *tym* 'finish' entails the cessation of an action and is more state and endpoint-oriented, and cannot be combined with transitive coding. An intransitive verb like *bdy* 'begin', however, which is inherently more action and agent-oriented, does take such transitive inflection.

Fluid-subject marking may also be conditioned by aspect, in which punctuality seems to be a possible contributing semantic factor in Turoyo. The  $S_A$  construction is compatible with a more punctual reading:

- (35) Turoyo (SE Turkey; Ritter 1990, 85)
- |                                 |                    |                     |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| a. <i>kfəl-le</i> <sup>13</sup> | 'He became hungry' | ( $S_A$ , punctual) |
| b. <i>kafən-Ø</i>               | 'He starved'       | ( $S_p$ , durative) |

Finally, we noted that a split in the coding of *s* is also attested for non-ergative alignment (see §3.5.4.). In the Jewish Urmi compound perfect, the coding of *s* and *A* is distinct for the third person. Some semantically intransitive verbs are classified like primary transitive verbs and take transitive coding instead. The resulting split parallels Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish. The main typological difference is the treatment of controlled activities, such as 'dance', which do take transitive coding in Jewish Urmi, e.g. *rqil-é* 'He has danced', but intransitive in the SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects. Conversely, semelfactives or sound emission verbs, such as 'bark', take intransitive coding in Jewish Urmi, e.g. *nwix-Ø* 'It<sub>M</sub> barked', but transitive in the SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects.

13 < \**kfən-le*.

TABLE 41 Overview of morphological person splits in the perfective past

Independent	3rd person ( <i>q̄til</i> -P-A)	1st/2nd person* (V-A-P)	Dialects
(A=S=P) neutral / (A=S≠P) accusative	(A=S≠P) accusative	(A=S≠P) accusative	Several NENA dialects (e.g. J. Challa, J. Barzani, J. Arbel, C. Marga)
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A=S≠P) accusative	(A=S=P) neutral	Northern Trans-Zab Jew- ish dialects of NENA (e.g. J. Urmi)
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S=P) ergative	(A≠S≠P) tripartite	J. Sulemaniyya and Ḥalabja (NE Iraq)
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S=P) ergative	(S≠A=P) horizontal	J. Saqiz and Sanandaj (W Iran)
(A=S=P) neutral / (A≠S=P) ergative	(A≠S=P) ergative	(S≠A=P) horizontal	Ṭuroyo (SE Turkey)
(A=S=P) neutral	(A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S=P) ergative**	C. Artun, Umṛa and Jin- net (SE Turkey), with the L-E-series
(A=S=P) neutral	(A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S=P) ergative	The majority of NENA dialects, with the <i>qam-</i> <i>qaṭəl</i> -construction

Notes: \*This is generally available for all persons in NENA. \*\*Second person only in C. Umṛa and Jinnet.

Presumably, telicity and dynamism play a greater role than punctuality in the Jewish Urmi perfect (Khan 2008b, 73).

#### 6.4 Splits Based on Argument Properties

The splits based on the referential properties of arguments, such as person primarily, are first and foremost a constructional split and have no direct bearing on ergativity. A particular set of argument indexes, namely the E-set, is gradually being replaced depending on the dialect. The same constraint simply works out differently in each dialect (group), and what is pertinent to alignment is only the marking of s and its relationship to other core arguments, although sometimes also the similar treatment of A and P. Table 41 above pro-

TABLE 42 Overview of person and gender-based morphological splits in the 'perfect', including compound perfect forms

3rd person	1st/2nd person	Dialects
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A=S≠P) accusative	The majority of NENA dialects
(A≠S≠P) tripartite	(A=S≠P) accusative	Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA
(A≠S=P) ergative	(A≠S≠P) tripartite	J. Rustaqa and Rewanduz and SE Trans-Zab Jewish NENA
(A≠S=P) ergative	(S≠A=P) horizontal	Ṭuroyo (perfect is identical to preterit)
Non-feminine	Feminine	Dialects
(S≠A=P) horizontal	(A≠S=P) ergative / (A=S≠P) accusative	J. Sulemaniyya and Ḥalabja (NE Iraq)
(A=S≠P) accusative	(A≠S=P) ergative	Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA

vides an overview of the person-based alignment splits in the preterit, alongside independent pronoun alignment. Table 42 offers an overview of person-and/or gender-based splits in the perfect. These tables offer a simplified summary and should not be mistaken for balanced splits, as these person splits do not always distinguish neatly between first/second person as opposed to third person and are not always complementary in NENA dialects. Independent pronouns, and full nominals for that matter, do not pattern ergatively in C. Artun (Hertevin), even though the dependent first/second person markers point to ergative alignment. In several dialects, independent object person markers, like the *'əll*-series, are preferred, especially for the first/second person, treating them like full nominals.

#### 6.4.1 Patient-Related Scales

In general, Central and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic dialects make a distinction between several transitive perfective past constructions depending on the relative ranking of P on the prominence scale. *qtil-* and *qaṭal-* show considerable overlap in terms of differential indexing and prepositional marking patterns.

Irrespective of alignment type, a prominent—primarily definite—P generally determines the prepositional marking and/or overt expression of cross-indexes of P. Example (36) is an illustration of such DOM constructions in *q̄til-* based on the morphological pattern of Trans-Zab Jewish varieties (see § 3.3.2.). Differential object flagging and indexing can occur independently or combined.

(36) Differential object marking in Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA

	[A]	[(DOM→)P]	[V(-P)-A]	
a.	<i>ḥatán</i>	<i>ʾəl-kaldá</i>	<i>nšəq-le</i>	(prepositional marking only)
	groom:MS	DOM-bride:FS	kiss <sub>PFV-3MS</sub>	
b.	<i>ḥatán</i>	<i>kaldá</i>	<i>nšəq-a-le</i>	(cross-indexing only)
	groom:MS	bride:FS	kiss <sub>PFV-3FS-3MS</sub>	
c.	<i>ḥatán</i>	<i>ʾəl-kaldá</i>	<i>nšəq-a-le</i>	(both strategies)
	groom:MS	DOM-bride:FS	kiss <sub>PFV-3FS-3MS</sub>	
	'The bridegroom kissed <b>the bride</b> .'			

