Alignment in eastern Neo-Aramaic languages from a typological perspective

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4. ALIGNMENT SPLITS IN NENA BASED ON ARGUMENT-RELATED PROPERTIES

Following the grammatical synopsis of Eastern Neo-Aramaic in the preceding chapter, this chapter unravels the entanglement of North Eastern Neo-Aramaic diversity manifested in alignment splits, concentrating on the perfective past constructions based on *qṭil-* and argument-related properties[106].

First of all, it is a common assumption that NENA started out with an ergative alignment pattern akin to the Jewish NENA dialects that is developing toward an accusative pattern under the influence of DOM and its relation to the prominence scale (Mengozzi 2005; Khan 2007a; Barotto 2015:237) in accordance with a traditional view that in an alignment split conditioned by the referential properties, lower ranking arguments pattern ergatively but higher ranking ones do not (Silverstein 1976; Dixon 1995:83-94; see §2.4.3). Ergativity is said to be gradually deminished in the increasingly more restricted use of the E-set as dependent person forms in the inverted 'perfective' construction. There seems to be a cross-dialectal bias against the coherent grouping of the S and P for first and second person arguments through the E-set, hypothetically:

(1) ***nšiq-**áx**-loxun* 'You$_{PL}$ kissed **us**'
qim-**ax '**We** rose'

When and to what extent the E-set is used in the 'perfective' is, therefore, one of the main themes in this chapter. In most dialects it is restricted to third person in the P function. The person role split is generally attributed to ergativity (e.g. Mengozzi 2005; Doron and Khan 2012) but Section 4.2. will argue that it is regardless of alignment pattern and rather a constructional split based on person.

It will often prove difficult to group the S, A and P in a complete and/or coherent fashion. In our approach, ergative alignment hinges on the grouping of the S with the P. If there is no such grouping on any level, it makes no sense to speak of ergativity. Alignment typology studies similarities and/or differences, focusing on the relationship between S and P or A. Yet, this relationship is not always symmetric (either synchronically or diachronically). Constraints and

[106] One should note that the perfective past can also be expressed via compound verbal forms based on the resultative participle (*qṭila*) in NENA dialects. These forms are discussed in the next chapter.

conditions may not be equally relevant to all grammatical functions. Dialects may completely dispose of the E-set or confine it to either the S or the P function. The S, A and P may each lead a life of their own in NENA and this may result in considerable asymmetry. variation and changes, therefore, are strictly based on the interaction of intransitive constructions and transitive constructions through agreement, case-marking, person forms, and system-internal factors which are largely independent of how we classify the entire arrangement as a whole. Restrictions or a decline in the use of a particular set of person indexes, therefore, may but does not necessarily tell us something about ergativity, unless a grouping between S and P is manifested. For example, the E-set may be used as a patient index for all persons (*nšiq-ax-loxun* 'You$_{PL}$ kissed us') in an 'accusative dialect', even though there is no corresponding use as subject indexes (***dmix-ax* 'We (have) slept'). And we will note ways in which ergative alignment is manifested other than the E-set in the inverted 'perfective' construction that are contrary to predictions of the prominence hierarchy. Despite the fascinating microvariation in NENA, there is as of yet no witness to a fully coherent ergative type reported in any grammatical description.

Transitive constructions, then, may be treated very differently from intransitives. Within transitive constructions, NENA generally differentiates between basic transitive 'perfective' constructions with an object index and those without. The construction changes on the presence or absence of verbal person marking denoting the P, especially when it is non-third person. NENA dialects also have distinct coding preferences in terms of case-marking and agreement in such constructions. Case-marking interacts with the independent person forms, while agreement is based on cross-indexes (Subsection 4.2). Full nominals may be treated differently from pronominals. Within pronouns, independent person forms are treated differently from dependent ones and, generally, the third person is distinguished from the first and second. These, then, constitute the main variables we will examine:

- S, A and P (T and R only sporadically);
- case-marking vs. agreement;
- 'imperfective' (*qaṭəl-*) vs. 'perfective' (*qṭil-*) constructions;
- intransitive vs. transitive clauses;
- presence vs. absence of object indexes;
- full nominal vs. pronominal;
- independent vs. dependent person form;
- third person vs. first/second person.

Subsections 4.1. and 4.2. mainly deal with P-related factors petertaining to distinct (differential) object marking strategies. Subsection 4.3. concentrates on A-related factors. It also discusses a few verb-related factors regarding labile valency alternations to investigeate the coding properties of the agent. The verbal semantic motivations of such splits are treated in greater detail in Chapter 5 (§5.1.1). Subsection 4.4. is a treatment of more complex interacting A and P-related factors in analogy with 'imperfective' constructions.

4.1. Person Role Restrictions

Given that higher ranking patients are incompatible with the inverted 'perfective' construction, a distinct expression of the P is preferred. Analytic, independent expression of object person forms are preferred over the synthetic, more dependent E-set attached to the verbal base across NENA dialects.

4.1.1. Person Role Constraints in Transitive Constructions

The transitive perfective past constructions express various person splits in NENA. It is the E-set used to encode the P in the 'perfective' (*qṭil-*) that is restricted in most dialects. There is at least a patient-related person scale peculiar to the 'perfective' and the restriction on patient-marking appears to follow a hierarchy from 1,2 > 3ms. > 3pl. > 3fs.

Complete person-marking is found only in a few Christian and Jewish dialects in NW Iraq, such as J. Amidya and J. Aradhin, as well as SE Turkey, such as J. Challa and C. Ashitha, and the Christian dialects in and around Urmi in Iranian Azerbaijan[107]. It is also documented in the earliest NENA literature, such as Jewish texts from Nerwa (15th-16th c. NW Iraq; Sabar 1976). In the majority of dialects, however, and especially the Trans-Zab Jewish varieties known so far that exhibit ergative alignment, the E-set is confined to the third person in the 'perfective'. As illustrated below, only the third person is compatible with the inverted 'perfective' construction. The A role, by contrast, which is expressed through the L-set, reveals no such restrictions.

[107] Maclean (1895:135-139) also mentions the Christian dialects of Txuma, Upper Ṭiyari, Shamshdin and Ashitha in SE Turkey and Alqosh in NE Iraq.

(1) **Person-restricted patient-marking in J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a:85-86)

3MS	*nšəq-**Ø**-le*	'He kissed	**him'**
FS	*nšiq-**a**-le*		**her'**
PL	*nšiq-**i**-le*		**them'**
1PL	***nšiq-ax-le*		**us'**
2FS	***nšiq-at-te*		**you$_{FS}$'**
	etc.		

Person constraints occur in all dialects irrespective of alignment. It is always found in dialects that group the S and P (e.g. *dmix-**ax*** '**We** slept' : ***nšiq-**ax**-lu* 'They kissed **us**') and possibly found in dialects that group the S with the A. Yet, when person indexing is unrestricted, the S always aligns with the A (e.g. *dməx-lan* 'We slept' : *nšiq-**ax**-lu* 'They kissed **us**') (cf. Golbenberg 1992:125). Thus, interestingly, what seems to be the case is that the grouping of S and A in the 'perfective' is fruitful ground for unrestricted use of patient indexes.

It is the specific combination of the 'perfective' base *qṭil-* and dependent person forms that is disfavored or categorically disallowed[108]. There is no such constraint in the same sequence of morphemes attached to the 'imperfective' where these roles follow the opposite order (e.g. °*našq-at-te* 'You$_{FS}$ kiss him'). The restriction minimally targets the first and second person in their P function. Thus, if the 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[109].

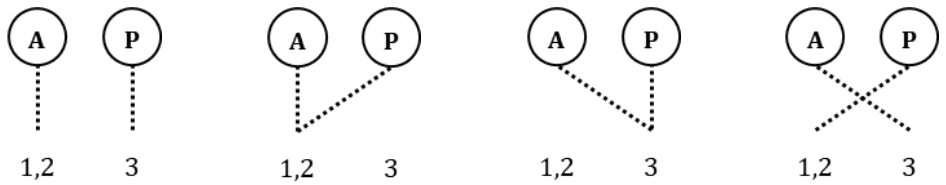
Since there is no relative hierarchy for first and second person in Neo-Aramaic, it suffices to differentiate third from non-third person. Thus, for our purposes, non-third person reference is fundamental and strongly disfavored or disallowed in 'person-restricted dialects'. In line with this, we shall refer to 'person-restricted dialects' in which the E-set does not mark all persons in the P function in the 'perfective' like J. Betanure above, such that forms like ***nšiq-ax-lu* 'They kissed us' do not occur. We shall refer to 'person-unrestricted dialects' in which the E-set is available for all persons in the P function like J. Amidya.

[108] For a generativist perspective on this person-role constraint in NENA, see Doron and Khan (2012).

[109] See §2.4.3 and §2.4.4 for a typology of such person-based splits.

Transitive constructions can be categorized in terms of person role associations (Zúñiga 2002; Haspelmath 2007; see §2.4.3). This is schematized in the figure below.

Figure 12. *Monotransitive person role associations*



Source: *Haspelmath (2007).*

In most dialects, the person of the A is insignificant, and therefore, the relative ranking of persons is unimportant (but see below); only the person reference of the P is relevant. Consequently, the E-suffixes just happen to be only in the 'canonical' and clustering third person associations where the P is third person.

The person constraint, however, is not always absolute and I believe this is connected with the relative ranking of persons. Person-restricted dialects may still occasionally use the E-suffixes for non-third person reference. In her description of the NENA (Judi) Christian dialect of Beṣpən (SE Turkey), Sinha (2000:142) mentions that, apart from the third person forms, only the first masculine singular is attested. In her text sample, she records the following forms with a 1ms. E-suffix marking the object.

(2) **C. Beṣpən** (SE Turkey; Sinha 2000: 182.10, 192.65)

a. *ala* *hiw-**ən**-ne=ž* *dənye*
God:MS give$_{PFV}$-1MS-3MS=ADD world
'God gave **me$_M$** the world (i.e. I was born).'

b. *qəm-lɛ* *mətt-**ən**-nehɛn* *b-gawəd* *tarzyuta*
rise$_{PFV}$-S:3PL put$_{PFV}$-1MS-3PL in-inside.of tailoring
'Then they put **me$_M$** inside the tailor's workplace.'

c. *lá-* *mšoder-**ən**-nehɛn* *l-nawba* *pləx-li* *tama*
NEG II:send$_{PFV}$-1MS-3PL to-patrol work$_{PFV}$-S:1SG there
'They didn't send **me$_M$** on patrol. I worked there.'

Similarly, the first plural E-suffix is used sporadically in a lower Ṭiyari dialect (SE Turkey). Talay (2008a:317-318) does not mention this but it is undoubtedly also an exceptional case in an otherwise person-restricted dialect, for example:

(3) **C. Sarspido** (Lower Ṭiyari, SE Turkey; Talay 2009:142.29)

a. *siq-la* *axni* *šqil-**ix**-la* *mən* *tama*
go.up$_{PFV}$-S:3FS we take$_{PFV}$-1PL-3FS from there
'She came (and) took **us** away from there.'

b. *moθ-**ix**-la* *l-qaṣra* *diyy-a*
bring$_{PFV}$-1PL-3FS DAT-castle LK-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 the A. The Ps are non-third person but the As are third person, i.e. the person role association is crossed. Recently, Khan (2016b:248-249) came to the same conclusion regarding Christian Urmi (NW Iran), given that most of his informants more readily accept *xəzy-ən-ne* 'He saw me' rather than (**)*xəzy-ən-nux* 'You saw me'. These observations indicate that when the P outranks the A in person, the use of the E-series seems to be more acceptable in person-restricted dialects, whereas when both the A and P are non-third person, the construction is avoided altogether. If this is correct, the reference of the A is significant and the relative ranking may have contributed to the conventionalization of the person split in person-restricted dialects. That is, the relative ranking seems to be only relevant for the most potential agents. The first/second persons are most topicworthy and less likely to be selected as Ps (e.g. Silverstein 1976; Haspelmath 2007; cf. Khan 2016b:249) and, being human, attract agent-like properties more so than the third persons. A conflict would result especially when both arguments are at the highest person reference and, thus, maximally topicworthy. On the other hand, the prominence scale does not fully account for this. Role disambiguation *per se* is not crucial, for instance, since, when both A and P are third person and thus potentially ambiguous, the E-set is available (e.g. C. Urmi *xəzy-a-lə* 'He saw her'). Moreover, one would expect that when the P outranks the A in topicworthiness, verbal morphology other than the canonical ranking (A > P) is favored, but this is not the case, the harmonic and disharmonc person role associations have the same coding strategies (e.g. C. Urmi *xəzy-a-li* 'I saw her').

In some dialects, such as Jewish Arbel (NE Iraq; Khan 1999:119), the zero expression of a third masculine singular pronominal object is impossible and

perfective past forms like *grəš-le* can only mean 'He pulled', not ***grəš-***Ø**-le* 'He pulled **him**'. This limits the E-series and its use in patient indexing to the third person feminine singular and plural. Thus, number and gender are involved too. In yet a few other dialects, as we shall see, the E-series is no longer combined with the 'perfective' (*qṭil-*). The distinction between 3ms. and non-3ms. is presumably purely morphological. The feminine and plural are not only morphologically marked (*-a*, *-i*) in opposition to the masculine (Ø) but the zero morpheme of the 3ms. E-series inevitably gives rise to some degree of ambiguity between forms with zero expression of the P and those without any expression of P, e.g. *nšəq*(-**Ø**)-*li* can mean either 'I kissed' or 'I kissed **him**'.

Moreover, we could tentatively assume a relative hierarchy for person marking tendencies. First of all, if a NENA dialect employs a verbal index from the E-series for non-third person referents it will do so for third person referents but not *vice versa*. That is, a dialect that allows first/second person forms such as *nšiq-**ax**-le* 'He kissed **us**' will also allow third person forms like *nšiq-**a**-le* 'He kissed her' but not the other way around. The same applies to the third masculine singular zero expression. If a NENA dialects marks the 3ms. via a zero morpheme (*nšiq-**Ø**-le* 'He kissed **him**'), it will also mark the plural and feminine singular (*nšiq-a-le*, *nšiq-i-le*). We can schematize this as follows:

(4) **Person hierarchy for E-suffixes to express the P**

E-suffixes

(less favorable) ← (more favorable)

[1/2]	⊃	**[3]** MS	⊃	PL	⊃	FS
-ən, *-ax* etc.		*-Ø*		*-i*		*-a*

The E-series is less likely to express the P function from left to right. If the E-series is no longer available up to the 3fs. (*-a*), it will not be found for anything to its left either.

This obviously also interacts with the availability of the E-set as object indexes to other grammatical functions that align with the patient such as the indexing of T and R in ditransitive constructions. In Jewish Amidya, for instance, the E-set is fully available for all such roles in all persons:

(5) **J. Amidya** (person-unrestricted, NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989:107-109)

a. *šmiʔ-**a**-lu.* (P)
hear$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3PL
'They heard **her**.'

c. *hiw-**i**-le* *ṭal-i* (T)
give$_{PFV}$-T:3PL-A:3MS DAT-1SG
'He gave **them** to me.'

b. *hiw-**a**-li* *pare* (R)
give$_{PFV}$-R:3FS-A:1SG money:PL
'I gave **her** money.'

If the scale illustrated above is correct, it is likely that it will also apply to restrictions on the marking of the T or R. In another Jewish variety, for instance, the dialect of Urmi, the E-suffixes can mark the R only for 3fs. reference forms like *hiw-**a**-le* 'He gave **to her**'. They cannot do so for any reference to left of the scale including the 3pl. ****hiw-**i**-le** 'He gave **to them**' or 3ms. ****hiw-∅-le** 'He gave **to him**' (Khan 2008b:145). In the same dialect, however, the E-suffixes are available not only for 3fs. but also for 3ms. and 3pl. reference to mark the P and T, e.g. *xəzy-**i**-le* 'He saw **them**', *xze-∅-le* 'He saw **him**'. The turning point, then, seems to be the 3fs. and the role that is more restricted is the recipient.

Diachronically, the person split could indicate that first/second person enclitics have not fully grammaticalized to the P function in all NENA dialects, especially when their S-marking function is still present (which would explain why only accusative varieties can be person-unrestricted). The person split may also be connected with the source construction. Historically, the *šmiʕ l*-construction could be used impersonally, especially with dative experiencers, as illustrated below. The feminine ending *-ā* is impersonal, so that *šmīʕ-ā l-an* literally represents 'Us it$_F$ is heard'. Besides *šmʕ* 'hear', the verbs *ḥzy* 'see' and *sbr* 'think, reason' are verbs that frequently occur in dative experiencer resultative constructions and are by far the most in common in Jewish Babylonian (cf. Schlesinger 1928:45, § 30; Sokoloff 2002:327b; Bar-Asher 2014:78; cf. Coghill 2016).

(6) **Syriac** (3rd c. Drijvers 1964:50.4)

w=aykannā	*ḏa=**šmīʕ-ā***	***l-ān***	*kull-hēn*	*ḥlīṣ-ān*
and=according	SUBR=heard -3FS	DAT-1PL	all-3PL:F	strong-FPL

ʔu=qrabṭānāy-ān
and-warlike-FPL

'And **as we are informed** (lit. **us, it$_F$ is heard**), they$_F$ (Amazonian women) are all strong and warlike.'

To sum up, only third person patients are compatible with the inverted 'perfective' construction in most dialects. There are some indications that the relative ranking of A and P is relevant. Some person-restricted dialects seem to allow for object coding, when the object outranks the agent on the person hierarchy. The use of the E-set to mark the object may even be more restricted to 3pl. and 3fs. or 3fs. only, and may even be completely obsolete, especially in the expression of the R.

4.1.2. Dependent and Independent Person Forms

As discussed in §3.3.1, dialects generally have an independent set of prepositional person forms that are generally based on differential object markers. Such independent prepositional person forms may serve as an alternative to dependent person forms, especially the person-restricted E-set[110].

I will show that there is a TAM-sensitive split in object person forms due to the person split peculiar to the 'perfective'. Although the independent object person forms are optional in other clauses, they are necessary in 'perfective' constructions to refer to at least the first and second person in person-restricted dialects. This suggests that the wide array of object sets does not have the same status for each inflectional system. The independent object person forms are mainly acceptable in 'perfective' constructions and favored as an alternative to the object-marking E-series in some person-restricted dialects. These person forms are often based on the preposition that marks recipients. Since they are generally also used to mark themes, the recipient tends to be marked by a different preposition in order to avoid morphological identity in case-marking. There is no need for this in other clauses, such as the 'imperfective', because the L-set expresses pronominal themes and the preposition marking the recipient may freely vary.

4.1.2.1. Independent Prepositional Series

Dialects that use independent prepositional pronominal objects as an alternative to the E-set of person forms exhibit the following tendency. When a verbal form does not combine with a set of dependent person forms, an independent

[110] This is sometimes referred to as the "intraconjugational" expression of the object against the "extraconjugational" expression (e.g. Pennacchietti 1994; Mengozzi 2002b).

set, preferably the same as the marker of recipients, is selected instead. This results in notable differences between the 'perfective' and other constructions.

Generally, unmarked independent personal pronouns may be used to express the P similarly to the S and A. They generally require agreement. (7a) below, for instance, is a rare example where the unmarked P does not trigger agreement, while in (7b) it does.

(7) **C. Barwar** (NW Iraq, person-restricted; Khan 2008a:881, transcription slightly modified)

	[A]	[P]	[V-A]
a.	***ʔana***	***ʔati***	*bay-ən*
	I	you:SG	want$_{IPFV}$-1MS
	'I want you.'		

	[V-A-P]	[P]
b.	*qa-t-nabl-an-ne*	***ʔap-ʔaw***
	to-SUBR-take$_{IPFV}$-1MS-3MS	ADD-he
	'so that I take also **<u>him</u>**.'	

This agreement with independent unmarked pronouns generally als holds for the P-marking E-set in dialects that use them, e.g. ***axni*** *šqil-**ix**-la* 'She took **us**' (C. Sarspido, Lower Ṭiyari, SE Turkey; Talay 2009:142.29).

Nevertheless, in other dialects, prepositions may also serve as the basis for independent object pronouns distinct from the unmarked pendants above, such as the preposition *(ʔəl)l-* in J. Arbel:

(8) **J. Arbel** (NW Iraq, person-restricted; Khan 1999:334)

	[P]	[V-A]
a.	***ʔəll-ő́x**=iš*	*ġazy-a*
	DAT-2MS=ADD	kill$_{IPFV}$-3FS
	'that she sees **you** also.'	

	[P]	[V-A-P]
b.	***ʔəll-án***	*qaṭl-i-lan*
	DAT-1PL	kill$_{IPFV}$-3PL-1PL
	'that they kill (also) **us**.'	

These prepositional person forms are used particularly in combination with the 'perfective', as illustrated below. They are often the same as the dative such as (9) *(ʔəl)l-* or (10) *ḳa(d)-* 'to, for' but unusual prepositions like (11) *(ʔəb)b-* 'in, at; with; against' also occur. These can be extended with *d-* or the independent pos-

sessive prononominal base *did-* or *diyy-* depending on the dialect, e.g. *ḵa-**diy-**ʿux* in (10b).

(9) **J. Koy Sanjaq** (NE Iraq, person-restricted; Mutzafi 2004a:189.15)

a. *šeraké* *dwiq-le* ***l-ʕaqubraké***
lion:MS:DEF seize$_{PFV}$-A:3MS DAT-mouse:MS:DEF
'The lion caught hold of **the mouse**.'

b. *ʕṣíṛ-e=**ll-ew***[111]
squeeze$_{PFV}$-A:3MS=DAT-3MS
'He squeezed **him**.'

(10) **C. Sardarid** (NW Iran, person-restricted; Younansardaroud 2001:205, 232.4, transcription modified)

a. *ʿavva* *purəḵ-lə* ***ḵa*** ***yala*** *mən* *mota*
DEM:MS II:rescue$_{PFV}$-A:3MS DAT boy:MS from death:MS
'He saved **the boy** from death.'

b. *may* *xzi-lə* ***ḵa-diy-ʿux*** *ɟu* *pəlxana?*
who see$_{PFV}$-A:3MS DAT-LK-2MS in work
'Who saw **you**$_{MS}$ during work?'

(11) **C. Gaznax** (SE Turkey, person-unrestricted; Gutman 2015:315, glossing adapted)
nšiq-li ***biy-ux***
kiss$_{PFV}$-A:1SG against-2MS
'I kissed **you$_{MS}$**.'