Differential prepositional marking by itself does not generally lead to distinct alignment types across dialects, since, by and large, A is not marked prepositionally. Accusative DOM may sometimes even involve several prepositions in a single dialect, e.g. *qa-*, *ṭla-* and *l-* in Barwar (Khan 2008a, 784 ff.). Incidentally, it results in horizontal prepositional marking (S≠A=P) in the Rayite dialect of Turoyo.

At first face value, this is remarkable, since one would not expect a grouping with S and P to be dependent on differential object marking. Differential P-marking is usually associated with non-ergative patterns, precisely because the properties of P are central to its overt expression and not A (see § 3.2.2.). Nevertheless, where the referential properties of P are relevant for ergativity, we could expect the ergative construction to be favored for the definite object (see § 4.4.1.1.). The fact that all sorts of morphological alignment types are compatible with DOM in NENA dialects need not surprise us, since the coding of S is independent of such referential factors: it simply demonstrates, that, although the conditioning factor is accusative, differential object marking is not confined to an accusative morphological expression thereof (cf. Bossong 1985). Thus, differential object marking by the preposition (*ʾəl*)/*l-* is found alongside object indexing that is accusative, neutral and ergative in its morphology. From the perspective of the variation within NENA, this possible combination of ergative indexing and accusative flagging such as shown in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA is not unexpected but merely an incidental epiphenomenon, since the same strategies are found across dialects, but

the difference is the morphological marking, particularly that of *s*, which is not sensitive to prominence scales in the first place.

The same holds for pronominal objects, which can be expressed by a preposition independent of the verb or by verbal person markers. The main difference among dialects can be the expression of *s*, as is illustrated in (37) below. Both accusative verbal person marking, as represented in Jewish Arbel (NE Iraq) and ergative verbal person marking, as represented in Jewish Sulemaniyya (NE Iraq), are restricted to the third person, and the unrestricted alternative independent objects are the same, but only the choice of person marking in the intransitive (37a) is distinct. The independent expression by the *'alla*-series is favored when no dependent person markers, i.e. the E-set, are available, whereby the prepositional marking system penetrates the verbal person marking system. Consequently, the main difference between these two dialects is the coding of *s*. This concurs with Siewierska's (2004, 46–47, 60–61) typological survey: cross-linguistically, object person markers tend to be coded independently, and independent person markers, if restricted, typically refer to human referents. The ergative-tripartite person split is consistent with the person scale, since the marking of *s* and *p* groups the lower ranking persons. Nevertheless, tripartite alignment is equally attested for the third person (i.e. *qətl-le 'alla* 'He killed her'), which contradicts the person scale, and the same restrictions apply to the accusative pattern in (37a–d), which indicates that a split along the person scale may have nothing to do with ergativity.

(37) **Accusative and tripartite compared**

<p><b>J. Arbel</b> (Khan 1999)</p> <p>ACCUSATIVE (3<sup>RD</sup> ONLY)</p> <p>[V        -S]</p> <p>a. <i>qəm</i>        <i>-la</i></p> <p>      'She rose.'</p> <p>[V-P        -A]</p> <p>b. <i>qətl-a</i>        <i>-le</i></p> <p>      'He killed her.'</p> <p>ACCUSATIVE</p> <p>[V-A]        [P]</p> <p>c. <i>qətl-le</i>        <i>'əllax</i></p> <p>      'He killed you<sub>FS</sub>.'</p>	<p><b>J. Sulemaniyya</b> (Khan 2004a, 2007a)</p> <p>ERGATIVE (3<sup>RD</sup> ONLY)</p> <p>[V-S]</p> <p>e. <i>qim-a</i></p> <p>      'She rose.'</p> <p>[V-P        -A]</p> <p>f. <i>qətl-a</i>        <i>-le</i></p> <p>      'He killed her.'</p> <p>TRIPARTITE</p> <p>[V-A]        [P]</p> <p>g. <i>qətl-le</i>        <i>'əllax</i></p> <p>      'He killed you<sub>FS</sub>.'</p>
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[V-S]	[V-S]
d. <i>qəm-lax</i>	h. <i>qim-at</i>
'You <sub>FS</sub> rose.'	'You <sub>FS</sub> rose.'

Similarly, the fundamental difference between the morphologically non-distinct, i.e. neutral, and horizontal verbal person marking may also be the coding of s: while the transitive constructions are similar, the intransitive constructions are distinct, as contrasted in (38) below. In Turoyo (SE Turkey), and arguably the Jewish dialects of NENA in West Iran like Saqiz and Sanandaj, horizontal alignment is confined to first/second person arguments alternating with ergative for the third person. Morphologically non-distinct marking is necessary for first/second person markers in the Northern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA, such as J. Urmi, and this alternates with accusative for the third person only. The fact that neutral alignment is preferred also shows that the differential marking is not geared to disambiguate between A and P in phonological form.

(38) Neutral and horizontal compared

J. Urmi (Khan 2008b)	Turoyo (Miden, cf. Jastrow 1985)
ACCUSATIVE (3RD ONLY)	ERGATIVE (3RD ONLY)
[V -S]	[V -S]
a. <i>qəm -la</i>	b. <i>qayim -o</i>
'She rose.'	'She rose.'
[V-P -A]	[V -P -A]
c. <i>xəzy-a -le</i>	f. <i>həzy -o -le</i>
'He saw her.'	'He saw her.'
NEUTRAL	HORIZONTAL (1ST/2ND ONLY)
[V-A-P]	[V-A-P]
d. <i>xzé-li-lax</i>	g. <i>hzé-li-lax</i>
'I saw you <sub>FS</sub> .'	'I saw you <sub>FS</sub> .'
[V-S]	[V-S]
e. <i>qəm-lax</i>	h. <i>qayim-at</i>
'You <sub>FS</sub> rose.'	'You <sub>FS</sub> rose.'