NENA dialects generally do not distinguish in form between independent third person and non-third person forms, they are all based on the same preposition. Thus, both person types may be prepositional. At the same time, nouns are generally case-marked in the same way as pronouns, as given in examples (9) and (10). This does not apply *vice versa*. If pronominal Ps can be case-marked, this need not apply to full nominal Ps, e.g. *biy-ux* in Christian Gaznax in (11) above. Case-marking patterns in NENA, therefore, seem to be consistent with the prominence hierarchy. Case-marking of the patient becomes more likely to the left-edge of the prominence hierarchy starting with non-third person forms:

[111] Out of *ʕṣiṛ-le ʔəll-ew*, see next subsection on cliticization.

(12) 1,2 PRO > 3 PRO > fNP

In addition, one should note that the analytic expression of pronominal objects as such allows the pronouns to occupy positions independently of verbal inflection like nouns. Pre-verbal position, then, factors in the selection of independent object pronouns, since they provide a pronominal equivalent of full nominals in P-V word order in, for instance, the Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan like Urmi that have this preference. Example (13) illustrates how Jewish Urmi regularly aligns independent pronominal object with full nominal objects. Placement after the verb is equally possible for both of these.

(13) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; Khan 2008b:448, 300)

a. ***əl-ʿyalé*** *dah-i-wa* 'They would beat **the children**.'

b. ***əll-án*** *dah-i-wa* 'They would beat **us**.'

Dialects may, therefore, exhibit co-variation in the expression of person indexes. The independent expression may be favored in 'perfective' constructions as an alternative to inverted 'perfective' form. Across the dialectal landscape, NENA varieties make use of independent pronouns besides the E-set. This can apply to person-unrestricted dialects like Jewish Barzani. Compare the following paradigms:

(14) **Two sets of object person forms in J. Barzani** (NW Iraq, Mutzafi 2002a:65)

	PREP SERIES		E-SERIES			
3FS	*xzé-lexun* ***ʔəl-u***		*xzé-***Ø***-lexun*	'You$_{PL}$		**them'**
MPL	*xze-le* ***ʔəl-a***		*xəzy-**a**-le*	'He		**her'**
MS	*xze-la* ***ʔəl-e***		*xze-***Ø***-la*	'She	saw	**him'**
1PL	*xze-lu* ***ʔəl-an***		*xz-**ax**-lu*	'They		**us'**
2FS	*xze-li* ***ʔəl-ax***	etc.	*xəzy-**at**-i*	'I$_{FS}$		**you$_{FS}$'** etc.

The independent object person forms are not available in every dialect in the same respect but the contexts where they are most acceptable appear to be the perfective past. Jewish Amidya, for example, is a person-unrestricted dialect but does not generally favor independent expression of object person forms. Hoberman (1989:101-102) notes for this dialect that a set of independent person forms based on *ʔal-* may be used to mark the P in highly formal language found in religious literature, and that only by enforced elicitation, the L-suffix in the 'imper-

fective' may be omitted in favor of this set, e.g. *p-šaql-i ʔaleni* 'They will take us' instead of *p-šaql-i-lan* 'They will take us'. Independent expression of object person forms remains more acceptable in the 'perfective' instead of the E-set, e.g. *šqil-ax-lu* instead of *šqəl-lu ʕaleni* 'They took us'. Yet, in person-restricted dialects, the independent forms are the only means to express non-third person forms in transitive perfective constructions. One such dialect is Jewish Arbel. Compare the following paradigms:

(15) **Person-restricted patient-marking in in J. Arbel** (NE Iraq, Khan 1999:119, 133)

	PREP SERIES	E-SERIES			
3FS	*ġze-le* ***ʔill-áw***	*ġizy-**a**-le*	'He		**her'**
PL	*ġzé-lxun* ***ʔill-u***	*ġzé-**ni**-lxun*	'You$_{PL}$		**them'**
MS	*ġze-la* ***ʔill-éw***		'She	saw	**him'**
1PL	*ġze-lu* ***ʔill-án***		'They		**us'**
2FS	*ġze-li* ***ʔill-áx***		'I$_{M}$		**you$_{FS}$'**
	etc.		etc.		

Consequently, although the independent pronominal objects are optional in other clauses, they are necessary in 'perfective' constructions to refer to at least the first and second person.

Note that the marking also co-varies for the third person plural and the feminine singular. Both *ġze-le ʔill-áw* and *ġizy-a-le* are available for 'He saw her'. Independent or dependent expression is optional for the third person. Yet, in dialects such as J. Arbel, the 3ms. must be expressed by this special series based on the preposition *ʔill-*, e.g. *ġzéle ʔillew* 'He saw him' but not ***ġze-Ø-le* 'id.' Along the person-conditioned hierarchy, then, the independent ('PREP-set' or '*ʔəll*-set') and the dependent set ('E-series') intersect at the third masculine singular which is morphologically least marked of the third person. This occurs across NENA dialects. Table 25 at the end of this subsection illustrates the distribution for a sample of a few dialects.

As a final note, historically, the *šmiʕ l-*construction could also be extended with prepositional complements in Aramaic languages of Late Anitquity, as illustred by the prepostion *ʕal-* 'on' below. Nevertheless, the independent prepositional objects are presumably separate historical developments in NENA.

(16) **Syriac** (5th c. Cureton 1864 2.11)

šmīʕ-Ø *l-ī* ***ʕlay-k*** *d=*
heard-3MS DAT-1SG on-2MS SUBR=
'I am informed / have heard (lit. Me is heard) **about you$_{MS}$** that…'

Table 25. *Distribution of independent object pronouns*

3FS/PL	3MS	1,2		DIALECTS' SAMPLE
E-set			mainly *(ʔəl)l-*	(**SE Turkey**) J. Challa (Fassberg 2011); C. Ashitha (Borghero 2006), C. Gaznax (Gutman 2015) (**NW Iraq**) J. Barzani (Mutzafi 2002a); (**NW Iran**) C. Urmi (non-literary, Khan 2016)
E-set		mainly *(ʔəl)l-*		**(NW Iraq**) C. Barwar (Khan 2008a); (**Trans-Zab**) J. Arbel (Khan 1999), J. Sulemaniyya and Ḥalabja (Khan 2004a), J. Saqqiz (Israeli 1998), J. Kerend (Hopkins 2002), J. Urmi (Khan 2008a), J. Salamas (Duval 1883)
qa- (*ḵa-*)				(**NW Iran**) C. Sardarid (Younansardaroud 2001)

4.1.2.2. Two Independent Person Forms in Ditransitives

It is worth noting that there is a tendency to differentiate between the recipient and patient in the 'perfective', when a preposition merges these. This tendency sets the 'perfective' apart from other clauses (cf. Hoberman 1989:101-102). A dative preposition such as *(ʔəl)l-* 'to, for', for instance, can be employed to mark the recipient when the theme is pronominal or full nominal (see §3.4). This is the L-suffix for the 'imperfective' and the E-suffix for the 'perfective'. Khan (2016b:385) notes for C. Urmi that the person forms based on the dative preposition can mark the R throughout the system but they only mark the P in the 'perfective' constructions and, importantly, they can never mark the T of ditransitive verbs.

This can be contrasted with Christian Ashitha. Consider the following examples in (17) from Christian Ashitha. In (17a-c), the prepositional argument does not express the theme but the recipient regardless of person, NP type or TAM.

(17) **C. Ashitha** (SE Turkey; Borghero 2006:200-202)

a. *yawəl-Ø* *-lux* ***ʔəll-a*** (V+T = L-set, R = *ʔəll-*)
give$_{IPFV}$-A:3MS -T:2MS R:OBJ-3FS
'He gives you$_{MS}$ to her.'

b. *hiw-at* *-la* ***ʔəll-e*** (V+T = E-set, R = *ʔəll-*)
give$_{PFV}$-T:2FS -A:3FS R:OBJ-3MS
'She gave you$_{FS}$ to him.'

c. *hiw-le* ***ʔəll-i*** ***mexulta*** (T = fNP, R = *ʔəll-*)
give$_{PFV}$-A:3MS R:OBJ-1SG food:FS
'He gave me food.'

Yet, *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 lends itself for further differentiation. In Christian Ashitha, for instance, *ṭla* serves as an alternative to *(ʔəl)l-*:

d. *hiw-a* *-li* ***ṭlal-ɛxu*** (V+T = E-set, R = *ṭla-*)
give$_{PFV}$-T:2FS -A:3FS R:DAT-2PL
'I gave it$_F$ **to you$_{PL}$**.'

Now, when the *(ʔəl)l*-based series is combined with a 'perfective' verbal form, they can also mark the theme in C. Ashitha. The recipient is marked differently by another preposition, in this case *ṭla-*:

e. *hiw-le* ***ʔəll-a*** ***ṭlal-ux*** (T = *ʔəll-*, R = *ṭla-*)
give$_{PFV}$-A:3SG T:OBJ-3FS R:DAT-2MS
'He gave it$_F$ **to you$_{MS}$**.'

What we do not seem to observe in Christian Ashitha are examples like the following where the theme and recipient are marked by the same preposition:

f. ***hiw-le* ***ʔəll-a*** ***ʔəll-ux*** (T = *ʔəll-*, R = *ʔəll-*)
give$_{PFV}$-A:3SG T:OBJ-3FS R:DAT-2MS
'He gave **it$_F$ you$_{MS}$**.'

Such a double object construction with two identical independent object person forms is avoided. This differentiation in the coding of the R seems to be a feature peculiar to the 'perfective'.

This indicates a constructional split based on the R that is sensitive to the inflectional base of the verb (or the TAM). Moreover, the use of *ʔəll*-based person forms to mark the theme does not appear to be possible in the 'imperfective' (as in J. Amidya and C. Urmi mentioned above), e.g. ***yawəl-∅ **əll-a ṭlal-ux*** 'He gives **her to you$_{MS}$**'. The object-marking L-suffixes are still favored in the 'imperfective'. The following diverging patterns unfold for ditransitive constructions based on the 'imperfective' against those based on the 'perfective':

	A	T	R
yawəl-	-E	-L	*ʔəll-/ṭla(l)-*
hiw-	-L	*ʔəll-*	*ṭla(l)-*

The *(ʔəl)l*-based set, therefore, although they are ultimately derived from from a dative preposition, seem to pattern as an object-marking set in the 'perfective' in accordance with the L-suffixes in the 'imperfective'. The morphological parallelism between *(ʔəl)l-* and the L-suffixes presumably strengthens their morphosyntactic correlation.

4.1.3. Cliticization and Secondary L_2-series

The previous subsections explained that when the synthetic expression of pronominal objects is unavailable, an analytic strategy tends to be employed instead through the use of an independent set. There is also a tendency contrary to this, namely that what is put after the verb ends up increasingly more dependent on it in line with the rest of the suffixal verbal inflection. The independent pronouns based on the dative preposition (*ʔəl*)*l-* are attached to the verb, much like the L-suffixes, and may become morphologically non-distinct. Where this merger is incomplete, we shall speak in terms of an L_2-set.

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

(18) **J. Kerend** (W Iran; Hopkins 2002:287)
P V
ʔəlóx *grəš-li* 'I pulled **you$_{MS}$**'.

J. Kerend, however, is a Trans-Zab Jewish dialect where the unmarked word order is generally P-V. When they are placed after the verb, however, there is a very strong tendency to cliticize with syncope of the initial *ʔ-* after consonants and *ʔə-*

after vowels. This coalescence yields another set of person form which we may call an *ʔəll*-series (cf. Khan 1999) besides the familiar L-suffixes. C. Ashitha *xzelé=**ll-ən***, for example, is a coalesence of *xzele **ʔəll-ən*** 'He saw **us**' (Borghero 2006:193) and J. Arbel *ġzé-lan=**ill-eu*** 'We saw **him**' alternates with *ġze-lan **ʔill-éu*** (Khan 1999:118-119, 133-134). In ditransitive constructions, the *ʔəll*-series may even attach to an inverted 'perfective' construction where the E-set always denotes the T and the *ʔəll*-series the R, e.g. J. Urmi *hiw-a-le=**lli*** 'He gave her **to me**' (Khan 2008b:123).

Ultimately, the simplification of /ll/ neutralizes the distinction with L-suffixes. The following sets in Jewish Saqqiz (W Iran; cf. Khan 2009:158 for J. Sanandaj) including the familiar primary L-suffixes, the secondary prepositional *ʔəll*-series and the possessive suffixes show how the sets of person forms may be neutralized:

(19) **Secondary L-set of dependent person forms in J. Saqqiz** (person-restricted, W Iran; Israeli 1998:30, 113)

	L_1-SET	L_2-SET	POSS
1SG	*-li*	*-l-i*	*-i*
2MS	*-lox*	*-l-ox*	*-ox*
FS	*-lax*	*-l-ax*	*-ax*
3MS	*-le*	*-l-ev*	*-ev*
FS	*-la*	*-l-av*	*-av*
PL	*-lu*	*-l-u*	*-u*

The secondary L_2-set in (19) represent the forms that correspond with the *ʔəll*-series in closely related dialects of Jewish Saqqiz. The distinction in (19) between the L_1-set and the L_2-set is minimal in Jewish Saqqiz and clearly correlates with the 'possessive' suffixes. The /i/ of the preposition *il-* is absent in the forms that have undergone coalsescence: 'You kissed him' is not ***nšiq-lan-ilev* but *nšiq-lan-lev* (Israeli 1998:115). Hence, all indexes but the third person singular indexes are identical with the familiar L-suffixes. Only the third person singular forms constitute another series of person markers[112]. Thus, it is *nšíq-le-**lav*** for *nšiq-le **ilav*** 'He kissed her' and not ***nšíq-le-**la***, as found in 'neutral' dialects. This makes it perhaps somewhat arbitrary to differentiate between a double L-set construction such as J. Urmi *xzé-le-li* 'He saw me' and a verbal form that com-

[112] Cf. Talay (2011:56-57) for a similar phenomenon in the Khabur dialects.

bines with an L_2-set such as J. Saqqiz *xze-le-li* 'He saw me'. Indeed, such J. Saqqiz forms are effectively double L-set constructions. We need not differentiate between the two L-sets apart from the third person.

This notwithstanding, the morphosyntactic treatment of the L_1-set and *ʔəll*-series is not always the same. Dialects may avoid expressing an object person form independently. They may also avoid treating the L-suffix as dependent instances of the same prepositional argument. In fact, the independent object person forms alternate with the E-series rather than the L_1-suffixes in the perfective past in Jewish Amidy where independent object person forms are avoided (cf. Hoberman 1989:101-103).

In addition, we noticed in the previous subsection for dialects such as Christian Ashitha that the *ʔəll*-series is generally not doubled. Two objects with the same preposition are disfavored. Yet, the *ʔəll*-series freely expresses an R subsequent to an L-suffix denoting the T in the 'imperfective', e.g. *yawəl-∅-**lux** ʔəll-a* 'He gives **you**$_{\textbf{MS}}$ to her'. This indicates that the L_1-suffix is not treated like the *ʔəll*-series. Similarly, a double L_1-set construction is clearly distinct, when independent person forms are based on other prepositions such as *qa-* or *ṭ(l)a-* in other dialects that still make use of the preposition *(ʔəl)l-* for other purposes. The same speaker may employ the double L-set construction[113] or an independent person form, for example:

(20) **J. Amidya** (person-unrestricted, NW Iraq; Greenblatt 2011: 336.8, 336.5)

a. *már-ri-lux*
say$_{\text{PFV}}$-1$_{\text{SG}}$-2$_{\text{MS}}$
'I told **you**$_{\textbf{MS}}$.'

b. *mər-ri ṭaθ-ux*
say$_{\text{PFV}}$-1$_{\text{SG}}$ to-2$_{\text{MS}}$
'I told **you**$_{\textbf{MS}}$.'

In sum, NENA dialects may use another set of object indexes based on the preposition *(ʔəl)l-*. They strongly differ in productive usage of this *ʔəll*-series and the degree of assimilation with the L-suffixes. The *ʔəll*-series may seem very similar and may even end up phonologically identical through increasing adhesion to a preceding verbal form, yielding a secondary L_2-set or merging with the primary

[113] This function appears to be part of an archaic layer in NENA that was available alongside marking the R by means of the E-series. The earliest texts witness (16$^{\text{th}}$-17$^{\text{th}}$ c.) forms such as *mīr-**at**-ti* 'I told **you**$_{\textbf{MS}}$ (R) besides *mər-rī-**lu*** 'I told **them** (R)' (Sabar 1976:xxxix, 53.10:16).

L_1-suffixes. The merger, however, is not complete. Third person patients tend to be marked differently. The primary L_1-suffixes are generally preferred in the 'imperfective'.

4.2. Differential Object Marking Trans-Zab Jewish Dialects

The person role constraint closely interacts with differential object marking strategies and indirectly with person-based alignment preferences. Alignment splits due to the marking of patients in transitive constructions are sensitive to the prominence scale affecting the agreement and case-marking system (cf. Mengozzi 2005; Coghill 2014). Yet, the person role constraint is not inherent to ergative alignment but to the combination of an E-set marking the patient and the 'perfective' inflectional base (*qṭil-*).

As we will see, the indexing through the E-suffixes and other strategies display splits and alternations. The distributional tendencies are not always clear. All else being equal, what applies to dependent third person forms will also apply to their use in the cross-indexing of full NPs (cf. Mengozzi 2005:252). How the person role split affects alignment patterns is entirely up to the dialect(s) in question. Three distinct types of Jewish dialects from the Trans-Zab dialect bundle will serve as an illustration. I will demonstrate that the transitive constructions are sensitive to the prominence scale regardless of morphological alignment in all these dialects. The argument ranking only indirectly affects alignment preferences. Hence, it is not a particular type of alignment *per se* that is favored in a specific context but a particular type of transitive construction or differential object marking strategy. What mainly differs across the dialects is the coding of the S which is not affected by the prominence scale. Moreover, in terms of trigger potential, the agreement with the P patterns accusatively throughout in all dialects, since it is conditioned by prominence, while this does not apply to the S and A.

Thus, the fact that we find ergative alignment in the South Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties such as Sulemaniyya and Kerend only depends on the coding of the S. While it may be unusual from a functional typological perspective, it is not at odds with the transitive constructions typical for (Neo-)Aramaic. The prominence scale only indirectly influences alignment preferences. Both ergative agreement and accusative case-marking of the P are coordinated by differential object marking. The first and second person forms are dependent in the A and S role and necessarily independent in the P role because of the person role constraint. Thus, there is co-argument sensitivity (Witzlack-Marakevich et al.

2016): when the P is third person and dependent, only then, the person marking is ergative. Other person forms may be either dependent or independent regardless of other arguments.

4.2.1. Accusative Agreement and Prepositional Marking

Beginning with accusative marking, we observe that prepositional object person forms (or the *ʔəll*-series) and the E-series may co-vary in 'accusative dialects'. The first, however, is necessary for non-third person forms and the latter optional for third person arguments in person-restricted dialects. This serves to show that we are first and foremost concerned with a constructional split and not an alignment split.

The two strategies of object-marking ultimately constitute distinct coding devices, namely differential case-marking and differential indexing. The first is more analytic and noun-centered, the other more synthetic and verb-centered. Yet, this sharp distinction breaks down where the *ʔəll*-series may be attached to the verb (despite the fact that they are prepositional object person forms).

It will be shown that accusative case-marking seems to penetrate the person marking system in 'accusative dialects' through the grammaticalization of the *ʔəll*-series and marginalization of the E-set to cross-indexes of full nominal P arguments. The morphological markedness is shifting more definitively to the P in relation to the S and A. This spreads from the first and second person forms to other pronouns through the third masculine singular. The latter is even adopted in the verbal agreement system in Jewish Arbel where it regularly attaches to the immediately preceding verbal form.

4.2.1.1. Coherently Accusative Marking

Nothing changes with respect to alignment typology in fully 'accusative dialects' where these two coding strategies either compete or overlap. There are simply two ways in which accusative alignment is manifested and possibly both of these simultaneously. The E-series is fully integrated in the verbal form, and another *ʔəll*-series less or not integrated derived from prepositional pronominal objects mark the P. The first is necessary for non-third person forms and the latter optional for third person arguments in person-restricted dialects. This is represented by the following examples in (21) from Jewish Arbel.

(21) **J. Arbel** (NE Iraq; Khan 1999)

a. (intransitive)
dmix-le 'He slept.'
sleep$_{PFV}$-S:3MS

b. (transitive, dependent E-set)
*ġəzy-**a**-le* 'He saw **her**.'
see$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS

c. (transitive, independent *ʔəll*-set)
ġze-le ***ʔəll-í*** 'He saw **me**.'
see$_{PFV}$-A:3MS P:OBJ-1SG

Both the case-marking and agreement pattern accusatively in dialects like Jewish Arbel. The P argument receives special treatment in either indexing through the E-set or case-marking by *(ʔəl)l-*, as shown in the following comparison:

(22) **J. Arbel** (NE Iraq; based on Khan 1999:288-290)

[S] [V-S]
a. *kābrá* *dmix-le*
man:MS sleep$_{PFV}$-S:3MS
'The man slept.'

[DOM→ P] [V-A]
b. ***ʔəl-**iyyá* *kābrá* *dwiq-le* (differential case-marking of P)
DOM-DEM:MS man:MS seize$_{PFV}$-A:3MS
'He seized this man.'

[P] [V-P-A]
c. *ʔiyyá* *golká* *dwiq-**ā**-le* (differential indexing of P)
DEM:MS heifer:MS seize$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS
'He seized (lit. it$_F$) that heifer.'

What motivates speakers to choose either of these constructions is not altogether clear. Khan (1999:289-291) notes for Jewish Arbel that there is no clear-cut distribution between them. Case-marking is used less frequently and seems to be more sensitive to contextual salience and animacy than indexing. Indexing prefers P-V word oder and is occasionally also used for indefinite NPs, while definite and usually inanimate NPs may lack differential marking altogether. In addition, sporadically, accusative case-marking and indexing of full NPs are combined:

	[A]	[DOM→P] ⟵	[V-P-A]
c.	*kābrá*	***lə-ʔanne***	***beʔé***	*zəbn-**i**-le*
	man:MS	DOM-DEM:PL	egg:PL	sell$_{PFV}$-P:3PL-A:3MS

'The man sold (lit. them) **those eggs**.'

The *ʔəll*-series are generally attached to an immediately verbal form, e.g. *ġzélox=əlleu* 'You$_{MS}$ saw him' for *ġzelox ʔəlléu*. The third person Ø-morpheme from the E-set is not used in Jewish Arbel but the corresponding person form from the *ʔəll*-series must be used instead, i.e. *ʔəlléu* ~ *=lleu* 'him'. Jewish Arbel has adopted this in the agreement system. It is the only means to index a masculine singular NP, for example:

(23) **J. Arbel** (NE Iraq; Khan 1999: 498, Y:83)

[V-A-P] ⟶	[P]
*xip-la=**ll-eu***	***bron-í***
wash$_{PFV}$-A:3FS=OBJ-3MS	son-my

'She washed (lit. him) **my son.**'

The E-set is preferred for feminine singular and plural nominals, so that we obtain the following cross-referencing system in the 'perfective':

baxta	*ġəzy-**ā**-lox*	'You$_{MS}$ saw (lit. her) the woman'
nāše	*ġz-**éni**-lox*	'You$_{MS}$ saw (lit. them) the people'
kābra	*ġze-lox=**əlleu***	'You$_{MS}$ saw (lit. him) the man'

The difference between indexing and case-marking could also hinge on the relative iconicity-related morphological markedness of the patient (Mengozzi 2005; Barotto 2015). One may argue that in terms of morphological markedness, the inverted 'perfective' construction is less marked in terms of coding material. Generally speaking, patient indexes are morphologically slightly weaker than the subject and agent indexes in accusative dialects (see further below). The E-suffixes denoting the P involve zero (Ø) realization and are often person-restricted, while this does not apply to the L-suffixes denoting the S and A. The case-marking is, however, typically accusative, so that the P itself unquestionably receives overt coding while the S and A are zero-marked. Case-marking shifts the morphological markedness more definitively to the P over the A and the S.

Another difference is that the patient indexes from the *ʔəll*-series immediately follow subject and agent coding when they attach to the verb which is in

accordance with the 'imperfective'. Although all person referents are marked accusatively, the heavier coding is reserved for the first and second person, and in Jewish Arbel, also the third masculine singular. This suggests that Jewish Arbel is in the process of levelling the object coding from the E-set to the *ʔəll*-set and the prepositional marking system is penetrating the agreement system through the grammaticalization of a new set of dependent person forms out of independent ones.

4.2.1.2. Extended Ergative or Marked Nominative?

Relative markedness plays an important role in Dixon's (1979, 1994) approach to alignment (see §2.2.6). In his view, the P is ideally most marked in accusative systems, while the A is in ergative systems. Dixon (1979) introduced the term 'extended ergative' to describe a case system where the case-marker of the A may be extended to all instances of the S against the P that is functionally and morphologically the more default form (cf. Payne 1980). In line with Dixon (1979), Doron and Khan (2012:231-233) analyze the agreement pattern as given for such dialects as Jewish Arbel as 'extended ergative', since the P (i.e. the E-set) is less marked while the S is more marked like the 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 notion of 'extended ergative' is mainly diachronically motivated and presumes these dialects were once coherently ergative but have extended the L-suffixes that mark the agent to all intransitive verbs, aligning the A with the S.

Whether this diachronic view is tenable is yet to be assessed, but, synchronically, anything related to 'nominative-accusative' is preferable over 'extended ergative' or 'post-ergative'. The obvious reason for this is that the defining characteristic of an ergative system, namely that the S and P are somehow treated alike is not observed (cf. Hoberman 1989:91, fn. 2). Adopting the term 'ergative', then, is rather misleading, at least from a synchronic perspective. Later, Dixon (1994:64), indeed, prefers the less confusing label 'marked nominative' instead of 'extended ergative', because the A receives no special treatment typical for an ergative system. Accordingly, Barotto (2015) suggests we could also consider the type of inflection in these dialects a kind of 'marked nominative'.

Nevertheless, 'marked nominative' only marginally applies. Dixon (1994:67-68) points out he first and foremost applies these markedness principles to nominal case-marking and is reluctant to extend this to agreement through person forms. For, if the P has less or no trigger potential for agreement

(as opposed to the S and A), this is considered a typical form of accusative agreement (see §2.2.6). The reverse would pertain to a 'marked nominative' (or 'extended ergative') agreement system where the S and A are not overtly indexed but only the P is. It is clear that these NENA dialects are typically accusative in this respect[114], since it is the agreement with the P that is more restricted and context-dependent against the agreement with the A and S which is also morphosyntactically grouped through the same set. These dialects, then, cannot be considered 'marked nominative' in this sense. There is 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 the S. Cross-linguistically, it is third person (singular) agreement marking that tends to be zero and especially in the S and A role (Siewierska 2004:24, 2005; see §2.4.4). This would be the 3ms. form of the E-set in NENA which is found in the expression of the P in these dialects, although not all of them such as Jewish Arbel where *ʔəlléu* 'him' is used instead. This would render the agreement system for these dialects a type of 'marked nominative', since only the P is possibly zero[115]. Thus, the agreement is typically accusative in terms of trigger potential but only arguably 'marked nominative' in terms of phonological form. What is clear, however, is that ergative alignment is not found in the dialects concerned (at least synchronically).

4.2.2. Neutral (overt) Agreement and Accusative Prepositional Marking

In a comparable way to the preceding, the Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan like Urmi manifest neutral indexing for all persons (A=S=P), accusative indexing for the third person only (A=S≠P), while nominal case-marking patterns consistently accusatively. The accusative case-marking alternates with or combines with accusative or neutral agreement. Apart from person, the prominence scale hardly affects alignment preferences. These dialects are also characterized by an active-stative fluid type of subject-marking (see §5.1.2).

[114] See also Coghill (2016:61-62) who arrives at a similar point of view.

[115] This would only apply to unmarked clauses, since agreement with the A may also be ∅ in unspecified agent constructions (e.g. *xil-a* 'It$_F$ was eaten'), see Section 4.3. Since I consider this a pragmatically marked transitive construction, it is not part of the discussion here.

4.2.2.1. Extensive Neutralization

The P can be indexed by either L-suffixes or E-suffixes. This results in two distinct alignment patterns. The first is essentially accusative by isolating the P. This is confined to third person referents only, as exemplified below.

(24) **Third person only** (J. Urmi NW Iran; Khan 2008b)

a. (transitive perfective)
*xəzy-ɑ-**le*** 'He saw **her**.'
see$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS

b. (intransitive perfective)
$^{+}$*dməx-**la*** '**She** went to sleep.'
sleep$_{PFV}$-S:3FS

Nevertheless, the S also aligns with the P for the third person in a perfect construction, as illustrated in (24c) and (24d) below. Since the transitive counterpart of the perfect is based on different verbal morphology, we will leave it out of discussion here[116]. For, otherwise, these dialects are neutral, grouping all functions.

c. (transitive perfective)
*xəzy-**ɑ**-le* 'He saw **her**.'
see$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS

d. (resultative aligns with the P)
$^{+}$*dmix-**ɑ*** '**She** has gone to sleep.'
sleep$_{PFV}$-S:3FS

The third person inflection, then, varies between neutral (e.g. *xzé-le-la* 'He saw her') or accusative (e.g. *xəzy-ɑ-le* 'He saw her'), both in the expression of third person pronouns as well as differential indexing (see further below). Non-third person indexes, however, necessarily manifest a neutral agreement pattern which is represented below.

(25) **First and second person** (J. Urmi NW Iran; Khan 2008b)

a. (intransitive) $^{+}$*dməx-**lax*** 'You$_{FS}$ went to sleep.'
sleep$_{PFV}$-S:2FS

[116] See §5.1 and §5.3.3 for the relationship between the S$_P$ form and other perfects in Jewish Urmi.

b. (transitive) *xzé-**li-lax*** 'I saw you$_{FS}$.'
see$_{PFV}$-A:1SG-P:2FS

First and second person references are, thus, excluded from the accusative verbal coding where neutral alignment is preferred. The first and second person are similarly not patient-like in the fluid-subject marking, e.g. ⁺*dmix-ex* 'We have fallen asleep', since **⁺*qtil-**ex***- 'killed **us**' is not available in transitive coding. The subject marking remains distinct (⁺*dmix-**ex*** vs. ⁺*dməx-l**an***) but there is no alignment with the P contrary to the third person (⁺*dmix-**a*** : *xəzy-**a**-le*). Another difference between the accusative and neutral coding is the affix order. In the accusative pattern, the P is suffixed immediately to the inflectional base and precedes the A. In the neutral pattern, the A always comes before the P[117].

In addition, the two transitive constructions are not entirely functionally equivalent according to Khan's (2008b:259) informants for Jewish Urmi. The doubled L-suffixes typically express remote past events, while the person-constrained forms with an E-suffix typically recent past events:

xzé-le-la 'He saw her' (back then)
xəzy-a-le (just now)[118]

It should be noted that the preterit is essentially the same as the 'accusative dialects'. In terms of agreement potential, the S and A are clearly grouped against the P. The Jewish dialects of Iranian Azerbaijan employ differential case-marking or differential indexing or a combination thereof. The word order is typically verb-final. The overt case-marking is accusative, for example:

(26) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; transcription modified)
a. ⁺*šultaná* ⁺*dməx-le*
king:MS sleep$_{PFV}$-S:3MS
'The king slept.'
[A] [DOM→P] [V-A]
b. ⁺*šultaná* ***ʔəl-bron-éw*** *nšáq-le* (diff. case-marking)
king:MS DOM-son:MS-his kiss$_{PFV}$-A:3MS
'The king kissed **his son**.' (Garbell 1965:170)

[117] How this aligns with the L-suffix marking the S immediately following the verbal base is a moot point, see §3.2.3.

[118] This may be connected with the fluid active-stative alignment in these dialects, see §5.1.2.

The agreement may be either accusative or neutral. Compare:

[P] ⟵ [V+P]

c. ***tar-é*** *pəlx-**i**-le* (accusative differential indexing)
door-PL openPFV-P:3PL-A:3MS
'He opened (lit. **them**) **the doors**.' (Garbell 1965:150)

d. ***tará*** *pláx-le-**le*** (neutral differential indexing)
door:MS openPFV-A:3MS-P:3MS
'He opened (lit. **it$_M$**) **the door**.' (Garbell 1965:140)

The accusative case-marking is frequently combined with either of these agreement patterns (Khan 2008b:298-301). Compare the following examples:

e. ***ʔəl-d-o*** ***baxt-éw*** *šiwq-**a**-le* (accusative throughout)
DOM-LK-DEM:MS woman-his leavePFV- P:3FS-A:3MS
'He left (lit. **her**) **his wife**.' (Garbell 1965:157)

f. *+šultaná* ***ʔəl-bron-éw*** *nšáq-le-**le*** (agreement is neutral)
king:MS DOM-son:MS-his kissPFV-A:3MS-P:3MS
'The king kissed (lit. **him**) **his son**.' (Garbell 1965:178)

Independent object person forms seem to follow the same pattern as full NPs. There is free alternation between dependent and independent person forms in Jewish Urmi. The suffixal L-series are given in (27c) and (27d) below and the independent *ʔəll*-series in pre-verbal position are given in (27a) and (27b) below. This applies to both the 'imperfective' and 'perfective'. Independent pronominal objects can also be indexed like full nominal objects. This is the regular construction of demonstrative pronouns with human referents (Khan 2008b:299) such as *o* in (27c) below. Interestingly, independent non-third person forms are regularly expressed without additional indexing (Khan 2008b:301), as illustrated in (27d).

(27) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran; Khan 2008b:426.137, 428.148, cf. 329)

	P = *əll-*			**P = L-set**
a.	***əll-án***	*dah-i-wa*	c.	*dah-í-wa-**lan***
	DOM-1PL	beatIPFV-A:3PL-PST		beatIPFV-A:3PL-PST-P:1PL
	'They would beat **us**.'			
b.	***əll-í***	*əmbəl-lu*	d.	*əmbál-lu-**li***
	DOM-1SG	takePFV-A:3PL		takePFV-A:3PL-P:1SG
	'They took **me**.'			

c. ***əl-d-ó*** *loka* *+plát-le-**le***
DOM-LK-DEM:SG there release$_{PFV}$-A:3MS-P:3MS
'He had **him** released from there.' (Khan 2008b:298)

d. ****əll-án*** *loka* *+plát-le-**lan***
**OBJ-1PL there release$_{PFV}$-A:3MS-P:1PL
'He had **us** released from there.'

Speakers do not seem to have strong preferences for a particular strategy. Khan (2008b:297-300) notes that there are no clear distribution patterns apart from the following tendencies. The combination of both differential case-marking and indexing is regularly conditioned by definite human referents as well as the presence of demonstratives, while case-marking on its own is favored for non-third person forms. The fact that independent object person forms of the first and second person do not trigger agreement while independent pronouns such as *o* 'that one' regularly do so seems unexpected, since they are (by definition) definite, human and deictic and more salient than other arguments. Cross-linguistically, object person forms tend to be coded independently (Siewierska 2004:46-47) and independent person forms are generally confined to human referents, especially in the R role (ibid. 60-61). This also seems to hold for NENA but, interestingly, not for the first/second persons.

4.2.2.2. Neutral Marking in Ditransitives

The secondary L-suffixes that denote the P are possibly ultimately based on their use to mark the R. As described in §3.2.4, the double L-set construction found for Jewish Urmi is also attested elsewhere in 'accusative dialects' like Jewish Amidya (NW Iraq). In Jewish Amidya, the alternation between a doubled L-suffix and the E-suffixes is confined to the R, compare *mir-**ət**-ti* besides *már-ri-**lux*** 'I told **you$_{MS}$**' (Greenblatt 2011: 336.8, 336.5). A form like *nšəq-li-lux* 'I kissed you$_{MS}$' is not psosible. Cross-linguistically, coding associated with recipients in ditransitive constructions may become the target construction for differential marking of the patient (e.g. Bossong 1985, 1991, see §2.4.2) and it is well-known that non-third person forms are more likely to fulfil the recipient role. In Jewish Urmi, then, the grouping of S and A with the R is already there like Jewish Amidya but the P also aligns with the R and necessarily for non-third person forms. The result is a rather striking system where all these functions are marked through the same set. The objects P and R both follow the A:

(28) **Grouping of R and P alongside A and S** (J. Urmi NW Iran; Khan 2008b)

a. (intransitive)
+*dməx-li* 'I went to sleep.'
sleep$_{PFV}$-S:1SG

b. (monotransitive)
*xzé-li-**lax*** 'I saw you$_{FS}$.'
see$_{PFV}$-A:1SG-P:2FS

c. (ditransitive)
*háw-li-**lax*** 'I gave to you$_{FS}$.'
give$_{PFV}$-A:1SG-R:2FS

Moreover, it should be pointed out that the dative preposition *(ə)l-* regularly expresses recipients and patients like the L-suffixes, e.g. *hwəl-le-le* ~ *hwəl-le əllέw* 'He gave to him' (Khan 2008b:144). The case-marking of recipients is not sensitive to prominence in Jewish Urmi. The preposition *əl-* may alternate with another prepostion *ba-* (not be confounded with *b-* 'in, with') dedicated to recipients in Jewish Urmi, e.g. *hwəl-le baέw* 'They gave to him' (Khan ibid.). Recipient nominals are generally placed after the verb and themes generally before the verb. As in NENA in general (see §3.4.3), case-marking of the R is preferred over case-marking of the T, while agreement with the T overrules agreement with the R. (28d) offers an example of such a pattern in the perfective past. The preposition *əl-* marks the R, the person form *-a* indexes the T.

[T] ⟵ [V+T] [*əl*→R]

d. ***o*** ***kaxtya*** *hwil-**a**-le* ***əl-xalunt=ət*** ***mərza*** ***Mahmud***
DEM:SG letter:FS give$_{PFV}$-3FS-3MS DAT-sister=LK PRN PRN
'He gave **the letter to the sister of Mirza Mahmud**.' (Garbell 1965:229, transcription modified)

When both the T and R are independent person forms, the T is based on the preposition *əl-* like the P but the R is marked by the preposition *ba-* instead, for example:

[*əl* →T] [*ba*→R]

e. *ba-ma* ***əll-áx*** *hwəl-lu* ***ba-í***
DAT-what OBJ-2FS give$_{PFV}$-3PL to-1SG
'How come they gave **you$_{FS}$ to me**?' (Garbell 1965:238, transcription modified)

This is consistent with a general tendency in NENA to avoid the identical case-marking of the T and R. It also indicates that prominent full NPs are treated differently from pronouns. While prominent full NPs tend to align the R role with the P in terms of case-marking through the preposition *əl-*, independent pronouns tend to align the T role with the P through the same preposition. The *əll-* set of person forms, then, groups T and P indirectively, while such grouping is avoided for prominent full NPs. There is one exception known to me that demonstrates it is possible to combine even two identically case-marked objects in Jewish Urmi, as given in (28f) below. This is an exceptional example where the nominal theme is case-marked besides the nominal recipient through the same preposition (*ə)l-*. As expected for NENA, the additional indexing favors the T over the R. Neutral ditransitive case-marking (T=P=R), therefore, also occurs in this dialect, even alongside indirective indexing (T=P≠R).

	[*əl*→T]	⟵	[V+T]	[*əl* →R]
f.	***əl-d-áy***	***ˈkaló***	*məspy-**a**-lu*	***əl-ˈhatáń***
	DAT-LK-DEM:FS	bride:FS	hand.over$_{PFV}$-3FS-3PL	DAT-groom:MS

'They handed **the bride over to the groom**.' (Garbell 1965:155, transcription modified)

To summarize, identical case-marking of both the T and R is avoided in ditransitive clauses but is occasionally found for full NPs. Full nominal themes are generally zero-marked, while the recipient is marked by *əl-*. Independent pronominal themes, on the other hand, are generally marked by *əl-*, while the recipient is marked by the preposition *ba-*. The differential indexing favors the T over the R irrespective of whether this is expressed through the L-set or E-set.

4.2.3. Ergative Agreement and Accusative Prepositional Marking

The case-marking and agreement system diverge more rigorously in the alignment typology of the South Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties. The nominal case-marking is accusative (A=S≠P), whereas agreement is ergative (A≠S=P). At the same time, first and second person forms pattern in a tripartite fashion (A≠S≠P). We will observe that what constrains the E-suffixes as patient-markers also constraints ergative agreement. At the same time, the prepositional marking overlaps with verbal person marking. The system found in these NENA dialects is typologically rather unusual.

4.2.3.1. Ergative Agreement

Firstly, the ergative alignment in these dialects is only realized, when the P is indexed by the E-series in the 'perfective' like most intransitive verbs. Example (29), for instance, repeats this. A is marked by the L-series, while P and S are marked alike by the E-series:

(29) **J. Kerend** (W Iran; Hopkins 1989a:428; 2002)

	INTRANSITIVE		TRANSITIVE
a.	*pləṭ-**Ø**-li* move.out$_{PFV}$-3MS-1SG 'I took **him** out.'	c.	*pəlṭ-**a**-li* move.out$_{PFV}$-3FS-1SG 'I took **her** out.'
b.	*pliṭ-**Ø*** move.out$_{PFV}$-3MS '**He** went out.'	d.	*pliṭ-**a*** move.out$_{PFV}$-3FS '**She** went out.'

Secondly, ergative alignment is restricted to the third person. A and S are contrastive for all persons, including non-third person forms, e.g.

e.	*pliṭ-**na*** move.out$_{PFV}$-1MS '**I$_M$** went out.'	f.	*pləṭ-**li*** move.out$_{PFV}$-1SG '**I** took out.'

By contrast, no such realization is available for the P, e.g.

g. ***pləṭ-**na**-le*
move.out$_{PFV}$-1MS-3SG
'He took **me$_M$** out.'

Apart from this person restriction, the E-series fulfills all the functions that are also associated with the L-suffixes in the 'imperfective'. This includes the indexing of prominent nouns. (30) below illustrates how the E-set cross-references a prominent NP *xalistá* 'sister' in either the S or P role. The L-suffixes indexes the A referent such as *ahmád* in (30a).

(30) **J. Saqqiz** (W Iran; Israeli 1998:103)

a. *aḥmád* ***xalist-év*** *xizy-**a**-le*
PRN sister-his see$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS
'Ahmad saw **his sister.**'

b. *lima* ***xalist-í*** *mity-**a*** *bel-óx?*
when sister-my arrive$_{PFV}$-S:3FS at.house-POSS:2MS
'When did **my sister** arrive at your$_{MS}$ house?'

The trigger potential of agreement is accusative (A=S≠P) in both inflectional systems. The P differs from the S and A only in trigger potential. S and A arguments are always indexed while the 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 the S. This limits the manifestation of the ergative pattern even further but to a similar degree as the accusative pattern in the 'imperfective'. The differential indexing is only ergative in phonological form in the 'perfective'. The following examples from Jewish Sulemaniyya compare both inflectional systems that demonstrate the overall similar special treatment of the P:

(31) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; illustration based on Khan 2004a, 2007a:154)

PERFECTIVE (PRETERIT)			IMPERFECTIVE (PRESENT)		
a.	*baxt-i*	*nəšq-**a**-le*	e.	*baxt-i*	*năšəq-Ø-**la*** (def. P, *a* : *la*)
	'He kissed my wife.'			'He kisses my wife.'	
b.	*baxta*	*nšəq-le* (**Ø**)	f.	*baxta*	*năšəq-Ø* (**Ø**) (indef. P, **Ø : Ø**)
	'He kissed a woman.'			'He kisses a woman.'	
c.	*baxtaké*	*qim-**a***	g.	*baxtaké*	*qem-**a*** (def. S, *a : a*)
	'The woman rose.'			'The woman rises.'	
d.	*baxta*	*qim-**a***	h.	*baxta*	*qem-**a*** (indef. S *a : a*)
	'A woman rose.'			'A woman rises.'	

The indexing of the S and A is not dependent on the relative prominence of the nominal referent in both systems. The indexing of the P in turn is dependent on the prominence scale (definiteness). And across both systems, the coding of the S is the same[119]. What is peculiar to the 'perfective' against the 'imperfective' is fundamentally the different marking of the A against the S, reserving the more marked set of argument indexes (L-series) for the A. Of course, the morphologi-

[119] The South Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, however, also exhibit split subject-marking where the S may also align with the A depending on semantic and/or morphological factors, see §5.1.1.

cal alignment of the S with the P is also peculiar to the 'perfective' but its manifestation is more restricted than the coding of the A. There is, thus, a degree of diffusion of agreement properties across the grammatical functions for the 'perfective'. The S and P align morphologically but not in terms of trigger potential, while the S and A align in terms of trigger potential but not morphologically. Moreover, it is higher ranking full nominals that are marked ergatively, while NPs of lower ranking in prominence such as indefinitenes proceed on a tripartite basis, since the expression of the P is zero but the S and A are distinct.

Ergative alignment, then, is evidently a rather marginal phenomenon in these dialects. The differential indexing of definite NPs and the expression of third person pronouns, as illustrated by the arrow in the following schema. One should note that the accusative person marking in the 'imperective' reaches to the utmost left edge.

(32) **NP-conditioned ergative indexing in the 'perfective'**

1/2 PRO > 3 PRO > fNP: definite > indefinite

ERGATIVE INDEXING

The left edge of the scale in (32) is associated with the topicworthy participants that trigger differential marking in the P function. The first and second person are precluded from an alignment with the S (*qim-na* : ***nšəq-na-li*).