A morphologically very different phenomenon is the *qam-qatəl*-formation to express the preterit, illustrated in (39) below. Nevertheless, functionally, it is a type of differential object marking in that first/second person objects need

to be marked by the L-set for which the *qam-qaṭal*-preterit is necessary. The *qṭil*-preterit, by contrast, is again available only for the third person. Differential object marking has at least partly motivated the construction of an entirely distinct verbal form dedicated to the higher ranking P arguments. Although the *qam-qaṭal*-stem is based on the transitive morphosyntax of *qaṭal*-, it is confined to transitive perfective past clauses and functions as the equivalent to *qṭal-le* with a pronominal object. This resulting system in (39c) makes a morphosyntactic distinction between S and A, but not between S and P, which points to a person-unrestricted ergative against a person-restricted accusative pattern.

(39) *qṭil*- and *qam-qaṭal*-preterit compared

J. Zaxo (based on Cohen 2012, 458–465)

ACCUSATIVE (3RD ONLY)

[V            -S]

a. *qəṃ*            *-la*  
‘She rose.’

[V-P            -A]

b. *xəzy-ā*        *-le*  
‘He saw her.’

ERGATIVE

[V-A            -P]

c. *qam-xāzy-a* *-lax*  
‘She saw you<sub>FS</sub>.’

[V            -S]

d. *qəṃ*            *-lax*  
‘You<sub>FS</sub> rose.’

Ergativity in itself therefore plays no role in the constructional preferences for person referents, which may be simply the result of the collapse of the inverted preterit due to cross-system harmonization that has targeted first/second person objects first.

#### 6.4.2 *Agent-Related Scales*

While P and R can be marked by various prepositions, A, if applicable in the dialect, can be marked only by the preposition *l*- and/or its allomorphs. Historically, such dative agents and L-suffixes were similar instances of the same preposition of nominal and pronominal arguments, respectively.

The special *l*-marking of A in Turoyo is optional and always combined with overt A indexing, sometimes conditioned by agent focus, especially when A is pronominal. Zero coding is also found for A arguments in focus, but overt marking of pronominal As strongly correlates with agent focus. This agent focalization is reminiscent of other languages that show differential or optional A-marking. This flagging of A is combinable with differential ergative indexing or additional flagging of Ps. The co-variation between an overtly and zero-coded A closely resembles other constructions, where the argument is marked by *l*-, including possessors and experiencers.<sup>14</sup>

A less clear, but also possible instance of focal A-marking is attested in NENA dialects where the L-suffixes group s and A in the preterit. This agentless ‘perfective’ construction in these dialects is possibly similar to languages such as Konjo (Friberg 1996) where agent agreement is absent when A is focal (Siewierska 2004, 160–162). The absence of agreement in itself cannot be connected with agent focus in NENA, but when the agent is a full nominal, only P is indexed and the A index must be lacking in order to focalize it and mark it by the preposition (*’al-*)/- (see § 4.2.). This is a major difference from the aforementioned pattern in Turoyo, where flagging of A is always combined with indexing of A (see § 5.2.2.).

Overt indexing of A may also be more obligatorily absent: in the compound realis perfect of Jewish dialects of NENA in West Iran, A is confined to the third person and never realized overtly, while overt marking of P is possible and may involve all persons (see § 3.4.7.). As expected, therefore, the ergative pattern is confined to lower ranking persons, but, here, it is dependent on the person reference of P and A. No such restrictions are found for s and a tripartite pattern is found when A is first/second person.

Furthermore, verbal constructions can depend on the animacy of A in the Southeast Trans-Zab Jewish varieties that group s and P by the E-set. This is restricted and also lexically motivated by the meaning of the verb: a non-human agent receives intransitive coding distinct from A, while a human agent receives the transitive coding of A. This demonstrates that inanimate arguments are not always compatible with the A function and require an intransitive verbal construction instead, and as a consequence it is the lower ranking argument, i.e. inanimates, that favor marking distinct from A (see § 3.5.2.2.).

Moreover, a higher person reference of A is blocked from the *q̄til-a-le*-forms in some NENA varieties, when P is also of higher ranking (see § 4.4.1.2.). The relatively lower ranking of A is presumably significant in the compatibility of a

14 See Noorlander (2021).

situation with the inverted transitive perfective. When P outranks A in person, the use of the E-series in *qtil-a-le* seems to be more acceptable for speakers of an otherwise person-restricted construction, whereas, when both A and P are high in ranking, the construction remains impossible. Typologically, we would not expect the situation where P outranks A to be favored in an otherwise restricted construction.

Special marking of A may also be solely dependent on its person reference: if my analysis is correct, the first/second person are expressed by means of an L-E-series that results in an ergative pattern in the Christian dialect of Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey) as well as partly in C. Umra and Jinnet (see § 4.4.4.). Typologically, C. Artun shows a rather complex agreement system in *qtil*-, since the 3ms., 3fs. and 3pl. are morphologically non-distinct and the 3fs. and 3pl. can pattern accusatively. The ergative, in turn, is restricted to the other persons, which would be an important counterexample to the predictions of the person scale, since it is the highest ranking arguments that pattern ergatively, while the lower ranking persons do not, nor independent pronouns and full nominals.