4.2.3.2. Accusative Case-Marking and Tripartite Person Marking

When we consider the case-marking system, a different tendency is observed. The Trans-Zab Jewish 'ergative dialects' use the dative preposition *(ʔəl)l-* 'to, for' and its allomorphs to mark the patient NP differentially in an accusative fashion such as *bratăké* 'the girl' in (33a) and *lixle* 'each other' in (33b).

(33) **Differential case-marking**

	[A]		[DOM→P]	[V+A]	
a.	*bronăké*	***həl-***	***bratăké***	*la-xe-wa-le*	*ba-ʕamr-éf*
	boy:DEF	DOM	girl:DEF	NEG-see$_{PFV}$-PST-A:3MS	in-lifetime-his

'The boy had never seen **the girl** in his life.' (J. Sanandaj, W Iran; Khan 2009:323)

b. ***il*** ***lixle*** *nšiq-lu*
DOM RECP kissPFV-A:3MS
'They kissed **each other**.' (J. Saqqiz, W Iran; Israeli 1998:45)

Moreover, non-third person forms can only occur in their independent prepositional form, e.g. J. Sulemaniyya *nšəq-la* ***ʔəll-i*** 'She kissed **me**'. When we consider pronouns only, the *ʔəll*-series express both third and non-third person referents like J. Sulemaniyya *ʔəll-i* 'me' and *ʔəll-éw* 'him' but the E-suffixes are confined to the latter. The independent object person forms, however, do not have the same status as the E-set. They are not used to differentially index nouns[120]. The system that unfolds is represented in Table 26 below. Non-third person forms have to be expressed independently in the P role. The dependent forms are confined to the S and A role.

Table 26. *First and second person forms in relation to case-marking and agreement (in the 'perfective')*.

	CASE-MARKING	GLOSS	AGREEMENT	GLOSS
A	*brataké*	'the woman'	*-la*	3fs.
S	*brataké*		*-a*	
P	*ʔəl-brataké*		*-a*	
	INDEPENDENT		DEPENDENT	
A	*ana*	'I, me'	*-li*	1ms.
S	*ana*		*-na*	
P	*ʔəlli*			

Strictly speaking, the independent person forms would seem essentially accusative like case-marking of full nominals. When we consider non-third person forms in the 'perfective' only, however, a tripartite subsystem unfolds. As there is no dependent person form available for the P, an independent one is selected instead. Yet, combined with other person indexes, it gives rise to a tripartite alignment type for all non-third person forms in contradistinction to the ergative indexing system confined to the third person forms. In our approach, this is strictly speaking not an accusative pattern (*pace* Barotto 2015:240, 243), since

[120] This may be possible in some other dialects such as Jewish Arbel (NE Iraq), see previous Subsection 4.2.1.

the S and A are still differentiated. This is illustrated below for first person masculine singular S and A and second person feminine singular P.

(34) **Tripartite alignment** (J. Sulemaniya NW Iraq; Khan 2004a)

a. (intransitive)

kwiš-na	'I$_{M}$ descended.'
descend$_{PFV}$-S:1MS	

b. (transitive)

qṭəl-li	*ʔəll-áx*	'I killed you$_{FS}$.'
kill$_{PFV}$-A:1SG	OBJ-2FS	

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 the P and A are both full NPs, the construction is evidently accusative, and when both are third person pronouns, it is evidently ergative. The cutoff point is between dependent person forms and independent nominals both belonging to to the third person, while the first and second person seem to have a mixed subsystem of their own. Essentially, however, only the A and P are affected, while the S is not. When the P is non-third person but the A is third person, the transitive construction is identical to (34b) above:

	[A: 3]	[P: 2]	
c.	*qṭəl-la*	*ʔəll-áx*	'She killed you$_{FS}$.'
	kill$_{PFV}$-A:3FS	OBJ-2FS	

But when the A is non-third person but the P is third person, the transitive construction is consistent with ergative indexing:

	[P: 3 – A: 2]	
d.	*qəṭl-a-lax*	'You$_{FS}$ killed her.'
	kill$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:2FS	

Both patterns may also occur when both arguments are third person.

4.2.3.3. Combining the Two DOM-Strategies

Differential case-marking and indexing of full nominals can also be combined. Thus, remarkably, it is possible though highly exceptional that differential object

marking involves both ergative indexing and accusative case-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.

(35) **J. Sulemaniyya** (W Iran; Khan 2004a:326)

[DOM→T]	⟵	[V+T]	
lă-yalé		*ləbl-**i**-le*	*ta-baġdád*
DOM-child:PL		bring$_{PFV}$-3PL-3MS	DAT-PRN

'He took **the children** to Baġdad.'

It may be that this is only possible in the Sulemaniyya dialect. Khan (2009:319-320) does not mention an example for Sanandaj, for example.

We observe, therefore, three distinct patterns in the interaction of case-marking and agreement, reviewed in Table 27: either ergative agreement or accusative case-marking or both of them. The P aligns with the S ergatively only in terms of agreement.

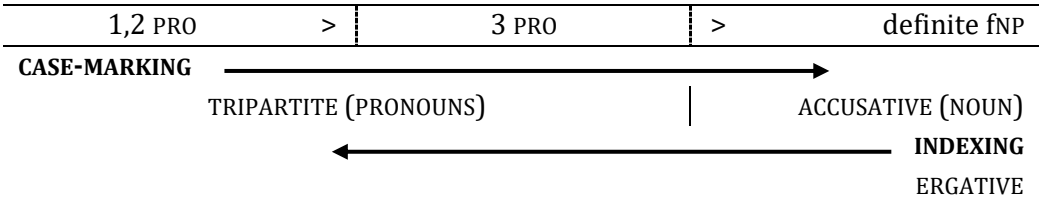
Table 27. *Ergative agreement and accusative case-marking of the P*

	AGR	CM			
S	E-set		***kaldaké** məṭy-**a***		'**The bride** arrived.'
P	E-set		*ḥatanaké **kaldaké** nəšq-**a**-le*	(most frequent)	'The groom kissed **the bride**.'
		ʔəll-	*ḥatanaké **ʔəl-kaldaké** nšəq-le*	(less frequent)	
	E-set	*ʔəll-*	*ḥatanaké **ʔəl-kaldaké** nəšq-**a**-le*	(exceptional)	

Note: *These sentences are not actually attested but serve as illustrations of the concerning pattern.*

Differential case-marking seems to be promoting a non-ergative pattern through the non-third person forms and, because of this, the prepositional marking system competes with or even combines with the person marking system. In accordance with the prominence hierarchy, then, case-marking becomes increasingly more likely for non-third person arguments, which are at the top of the hierarchy, and subsequently third person pronouns and prominent nouns. For the non-third person forms this results in a tripartite pattern, for nouns in an accusative pattern, while third person pronouns are either ergative or tripartite. These observations are summarized in Table 28.

Table 28. *Prominence hierarchy and (non-)ergative alignment*



This is consistent with Dixon's observation (1994:109) that the accusative alignment has a wider range on the prominence hierarchy than the ergative, if a language manifests such a split.

In other respects, this alignment system is contrary to Dixon's observations. Ergative indexing tends to combine with ergative case-marking but not with the accusative (see §2.5.1). In the traditional view, the dependent person forms are more likely to pattern accusatively than independent person forms, and if they pattern ergatively, the expectation is that independent pronouns and full nominals will also pattern ergatively. 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. It seems to me that the ergativity in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects constitutes a noteworthy counterexample and goes against this tendency. The lower ranking full nominals follow a tripartite pattern, while the higher ranking ones an ergative pattern. This tripartite-ergative split conditioned by the referentiality of the full nominal, then, is the exact mirror image of the ergative-tripartite split conditioned by the person reference of the pronoun.

In addition, in terms of markedness, the expectation for overt ergative indexing is rather that the P and S are equally overt while the A is typically not overtly indexed (see §2.2.6). NENA ergative indexing is not typical in this respect either. Also, it is confined to the third person feminine and plural in the P role and a zero realization of the P only in the third person masculine singular. Person indexing is thus not confined to the most salient arguments (contrary to functional typological observations, see §2.4.4). It is the non-third person forms that are most salient and these are not marked as such in the P role for NENA.

It is possible that this is connected with another cross-linguistic tendency that we also noted for the dialects in the previous subsections regardless of ergativity. Object person forms tend to be coded independently more readily so than the agent and subject especially human referents (Siewierska 2004:46-47, 60-61).

4.2.3.4. Horizontal Person Marking

Finally, for completeness's sake, I also mention here an instance of horizontal alignment in NENA. As noted in §4.1.3, the attachment of *ʔəll*-series may end up as a secondary L_2-set and merge with the L-suffixes, for example in Jewish Saqqiz (Israeli 1998) and Jewish Sanandaj (Khan 2009:158). The independent object person forms based on the dative preposition *il-* immediately attach to the preceding verbal form and are phonologically non-distinct from the agent markers except for the third person singular. Thus, it is *nšíq-lax-li* 'You$_{FS}$ kissed me' where *-li* out of *ili* 'me' is identical with the corresponding L-suffix, but it is *nšiq-lax-**lev*** for 'You$_{FS}$ kissed him' and not ***nšíq-lax-**le*** (Israeli 1998:115).

The distinction between the L-suffixes and the *ʔəll*-series is limited to the third person in Jewish Saqqiz. The object person forms *-lav* 'her' and *-lev* 'him' comprise an L_2-set corresponding with the *ʔəll*-set (i.e. *ilav*, *ilev*) in other dialects and are distinct from the agent person forms *-la* and *-le* belonging to the L-suffixes. One could argue that the merger of the *ʔəll*-series and the L-suffixes results in another alignment pattern, namely a horizontal one where P and A are marked alike. First of all, ergative alignment (*dmix-**a*** '**She** slept' : *nišq-**a**-le* 'He kissed **her**') is observed for third person referents only (marked by the E-set). A trapartitite pattern co-varies with this for the third person singular L_2-set indexes only (*dmix-a* 'She slept' : *nišq-le-**lav*** 'He kissed **her**'). In other respects, however, there is practically only one single L-set for first and second person as well as the third plural reference (i.e. *-lu*) that not only expresses the A but also the P. Thus, the A and P are arguably marked by the same set in these constructions:

(36) **Horizontal alignment (1,2 and 3pl.) in Jewish Saqqiz**

a. (intransitive)
dmix-an 'I$_F$ went to sleep.'
sleep$_{PFV}$-S:1FS

b. (transitive)
nšiq-li-lax 'I kissed you$_{FS}$.'
kiss$_{PFV}$-A:1SG-P:2FS

4.3. Agent Omission and the Case-Marking of the Agent

While differential object marking was shown to be independent of alignment type, voice does seem to correlate with a particular alignment type. NENA dialects usually have passive voice constructions. As noted at several points, the L-suffixes that mark the agent may be lacking in several dialects, irrespective of

alignment type in the dialect. This gives rise to an agentless 'perfective' form (cf. Gutman 2008). In relation to the active, the agentless 'perfective' is reminiscent of the passive. (37) below offers an illustrative example.

(37) *xabuše* *xil-i-**le*** '**He** ate the appels.'
xabuše *xil-i*(-Ø) 'The apples were eaten.' / 'X ate the apples.'

In leaving the agent unexpressed, the question arises whether the construction is morphosyntactically still transitive or not (cf. Keenan and Dryer 2007:330) and whether this should be analyzed as ergative or passive. Is the patient-like argument in *xil-i* the S or the P? Passive and ergative can be studied along a continuum (Comrie 1988). In this section, it will be argued that there is a major difference in treating such clauses between Trans-Zab Jewish variaties that display ergative alignment and other NENA dialects[121]. The 'dynamic-stative dialects' show closer affinity with Trans-Zab Jewish 'ergative varieties'[122].

4.3.1. Passive-Ergative Continuum

Comrie's (1988) criteria on the passive-ergative continuum are paraphrased in Table 29 below. The criteria allow for intermediate cases. Which criterion has greater weight, must be weighed on language-internal grounds[123]. 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 (iii)- (i).

[121] Recently, Khan (2017) reached the same conclusion.

[122] See Mengozzi (1998) and Göransson (2015) for a comparison of the main labile verbs in NENA, although what Mengozzi calls "passive" represents the inchoative/anticausative counterpart here.

[123] From a diachronic point of view, the criteria may be ambiguous, too. For example, if the ergative transitive construction is ultimately passive in origin, there may well have been a point where the markedness opposition (iii) was lost.

Table 29. *Passive vs. ergative*

		Prototypical passive	**Prototypical ergative**
(i)	**Subject properties of the patient**	The patient has all or at least more behavioral properties of the S than the agent	The patient has no or at least less behavioral properties of the S than the agent
(ii)	**Integration of the agent in clausal syntax**	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
(iii)	**Relative markedness**	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.

Notes: *Based on Comrie (1988)*.

Constructons can be characterized in terms of a continuum and considered passive-like or ergative-like. Generally speaking, a voice opposition is a requirement for a passive, as entailed by criterion (iii). Without it, we are examining a different phenomenon. In terms of voice, the ergative functions similarly to the active voice of an accusative type. The first criterion mainly applies to the S-like behavioral properties such equi-NP deletion of the P in languages like Dyirbal (see §2.2.3.4) which is very passive-like but irrelevant to languages where ergativity is only manifested in coding and not behavior (Keenan and Comrie 1977; Comrie 1988:12-15; Givón 1995:256-267).

It is the second criterion, however, that allows for most ambiguity. To what extent is the agent dispensable in languages? The omission of the A can still yield well-formed sentences where languages otherwise exhibit an ergative pattern (cf. Keenan 1976:313; Comrie 1988:18-19). Samoan, for instance, allows the absence of agent coding for most transitive verbs such as 'hit' in (38) below (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:104). The agent of the corresponding active transitive clause is omitted in (38b) 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.

(38) **Samoan** (Polynesian, Samoa; Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:416, 421; glossing adapted)

	[V]		[ERG→A]		[P]			
a.	*Sā*	*sasa*	*e*	*le*	*teine*	*Ø*	*le*	*le maile*. (specified agent)
	PST	hit	ERG	the	girl	ABS	the	dog

'The girl hit the dog.'

	[V]		[S/P?]			
b.	*Sā*	*sasa*	*Ø*	*le*	*le maile*.	(agentless/unspecified agent)
	PST	hit	ABS	the	dog	

'The dog was hit.' / 'Someone hit the dog.'

Naturally, the coding is indistinct from the S in intransitive constructions such as 'fall' in (38c) because of ergative alignment:

	[V]		[S]			
c.	*Sā*	*pa'ū*	*Ø*	*le*	*teine*	(intransitive)
	PST	fall	ABS	the	girl	

'The girl fell.' (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:108)

Alternations of the kind in (39a) and (39b) would be a type of referential reduction of the agent, i.e. unspecified agent deletion, where possibly some impersonalization of the agent is intended.

This is similar to passive constructions that reduce the referentiality of the agent where traces of a transitive predicate may be retained. The unspecified agent is simply omitted or expressed as dummy NP or third person morphology. Complete omission of the agent (or subject) is also possible while retaining some of the transitive coding (Givón 1990:581-583), for example:

(39) **Ute** (Uto-Aztecan, United States, Colorado; Givón 1990:581, glossing slightly modified)

	[A]	[P]	[V]	
a.	*ta'wá-ci*	*sivą́ątu-ci*	*paxˆá-pųga*	(active)
	man-SUBJ	goat-OBJ	kill-TENSE	

'The man killed the goat'

	[A]	[P]	[V-PASS]	
b.	*Ø*	*sivą́ątu-ci*	*paxˆá-ta-pųga*	(passive)
		goat-OBJ	kill-PASS-TENSE	

'Someone killed the goat' / 'The goat was killed (by someone)'

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 the P retains object coding and the agent cannot be expressed as oblique.

Givón (1990:581) notes 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 (39d) effectively means 'Some persons killed the goat'.

	[A]	[P]	[V-A]	
c.	*ta'wá-ci-u*	*sivą́qtu-ci*	*paxˆá-qa-xˆa*	(active)
	man-SUBJ-PL	goat-OBJ	kill-PL-TENSE	
	'The men killed the goat'			
	[A]	[P]	[V-PASS-A]	
d.	Ø	*sivą́qtu-ci*	*paxˆá-qa-ta-pu̧ga*	(passive)
	PL	goat-OBJ	kill-PL-PASS-TENSE	
	'Some persons killed the goat'/ 'The goat was killed (by some persons)'			

Valency alternations such as the passive may affect verbal morphology such as compound verbal constructions involving auxiliaries (e.g. *be* + perfect participle) and other coding properties of arguments such as case marking like the *by*-phrase in the English passive. Morphological modification is not always necessary, however. An alternation that does not involve a change in verbal morphology is considered labile. A valency alternation for an ambivalent verb like *open* in English, for example, does not involve a change in morphological marking. Ambitransitive verbs like *open* can have transitive and intransitive uses. Anticausatives may be distinguished from passives through special morphology. Samoan, for example, shows an anticausitive alternation for verbs such as 'break', as illustrated in (40) below. The anticausative morpheme *ma* is added to the verb to detransitivize the event, shifting the viewpoint to an affectee of a spontaneous process rather than an action performed by an agent (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:738).

(40) **Samoan** (Polynesian, Samoa; Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:738, glossing adapted)

				[P]			[A]		
a.	*Sā*	*fa'i*	Ø	*l=o='u*	*nifo*	*e*	*le*	*fōma'i*.	(causative)
	PST	break	ABS	the=POSS=1SG	tooth	ERG	the	doctor	
	'The doctor pulled my tooth out.'								

[S]

b. *'ole'ā* *ma=fa'i* *nifo!* (inchoative)
FUT DTR=break tooth
'My teeth are about to break off!'

In some languages where ergative morphosyntax predominates (such as Lezgian, Haspelmath 1993a), however, there is similarly no distinction in verbal morphology between verbs that freely omit the agent and spontaneous events. It is not always easy, then, to the differentiate between anticausative and passive either. Haspelmath (1993b) demonstrates that insofar as speakers conceive a change of state as more likely to be spontaneous, the inchoative verb will be patient-oriented and the more likely the causative counterpart is derived. This raises an important issue. Without any overt oblique expression of the agent, it can be extremely difficult to distinguish a detransitivized clause from actual intransitives such as anticausatives. Naturally, anticausatives do not suggest that a speaker is unaware of any causal relationship. A speaker may even ascribe the change of state to some cause by adding a causal phrase, e.g. *The door opened because of the wind* (cf. Croft 1994b: 110). In her analysis of the passive, Siewierska (1984: 256) adds the criterion of a "strongly implied" agent (cf. Comrie 1985:326). We should understand her qualification of "strongly" in terms of relative salience to overt expression. That is, there is a closer association with some agent that is omissible in a passive construction (e.g. *The door was opened* (*by sth./sb.*)) relative to other similar agentless situations that a language encodes as such (e.g. *The door opened* (*by itself*)). It is this that gives rise to a structural affinity between the passive verb and a particular oblique expression of the agent. Due to the stronger implication of an agentive cause, intentional and instrumental adverbials, for example, are compatible with a passive but not an anticausative (Givón 2001: 117).

The possible omission of the agent, therefore, is not a decisive criterion to distinguish ergative constructions from passives (Haig 2008:41). Yet, if a language also employs 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, however, also manifests itself in agreement, we more clearly diverge from the passive prototype and converge more closely with the ergative type. When the full agent NP is unexpressed but stil manifested in agreement, this is indistinct from languages where coreferential NPs are not obligatory (also known as pro-drop) such as Spanish *él canta* vs. *canta* 'He sings' (Comrie 1988:18). This does not apply to the agent in a passive. Obligatory agreement unifies the S and

A and sets the 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. In the passive prototype, therefore, the coding of the patient is not expected to be sensitive to such factors.

By and large, then, the passive is syntactically intransitive but still semantically transitive in implying some agent, while the anticausative is both semantically and syntactically intransitive. The free omission of the agent is not a decisive criterion to distinguish passives from agents, but the integration of the agent is more evident in its indispensability and unconditional manifestation in verbal agreement.

4.3.2. Passive Constructions and Oblique Agents in NENA

Before we discuss the agentless 'perfective' form on the basis of the passive-ergative continuum, one should note that is not the only construction that expresses the passive in NENA dialects. Other constructions include:

(i) Impersonal passive
(ii) Auxiliary 'come' and infinitive
(iii) Auxiliary 'become' and resultative participle
(iv) Copula 'be' and resultative participle

Dialects may employ multiple passive constructions and these may even exist alongside the agentless 'perfective'. Overt expression of the agent is rare in passive constructions. Since this is also seldom addressed in grammatical studies, only a few tentative remarks can be made, pending further investigation across dialects. If the agent is overt, it tends to be expressed through several prepositions, particularly *(ʔəl)l-* which otherwise also marks the recipient, and *mən* 'from'.

4.3.2.1. Impersonal Passive

Impersonal constructions based on the unspecified third plural are common to NENA as a whole. A third person plural agent index such as *-i* in an 'imperfective' form *˚qaṭl-i-wa-le* literally means 'They would kill him' but can be equivalent to 'He would be killed' or 'One would kill him'. The coding does not change with respect to the active voice but the referentiality of the agent is reduced by using the 3pl. form, while the patient is highly topical. An example is given below from the Christian dialect of Aradhin (NW Iraq). The demonstrative *āwa* refers back to *bɐrzara* 'seed' which is semantically plural. 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.

(41) **C. Aradhin** (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982:76.27, transcription adapted)

pāyiš-Ø	*bɐrzara*	*dax*	*⁺barzarɐ*	*š-šišme*	*daqīqa*
become$_{IPFV}$-3MS	seed:MS	like	seed:MS	LK-sesame	tiny:MS

u	***šawq-ī-le***	***āwa***	*mən*	*čēri*	*hul*	*bahɐr*
and	store$_{IPFV}$-3PL-3MS	DEM:MS	from	autumn	till	spring

'The seeds are small like sesame seed, and **they are stored** (lit. they store it$_M$ that one) from fall to spring.'

The cause is generally not overtly expressed. It seems, however, to be possible at least in the following example from Christian Aradhin. The referentiality of the agent is reduced on the verb by using a third plural index (i.e. *-i*). The initiator NP is oblique (i.e. dative)[124]:

(42) **C. Aradhin** (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982:76.28)

	[V-A-P]	[OBL]	[OBL]	
lākin	*masnd-ī-la*	***l-qēṣa***	***l-taq-āne***	***t-ʔilān-e***
but	III:support$_{IPFV}$-3PL- 3FS	DOM-wood:MS	DAT-branch-M:PL	LK-tree-PL

wīš-e
dry-M:PL

'But it$_F$ (i.e. the tomato plant) is supported (lit. they support it$_F$) **by sticks**, **by dry branches of trees**.'

If this is correct, this may suggest that the third person plural is grammaticalized to an invariant passivizer in Christian Aradhin and the agent is expressed as oblique (see Gívon 1976:180 for the grammaticalization of such a passive in Kimbundu, a Bantu language).

4.3.2.2. Auxiliary COME and Infinitive

Periphrastic types of passives are also common in NENA dialects, particularly the use of an intransitive auxiliary 'come' with a verbal noun[125]. The infinitive of

[124] It is not clear whether this is confined to third person plural initiators.

[125] This is a pattern replication from Northern Kurdish (Behdînî). In Kurdish, the infinitive is based on a past stem (like Aramaic *qṭil-*) and can have an inherently passive meaning.

gnw ‘steal’, for instance, is *gnāwa* ‘stealing’ and together with the verb ‘come’ it expresses the passive:

(43) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2004a:69)
θe-lu (*lə-*)*gnāwa*
come-S:3PL (to-)steal:INF
‘They were stolen.’

Literally, ‘they came (to) stealing’ (cp. English *They came to be stolen*). Cohen (2012:180, fn. 15) mentions a few examples for Jewish Zaxo (NW Iraq) in this construction type (the verb ‘come’ is *ʔsy* in this dialect). The agent is introduced by the prepositional phrase *bət/d ʔīz* ‘by’, literally ‘by hand of’, for example:

(44) **J. Zaxo** (NW Iraq; Cohen 2012:180, fn. 15)

[AUX+S: patient]	[INF]		[OBL: agent]	
u=b-ase-Ø	*ʔəl*	*maqōze*	***bəd ʔīz***	***mušulmāne***
and-FUT-come$_{IPFV}$-3MS	to	III:burn:INFV	by	Muslims

‘He will be burned **by Muslims**.’

4.3.2.3. Auxiliary BECOME and Resultative Participle

Anorther construction type involves an intransitive process auxiliary ‘become’ *pyš* or *xdr* (or *ġdr* depending on the dialect) with a resultative participle. The participle inflects like an adjective and agrees with the subject in gender and number (see further below). The verb is intransitive, for example:

(45) **C. Qaraqosh** (NW Iraq; Khan 2002a:383)

pəsra	*pəš-lə*	*xil-a*
meat:MS	become$_{PFV}$-3MS	eat:RPP-MS

‘The meat was eaten.’

This literally conveys ‘Meat became eaten’ (cp. German *Fleisch wurde gegessen*).

The agent can be expressed as oblique, generally through the prepositions *(ʔəl)l-* ‘to, for’ or *men-* ‘from’ (see also §5.2.3), for example:

(46) **C. Qaraqosh** (NW Iraq; Khan 2002a:383)

[S]	[AUX+S]	[RPP+S]	[OBL]
pəsra	*pəš-le*	*xil-a*	***l-kalwə***
flesh:MS	become$_{PFV}$-S:3MS	eat:RPP-MS	DAT-dogs

‘The meat was (lit. became) eaten **by dogs**.’

(47) **C. Aradhin** (NW Iraq; Krotkoff 1982:106.118)
bɛ̄θ-i *lē-xāšəx-Ø* *ṭla* *t-pāyəš-Ø*
house:MS-my NEG:IND-be.fit-S:3MS for SUBR-become$_{IFV}$-S:3MS
dīš-a ***mən anne*** ***nāše***
tread:RPP-MS from DEM:PL people
'My house is not fit to be (lit. that it becomes) trodden **by people**.'

4.3.2.4. *Copula BE and Resultative Participle*

Dialects may also express the passive by combining the resultative participle and the 'copula' set or its suppletive pendant the verb *hwy* 'be'. The resultative participle agrees with the subject in gender and number. Like other adjectives, the resultative participle is inflected for number and gender, but the latter only in the singular:

(48) RESULTATIVE PARTICIPLE[126]
MS *qṭil-a* (~ *qəṭl-a*) 'killed'
FS *qṭil-ta* (~ *qṭəl-ta*)
PL *qtil-e* (~ *qəṭl-e*)

Generally, the final vowels of the participle /a/ or /e/ and initial vowel of the 'copula' /i/ will undergo contraction to /e/. For example, the Jewish Arbel resultative participle of *klw* 'write' is *kliwá* 'written'. If it combines with a copula beginning with /i/, such as *ile* 'It$_M$ is', it fuses into *kliw-é=le* 'It$_M$ is written' instead of *kliwa=ile*. The third person copula forms that evince an /l/-segment are noteworthy such as 3ms. =*ile* 'He is' and 3fs. =*ila* 'She is', but should not be confounded with other sets of person forms such as the L-suffixes. The agent is regularly expressed through the same prepositions as above, for example:

(49) **C. Baz** (Maha xtaya, SE Turkey; Mutzafi 2000:311)
[S] [RPP-S] [OBL]
kawdənta *mxé-ta=la* ***l-mār-aw***
she-mule:FS hit:RPP-S:FS=S:3FS DAT-master:MS-her
'The she-mule has been beaten **by its master**.'

(50) **J. Arbel** (NE Iraq; Khan 1999:285)

[126] The variable forms in parentheses are mainly found in Trans-Zab Jewish dialects, see §4.3 and §5.2.5.

[S]	[RPP-S]	[OBL]	
gaw-kaxtá	*kliw-é=le*	***min-il=id***	***malʔaxé***
inside-letter:MS	write:RPP-S:MS=S:3MS	from-hand=LK	angel:PL

'(He sees) the content of the letter is written **by the hand of angels**.'

4.3.3. Lability in South Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish Varieties

Having reviewed the various passive constructions in NENA, I will argue that the agentless 'perfective' form is not proper to a passive voice or an unspecified agent deletion construction in the 'ergative dialects'. It rather is an intransitive inchoative construction that may be interpreted as passive. Grammatical and morphological reasons will be given for this analysis and a comparison with the active-stative alignment in other NENA dialects.

Agent coding may be lacking for virtually every transitive verb in South Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties, also referred to as 'ergative dialects'. The agentless form generally denotes a spontaneous event which indicate that, *ceteris paribus*, the agent is completely absent as in a patientive intransitive verb (such as *pil-Ø* 'He fell'). A verb like *pqy* 'shoot, burst' in (51) below can lack agent agreement. The agent agreement is present and the L-suffixes mark the agent in (51a). The verb takes no agent index in (51b) and the agent is left unspecified.

(51) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a:297)

	[P] ⟵ [V-P-A]		
a.	*tfangăké*	*pəqy-a-le*	(specified agent, causative)
	rifle:FS:DEF	shoot$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS	
	'He fired the rifle.'		
	[S] ⟵ [V-S$_P$]		
b.	*tfangăké*	*pəqy-a*	
	rifle:FS:DEF	shoot$_{PFV}$-3FS	
	'The rifle was fired (by sb.).'		(agent unspecified, inchoative)
	'The rifle exploded.'		

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 qṭil-Ø* 'My uncle was killed', 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 pas-

sive of such verbs has to be expressed differently, for example, by the resultative participle and the copula or *hwy*, e.g. *xiya Ø-hăwe-Ø* 'He may have been seen' (Khan 2009:310).

Khan's observations imply that practically all effective transitive verbs are labile. That is, forms like *qṭil-Ø* 'He was killed'[127] and *pəqy-a* 'It$_F$ exploded' are essentially inchoative or anticausative (Khan 2009:309), denoting 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 and the meaning is similar to that of an agentless passive: 'The rifle was fired (by somebody)'. As discussed in §4.3.1, the free omission of the agent is a hallmark of various 'ergative languages' (Keenan 1976:313) and, therefore, not a decisive criterion to distinguish ergative from passive (cf. Haig 2008:41). The telicity condition and the spontaneous interpretation indicate that the status of the single argument in the agentless 'perfective' form is that of the S and the construction is essentially inchoative and not passive in 'ergative dialects'.

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' in the following example:

(52) **J. Sanandaj** (W Iran; Khan 2009:309)

[S]	[V-S]	[OBL]		
mam-í	*qṭil-Ø*	***mən-laga***	***sarbazé***	(overt agent)
uncle-my	kill$_{PFV}$-3MS	from-side	soldiers	

'My uncle was killed by the soldiers.'

One should note that the same preposition marks the indirect cause (i.e. 'because of') and can be added to any intransitive predicate, e.g. *mən-qardá reṭ-Ø* 'He is shaking because of the cold' (Khan 2009:585). Thus, the agent complement in (52) is also typical for the indirect cause of anticausatives and, if thus understood, (52) would be more akin to English 'My uncle got killed because of the soldiers'. Anticausatives do not suggest that a speaker is unaware of any causal origin and may add a causal phrase (cf. Croft 1994b:110) but the cause is otherwise not as strongly implied as in the prototypical passive.

The telicity condition and spontaneous reading indicate that the agentless construction is intransitive and the patient is the S. Agent coding is not simply

[127] It is not clear wether this could also mean 'My uncle died'.

deleted in forms like *pəqy-a* 'It$_F$ exploded'. Further support for this can be found in the inflectional morphology. The inflectional base of strong transitive verbs is not the same as that of intransitive verbs. Intransitive and transitive verbs are distinguished by means of a shift in syllable structure where the intransitive base consistently maintains a long front vowel /i/. As illustrated in (53) below, the intransitive usage of strong labile verbs morphologically follows the pattern of strong intransitive verbs. If the agent agreement were simply dropped, we would expect forms like *qəṭl-a* 'Someone killed her' but we find *qṭil-a* instead.

(53) **Transitive and intransitive bases** (J. Sulemaniyya, NE Iraq; Khan 2005)

	TRANSITIVE		INTRANSITIVE	
3MS	***qṭəl***-Ø-*le*	'He killed him'	***smix***-Ø	'He waited'
3FS	***qəṭl***-*a*-*le*	'He killed her'	***smix***-*a*	'She waited'
3PL	***qəṭl***-*i*-*le*	'He killed them'	***smix***-*i*	'They waited'
	INTRANSITIVE			
3MS	***qṭil***-Ø	'He was killed'		
3FS	***qṭil***-*a*	'She was killed'		
3PL	***qṭil***-*i*	'They were killed'		

This is a further indication that the argument is the S and not the P.

It should be pointed out that, while most transitive verbs are labile, this is not to say that transitive verbs can alternate in valency through different stem formations. Several intransitive verbs such as *tym* 'finish' are transitivized by stem III:

(54) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a:299)

a. *tim*-Ø (inchoative, stem I)
finish$_{PFV}$-S:3MS
'It$_M$ finished.'

b. *ktebăké* *mtim*-*a*-*le* (causative, stem III)
book:FS:DEF finish$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS
'He finished the book.' (Khan 2004a:299)

Conversely, effective transitive verbs such as *ʔxl* 'eat' and *pqy* 'shoot' may omit the patient, while the coding of the agent remains the same. The patient *tfanga* in (16a-b) for example may be freely omitted and the L-suffix encodes the agent:

(55) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a:297, 301)

	[P]	[V-A]	
a.	*tfanga*	*pqe-le*	(patient specified)
	rifle:FS	shoot$_{PFV}$-3MS	
	'He shot a gun.'		
	[V-S$_A$]		
b.	*pqe-le*		(patient unspecified)
	shoot$_{PFV}$-3MS		
	'He shot.'		

All else being equal, for each intransitive valence pattern that alternates with a transitive valence pattern of the same stem type, the agent is potentially completely absent and the event is considered to unfold spontaneously. This is consistent with the higher degree of saliency on the part of the patient for inchoatives/anticausatives (cf. Croft 2001:317). Most intransitive verbs will pattern like anticausatives inflected by E-suffixes. We can schematize this as follows:

(56) **Voice constructions**

INTRANSITIVE			TRANSITIVE
anticausative	passive	patient omission	active
E-set (⊇ S)			L-set (⊇ A)

Some labile verbs, however, do evince a distinction in the coding of the A and S that are arguably reminiscent of the antipassive voice (see §2.2.1) and this goes against the tendency in (57). Insofar as speakers perceive an agent-like argument to be more salient, the intransitive construction will not be patient-oriented. The verb *ylp* 'learn' can show distinct coding of the agent for the transitive and intransitive valence pattern:

(57) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a:305)

	[P]	[V-A]	
a.	*torá*	*lip-le*	(active)
	Torah	learn$_{PFV}$-3MS	
	'He learnt Torah.'		
		[V-S$_P$]	
b.	*ga-maktáb*	*lip-***Ø**	(antipassive)
	at-school	learn$_{PFV}$-3MS	
	'**He** learnt at school.'		

Khan (2004a:301) explains that the distinction between (57a) and (57b) is not simply the omission of the patient but also aspectual. The antipassive form of *ylp* 'learn' in (57b) refers to a durative activity, while the active refers to a punctual activity. The durative aspect is typical for the antipassive in languages where ergativity predominates (Hopper and Thompson 1980; Cooreman 1994, see §2.3.3).

Antipassives may also correlate with reflexives (Comrie 1978:361-362). Similarly, some intransitive constructions that are understood as reflexive reveal distinct coding from the A in NENA such as *sxy* and *xpy* conveying 'wash (oneself)', for example:

(58) **J. Sulemaniyya** (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a:300; 2007a:150)

	[P]	[V-P-A]	
a.	*bronăké*	*xip-Ø-la*	(active)
	child:MS:DEF	wash$_{PFV}$-3MS-3FS	
	'She washed the child.'		
	[V-S]		
b.	***xip-a***		(antipassive)
	wash$_{PFV}$-3FS		
	'She washed.'		

The intransitive valence pattern of such verbs like *xip-a* 'She washed' is, thus, not simply agentless and does not convey the meaning 'She was washed (by sb. else)'.

An antipassive may also be extended with an oblique patient. This also holds for NENA. The intransitive alternant of (59a) in (59b) is patientless but takes subject coding distinct from the A. It may take a prepositional complement denoting the patient (*ga-ʔilí* 'at my hand'). The meaning of the verb is only slightly different but it is clear that *xmatá nqis-a* in (59b) is agent-oriented and does not imply an agent other than 'the needle'.

(59) **J. Sanandaj** (W Iran; Khan 2009:522)

	[A]	[V-A]	[P]	
a.	*hangăké*	*nqəs-la*	*ʔəl-í*	(active)
	bee:FS:DEF	prick$_{PFV}$-3FS	OBJ-1SG	
	'The bee stung me.'			
	[S]	[V-S]		
b.	*xmatá*	***nqis-a***		(patientless antipassive)
	needle:FS:DEF	prick$_{PFV}$-3FS		
	'The needle pricked.'			

	[S]	[V-S]	[OBL]	
c.	*xmatá*	*nqis-**a***	*ga-ʔil-í*	(antipassive)
	needle:FS:DEF	prick$_{PFV}$-3FS	at-hand-my	
	'The needle pricked my hand.'			

Khan (2009:304, 543) notes that human subjects require A-like coding of the subject in this construction. If the subject *xmatá* 'needle' is changed to a human NP like *baxtăké* 'woman', it is coded like the A instead:

	[S]	[V-S]	[OBL]
d.	*baxtăké*	*nqəs-**la***	*ga-ʔilí*
	woman:FS:DEF	prick$_{PFV}$-3FS	at-hand-my
	'The woman pricked my hand.'		

Lability and omission of arguments is also known to lead to ambiguity in orientation in languages where ergativity predominates (e.g. Drossard 1998). The intransitive valence pattern of the verb *ylp* is agent-oriented in Jewish Sulemaniyya (see above). In Jewish Sanandaj (W Iran), it is oriented towards an affectee. Khan (2009:304, 534) notes that transitive form of the verb *ylp* 'learn', e.g. *yləp-le* 'He learnt', expresses a controlled activity ('He learnt by himself'), while the intransitive form, e.g. *yálip-*∅ 'He learnt', expresses an activity where the subject is taught by somebody else ('He learnt from somebody else').

4.3.4. Lability in Other Dialects

The patient in the agentless 'perfective' form is difficult to categorize in terms of grammatical functions in 'accusative dialects'. It will be argued that this form is neither a passive prototype nor inchoative in 'accusative dialects' but a truncated transitive construction where agent coding is omitted (cf. Keenan and Dryer 2007:330), unlike 'ergative' and 'dynamic-stative dialects' (see §4.3.4.5). There is evidence that this seemingly intransitive agentless construction can still be transitive. At the same time, it is not unambiguously subsumed under ergative alignment. Nevertheless, forms like *xil-a* 'It$_F$ was eaten' may still be morphosyntactically transitive in dialects where accusative person marking predominates and this deviates from the passive prototype. We shall consider the following properties:

- referential properties of the agent;
- differential object marking.

4.3.4.1. Passive and Anticausative

When we turn to the 'accusative dialects', we note that, apart from the agentless form, voice is straightforward. Naturally, the S and A arguments are always treated alike. Verbs generally alternate in valency through causativization. The transitive verb is modified through a distinct stem formation of the verbal root such as *plṭ* 'move out' (stem II against I):

(60) **C. Barwar** (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a)

a.	*pliṭ-**le***	'He went out, away'	(stem I, inchoative)
	go.out$_{PFV}$-S:3MS		
b.	*mpuləṭ-∅-**le***	'He took it$_M$ out.'	(stem II, causative)
	II:take.out$_{PFV}$-P:3MS-A:3MS		

A few verbs such as 'break' and 'open' that are well-known to be labile in languages of the world are so in the 'accusative dialects' (Mengozzi 1998; cf. Göransson 2015). The coding of the S and A does not diverge for labile verbs such as *pθx* 'open'. The form is completely ambivalent. Object indexing and sometimes word order can serve a discriminatory function in valency alternations for such labile verbs (cf. Mengozzi 2006). In the intransitive valence pattern in (61a) below, the verb follows the S. In the transitive valence pattern in (61b), the verb precedes the P and the P is differentially marked. The cross-referencing of the P definitively distinguishes between an intransitive or transitive valence pattern (cf. Givón 1976:168). Post-verbal position is favorable for objects in dialects like Jewish Betanure.

(61) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a:256.399, 242.351)

	[S]	[V]	
a.	***tarʔa***	*pθəx-**le***	(intransitive, S-V order)
	door:MS	open$_{PFV}$-S:3MS	
	'**The door** opened.'		
	[V]	[P]	
b.	*pθix-ā-**le***	*kāwa*	(transitive, V-P order)
	open$_{PFV}$-P:3FS-A:3MS	window:FS	
	'**He** opened (lit. it$_F$) the window.'		

If no patient index is present and the gender and number of the patient and agent are identical, only the word order discriminates between the transitive and intransitive valence pattern, e.g. *tlix-le bεθa* 'He destroyed the house' vs. *bεθa tlix-le* 'The house collapsed' (C. Barwar, NW Iraq; Khan 2008a:756).

The agentless construction is non-distinct from the transitive apart from the presence of agent coding. Unlike 'ergative dialects', the spontaneous reading is only available for the verb that inflects like the A. This is illustrated by the following examples from Jewish Betanure for the verb *pqʔ* 'burst'. Both the specified agent acting on a patient in the transitive valence pattern in (62a) and the subject of the intransitive valence pattern of the spontaneous event in (62b) are expressed through the L-set. When the agent is unspecified, however, the patient in (62c), may also be encoded through the E-set, exactly like the P in (62a).

(62) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq, person-restricted; Mutzafi 2008a)

a. *pqiʔ-**a**-lu* (causative, specified agent)
burst$_{PFV}$-3FS-3PL
'They burst it$_F$.'

b. *pqeʔ-la* (inchoative, spontaneous)
burst$_{PFV}$-3FS
'It$_F$ burst.'

c. *pqiʔ-**a*** (impersonal, unspecified agent)
burst$_{PFV}$-3FS
'It$_F$ was burst (by sb.).'

As in the 'ergative dialects', a cause phrase may also be added to the inchoative/anticausative verb and is introduced by the source preposition *mən-* 'from' such as *mən ʔilāha* 'by/because of God' in (63) expressing the cause of *lqy* 'get punished' (an anticausative counterpart to stem II *lqy* 'punish'; Mutzafi 2008a:360):

(63) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a:314.571)

[V-S]	[OBL]	
lqe-lox	***mən***	***ʔilāha***
be.punished$_{PFV}$-S:2MS	from	God

'You$_{MS}$ have been punished **by God**.'

The patient of the anticausative is treated as more agent-like than the patient of the agentless construction. At first glance, this may seem rather unexpected. 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). Unlike 'ergative dialects', this is not reflected in the person indexes in 'accusative dialects'.

Although it involves no special verbal morphology, the agentless construction resembles a passive. Hoberman (1989:111-112) notes for Jewish Amidya that the patient NP, if made explicit, is regularly put before the verb like the S. He points out that, when a topical patient occurs in pre-verbal position, no overt expression of the agent is possible. The referentiality of the patient can also be reduced. An example of its complete impersonal use is given below from an early Jewish scribal idiolect. The 3ms. serves as the unmarked form.

(64) **Early J. Nerwa** (Literary, NW Iraq; Sabar 1976:57 13:10)
Aḇrāhām ***mīr*(-Ø)** *ʔəbb-e*
Abraham say$_{PFV}$ (-3MS) about-3MS
'**It was said** about Abraham (lit. Abraham—, it was said concerning him).'

Such morphologically unmodified alternations between transitive and impersonal could constitute an impersonal labile alternation.

4.3.4.2. *Referential Continuity*

NENA dialects generally employ third person plural marking to reduce the referentiality of the agent in the construction of an impersonal passive (e.g. *xil-a-lu* 'Someone ate it$_F$', literally 'They ate it$_F$'). The 3pl. coding is non-referential, respectively, dummy morphology in such pragmatically agentless contexts. The agentless construction converges with the unspecified third plural agent construction. The third plural L-suffix can also be dropped to reduce not only the referentiality but also the coding of the agent, such that the E-series continues the encoding of the patient but the expression of the agent is zero:

(65) *xil-i-lu* 'It was eaten.' / 'They ate them.'
xil-i-Ø 'It was eaten.' / 'They ate them.'

The main point, therefore, is that a 'perfective' without agent agreement morphology can entail an implicit reference to a third person (especially plural) agent just like the overt counterpart. It is essentially not distinct from the passive in Ute discussed in §4.3.1.