Perfective transitive clauses with an object index can be treated very differently from those without: this creates a constructional split, primarily motivated by the properties of P, but also affecting the coding of A. Without an object index, A agreement is indistinct from S agreement. A co-referential nominal object is not obligatory and, if indefinite, even impossible in such constructions. The first/second person L-E-series in C. Artun only manifest themselves in the combination with a dependent object person form, which may cross-index a co-referential NP. Similarly, the *qam-qaṭal*-construction also requires fully transitive coding, but, contrary to the L-E-series, the marking of A and P are only conditioned by the pronoun-noun hierarchy, i.e. both have to be cross-indexed, and not the person hierarchy, i.e. all persons are compatible. In addition, compound verbal forms analogical to *qaṭal*- treat such transitive clauses differently, and this affects the coding of A, especially with first/second person objects (see § 3.1.3.3. and § 4.3.2.4.). The adaptation to *qaṭal*- presumably normalizes the use of the L-set to mark the object. The merger of the compound perfect with *qaṭal*- also yields forms virtually identical to that of *qtil*-, as shown in (40) below. Such perfect and pluperfect ms. forms would be phonologically identical to equivalent preterit and pluperterit constructions with the opposite roles. The *qtil*-constructions such as the perfect in C. Borb-Ruma (Bohtan) in (41) below, which match the inflection of *qaṭal*- both in form and function, do not show any person role constraints (see § 4.4.3.2.), and as a result of this the distinct marking of A is tense-aspect sensitive, e.g. *qṭal-li* 'I killed' vs. *qṭil-ən* 'I<sub>M</sub> have killed'.

(40) **J. Urmī** (NW Iran; based on Khan 2008b)

PERFECT (+ <i>qtila</i> + E <sub>1</sub> -set)	PRETERIT (+ <i>qtil-</i> + E <sub>1</sub> -set)
+ <i>qtil-ən-ne</i>	: **+ <i>qtil-ən-ne</i>
'I <sub>M</sub> have killed him.'	'He killed <b>me<sub>M</sub></b> .'
+ <i>qtil-ən-wa-le</i>	: **+ <i>qtil-ən-wa-le</i>
'I <sub>M</sub> had killed him.'	'He had killed <b>me<sub>M</sub></b> .'

(41) **C. Borb-Ruma** (Bohtan, SE Turkey; based on Fox 2009)

PERFECT ( <i>qtil-</i> + E <sub>1</sub> -set)
<i>qtil-ən-ne</i>
'I <sub>M</sub> have killed him.'
<i>qtil-ən-wó-le</i>
'I <sub>M</sub> had killed him.'

## General Conclusion

### 7.1 Constructions Leading a Life of Their Own

The Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic morphological alignment systems demonstrate that S, A and P, even when grouped according to the same morphological criterion, can ‘lead a life of their own’. Since intransitive and transitive constructions can vary independently of one another, relationships between these constructions and the arguments they instantiate may not always provide a neatly coherent system. Moreover, the same morphological expression for arguments can occur across dialects with sometimes completely opposite functions. Alignment variations and changes are thus strictly based on the interaction of different intransitive and transitive constructions primarily because of system-internal and construction-specific factors, all of which seem to be largely independent of how we classify typologically the arrangement of grammatical functions as a whole. This has implications for future research on alignment typology in general, where areal and diachronic factors must be given more weight.

#### 7.1.1 *Identifying Argument Groupings*

The grouping of S with other core arguments by morphological and syntactic criteria is the defining characteristic of an alignment type (Croft 2012:259). This generally holds for Neo-Aramaic, where we found that, across constructions, S and A are grouped in unconditioned indexing, while object marking by means of cross-indexing and/or prepositional marking is conditioned by argument properties. In fact, object marking is never obligatory (A=S≠P), which appears to be a stable feature of Aramaic at large.

There are several contexts, however, in which this principle does not seem to hold, and S is isolated. Clauses with A and P can be treated in a way radically distinct from clauses with S, thus sometimes treating A and P alike or A differently from P, yet neither is treated like S. In transitive constructions, the marking of one argument can be sensitive to that of another, whereby two-argument clauses that involve two dependent person markers can be treated rather differently from other clauses. In general, the morphological alignment is only fully identifiable in the presence of pronominal or differential object marking. While such clauses may not even be the most frequent, only by including clauses where the object is expressed overtly we can identify the full characterization of the dialect’s alignment typology.

### 7.1.2 *Ergativity from Typological Perspectives*

In the prototypical example of morphological ergativity, only *s* and *P* are indexed by the same morphology and only *A* is case-marked. This coherent type of ergativity does not exist in Neo-Aramaic. Where ergative alignment is observed in Neo-Aramaic, the conditions are not always what we might expect typologically from a functional perspective. This concurs with observations in large scale typological studies, such as Bickel (2008) and Bickel et al. (2015), who argue for an approach different from a purely functional one. From the perspective of Neo-Aramaic, ergativity is as compatible as the accusative or other alignment types with verbal and nominal systems. The resulting alignment patterns as well as their loss and their spread in respective dialects seem to be an epiphenomenon of constructions and their dialectal variation, and not an avoidance of ergativity.

Ergative morphological marking is manifested in Neo-Aramaic under certain conditions. It is at least in part restricted by

- a) the inflectional base of the verb *q̄til-/q̄ṭl-* or the related resultative participle *q̄ṭila/q̄ṭlá*, both reflexes of the historical resultative participle;
- b) the tense, aspect and, to some extent, the mood that the verb expresses;
- c) the L-suffixes and other reflexes of the historical dative preposition *l-*;
- d) and the position of *A* and/or *P* arguments on the prominence hierarchy.

The precise circumstances under which ergativity is manifested needs to be determined for each dialect (subgroup) independently. The TAM of the verb that conditions an alignment split differs across dialects, and the relevant factors of the prominence hierarchy also need not be the same. The inflectional base of the verb, however, is always a determining factor and non-accusative alignment is structurally linked with a verbal form based on *q̄til-* and/or *q̄ṭila*, both reflexes of the historically resultative participle.