The omitted agent, however, can have more S-like syntactic properties than the P as in anaphoric deletion. Agentless 'perfective' forms can be analyzed as truncated transitive constructions, even in the case of early Jewish Nerwa (Gutman 2008:74, ex. 22). As Gutman (2008) demonstrates, the construction can entail an implicit reference to a third person (especially plural) agent just like the

overt counterpart. Similarly, Polotsky (1996:17-18) records examples for literary dialects in which lack of agreement with the A is confined to the third person plural[128] like the following examples where the agent reference is clear from the immediate context:

(66) **C. Ashitha** (Literary, NW Iraq; Polotsky 1996:17, transcription mine)

a.	*θe-lay*	***šqil-a*(-Ø)**	*baxta*	*b-xurṭūθa*	*w=zəl-lay*
	come$_{PFV}$-S:3PL	take$_{PFV}$-3FS(-3PL)	woman:FS	by-force	and-go$_{PFV}$-S:3PL
	'They came, **took the woman** by force and went.'				
b.	*zəl-lay*	***ṭʃin-*Ø(-Ø)**	*sandūqa*…		
	go$_{PFV}$-S:3PL	carry$_{PFV}$-3MS(-3PL)	chest:MS		
	'They went, **lifted the chest**…'				

Gutman (2008) records numerous examples for Jewish Zakho (NW Iraq) that also contain the zero expression of third person singular agents, although the plural is evidently more frequent.

Sabar (1976:48 fn. 101) mentions similar examples for early Jewish Nerwa texts and explains that it is rather a stacking of preterit forms in which only one of them takes L-suffixes, much like a serial verb construction. Yet, the null marked agent can also be co-referential with 'imperfective' constructions (Polotsky 1996:18). Hoberman (1989:111-112) notes for Jewish Amidya (NW Iraq), for instance, that the lack of agent agreement is restricted to the third plural, and that a third person plural agent is still recoverable from the context for interlocutors, as illustrated in (67) below.

(67) **J. Amidya** (NW Iraq, person-unrestricted; Hoberman 1989:111; glossing adapted)

min	*ʔid-i*	***šlip-a*(-Ø)**	***g-əmr-i***	*ṛaḅθe=la*
from	hand-my	draw$_{PFV}$-3FS(-:3PL)	IND-say$_{IPFV}$-A:3PL	big:FS=she.is

'(There was also a ring$_F$ on my hand;) **they drew it$_F$** from my hand**, they said**: It$_F$'s big.'

A 'perfective' stripped of agent agreement morphology, therefore, can entail an implicit reference to a third plural A regardless of the verbal form. It is perhaps somewhat similar to the English gerund, i.e. 'Ø$_i$ Having drawn it from my hand, they$_i$ say'.

[128] All of his examples, it should be noted, are also confined to third person patients.

Finally, the overt expression of the agent NPs can be indistinct from the transitive counterpart. An example from Gutman's (2008) discussion is given below. A zero-marked full nominal agent *xūrāse* 'his friends' is present but the verb *fhm* 'understand' expresses only agreement with the patient:

(68) **J. Zaxo** (NW Iraq; Gutman 2008:74)

[A]	[V-P]	[P]	[V-A]	[P]
xūrās-e	*fhīm-a*-(-Ø)	*zāya*	*ū-ngəz-lu*	*səppās-u*
friend:PL-his	understand$_{PFV}$-3FS(-3PL)	matter:FS	and-bite$_{PFV}$-3PL	lip:PL-their

'**His friends** understood the matter, and bit their lips.'

Note also how the word order is A-V-P, as expected for a transitive clause. Hoberman (1989:112) notes for Jewish Amidya that this overt expression is confined to third person plural agent NPs.

4.3.4.3. Differential Object Indexing

The same sensitivity to definiteness for objects may also be found for the patient in the agentless 'perfective' form. This is, for instance, found in Christian Barwar. In (69) below, the 'perfective' lacks agent indexes. The coding of the patient remains sensitive to prominence which is characteristic of the P (and not the S). This would suggest that, where the referentiality of the A is reduced, the morphosyntax is still transitive and the remaining single overt argument may still be treated like any other P (Khan 2008a:750). If it expresses no agreement, it is completely impersonal, i.e. *baxta qṭil* 'A/the woman was killed'. The preverbal position of the patient, however, is typical for the S of inchoatives, e.g. *ʔo-bɛθa tlix-le* 'The house collapsed', although word order is not entirely fixed:

(69) **C. Barwar** (NW Iraq, person-restricted; Khan 2008a:749-750, 758, 1984.33; cf. Doron and Khan 2012:231)

a. *baxta* *qṭil-a* (definite patient)
woman kill$_{PFV}$-3FS
'The woman was killed.'

b. *baxta* *qṭil* (indefinite or definite patient)
woman kill$_{PFV}$
'A/the woman was killed.'

[S]	[V]

c. *ʔo-bɛθa* *tlix-le* (inchoative)
the-house destroy$_{PFV}$-3MS
'The house collapsed.'

	[V]	[P]	
d.	*tlix-a-la*	*maθa*	(transitive)
	destroy$_{PFV}$-3FS-3PL	village:FS	

'They destroyed the village.'

Similarly, the agentless form may be person-restricted like the corresponding active. The person reference of the patient is confined to the third person in some person-restricted dialects like the P (and contrary to the S)[129]. Thus, the E-suffixes are constrained to third person patients in person-restricted dialects such as C. Barwar (Doron and Khan 2012:232-233) and possibly also J. Zakho (Gutman 2008). This resembles the object indexes, compare for C. Barwar:

(70)	***griš-**ax**-Ø*	'They pulled **us**.' / **We** were pulled.'	(non-third person)
	***griš-**ax**-lu*	'They pulled **us**.'	
	*griš-**a**-Ø*	'They pulled **her**. / **She** was pulled.'	(third person)
	*griš-**a**-lu*	'They pulled **her**.'	

C. Barwar, thus, treats the patient in the bare 'perfective' construction like the P rather than the S (Khan 2008a:750).

The patient of the transitive verb, therefore, can still evince object properties and can imply a 3pl. agent. Khan does not mention this but in example (71) below, for instance, the 'perfective' lacking agreement is presumably continued by 'perfective' forms with third plural agent agreement, i.e. L-suffixes marking the A, while there is no indexing of *ʔərwe* 'sheep', since it is indefinite. *prim=ʔərwe* presumably conveys so much as 'People slaughtered sheep'. Naturally, such impersonals need not be distinct from a passive prototype in meaning but, morphosyntactically, the construction is transitive as an alternative to *prim-la ʔərwe* 'They slaughtered sheep'.

(71)	*awwa*	*dana*	*bab-i*	*parəm-Ø-wa*.	
	that	time	father-my	slaughter$_{IPFV}$-3MS-PST	
	prim=ʔərwe.	*u-mbošəl-**la**=w*	*wid-**la***	*xumṣa*	
	slaughter$_{PFV}$=sheep:PL	and=II:cook$_{PFV}$-3PL=and	make$_{PFV}$-3PL	xumṣa	

[129] This does not apply to all dialects, for example: J. Betanure (accusative, person-restricted) *griš-**ax*** '**We** were pulled (= Somebody pulled us)' (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a:68). The restriction does not apply to 'ergative dialects' in general, compare J. Sulemaniya (ergative, person-restricted) *griš-**ax*** '**We** got pulled' (NE Iraq; Khan 2004a), where the construction is intransitive (see §4.3.3).

'At that time my father slaughtered. **Sheep were slaughtered**. **They** cooked and made *xumṣa*' (Khan 2008a:2028, B10:40)

4.3.4.4. Impersonal Passive, Ergative, or Something Else?

Contrary to the ergative Jewish varieties, overt agreement with the A in the 'perfective' is not obligatory in other dialects (Hoberman 1989:111; Gutman 2008; Khan 2008a:750). Diachronically, Gutman (2008) argues that an originally impersonal passive construction was reinterpreted as active in its extention from non-referential (i.e. unknown) agents to referential (i.e. known) agents when combined with topical patients. An isolated occurrence of such an agentless 'perfective' form is interpretable as an impersonal passive (equivalent to the dummy third person A-coding) but a contextual occurrence is interpretable as active where the expression of the A is deleted. We noted that third person, especially plural, reference can still be retained.

This noteworthy, peculiar treatment of the A is taken to be evidence that even these 'accusative dialects' (like J. Amidya, C. Barwar etc.) that group S and A through the L-series (e.g. *nšəq-lu* 'They kissed' : *qəm-lu* 'They rose') exhibt a fundamentally ergative structure in the 'perfective'. Doron and Khan (2012; cf. Barotto 2015) argue that the absence of agent coding is, at bottom, evidence of ergativity. They (2012:231-233) conclude that this construction should be considered a type of 'ergative'. The L-suffixes that encode the A may be absent without violating the P status of the patient. Distinct from the passive and similar to the ergative, the A can be co-referentially deleted and, hence, share syntactic properties with the S.

It should be clear, however, that, in phonological form, no ergative grouping is manifested, since the P (i.e. the E-set) is distinct from the S (i.e. the L-set). Since the S and P trigger agreement (to the exclusion of the A), one could argue that this is an ergative grouping (A≠S=P) in terms of trigger potential. The differential P-marking and the cross-clausal anaphoric deletion indicate that the unexpressed A has more S-like syntactic properties than the P. One shoulde note, however, that the unambiguous accusative grouping of S and A in unmarked clauses seems to be more fundamental in these dialects. Overt agreement with the A is unrestricted, while the lack of agreement clearly is restricted, functionally specialized and not fully productive. Indeed, why the agentless 'perfective' form is not typically passive is presumably because the patient indexes are the same for the P in the active voice/transitive coding and distinct from the S. This is not the case in the ergative Trans-Zab Jewish Varieties (see the preceding subsection).

Moreover, it should be mentioned that the lack of agent agreement is possibly at least partially a contact-induced phenomenon. Inasmuch as a dialect allows the dropping of the agent, it parallels a Kurdish equivalent construction, where the verbal agreement with the (S and) P is fixed but the omission of the A can still be interpreted as transitive in Badīnānī Kurdish (see Haig 2008:262-268).

In the final analysis, it seems to me the agentless 'perfective' does not neatly fit in either the passive or ergative category. It is a restricted truncated transitive construction for dialect-dependent purposes. The diathetical ambiguity between personal active and impersonal passive alongside continuity with third person As would suggest that it simply expresses the event from the bare viewpoint of the patient, affected by a change of state, and that, in leaving the agent unmetioned, its recoverability from the context is significant in identifying an agent and treating it as a transitive clause. This would explain why only L-suffixes that mark the agent can be absent and not subject-marking L-suffixes[130]. This also indicates that it is not a purely morphological property of the L-suffixes which could arguably have a semi-clitic nature (see §3.2.2), since the L-suffixes, after all, are never absent in their subject-marking function (at least in NENA).

4.3.4.5. Lability in Dynamic-Stative Varieties

Dialects that manifest active-stative alignment also have labile verbs and these generally behave similarly to the 'ergative dialects'. The S_P form expresses the inchoative pendant with result state focus and the S_A form the perfective past. The form that corresponds with the inchoative in 'ergative dialects' expresses the realis perfect in 'dynamic-stative dialects'. Thus, the subject of the intransitive valence pattern that corresponds with the patient in the transitive valence pattern is coded in a patient-like or agent-like fashion depending on aspect. Thus, *plix-Ø* and *pləx-le* in (72) below are both inchoatives denoting a spontaneous event and not a passive.

[130] From the persective of the language system as a whole, the agentless 'perfective' could also be analogical to the 'imperfective'. The L-suffixes that mark the agent effectively behave like objects (P) which may be due to the parallelism with the L-suffixes that mark the patient in the 'imperfective' and are dropped in contexts where the patient has no or less referentiality (cf. §3.2.2), i.e. *qṭil-a-Ø* 'X killed her' : *°qaṭl-a-Ø* 'She kills X'.

(72) **J. Urmi** (NW Iran)

[P] ⟵ [V-P]

a. ***tar-é*** *pəlx-**i**-le* (causative, perfective past)
door-PL open$_{PFV}$-P:3PL-A:3MS
'He opened (lit. **them**) **the doors**.' (Garbell 1965:150)

[S] ⟵ [V-S$_P$]

b. ***tara*** *plix-Ø* (inchoative, realis perfect)
door:MS open$_{PFV}$-S:3MS
'The door has opened.' (Khan 2008b:294)

[S] ⟵ [V-S$_A$]

c. ***ləbb-ew*** *pləx-le* (inchoative, perfective past)
heart:MS-his open$_{PFV}$-S:3MS
'His heart opened (= He cheered up).' (Khan 2008b:459)

Forms like *plix-Ø* 'It$_M$ has opened', therefore, should not be considered passive and the agent is not overtly expressed in 'dynamic-stative dialects'. In Jewish Urmi, the passive has to be expressed differently, for example, by the resultative participle and the copula, e.g. *o-naša* ⁺*qtile=le* 'The man is killed' (Khan 2008b:83).

The main point in the end is that the argument in the agentless 'perfective' form is the S in both 'ergative' and 'dynamic-stative' Trans-Zab Jewish Varieties and not the P. This is not only grounded in the telicity condition and the spontaneous interpretation but also in the morphology. Strong intransitive and transitive verbs are morphologically distinguished. Although a stronger implication of the agent is not impossible, these dialects prefer other more typical constructions to express the passive voice.

4.3.5. Focal Dative Marking of the Agent in non-Trans-Zab Varieties

As discussed in the previous subsection, an agent, especially the third person plural, may still be interpretable in an agentless 'perfective' formation resembling the impersonal agent construction. The dative expression of the agent with such verbal forms is rare and archaic and mainly documented in textual sources. Unfortunately, no grammar fully treats its usage. An important disadvantage is that we do not obtain a full picture and, without consultation with native speakers, we do not know whether these textual data are representative of the dialect. It does show, however, that it is possible to add a dative agent and it will be pointed out that such agents have some unusual properties. Historically, such full nominals marked by *l-* and the L-suffixes represented the same prepositional

arguments. Synchronically, however, the L-suffixes are fully grammaticalized verbal suffixes. Other person forms are expressed like full nominals by the preposition *l-* and its allomorphs. As we will see, a pronominal agent or full nominal agent can be prepositional or zero-marked. It seems possible to me that some instances of such overt case-marking of the agent are a type of focal A-marking rather than simply an oblique agent complement to a passive construction[131].

On the basis of the scarce data, we cannot draw strong conclusions. However we analyze the ergative-like phenomena, they are part of an archaic layer. It is restricted against the far more frequent agreement with the (personal) agent. The dative prepositional marking of the agent is a lingering feature of the historically dative agent resultative construction.

By and large, agent agreement is not obligatory but its absence is evidently marked. Case-marking of the agent in such contexts is common but not obligatory either. The following patterns are found and patterns (73b)-(73c) are discussed below:

(73) **Marked and unmarked expressions of the agent in the 'perfective'**

a. **Unspecified agent construction**

xil-a-lu	'It$_F$ was eaten (by sbd.)' / 'People ate it$_F$' (= 'They ate it$_F$')
xil-a-Ø	'It$_F$ was eaten (by sbd.)' / 'People ate it$_F$' (= 'They ate it$_F$')

b. **With nominal agent (plural)**

xil-a-lu	(Ø-)*kalwe*	'Dogs ate it$_F$'	(AGR only)
xil-a(-Ø)	*l-kalwe*	'It$_F$ was eaten by dogs'	(CM only)
(Ø-)*kalwe*	*xil-a-lu*	'<u>Dogs</u> ate it$_F$'	(fronting, AGR only)
(Ø-)*kalwe*	*xil-a*(-Ø)	'id.'	(fronting, null marking)
l-kalwe	*xil-a*(-Ø)	'It was dogs that ate it$_F$'	(fronting, CM only)

c. **With pronominal agent**

	xil-a-li	'I ate it$_F$'	(dependent only)
ʔana	*xil-a-li*	'<u>I</u> ate it$_F$'	(independent and depenendent)
lal-i	*xil-a*(-Ø)	'It was I who ate'	(independent dative only)
ʔana	*xil-a*(-Ø)	'<u>I</u> ate it$_F$'	(independent unmarked only, rare)

[131] Recently, Coghill (2016:232f.) came to the same conclusion.

What we do not find is overt agreement and overt case-marking of the agent[132], e.g. ****l-kalwe xil-a-lu** 'Dogs ate it$_F$', or independent dative pronoun and dependent L-suffix, e.g. ****lali xil-a-li** 'I ate it$_F$'.

4.3.5.1. Dative Marking of the Agent

The agent can be introduced by the dative preposition *(ʔəl)l-* 'to, for; on, about', as illustrated by *l-dewe* 'by the wolves' in (74). This is comparable to agent complements in passives (see §4.3.2). One should note that the dative *(ʔəl)l-* is equally used to express other roles with agentless verbal forms (cf. Sabar 2002:96a), e.g. ***u-ʔəlle** mīr-Ø pāsūq* 'and **about him** (**by him) the verse is said' (J. Zaxo, Sabar 1976:40 fn. 34).

(74) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a:68)
ʔərwe *xil-i* ***l-dewe***
sheep:PL eat$_{PFV}$-3PL DAT-wolf:PL
'The sheep were eaten **by wolves**.'

In early Jewish NENA texts from Nerwa and early Christian NENA poetry from Iraq, there are a few examples of this kind where the dative is used to mark the agent. Some of them are given below.

(75) **Early J. Nerwa** (Literary, NW Iraq)
a. *ham* *āwa* *xīl-Ø* ***ʔəll=əd*** ***kalwe***
also DEM:MS eat$_{PFV}$-3MS DAT=LK dogs
'That one too had been eaten **by dogs**.' (Sabar 1976:40, 2:10)
b. *ʔəktīf-Ø* ***l-bāb-e***
bind$_{PFV}$-3MS DAT-father-his
'He (i.e. Isaac) was bound **by his father**.' (Sabar 2002:190b)
c. ***l-man*** *xlīq-ētən*
DAT-who create$_{PFV}$-2PL
'**By whom** where you$_{PL}$ created?' (Sabar 2002:40)
d. *xzē-lu* *ʕəzzəta* *d-la* ***xəzy-a*** ***ʔəl*** ***ču*** ***ʔādami***
see$_{PFV}$-A:3PL glory:FS SUBR=NEG see$_{PFV}$-3FS DAT not.any human
'They saw glory that **was not seen before by any human being**.' (Goldenberg 1992:120)

[132] This occurs productively in Ṭuroyo, see §6.1.3.

(76) **Early C. Alqosh** (Literary, NW Iraq; Mengozzi 2002a: I2 28.31c)
mā *d-lā* *xzē-Ø* ***l-nāšā*** *xzē-Ø-lē*
what SUBR=NEG see$_{PFV}$-3MS DAT-anyone see$_{PFV}$-P:3MS-A:3MS
'What was not seen **by anybody** he saw.'

This is also found in the expression of the perfect (in dialects with a dynamic-stative alternation). The western peripheral dialect of Hertevin (Christian, SE Turkey), for instance, may express an intransitive valence pattern of monotransitive and ditransitive verbs in the realis perfect, e.g. *ḥellek* 'It is eaten'[133], *hiw-a* 'It$_F$ is given'. A dative agent may be added, as illustrated in (77a) and (77b) below. These constructions are clearly passive-like with the following exception. The fronted position of this dative agent in these examples is unusual and not consistent with other post-verbal obliques. Because of this fronting, the agent is also focal. Yet, a passive rather typically defocuses the agent (Shibatani 1985; Givón 2001). Also, the agent does not ever seem to be prepositional when the verb does express agent agreement.

(77) **C. Hertevin** (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988:152.432, 156.499)
a. *l-ēt?-aḥ* ***l-dewe*** *ḥellek* ***l-naše*** *qṭellek*
NEG-know$_{IPFV}$-A:1PL DAT-wolves eat$_{PFV}$:3MS DAT-people kill$_{PFV}$:3MS
l-debbabe *ḥellek*
DAT-bears eat$_{PFV}$:3MS
'We do not know whether he (i.e. Joseph) has been eaten **by wolves**, he has been killed **by people** or he has been eaten **by bears**.'
b. ***l-?alaha*** *hiw-a* *lal-ew*
DAT-God give$_{PFV}$-3FS DAT-3MS
'It$_F$ (i.e. rulership) was bestowed to him (i.e. Joseph) **by God**.' [134]

The construction with agreement corresponding with (77b), for example, would be:

c. *hole* ***?alah*** *hiw-a-**le*** *lal-ew*
ACTZ God give$_{PFV}$-3FS-3MS DAT-3MS
'**God** has given it$_F$ to him.' (cf. Jastrow 1988:142.387)

[133] The masculine singular is often lengthened and extended with an obscure particle *-ek* in Christian Hertevin, i.e. *pteḥḥ-Ø* + *-ek* → *pteḥḥek* 'It$_M$ has opened, has been opened' (Jastrow 1988: 53).

[134] N.B. Jastrow (ibid.) translates active: "**Gott** hat sie ihm verliehen".

As shown in (77c), it is possible that the recipient and agent may be both prepositional.

4.3.5.2. Focalization and Zero Marking of the Agent

Focal agents (in pre-verbal postion) can also be zero-marked in combination with the agentless form (see §4.3.4). The agent NP is overtly expressed without overt agreement and without overt case-marking. The full nominal *kalwe* 'dogs' in example (78) is not case-marked and the verb only agrees with the (definite) patient:

(78) **J. Zaxo** (NW Iraq; Sabar 2002:193)

	[P]	[A]	[V-P]
xula	*dunye*	(Ø-)***kalwe***	*xīl-a*(-Ø)
Q	world:FS	dog:PL	eat$_{PFV}$-3FS

'Is it so that the world was eaten **by dogs** (or: **Dogs** ate it$_F$, the world)?'

The patient is fronted before the agent in (79), so that the word order is unusual for an active clause (which is otherwise (A-)V(-A)-P) but the focal agent is not dative.

The restriction to third person (plural) agents does not appear to apply absolutely. Jewish Zaxo also unveils an instance with an independent person form of the first person. Gutman (2008:75) mentions the following noteworthy example where there is no agreement with the first person agent:

(79) *dʔər-ri* *ʔəl* *dīn* *dīd-i*, ***ʔāna*** *ʔwiz-a* *u=ʔaxtoxun* *la* *ʔōz-ütū-la*
return$_{PFV}$-1SG to religion LK-my I do$_{PFV}$-3FS and-you:PL NEG do$_{PFV}$-2PL-3FS
'I returned to my own religion, **I** did it$_F$ but you$_{PL}$ do not do it$_F$' (J. Zaxo, NW Iraq; Gutman 2008:75)

The usage of independent pronouns here marks the contrastive focus between speaker *ʔāna* 'I' and addressee *ʔaxtoxun* 'you$_{PL}$'. Coreferential independent pronouns are not obligatory (also known as pro-drop) and usage of the unmarked independent person forms indicates topicalization and focalization (e.g. *ʔāna seli* 'I('m the one who) came' vs. *seli* 'I came'). Their usage without agreement is rather extroadinary, we would otherwise expect the form *ʔāna ʔwiz-a-li* 'I('m the one who) did it$_F$'. Yet, it could suggest that unmarked independent pronouns alternate with dative independent pronouns in the expression of focal agents (see further below).