Several alignment splits conditioned by clause- and/or verb-related scales occur in Central and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic. The differences in alignment types are inextricably linked with the historical development of the verbal inflection from an intransitive resultative construction to a transitive perfective past. This is confirmed by that fact that the coding of *A*, which is typically manifested in verbal person indexes, correlates with the expression of perfective past more strongly than the coding of *P*, which, in turn, is coordinated by differential object marking. The L-suffixes are more grammaticalized as indicators of *A* (and *s*) in the expression of the transitive perfective past, while the E-suffixes as indicators of *s* (and *A*) tend to 'lag behind' in the expression of the intransitive resultative or perfect. In this tense-aspectual split, L-suffixes thus first and foremost serve as TAM markers for both *s* and *A* and to inflect the original verbal adjective in opposition to the E-set, which historically did not necessarily have

the same TAM value. Otherwise a different verbal stem and/or preverbal TAM marker is sufficient to express a distinct TAM value in the respective dialect. These strategies to mark TAM are conventionalized differently among dialects but will affect also the person marking of A and/or S more likely than that of P. As a result, the role reference inversion in *qtil-* relative to *qaṭəl-* also has this TAM dimension by potentially conflating TAM constructions rather than merely (inverted) syntactic roles, cf. C. Borb-Ruma *qtil-i-le* 'They have killed him' vs. the rest of NENA *qtil-i-le* 'He killed them'.

Morphological splits are also reflected in different coding strategies and markedness relations among constructions or sets of person markers. The L-suffixes are verbal person markers, but due to their close historical relation with the preposition *l-* some correlations inevitably remain present even in a synchronic perspective. As a result, the L-suffixes may still interact with *l-*, and *l-* may still interact with L-suffixes. Those independent pronouns that are based on the preposition *l-* and its allomorphs—and in comparable ways also the L-based third person copulas—exhibit a greater tendency to become increasingly dependent on the verb and, similarly to the L-suffixes, grammaticalize into verbal suffixes. By the same token, the E-suffixes interact with the first/second forms of the basic and often enclitic copula, both of which are ultimately phonetically reduced variants of independent pronouns unmarked for a grammatical function but typically marking S and A.

Argument-related scales only indirectly influence the alignment types and mainly the coding of P in differential object marking. The fundamental difference among dialects is the coding of S, which is insensitive to such scales and the alternative strategy that is chosen as opposed to the inverted *qtil-* construction. The transitive perfective constructions dedicated to pronominal Ps are largely independent of intransitive constructions. Consequently, different alignment types are identified only indirectly on the basis of the differential indexing of arguments.

The alignment variation in the perfective past of Northeastern and Central Neo-Aramaic is generally characterized in the literature as a departure from the ergative and a shift towards accusative alignment. This view maintains that ergative morphology is exceptional within Aramaic and Semitic in general and is resolved by accusative constructions, driven by its overall accusative syntax. Morphological ergativity is diverse and one among several other types of alignment manifested in Neo-Aramaic. Although ergative groupings are always restricted in some way, it would be simplistic to say that ergativity in itself is breaking down.

First, it would be mistaken to attribute instances of person splits in mono-transitive clauses to ergativity, since these person splits can even occur with

non-ergative morphology and show the exact same distribution, with the main difference among dialects being the marking of *s*. Thus, we should consider this first and foremost constructional splits and abandon the idea that ergativity in *NENA* conforms to the predictions made by the hierarchies of ‘split ergativity’ in linguistic typology.

Secondly, neither the loss of the intransitive verbal forms with the E-set nor the loss of the inverted preterit necessarily indicate that ergativity is also lost. From the beginning, the clause types where the E-set served as an indicator of *s* would have had a status different from the clause types where the same set served as indicators of *p*. The synchronic variation reflects that the former is usually restricted to the expression of the perfect or resultative, whereas the latter, if it occurs in a dialect, is more commonly an independent expression of the transitive perfective past. This system is better described as fluid-*s* marking rather than ergative in the strict sense, as the distinction in subject-marking expresses a distinction in *TAM*. Diachronically, this could thus be characterized as the disintegration of semantic alignment, where *s* and *p* as well as *s* and *A* would have shared certain morphological properties on an equal basis, rather than ergative alignment, where *s* mostly aligns with *p*. Only in the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of *NENA*, however, can we speak in terms of ergative morphological marking of the third person. Nevertheless, here, we are most likely not dealing with a more archaic type, but with a contact-induced innovation. The reason for this is that the intransitive forms with the E-suffixes have fully grammaticalized to the perfective past, i.e. the same clause type as the transitive counterpart, and the fact that some intransitive verbs are compatible with transitive coding cannot be placed on par with the aforementioned semantic alignment, nor does it undermine the ergative characterization of their third person morphology.

By the same token, while the intransitive *qtıl*-base with E-suffixes grammaticalized from resultative to preterit at a slower rate than that with L-suffixes, the transitive verbal form with L-suffixes becomes more restricted due to cross-system harmonization under the influence of *qaṭəl*. However, these adjustments of transitive perfective past clauses to that of the ‘imperfective’ cannot be contributed to a shift from ergative to accusative, since, on closer examination, the increasingly popular transitive perfective past constructions cannot all be subsumed under accusative alignment; some of them can even be characterized as reflecting ergative morphology instead, i.e. the L-E-series, the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction.

It is not unlikely that further research will reveal even more variation than observed in the studies for this book. Nevertheless, despite—or perhaps rather because of—the astonishing variation in modern Aramaic, there is no witness

of a fully coherent ergative type in the data we have. Obviously the historical potential for ergative agreement in the perfective past hinged on the adjectival agreement with the original subjects and patients, in which the latter developed into the expression of objects. However, there is no synchronic evidence that compels us to assume that the grouping of *s* and *P* ever was fully coherent for Central and Northeastern Neo-Aramaic languages. Historically, neither ergativity nor its expected functional motivations are the ultimate trigger of the splits observed. Alignment has probably been unstable to begin with due to the inherent versatile nature of the verbal adjective (*qtil-*), on which the alignment variation is based, and as a result of this versatility ergativity is one of several possible outcomes (Noorlander forthcoming). In the evolution of constructions, *s* and *P* may 'lead a life of their own', and the relationship between them need not be symmetric. Transitive and intransitive constructions are likely to have had a different status from the beginning.

### 7.1.3 *Recommendations for Future Research*

The findings of this synchronic study may serve as a fertile ground for further research regarding the historical development of alignment systems and the possible role of language contact. Further research is needed to investigate the implications for the speech communities and historical dialectology, including displacement, possible diffusion of constructions and interdialectal mixture, taking into account the speakers' religious identity.

Furthermore, the previous discussion barely touched upon the role of language contact, because the material in Neo-Aramaic is already so complex in itself. Issues raised in this book may also be partially motivated by replications from neighboring languages by bi- or multilingual speakers, such as the ergativity in Southeastern Trans-Zab Jewish dialects and contact with Gorani and Central Kurdish. Indeed, alignment does not appear to be a stable feature in Iranian languages either (e.g. Dorleijn 1996; Mengozzi 2005; Haig 2008). This also has direct bearing on the debate whether language contact with Iranian contributed to the development of alignment in Neo-Aramaic (e.g. Khan 2004b, 2007b; Haig 2008). Contact-induced convergence with ergative neighboring languages could have played a role in the emergence of ergativity. However, the fluid-subject marking that also lies at the basis of the dialects that do not employ the E-set as subject indexes in general does not seem to comply with the patterns of non-Aramaic languages in the area. Pattern replication from ergative neighboring languages could at least partly explain why the SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties of NENA lost this original fluid-subject marking and largely adapted their split intransitivity to the subject coding pattern in contiguous Iranian languages such as Gorani and Kurdish. The dialectal

distribution of prepositional marking strategies for agents among the Neo-Aramaic dialects could correlate with the (ergative) case marking strategies in Northern Kurdish, which are notably absent in Central Kurdish as well as in the NENA dialects spoken in the area where Central Kurdish is dominant.

Again, we should bear in mind that intransitive and transitive constructions may differ in this respect and that alignment is not simply completely replicated from one speech community into the other. The identical marking of A and P, for example, is typologically unusual in the development of alignment systems (e.g. Palancar 2002), but it is a well-known feature of some Iranian languages (e.g. Payne 1980; Bossong 1985). Replicating such identical marking on the Iranian model would have affected only transitive constructions, and would not preclude other structures where A and/or P may also share properties with S.

## 7.2 A Taxonomy of Major Alignment Types

Since this general overview is organized to avail readers of a reference guide to this book, it presents abundant references to the relevant sections. For convenience and clarity's sake, a few representative examples are restated. Constraints are both dialect- and construction-specific.

### 7.2.1 Accusative Alignment ( $A=S \neq P$ )

Accusative alignment predominates in:

- prepositional marking (§§ 2.2.4.2, 2.3.2.1., 3.1.2, 3.3.2, 4.4.2, 5.1.4., 6.2.1., 6.4.1.);
- trigger potential for agreement (§ 6.2.1.);
- morphological marking of agreement in the inflection based on *qaṭal-* and the imperative (§ 2.1.3.), compound verbal constructions based on the infinitive and in most dialects also compound perfects based on the resultative participle (§ 2.2.5).

Accusative verbal person marking occurs also in the perfective past, as shown in (1), but is attested in only a few NENA dialects (§§ 4.2.1.2., 4.4.1.2.). Where this pattern occurs, however, it is restricted:

- to low ranking person objects, sometimes only 3fs. and 3pl., in the majority of dialects;
- to low ranking agents, if the object is high ranking;
- to non-referential or reflexive pronominal objects (§ 4.4.5.1.);
- to the perfective past as opposed to the perfect/resultative in J. Rustaqa and Rewanduz (§ 3.4.3.).

## (1) C. Marga (SE Turkey)

a. *dməx -lawxən*  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:2PL  
 'You<sub>PL</sub> slept.'

b. *griš -úx -lawxən*  
 pull<sub>PFV</sub> -P:1PL -A:2PL  
 'You<sub>PL</sub> pulled us.'

The object may be marked independently of the verb in an accusative fashion in several NENA dialects (see Map 4, §§ 3.1.2., 4.1.1.2., 4.4.2.), such as (2). When expressed by means of (*ʔal*)-, these pronominal objects may freely attach to the preceding verbal form in post-verbal position. This accusative type is also found in compound verbal forms (§ 2.2.5.2.), but it does not generally occur in the 'imperfective' where the L-set remains the preferred expression of pronominal objects (§ 4.4.2.1.), except for the Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA (§ 3.1.2.).

## (2) C. Sardarid (NW Iran; Younansardaroud 2001)

a. *dməx-li*  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub>-S:1SG  
 'I slept'

b. *xzi-li qa- diy-<sup>+</sup>ux*  
 see<sub>PFV</sub>-A:1SG OBJ- LK-2MS  
 'I saw you<sub>MS</sub>.'

## 7.2.2 Ergative Alignment (A≠S=P)

Depending on the dialect(s), ergativity is always at least in part restricted by

- (i) the inflectional base of the verb, namely *qtil-*/*qətl-* or the related resultative participle *qtila*/*qətlá*;
- (ii) thus minimally by tense-aspect (§ 6.1.1.):
  - a. perfective past and perfect only (§§ 3.3.1.1., 3.4.6., 3.4.7.);
  - b. realis resultative or perfect only (§ 3.4.3.);
- (iii) and additionally the prominence hierarchy, notably
  - a. pro-indexes (§§ 4.4.5.1., 5.2.1.);
  - b. cross-indexing of prominent NPS (§§ 3.3.1.3, 4.4.4–4.4.5.);
  - c. lower ranking persons only, depending on P (§ 3.3.1.1., § 5.2.1.) or A and P (§ 3.4.7., 4.5.5.);
  - d. higher ranking persons only, depending on A (§ 4.5.4.).