4.3.5.3. Possible Transitive Interpretations

While a passive interpretation of such dative agent constructions seems possible in some cases, it is not altogether unproblematic. Siewierska (2004:160-162) notes that some languages may drop agent agreement, when the A is focal. Konjo, for example, employs dependent person forms for the A only when it is not in focus, while the focalized A lacks agreement and optionally ergatively case-marked (Friberg 1996:141). The agreement with the A is dropped, when the A is focalized through fronting to preverbal position and the A may be additionally case-marked (Friberg 1996:142-147). It is possible that the NENA data reflect a somewhat similar phenemoneon.

First of all, the S is normally not expressed by the E-set but by the L-set in these dialects (i.e. *meθ-lē* 'He died'; Mengozzi 2002b:38)[135]. The E-set otherwise denotes the P in the corresponding transitive construction, so the construction is morphologically not typically intransitive to begin with[136].

Secondly, these constructions can have an active-transitive interptetation (Mengozzi 2002b:36). We noted in the previous subsections that such agentless forms can still be interpreted as transitive and imply a third person agent, especially plural. There are possibly similar examples of this in early Christian NENA poetry. The form *šqil-ā* below, for instance, presumably has a 3pl. agent reference that can be continued by L-suffixes that mark the agent on subsequent verbal forms in the same verse:

(80) **Early C. Alqosh** (Literary, NW Iraq; Mengozzi 2002a, J6 142.79)

a. *šqil-ā*(-**Ø**) *b-ʔiday-hin* *dery-ā-**lay***
take$_{PFV}$-3FS(-3PL) in-hands.of-their cast$_{PFV}$-3FS-3PL
'She was taken away (or: **They**$_i$ took her) and **they**$_i$ cast her into their hands.'

b. *l-manzal* *d-ihin* *nubl-ā-**lay***
to-dwelling LK-their carry$_{PFV}$-3FS-3PL
'**They**$_i$ carried her to their own dwelling.'

[135] The earlierst written sources from NW Iraq, however, do contain traces of active-stative fluid subject marking (Mengozzi 2002b:38-39; 2005:249-250, cf. Sabar 1976, 2002:49; see §5.1.2).

[136] In Mlaḥso, the passive and anticausative are both marked by L-suffixes, for instance (see §6.3.2).

The agentless form can imply a certain degree of subordination or interdependency to another verb that does take overt agreement (see previous subsection). Mengozzi (2002b:36) mentions several examples where an active interpretation is also favored for dative agents. In the example below, the L-suffixes continue the same reference of the dative nominal. They all belong to the third person plural:

(81) **Early C. Alqosh** (Literary, NW Iraq; Mengozzi 2002a)

a. *šqīl-Ø* ***l-māl[ā]ʾxē*** *w-nube-Ø-**lay*** *drē-Ø-**lay*** *b-gehan[ā]*
take$_{PFV}$-3MS DAT-angel:PL and-carry$_{PFV}$-3MS-3PL put$_{PFV}$-3MS-3PL in-PRN
'He$_i$ was taken **by angels$_y$** (or: **Angels$_y$** took him$_i$) and (**they$_y$**/**he$_i$) carried him and put him in Gehenna.' (J6 142.79d)

This referential continuity between the dative agent and the subsequent agent indexes could suggest that they enjoy the same pragmatic status. The preceding agentless 'perfective' form *šqīl-Ø* 'taken him' could be understood as a kind of gerund (compare English *Angels$_i$ having taken him Ø$_i$ carried him and Ø$_i$ put him in Gehenna*). This notwithstanding, the absence of agent agreement and the overt case-marking of the agent is still marked with respect to overt agreement and zero case-marking (*malaxe šqil-Ø-lay* 'Angels took him'.)

In addition, dative agents may freely alternate with the L-suffixes that mark the agent as the independent expression of a full nominal agent. The verbal form below lacks agreement with a nominal agent referent which is marked by *l-* instead, but it does exhibit agreement with the antecedent *āw*:

b. *āw* *d=lḇiš-Ø* ***l-ʾlāhā*** *wa=lbeš-Ø-**lan***
DEM:MS SUBR=clothe$_{PFV}$-3MS DAT-God:MS and=clothe$_{PFV}$-3MS-1PL
'He who was clothed **by God** and whom **we** clothed.' (I1 19.53d)

The correspondence is obviously facilitated by the morphological parallel between the dative preposition (*l-*) and the (dative) person indexes (L-suffixes). No agent index is present in *lḇiš-Ø* and the full nominal is introduced by the dative ***l-ʾlāhā***. The status of the patient in the subsequent verbal form with agent agreement *lbeš-Ø-lan* 'We clothed him' is clearly the P. In both cases, the verb refers back to the antecedent *āw* 'he'. This free alternation might suggest that the patient index on *lḇiš-Ø* enjoys a similar status to that in *lbeš-Ø-lan*, and that, thus, object coding is retained in the agentless form.

Independent dative pronouns can also be employed like full nominals instead of the L-suffixes. Goldenberg (1992:120-121) and Pennacchietti (1994:278, fn. 71) record examples where the agent is an independent dative person form[137], for example *lālox* in (82b) below.

(82) **Early J. Nerwa** (Literary, NW Iraq, person-unrestricted; Goldenberg 1992:121)

a. *u-ʔatta* *d-bəd-šāmeʔ-Ø* *bāb-i* *dəx* *d-qṭīl-ən-**nox***
and-now SUB-FUT-hear$_{IPFV}$-A:3MS father-my how SUBR-kill$_{PFV}$-A:1MS-P:2MS
'And now my father will hear how **you$_{MS}$** killed me$_{M}$.'

b. *bəd-yāʔe-Ø* *d-**lāl-ox*** *qṭīl-ēna*
FUT-know$_{IPFV}$-A:3MS SUBR-DAT-2MS kill$_{PFV}$-S/P:1MS
'He will know that (it is) **by you** I was killed.'

The pre-verbal position of the dative agent indicates that it is focalized through fronting (Goldenberg 1992:121). Rhétoré (1912:220) offers the following example from (written) Christian Aqlosh:

(83) ***l-gaḇro*** *qṭil-ā*
DAT-PRN kill$_{PFV}$-3FS
'(It is) **by Gawro** she was killed.'

Rhétoré (1912:220) remarks that the independent dative person form (*lāli* 'me', *lāloḵ* 'you$_{MS}$', *lāle* 'him' etc.) is used more assertively and conveys focalization like English 'It is I (you, he etc.) who killed'. The pre-verbal position signifies an increase in prominence of the dative argument, although its association with the agent role is peculiar to its combination with the agentless 'perfective' form.

The dative seems to mark salient agents that are contextually somehow unexpected and highly agentive (i.e. 'by me/dogs and not somebody/something else') reminiscient of differential A-marking (see §2.4.3). In this case, such agent focus requires the absence of agent agreement. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the dative agent is possibly partly a contact-induced phenomenon. The

[137] As pointed out elsewhere, the L-suffixes and independent dative person forms are historically related. Synchronically, however, the L-suffixes, as verbal indexes, do not have the same status. Thus, example (39b) should not be mistaken for an extraction and fronting of an L-suffix (*pace* Goldenberg 1992:121; Pennacchietti 1994:278) but simply an independent variant of the person index. What is fronted is the expression of the agent in which it receives dative-case marking but it is not the L-suffix itself that is fronted.

Aramaic dative agent construction parallels the Kurmanji Kurdish ergative construction where the verbal agreement is typically controlled by the P, and the A is expressed by a distinct case form referred to as the 'oblique' which marks the P in the present tense.

Pending further investigation, I would tentatively consider this a type of optional ergative case-marking or differential marking of the A conditioned by focus[138]. In some instances of the dative agent construction, this seems to me preferable than a straightforward oblique complement of a passive (cf. Mengozzi 2002b:36), because of the referential contintuity with agent indexes and the agent focus that are clearly not passive-like (as the function of the passive is inactivization resulting rather in the defocusing of the agent). If this is correct, then the focal ergative case-marking is combined with tripartite agreement in phonological form, since the A is zero, the P is marked by the E-set and the S by the L-set. In fact, although strictly speaking, only the pronominal A is case-marked, the person marking is best characterized as tripartite, since all functions are marked differently (be it dependent or independent).

Finally, dative case-marking is found much more readily for the patient than for the agent in Neo-Aramaic. For further studies, it would be interesting to assess whether the agent and patient could both be case-marked simultaneously (e.g. *l-dewe xil-i l-ərwe* 'It is wolves that ate the sheep')[139]. If it turns out that both the agent and patient may be identically case-marked, then this might be a type of horizontal alignment (S≠A=P).

4.4. Alignment Splits and Multiple Transitive Constructions

As explained in the preceding sections, when it comes to the inflection of the 'perfective', the choice of E- or L-suffixes is necessarily though not sufficiently conditioned by

(i) morphological base (*qṭil-* or *qaṭəl-*) for the marking of at least the A
(ii) and at least person reference for the P (§§4.1-4.2).

This section explores a tendency to normalize the use of the E-suffixes or L-suffixes at the cost of either to encode a particular grammatical function (S, A, P) by morphologically adapting transitive coding in analogy to the 'imperfective'. A

[138] A type that, interestingly, aligns agents at least with recipients in ditransitive constructions.

[139] Prepositional marking of both A and P is possible, for instance, in Ṭuroyo, see §6.1.3.

type of neutralization of argument encoding can be observed inspired by the predominant morphosyntax in all NENA dialects along different paths[140]. And this leads to a mixture between the 'perfective' and 'imperfective' morphology that is sometimes difficult to capture in terms of alignment.

When there is no verbal person marking of the P, the S and A are treated alike by means of the L-suffixes (*dmix-**li*** 'I slept', *xze-**li*** 'I saw') in both the accusative and neutral pattern. We will see that, when there is verbal person marking of the P, however, the whole construction changes and approximates the 'imperfective' depending on either the properties of the P or the properties of the A. There is a certain degree of co-argument sensitivity (Witzlack-Makarevich et al. 2016). Typologically, this is the mirror image of Comrie's 'antiergative' type (1975, 1978:380-383) where it is the full presence of the A that triggers distinct coding and only the P is coded differently. In NENA dialects, it is the full presence of the P that triggers distinct coding, and the coding of the A is affected by the absence or presence of the patient. Part of this is may be inspired by a tendency contrary to the neutral dialects, namely to discriminate between the A and P and avoid marking them by the same set of person forms (the L-suffix).

4.4.1. System-Internal Neutralization of Object Indexes

The preterit, or perfective past, is only a symmetrically inverted reflection of the 'imperfective' when S and A are also grouped. The majority of dialects, therefore, exhibit a morphosyntactic differentiation for both the A and S alike conditioned by TAM (*dməx-**la*** 'She slept' vs. °*damx-**a*** 'She sleeps').

The dialects that show neutral alignment (e.g. J. Urmi, C. Bohtan) employ the L-suffixes to mark all functions including both the A and P, e.g. J. Urmi *xzé-li-lax* 'I saw you$_{FS}$'. As noted in §4.2.2, the addition of an object marking L-suffix to the preceding agent marking L-suffix is also found in some 'accusative varieties' for the recipient role only (*hu-li-lax* 'I gave to you$_{FS}$') and is presumably the starting point for its usage to mark the P. In addition, this neutralization is possibly partly inspired by parallelism between the 'imperfective' and 'perfective'. Compare the forms in Table 30 below. The object-marking L-suffixes neatly align with each other in both systems. The arrow indicates the direction of the analogy from the

[140] See Pennacchietti (1994) for a brief overview and Mengozzi (2005) for a comparison with Kurdish.

'imperfective' to the 'perfective'. The parallel would have been first available in the person indexes denoting the recipient and then extended to PS (and TS).

Table 30. *Imperfective–perfective parallellism of object marking L-suffixes*

	A	R		A	P
IMPERFECTIVE	E	L	:	E	L
	k-wəl-Ø-	***-le***		*⁺qatl-a*	***-lu***
	'He gives	him'		'She kills	them'
PERFECTIVE	L	L	:	L	L
	hwál-le	***-le***		*⁺qtál-la*	***-lu***
	'He gave	him'		'She killed	them'

Source: *Data based on Khan (2008b)*.

It seems plausible, therefore, that this pattern at least partly unfolded in analogy with the 'imperfective' where the L-suffixes specifically mark objects (cf. Pennacchietti 1994). This is avoided in dialects such as Jewish Amidya that maintain complete agreement inversion.

Finally, the reverse direction of analogy is also found, from the 'perfective' to the 'imperfective'. Such levelling of dependent person forms in the 'imperfective' and 'perfective' is found in South Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties. The L_2-series attached to 'perfective' forms are based on the *ʔəll*-series but they may be employed with a status equivalent to that of the L_1-suffixes in a few dialects, e.g. J. Saqqiz *nšiq-li-**lav*** 'I kissed **her**' (out of independent *nšiq-li ʔilav*). This is replicated in the 'imperfective' of the in combination with first person singular E-suffixes, possibly because of the nasal resonant *-n-* akin to the lateral (Israeli 1998:114-117). Compare:

	IMPERFECTIVE		PERFECTIVE	
3MS	*našiq-n-**ev***	:	*nšíq-li-**lev***	(< *-li il-év*)
FS	*našiq-n-**av***	:	*nšíq-li-**lav***	(< *-li il-áv*)
PL	*našiq-n-**u***	:	*nšíq-li-**lu***	(<*-li il-ú*)

The L_2-series that are used to mark the P in the 'perfective' have penetrated the 'imperfective'.

To conclude, neutral dialects have levelled the L-set of patient indexes throughout the verbal system in analogy with the 'imperfective'. Analogy in the other direction is less frequent but also occurs such as the extension of L_2-series.

4.4.2. Competing Transitive Constructions: The qam-qaṭəl-Construction

For transitive perfective past clauses, there is a strategy to adopt the L-suffixes as an alternative to the E-series in marking the P, namely the transitive *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit. Although it is based on the 'imperfective' (*qatəl*-), this secondary formation is paradigmatically linked with the 'perfective' (*qṭil*-) in the expression of the perfective past. Thus, there are two basic transitive perfective constructions. As we will see, this entails a split in both the A and P, where the *qam-qaṭəl*-formation leads to ergativity.

Essentially, this ergative *qam-qaṭəl*-formation is presumably an attempt to avoid the transitive morphosyntax of the 'perfective' (*qṭil*-), while maintaining the L-suffixes as the primary set for object indexes. Both the stacking L-suffixes, or neutral alignment, and the E-set of patient indexes are disfavored or disallowed in the perfective past depending on the dialect. When the P is not expressed or indefinite, the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction cannot be used, and when the P is pronominal, it is favored over the *qṭil*-based construction, especially for the first and second person. This leads to a major split between intransitive and transitive morphosyntax in the perfective past and the differential treatment of the A depending on the reference of the P. When the P is pronominal, especially first and second person, the A is also marked differently, it is expressed through the E-set rather than the L-set conforming to the model of the 'imperfective'.

4.4.2.1. Two Basic Transitive Constructions

The *qam-qaṭəl*-construction is found across Jewish and Christian dialects which otherwise exhibit accusative alignment in the preterit and serves to indicate the preterit of transitive clauses with a patient index without inversion (*qaṭəl*-A-P). It alternates and competes with the inverted preterit based on the 'perfective' (*qṭil*-P-A). The TAM marker *qam-* is simply prefixed to the 'imperfective' (*qaṭəl*-) verbal form like other preverbal TAM modifications, for example:

(84) **The *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit** (J. Amidya; Hoberman 1989)

a. ***k***-*šamʕ-i-la* 'They hear her.'
IND-hear$_{IPFV}$-A:3PL-P:3FS

b. ***qam***-*šamʕ-i-la* 'They heard her.' (= *šmiʕ-a-lu*)
PFV-hear$_{IPFV}$-A:3PL-P:3FS

Although it is based on the 'imperfective' (*qatəl*-), it is equivalent to the 'perfective' (*qṭil*-) in the expression of the perfective past and used alongside intransi-

tive verbs such as *θe-le* ('came') in (85a) below. Compare (85a) and (85b) from the same story.

(85) **J. Amidya** (NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989:186.3)

a.	*θe-le*	*bab-e*	*u*	***qam-xaze-Ø-le***	*bə-bxaya*
	come$_{PFV}$-S:3MS	father-his	and	PFV-see$_{IPFV}$-A:3MS-P:3MS	in-crying
	'His father came and **saw him** crying.'				
b.	***xze-Ø-le***	*bron-e*	*bə-bxaya*		
	see$_{PFV}$-P:3MS-A:3MS	son-his	in-crying		
	'**He saw** his son crying.'				

This co-variation between preterit forms based on *qṭil-* and *qam-qaṭəl-* is widespread across Christian dialects of NENA. It is also found in Jewish dialects in NW Iraq, such as J. Amidya and J. Aradhin (Mutzafi 2002b). Example (86) gives the respective forms.

(86) **Two types of preterit in J. Amidya** (person-unrestricted, NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989; Greenblatt 2011)

	qam-qaṭəl	***qṭil***		
3FS	*qam-našəq-Ø-**la***	*nšiq-**a**-le*	'He	**her'**
MPL	*qam-našq-átu-**lu***	*nšiq-**í**-loxun*	'You$_{PL}$	**them'**
MS	*qam-našq-a-**le***	*nšəq-**Ø**-la*	'She kissed	**him'**
1PL	*qam-našq-i-**lan***	*nšiq-**ax**-lu*	'They	**us'**
2FS	*qam-našq-an-**nax*** etc.	*nšiq-**at**-ti*	'I$_{FS}$	**you$_{FS}$'** etc.

It should be pointed out that dialects that systematically employ the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction such as Jewish Amidya otherwise belong to the accusative type. It is rarely the case that they also employ independent object person forms, since dialects tend to favor either of these two strategies to mark the P instead of the E-set[141].

The fundamental difference between the two types of preterits is that the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit obligatorily takes patient indexes, while the *qṭil*-preterit need not, as the following examples show. When the P is not expressable as in (87a), is omitted (87b) or its referentiality is reduced to an indefinite NP, the *qam-qaṭəl*-formation cannot be used. Thus, the *qṭil*-based forms are allowed in

[141] The only dialects known to me that use both strategies are C. Barwar (NW Iraq; Khan 2008a) and C. Urmi (NW Iran; Khan 2016).

contexts where the P is not indexed but the *qam-qaṭel*-construction must include a patient index.

(87) **J. Amidya** (NW Iraq, person-unrestricted; adapted from Hoberman 1989; Greenblatt 2011)

	qṭil		***qam-qaṭəl***	
a.	*dməx-lu*	f.	***qam-ɖamx-i*	(S)
	'They went to sleep.'			
b.	*šmeʔ-lu*	g.	***qam-šamʕ-i*	(A without P)
	'They heard.'			
c.	*šmeʔ-lu baxta*	h.	***qam-šamʕ-i baxta*	(indefinite P)
	'They heard a woman.'			
d.	*šmiʔ-**a**-lu*	i.	*qam-šamʔ-i-**la***	(pron P)
	'They heard **her**.'			
e.	*šmiʔ-**a**-lu **baxta***	j.	(**)*qam-šamʔ-i-**la baxta***	(definite P)
	'They heard the woman.'			

The indexing of Ps as in (10j), however, is not equally available in all dialects for the *qam-qaṭəl*-formation. It is far less frequent than its *qṭil*-based counterpart in Jewish Amidya (NW Iraq; Hoberman 1989:52-53) and appears to be impossible, for instance, in C. Jilu (SE Turkey; Fox 1997:83). This suggests that the construction hinges on object person forms and is only secondarily included in the differential indexing of definite NPs, as indicated in Table 31. One should recall that no such constraints are identified for other TAM constructions based on *qaṭəl-* that are unambiguously part of the 'imperfective' inflectional system.

Table 31. *Two types of preterits and DOM in J. Amidya*

P	***qṭil-***	***qam-qaṭəl-***
[+pron]	optional (E-suffix)	obligatory (L-suffix)
[+index DOM]	+	–

Although J. Amidya freely employs the E-set of patient indexes, a quick glance at the texts in Hoberman (1989) and Greenblatt (2011) gives the impression that the *qam-qaṭəl*-forms that use L-suffixes instead is by far more common when the P is pronominal, while the pendant based on *qṭil-* is favored, when the P is a full NP. Further quantitative analysis is required to assess this.

Whereas dialects like J. Amidya would seem to have two constructions that co-vary, *qam-qaṭəl-* is in complementary distribution with *qṭil-* in person-restricted dialects, such as J. Zakho and J. Betanure (Mutzafi 2008a:85-86). The person restriction marginalizes the E-set to third person reference in J. Zakho, while the *qam-qaṭəl*-formation can freely express all persons through the L-set:

(88) **Person-restricted patient-marking in J. Zakho** (NW Iraq; Cohen 2012)

	qam-qaṭəl	***qṭil***		
3FS	*qam-nāšəq-Ø-**lu***	*nšiq-**a**-le*	'He kissed	**her'**
PL	*qam-nāšəq-Ø-**la***	*nšiq-**i**-le*	etc.	**them'**
MS	*qam-nāšəq-Ø-**le***	*nšəq-**Ø**-le*		**him'**
1PL	*qam-nāšəq-Ø-**lan***	***nšiq-**ax**-le*		**us'**
2FS	*qam-nāšəq-Ø-**lax***	***nšiq-**at**-te*		**you$_{FS}$'**
		etc.		

As a result, the *qṭil*-based preterit forms that include a patient index are more restricted.

Furthermore, it should be noted that in some dialects, such as C. 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 such that the following type of paradigm is observed:

xəzy-a-li	*baxta*	'I saw (lit. her) the woman'
xəzy-i-li	*naše*	'I saw (lit. them) the people'
qam-xāz-ən-ne	*nāša*	'I saw (lit. him) the man'

This is even more restricted in dialects like Christian Koy Sanjaq (NE Iraq, Mutzafi 2004b) where the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction is the only means to express a patient index in the perfective past (see further below).

Table 32 illustrates its distribution across a few dialects depending on the person reference of the object. Pennacchietti (1994:269-270, 276-277) contends that the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit spread from Iraq, particularly the Mosul plain, to the West and North East of the NENA speaking area. The two transitive preterits correlate with respect to the person-role constraint and are at the same time paradigmatically linked. For J. Amidya and C. Jilu, for instance, it is the *qṭil*-preterit with the E-set of patient indexes that is favored in the differential indexing of object NPs, while the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit with the L-set of patient indexes is large-

ly confined to the expression of object person forms (cf. Cohen 2012:238 for J. Zaxo).