Elsewhere it is arguably also restricted by:

- (iv) feminine gender participial agreement only (§ 3.4.5–3.4.6.);
- (v) partly trigger potential for participial agreement (§ 3.4.7.) and absence of agent agreement in the agentless preterit (§ 4.1.4.);
- (vi) prepositional marking of—often focal—agents (§ 4.1.4.3., § 5.1.2.).

Ergative indexing can be combined with differential accusative flagging (SE Trans-Zab, § 3.3.1.3.) or optional ergative flagging (Turoyo, § 5.2.2.1.). Optional ergative flagging occurs in pragmatically restricted contexts in some NENA dialects, alongside tripartite indexing: a type of ergative-like prepositional marking similar to Turoyo is documented in NENA, but s and p are not marked by the same set of person markers (§ 4.2.4.).

The ergative indexing of the type in (3) is thus far only attested in the SE Trans-Zab Jewish dialects of NENA (see Chapter 3, in particular § 3.3.1.1). This pattern also occurs in the irrealis pendant of the perfect in these dialects. It is confined to the resultative in the Jewish dialects of Rustaqa and Rewanduz (NE Iraq).

(3) **J. Saqiz** (W Iran)

- |               |   |             |                           |
|---------------|---|-------------|---------------------------|
| [s]           | [v  | -s]         |                           |
| a. <i>daé</i> | <i>piré</i>                               | <i>dmix</i> | <i>-a</i>                 |
|               | mother:FS                                 | old         | sleep <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS |
|               | ‘The old woman slept.’ (Israeli 1998:100) |             |                           |

- |                 |                                     |               |                         |            |  |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------|--|
| [A]             | [P]                                 | [v            | -P                      | -A]        |  |
| b. <i>aḥmad</i> | <i>xalist-év</i>                    | <i>xəzy</i>   | <i>-a</i>               | <i>-le</i> |  |
|                 | PRN                                 | sister:FS-his | see <sub>PFV</sub> -3FS | -3MS       |  |
|                 | ‘Ahmad saw his sister.’ (ibid. 103) |               |                         |            |  |

Ergative verbal person marking also occurs in dialects of Ṭur ‘Abdin (SE Turkey, NE Syria), illustrated in (4), where there is a major subclass of basic intransitive verbs that takes an alternative ‘perfective’ base \*CaCiC-, such as *damix-* for *dmx* ‘sleep’ below, instead of CCiC, such as *dmix-*, as found in NENA. Its overall typology is similar to the SE Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, but generally limited to pro-indexes (see Chapter 5, in particular § 5.2.1.).

(4) **Ṭuroyo** (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1985, 1992)

- |                 |                             |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| a. <i>damix</i> | <i>-o</i>                   |
|                 | sleep <sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS |
|                 | ‘She fell asleep.’          |

- b. *həzy -o -le*  
 saw<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:3MS  
 'He saw **her**.'

Compound verbal forms that express the realis present perfect in the Jewish varieties of Iranian Kurdistan may also pattern ergatively (§ 3.4.7.). As expected, the resultative participle agrees with s and p, illustrated by the feminine singular in (5a) and (5b) below, and the copula (-*ya*) also groups s and p, while the agreement with A (*axonawali* 'my brothers') is unexpressed. The realis perfect construction in (5b) is confined to prominent full NPs and third person markers for both A and p.

(5) **J. Kerend** (W Iran; Hopkins 2002, 292)

- a. *o hi-ta-ya*  
 DEM:3MS come-FS-3FS  
 'She has come.'
- b. *axonawal-i xzi-ta-ya*  
 brother:PL-my seen-FS-3FS  
 'My brothers have **seen her**.'

The dependent person markers in C. Artun (SE Turkey) also pattern ergatively. A is distinctly marked by a special set of person markers called the 'L-E-series', which mixes the L- and E-set, such as *-lah* and *-leton* in (6c) and (6d), while s and p are expressed by the L-set. This manifestation of ergativity is limited to first/second person markers (§ 4.3.4.).

(6) **C. Hertevin** (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988, 76)

- a. *te -lehon*  
 come<sub>PFV</sub> -S:2PL  
 'You<sub>PL</sub> came.'
- b. *te -lan*  
 come<sub>PFV</sub> -S:1PL  
 'We came.' (lit. Us came)
- c. *hze-lah -lehon*  
 see<sub>PFV</sub>-A:1PL -P:2PL  
 'We saw you<sub>PL</sub>.'

- d. *hze-letón -nan*  
 see<sub>PFV-A:2PL</sub> -P:1PL  
 ‘You<sub>PL</sub> saw us.’

A special transitive perfective past construction based on *qaṭəl-* is used in the majority of NENA varieties (see Map 6, §4.3.5.), as illustrated for the Christian dialect of Nerwa in (7) below. This so-termed *qam-qaṭəl*-construction is paradigmatically linked with *qīl-* in the expression of the transitive perfective past.

- (7) C. Nerwa (NW Iraq)
- a. *ʾana dmāx -lī*  
 I stand<sub>PFV</sub> -S:1SG  
 ‘I slept.’ (lit. Me slept)
- b. *ʾana qəm-xazy-a -lī*  
 I PFV-see<sub>PFV-A:3FS</sub> -P:1SG  
 ‘She saw me.’

In actual transitive clauses, both the L-E-series and *qam-qaṭəl*-construction:

- only occur when the object is a cross-index;
- freely combine with object marking of all persons;
- are obligatory in several dialects for first/second person objects, sometimes also 3ms.;
- never combine with indefinite full nominal objects;
- cannot occur with lexical transitivity, i.e. implicit objects.

Regarding compound verbal forms in the perfect, special treatment of A is also found in the participial agreement in the realis perfect of Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan (§3.4.5.). The feminine singular A betrays an additional /t/-element of the resultative participle form <sup>+</sup>*qṭal-ta* ‘killed’, as shown in (8b) below. Thus, we observe ergative marking (A≠S=P), although confined to the feminine singular and realis perfect.

- (8) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2008b)
- [V -S -PAST]
- a. *dmíx ∅ -an -wa* (intransitive)  
 slept -S:1FS -PST  
 ‘I<sub>F</sub> had slept.’

- [V -A -A -PAST -P]  
 b. *+qtəl -t -án -wa -le* (transitive)  
 killed -FS -A:1FS -PST -P:3MS  
 'I<sub>F</sub> had killed him.'

### 7.2.3 Other Basic Alignment Types

#### 7.2.3.1 Fluid-s or Semantic Alignment (A=S/S=P)

Several dialects are characterized by semantic alignment in verbal person marking based on *qtıl-*, where the treatment of S like either P or A of transitive perfective past clauses yields either a resultative or perfect as opposed to a perfective past reading, respectively (§§ 3.2.1.1., 4.3.1., 6.1.2.)

- (9) J. Urmi (NW Iran; Garbell 1965; Khan 2008b)
- a. *+dməx -le* (S<sub>A</sub>, perfective)  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS  
 'He slept.' (lit. Him slept)
- b. *+dmix -a* (S<sub>P</sub>, resultative/perfect)  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS  
 'She has slept.' (lit. She slept)
- c. *+qtıl -a -le*  
 kill<sub>PFV</sub> -P:3FS -A:3MS  
 'He killed her.' (lit. Him killed she)

#### 7.2.3.2 Neutral Alignment (A≠S≠P)

A few dialects manifest phonologically non-distinct verbal person marking (§§ 2.3.2.3., 3.3.2.1., 4.4.3.), e.g.

- (10) C. Haşsan (SE Turkey; Damsma forthcoming)
- a. *te -la*  
 come<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3FS  
 'She came.' (lit. Her came)
- b. *xzə -la -la*  
 see<sub>PFV</sub> -A:3FS -P:3FS  
 'She saw her.' (lit. Her saw her)

This is documented for Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan such as Urmi and Salamas in the northern periphery, and Western Christian NENA dialects and

the dialect of Mlaḥsó in SE Turkey (see Map 5). It is confined to the third person in C. Artun (Hertevin; SE Turkey) (§ 4.4.4).

Relative linear position contributes to role discrimination, as the L-suffixes are used in a strict V-A-P order. Since the morphologically identical person markers occur in a distinct affix position, this may be considered accusative in typological studies. This pattern here is not simply subsumed under accusative, because, unless the position relative to the verb is clearly distinct (i.e. prefixal vs. suffixal), it cannot be unambiguously determined on the basis of their position which suffix is *grouped* with *s* (§ 2.3.2.3.).

Compound verbal forms may also betray neutral verbal person marking (§ 4.3.2.4.), albeit confined to the third person, alongside accusative agreement:

(11) C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a)

a. *dmáxe*            *-le*  
 slept:RPP:MS -S:3MS  
 'He has slept, is asleep.'

b. *qṭile*            *-le*    *-le*  
 killed:RPP:MS -A:3MS -P:3MS  
 'He has killed **him**.'

7.2.3.3 Tripartite Alignment (A≠S≠P)

Tripartite alignment (A≠S≠P), as observed in (12), is the typical alternative for first/second persons in the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties against the ergative third person (§ 3.3.1.1.). P is prepositional and independent of the verb, as illustrated below, and the marking of A is distinct from *s*. Arguably, this tripartition is limited to the third person dependent markers in Jewish Saqiz, where prepositional pronouns merge with the L-suffixes.

(12) J. Sulemaniya (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a)

a. *kwiš*            *-na*  
 descend<sub>PFV</sub> -S:1MS  
 'I<sub>M</sub> descended.'

b. *qṭəl*    *-li*    *'əll-áx*  
 kill<sub>PFV</sub> - A:1SG OBJ-2FS  
 'I killed you<sub>FS</sub>,' (lit. Me killed to-you).

Compound verbal forms may also evince tripartite verbal person marking (§3.4.5.2.), albeit strictly speaking limited to the third person as well as full nominals. The following example for the realis perfect in Jewish Urmi represents the coding of S via the E-set (-i), A by means of a different set akin to the copula (-u) and P by the 'əll-series (-lle). The transitive construction also has a different inflectional base, namely the resultative participle +*qtilá*.

(13) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; Khan 2008b)

- a. *kwiš*            -i  
 descend<sub>PFV</sub> -S:3PL  
 'They have descended.'
- b. *qtil*            -u    -llu  
 killed:RPP -A:3PL -P:3PL  
 'They have killed them.'

7.2.3.4 Horizontal Alignment (S≠A=P)

Horizontal indexing (S≠A=P) groups A and P by means of the L-suffixes, which is at least attested for Turoyo (SE Turkey) (§5.2.1.), as given in (14), and arguably for Jewish Saqiz (W Iran) (§3.3.1.2.), confined to the first/second person. Conversely, the realis perfect in C. Artun (Hertevin, SE Turkey) presumably shows horizontal alignment confined to the third person (§§4.3.1., 4.4.4.).

(14) **Turoyo** (SE Turkey)

- a. *damix* -ono  
 sleep<sub>PFV</sub> -S:1FS  
 'I<sub>F</sub> went to sleep.'
- b. *ħzé* -li -lan  
 see<sub>PFV</sub> -A:1SG -P:1PL  
 'I saw us.' (lit. Me saw us)

Horizontal flagging occurs in at least one town in Tūr 'Abdin, namely Rayite (§5.2.2.1.); both types of flagging seem to be optional.

(15) **Turoyo** (Rayite, SE Turkey)

- a. *Ḥasané Aliḵi qayəm-∅*  
 Hasan Aliki rise<sub>PFV</sub>-S:3MS  
 'Hasan Aliki rose.' (Ritter 1967–1971, 95/145)

- b. *l-Ali*    *grəš-le*            *l-u-sayfo*  
 DAT-Ali pull<sub>PFV</sub>-A:3MS DAT-the-sword:MS  
 ‘Ali drew the sword.’ (ibid. 107/116)

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