Table 32. *Distribution of qam-qaṭəl-preterit and qṭil-preterit*

THIRD	FIRST/SECOND	DIALECTS' SAMPLE
qṭil-	*qam-qaṭəl-*	(**NW Iraq**) J. Amidya (Hoberman 1989), J. Aradhin (Mutzafi 2002b); (**NW Iran**) C. Urmi (Literary, Murre-van den Berg 1999; spoken, Khan 2016)
qṭil-	*qam-qaṭəl-*	(**NW Iraq**) J. Betanure (Mutzafi 2008a), J. Dihok (Sabar 1997), J. Zaxo (Cohen 2012), C. Alqosh (Coghill 2003), C. Aradhin (Krotkoff 1982), C. Barwar (Khan 2008a), C. Mangesh (Sara 1974), C. Qaraqosh (Khan 2002a), C. Telkepe (Coghill 2010, 2014), C. Tisqopa (Rubba 1993), C. Zaxo (Hoberman 1993); (**SE Turkey**) C. Baz (Mutzafi 2000), C. Jilu (Fassberg 1997), C. Sat (Mutzafi 2008c); (**NW Iran**) C. Salamas (Polotsky 1991);
qam-qaṭəl-		(**SE Turkey and NW Iraq**) most of the Khabur dialects (Talay 2008), C. Nerwa (Talay 2001), C. Peshabur (Coghill 2013); (**NE Iraq**) C. Koy Sanjaq (Mutzafi 2004b), (**W Iran**) C. Sanandaj (Panoussi 1990)

4.4.2.2. Possible Motivations

It seems plausible to me that the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit is an attempt to confine the marking of salient objects to the L-set. The L-set, grounded in the morphology of the 'imperfective', is the only verbal expression of non-third person patients. The verb has to select a different inflectional base, because it cannot be combine with L-suffixes to express the P. Unlike 'neutral dialects' like J. Urmi, the doubling of L-suffixes is blocked for at least the P function. Forms like ***nšáq-la-**li*** 'She kissed **me**' are strongly disfavored, respectively, disallowed, while *hu-lu-**li*** 'They gave **me** (sth.)' where the L-set person form marks the recipient role exists besides *qam-yaw-i-**li*** 'They gave me'. The view that this construction hinges on the L-series can find additional support in the use of L-suffixes to mark the predicative possessor. The L-set is combined with the verb *hwy* 'be' in suppletion to the existential marker *ʔiθ* 'there is' and this can also be the *qam-qaṭəl*-formation, for example, *qam-hāwe-**le** xa brūna* '**He** had a son' (lit. there.was-him a son, C. Aradhin,

Krotkoff 1982:38). This would be the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit counterpart to the hypothetical *qṭil*-preterit ***wə́-le-le* 'He had' (lit. was-it$_{M}$-him), a form unattested in this dialect, even though *wə́-le-be* with a B-series does exist meaning 'He could (lit. was-it-in.him)' (Krotkoff 1982:38). It is, nonetheless, built on the 'imperfective' °*hāwē-le* 'He has', although the L-suffix encodes the possessor or benefactor rather than the patient (P).

The *qam-qaṭəl*-formation, therefore, most likely unfolds by conforming to both an avoidance of stacking L-suffixes, or of neutral alignment (i.e. a double L-set constraint), and a person role constraint. We noted that, when the P is a non-third person form, it cannot be expressed by means of *qṭil*-based inflection in person-restricted dialects. The transitive *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit is used instead. First and second person forms typically constitute the starting point of DOM (cf. Bossong 1985; Haig 2008:152). When the P is lower in prominence, i.e. non-pronominal, or indefinite, the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction cannot be used. Instead, speakers will opt for a *qṭil*-based expression like the above. It is as if the *qam*-preverb signals "Note that, before anything else, it is the object that requires indexing through an L-suffix and not the agent".

These observations and the sensitivity to prominence indicate that this is not merely a suppletive paradigm (Cohen 2012:238; *pace* Polotsky 1991). It is a transitive perfective past construction dedicated to mark the patient differently for dialect-dependent reasons. The 'imperfective' without an object L-index (°*šamʔ-i-* 'They hear') could, in theory, serve as base for any similar perfective derivation (*qam-šamʔ-i-* 'They heard') but it is not readily used as such[142]. There is no morphological reason why patientless forms like ***qam-šamʔ-i* 'They heard' or ***qam-damx-i* 'They slept' are avoided. In terms of relative markednes, then, the *qam-qaṭel*-form is the marked counterpart, being more restricted than the *qṭil*-perfective. In addition, the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit does not appear to be combinable with prepositional/oblique arguments that take S-like subjects. Forms like ***qam-raʔəš-Ø ʔəbbi* 'He noticed me' do not appear to be possible, while *rʔəš-Ø ʔəbbi* 'He noticed me' is. The *qam-qaṭəl*-form, therefore, must promote the patient-like argument to full P function, as if it were an applicative voice

[142] Polotsky (1961:21 fn.) mentions that such objectless forms sporadically do occur. This would require further investigation but it seems that such forms occur alongside another *qam-qaṭəl*-construction that does have object coding, e.g. *qam-doq-a* (**Ø**) *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 do demonstrate the possibility of omitting an object index.

construction[143]. Differential object marking, therefore, is a phenomenon broader in scope than we might assume and has at least partly motivated the usage of an entirely distinct verbal form. We would expect highly individuated objects to favor morphological salience.

There is one observation that is contrary to this and suggests the motivation for this construction is mainly morphological. Intransitive verbs with a dummy, non-referential object that display transitive morphology are not excluded from this formation, such as J. Zaxo *qam-gamṣ-ī-la* 'They smiled', lit. 'they smiled (it)' (Cohen 2012:142). This cannot be connected with prominence.

4.4.2.3. Ergativity and Split A-Marking

The marking of the A, however, is also involved in the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction. An agent acting on a highly animate and referential participant will indirectly also receive distinct coding, i.e. the A and P are jointly treated differently, when the P is miminally a non-third person form. It is possible that the markedness, or the coding weight, of the entire construction, therefore, shifts in proportion to the P (Barotto 2015:238). If this is correct, this would be is a person or prominence-driven inversion of the morphosyntax, rather than one driven by grammatical aspect. A transitive perfective construction dedicated to a pronominal P, serving as a device to mark the patient differently in the preterit but at the cost of indirectly also affecting the encoding of the A in the same paradigm. Transitive perfective past clauses are, thus, treated very differently from intransitive perfective past clauses. Compare the following labile verb *pθx* 'open' in (89a) and (89b). The intransitive construction always involves a *qṭil*-based form while the transitive counterpart shifts to the *qaṭəl*-based form to cross-reference the object.

(89) **J. Betanure** (NW Iraq; Mutzafi 2008a:256.399, 266.426)

	[S]	[V-S]		
a.	*tarʔa*	*pθəx-le*	(itr. preterit, *qṭil-*)	
	door:MS	open$_{PFV}$-3MS		
	'The door opened.'			
	[P]	[V-A-P]		
b.	*tarʔa*	*qam-pāθx-i-le*	*ṭal-u*	(tr. preterit, *qam-qaṭəl-*)
	door:MS	PFV-open$_{IPFV}$-3PL-3MS	DAT-3MS	
	'They opened the door for him.'			

[143] Compare English *outrun* as in *John outran Mary* against simply *run*.

The presence of *qam-* as well as two distinct verbal indexes which cross-reference the A and P indicates that the clause is transitive as well as perfective past. This is consistent with the tendency of 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.

This distinction is even more grammaticalized in varieties where the E-set of patient indexes is completely absent (cf. Mengozzi 2002b:42). One such dialect is Christian Koy Sanjaq (Mutzafi 2004b). The perfective TAM-marker *qa-* (like *qam-*) is combined with *qaṭəl-* as the only, but only, expression of the perfective past with a P index:

(90) **C. Koy Sanjaq** (NW Iraq; based on Mutzafi 2004b)

	[V-S]		
a.	*səmax-**la***	'**She** stood.'	(S = L-set)
	[V-A] [P: fNP]		
b.	*ġze-**le** baxta*	'**He** saw a woman.'	(A = L-set)
	[V-A-P: PRO]		
c.	*qa-ġaze-Ø-**la***	'**He** saw **her**.'	(A = E-set, P = L-set)

Unfortunately, Mutzafi (2004b) provides no data for the differential indexing of objects in the perfective past. There is evidence for its usage elsewhere, e.g. *xrud-**le ʔe gūda*** 'Demolish$_{SG}$ (lit. **it$_{M}$**) **this wall**!' (Mutzafi 2004b:255, 256). Should this dialect express this in the preterit at all, it must employ the non-inverted construction as in (89c): hypothetically, *qa-ġazy-a-**le ʔe yāxora*** 'She saw (lit. **him**) **this child**'.

In C. Koy Sanjaq, therefore, the *qṭil*-perfective is only found in patientless verbal forms. The L-set is used to mark the S and A for a *qṭil*-based form only and at the same time only the P for a *qam-qaṭəl*-based form. When the verb takes an object index, the whole construction changes to that of the 'imperfective' morphologicy where it is the L-suffixes that denote the object. The marking of the A shifts accordingly. Indeed, the two perfective paradigms are in complete complementary distribution. What is principally a means to differentially mark the P in other dialects, constitutes a major distinction in the coding of the A in Christian Koy Sanjaq. A form like *nšəq-la* 'She kissed' cannot be combined with an object person form of any kind (neither E- nor L-set) but shifts to a form like *qa-našq-a-*

le 'She kissed him' instead. Object indexes are reduced to verbal forms based on *qaṭəl-* and the L-set of person forms.

It is difficult to capture this pattern in traditional terms of alignment typology. Table 33 shows an overview.

Table 33. *Alignment in the preterit in Christian Koy Sanjaq*

ITR.	[no P]	*qṭil-*		**S** L-set	
TR.	[P: fNP]	*qṭil-*	**A** L-set		P Ø
	[P: PRO]	*qam-qaṭəl-*	**A** E-set		**P** L-set

Although it is obviously partly parasitic on the accusative morphosyntax of the 'imperfective', 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. When person marking of the P is absent, it is clearly nominative, grouping S and A together by means of the L-set of person markers (*qṭil-*) (the P being Ø). Should we include, however, the presence of a person index of the P, then it is A that is treated differently, and the P is grouped ergatively with the S by means of the L-suffixes, albeit attached to a different inflectional base (*qam-qaṭəl-*). It is the A that is treated differently while the S and P remain unaffected.

This pattern, therefore, seems to be basically ergative[144]. Chyet (1995:245) adopts the term "pseudo-ergative" to refer to the dialects that use the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit[145]. He prefers this term, because transitive and intransitive verbs are treated differently. The distinction, however, is not between transitive and intransitive verbs *per se* but the presence or absence of person marking of the P. It is only one of the basic transitive constructions that triggers ergative agreement, when the P is a dependent person form[146].

[144] Khan (2017:891-892) appears to have reached the same conclusion by including this in his most recent discussion of ergative alignment.

[145] For a different view, see Coghill (2016:63, 65) who subsumes this under accusative alignment.

[146] This is a type of co-argument sensitivity (Witzlack-Makarevich et al. 2016).

If we would subsume this under a single, unified system, we could call it 'antiaccusative'[147] as the mirror image of Comrie's 'antiergative' type (1975, 1978:380-383), since the A is coded differently in the presence of the P (while this is the opposite in the 'antiergative' type where the P is coded differently in the absence of the A). The morphosyntax splits along two distinct constructions of which one is associated with the trigger potential of the P (*qam-qaṭəl-*) and the other with the trigger potential of the S and A (*qṭil-*). The L-suffixes serve to signal the more salient argument in both constructions.

4.4.3. Ergative Alignment in Peripheral Christian Dialects

The doubling of L-suffixes in the preterit (e.g. *nšáq-la-le* 'She kissed him') neutralizes grammatical distinctions. S, A and P are all marked by means of the same L-suffixes. In some Christian dialects, of which Hertevin (SE Turkey) is thus far the only remaining witness[148], this is partly avoided. A distinct set is used to mark the agent that marginalizes the doubling of L-suffixes (and, consequently, neutral alignment). This set is modelled on the 'imperfective'. This results in special marking of the A in a way comparable to the *qam-qaṭəl*-preterit, and thus ergative alignment, albeit confined to the first and second person rather than the third.

4.4.3.1. Fluid s-Marking

Christian Hertevin shows various (person role) splits. First of all, subject indexes from the E-set are found in active-stative subject marking. The S is fluid for all persons; the L-set for the perfective past, the E-set for the realis perfect.

(91) **C. Hertevin** (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988)

a.	*dmeḥ-li*	'I fell asleep.'	(preterit, S = L-set)
b.	*dmiḥ-**en***	'**I$_M$** have fallen asleep.'	(perfect, **S = E-set**)

The subject indexing in (91b) is further confined to positive polarity and realis mood (Jastrow 1988:58). It may also be found for anticausatives, e.g. *ptiḥ-a* 'It$_F$

[147] This is not to be confused with a distinct use of the same term in Creissels (2009) where it represents the marked nominative case form or adposition and in Siewierska (1985) where it designates anticausative verbs.

[148] See Pennacchietti (1991; 1994:274-275) for examples in scribal idiolects from NW Iraq which suggest this construction is not necessarily a recent development and used to be more common. Special marking of the A is also found in the dialect of Umra (SE Turkey) (Fox 2009:53).

opened / was opened'. The masculine singular is often lengthened and extended with an obscure particle *-ek* in Christian Hertevin, i.e. *pteḥḥ-Ø* + *-ek* → *pteḥḥek* 'It$_M$ has opened, has been opened' (Jastrow 1988: 53). There is no firm evidence it is productively used for transitive verbs (as in C. Bohtan see §5.1, see further below). Generally, in expressing transitive realis perfect clauses, C. Hertevin resorts to the actualizing pre-verbal TAM-marker *hole*[149] that may also be redundantly added to intransities. This parallels the system in Jewish Rustaqa where the preverb is *lā* (see §5.1.2), as compared below.

	C. Hertevin (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988:57-58)			**J. Rustaqa** (NE Iraq; Khan 2002b)		
(92)	PRETERIT					
a.	(Ø)	*ḥze-le*	'He saw'	(Ø)	*xze-le*	(A = L-set)
b.	(Ø)	*ʔite-le*	'He came'	(Ø)	*dye-le*	(S = L-set)
(93)	REALIS PERFECT					
a.	***hole***	*ḥze-le*	'He has seen'	***lā***	*xze-**le***	(A = L-set)
b.	(***hole***)	*ʔite-**Ø***	'He has come'	***lā***	*dye-**Ø***	(S = **E-set**)

4.4.3.2. Multiple Transitive Constructions

When we turn to transitive coding, there are several constructions avalaible and each of them is person-restricted: a typical 'perfective' construction confined to third person patients (*wid-a-le* 'He made it$_F$'), a double L-set construction confined to third person agents (*wid-le-la* 'He made it$_F$') and a mixture of the two confined to the first and second person agents (see below). The argument belongs to a particular person category and this absolute ranking determines the choice of a construction. Only the A and P are affected, while the S is not. In actual transitive clauses, different combinations of person forms are possible.

First of all, object indexes from the E-set ares limited[150] to 3pl. and 3fs. in C. Hertevin so that *wéd-le* can only mean 'He made', not ***wéd-**Ø**-le* 'He made **him**'. This set is mainly used in cross-indexing to an object NP, especially in P-V word order (Jastrow 1988:63). Clauses that omit the patient or include full indefinite nominal patients are treated similarly to intransitive clauses. When the P is a full

[149] The preverbal actualizer *hole* is historically an invariant third person form of the presentative copula, cf. *lā* in J. Arbel and Rustaqa (Khan 1999; 2002b).

[150] They can also mark the subject in the realis perfect (e.g. *dmiḥ-en* 'I have slept'), see §5.1.2.

indefinite NP, the verb expresses agreement only with the A (grouped with the S in the perfective past) but definite NPs may be indexed through the E-set:

	[V-A]	[P]
(94)	*gnu-le*	***robʔiyet***
	'He stole **a bushel**.'	
(95)	*gniw-**a**-le*	***robʔiyet***
	'He stole **the bushel**.'	

Secondly, additional L-suffixes are available to denote the patient for all persons, e.g.

(96)	*wéd-le-**ƚe***	'He made **him**'
	*wéd-le-**li***	'He made **me**'

Agent marking L-suffixes combined with patient marking L-suffixes are not available for all persons, however. For first and second person agents, C. Hertevin blends the L- and E-suffixes to a separate set which we shall refer to as the L-E-suffixes, for example:

(97)	*wéd-l-**áḥ**-leḥon*	'**We** made you$_{PL}$'	(***wed-**lan**-leḥon*)
	*wéd-l-**ét**-ti*	'**You$_{MS}$** made me'	(***wed-**loḥ**-li*)

4.4.3.3. *Possible Motivations*

A closer examination reveals that the expression of the A differs for the non-third person forms but is partly identical with the 'imperfective'. The shape and order of the E-suffixes (such as *-en* 1MS) followed by L-suffixes (such as *-laḥ* 2FS) are exactly the same (e.g. *-en-naḥ* < *-en* + *-laḥ*), but an /l/-element intrudes between the perfective base and the argument encoding. We can schematize this as follows:

(98)	*ḥaz*		*-en*	*-laḥ*	*ḥazennaḥ*	'I$_M$ see you$_{FS}$'
	IPFV		A	P		
	BASE-		**E-SET**	**L-SET**		
	PFV-	↓L↓-	A	P		
	ḥze-	*l-*	*en*	*-laḥ*	*ḥzélénnaḥ*	'I$_M$ saw you$_{FS}$'

This transitive perfective construction, therefore, shows a peculiar case of blending of both the E- and L-suffixes to, what I would 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 the double L-set construction for third person pronouns, and the past marker is put before the L-suffixes:

(99) **L-E suffixes after past convertor** (Jastrow 1988:61)

ḥze-	*-wa*	*-le*	*-la*	*ḥzewalela*	'He had seen her'
BASE	**-PAST**	**-L(-E)**	**-L**		
ḥze-	*-wa-*	*-l-en*	*-la*	*ḥzewalenna*	'I$_{M}$ had seen her'

Occasionally, however, they align with the E-suffixes that encode non-third person forms[151], such that the past convertor *-wa-* precedes it like the 'imperfective':

(100) **L-E suffixes before past convertor** (Jastrow 1988:62)

ḥaz	*-en*	*-wa*	*-laḥ*	*ḥazenwalaḥ*	'I$_{M}$ saw you$_{FS}$'
BASE	**(L)-E**	**-PAST**	**-L**		
ḥze	*-l-en*	*-wa*	*-laḥ*	*ḥzelenwalaḥ*	'I$_{M}$ had seen you$_{FS}$'

The L-E-series are possibly an attempt to avoid both agreement inversion and neutral alignment through the stacking of L-suffixes. The same set, for instance, is also employed in the expression of the predicative possessor, if another L-suffix follows, e.g. *let-**la** haye m-tu mendi* '**She has** no knowledge about anything', *lét-**l-áḥ**-le* (*let-**lan** + -le*) *haye* '**We have** no knowledge of that' (Jastrow 1988:66-67). Moreover, it is interesting to note that the person restriction on the expression of the agent in the double L-set construction (*ḥzé-le-li* 'They saw me') is also found in the expression of themes. Two consecutive L-suffixes are also employed in non-perfective ditransitive constructions. Thus, unlike the majority of NENA dialects, C. Hertevin allows a double L-set construction in the 'imperfective' as well as the imperative, e.g. *hal-**le**-li* 'Give **them** to me' (*hal* 'give!' + *-lehen* 'them' + *li* 'me'). This is limited to a third person theme index and parallels the restriction to the third person agent immediately following the 'perfective' (*qṭil-*). (101) offers a schema for comparison[152].

[151] In theory, the 3fs. L-suffix *-la* could also be interpreted as an L-E-suffix composed of *-l-* and 3fs. *-a*. It is possible the analogy started here.

[152] In other contexts, the R is expressed indirectively by means of the preposition *(la)l-* 'to, for', e.g. *mat?en-nen-na **lal-ew*** 'I$_{M}$ loaded it **for him**' (Jastrow 1988:112.59).

(101) **C. Hertevin** (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988:63)

		[A]	[P]	
		[3]	[1,2,3]	
a.	*ḥze-*	***le***	*-li*	'**They** saw me.'
	see$_{PFV}$	A:3PL	P:1SG	
		[T]	[R]	
		[3]	[1,2,3]	
b.	*hal-*	***le***	*-li*	'Give **them** to me!'
	give:IMPV	T:3PL	R:1SG	

In light of this, it would seem that, at least for C. Hertevin, 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; a rather unusual combination.

The 'intrusive' /l/ partly also functions as a TAM-marker in the verbal system. If it were omitted, the construction would essentially be realis perfect *ḥz-en-naḥ* 'I$_M$ have seen you$_{FS}$' as opposed to the preterit *ḥze-l-en-naḥ* 'I$_M$ saw you$_{FS}$'. This appears to be extremely rare, however. The only example of this occurs in *ʔaya=sse qbíl-en-na* 'that, too, I$_M$ have accepted (lit. it$_F$)' (Jastrow 1988:58-59). This is in tension with the orientation of (di)transitive verbs elsewhere, e.g. *qṭil-en* 'I$_M$ have been killed' (Jastrow 1988:59), *ḥellek* 'It$_M$ has been eaten', *qṭellek* 'It$_M$ has been killed', *hiw-a* 'It$_F$ is given' (Jastrow 1988:152.432, 156.499). Speakers prefer the actualizing preverb *hole* to express the transitive realis perfect on the basis of the preterit instead: *hole ḥze-l-en-naḥ* 'I$_M$ have seen you$_{FS}$'.

4.4.3.4. *Ergativity and Split* A*-marking*

Speakers, therefore, use several constructions to express the perfective past. The three that include a reference to the P are sensitive person role effects and are reviewed in Table 34. Like the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction (see §4.4.2), the L-E-suffixes only occur together with object indexes. They cannot be used to encode the S or the A without an index of the P. Constructions like ***dmeḥ-**l-en*** '**I$_M$** slept' with subject coding instead of simply *dmeḥ-li* are impossible. Agent coding without a patient index is not possible either: ***ḥze-**l-en** (ḥá)-baḥta* '**I$_M$** saw a woman'. When there is no patient index, the S and A are treated alike by means of the L-suffixes (*dmeḥ-**li***, *ḥze-**li***). When the P is indexed, however, the whole construction changes depending on either the person of the P or the person of the A.

Table 34. *Three types of transitive 'perfective' constructions in C. Hertevin (SE Turkey)*

qtil-	**P**	**A**	
E-SET + L-SET	[−1,2;3MS]	[±1,2]	*gniw-**a**-le **robʔiyet ḥăkoma***
	-E	-L	'They have stolen (lit. **it$_F$**) **the king's bushel**'
qtil-	A	P	
L-E-SET + L-SET	[−1,2]	[±1,2]	*ḥzé-**l-én**-na baḥtoḥ*
	-L-E	-L	'**I$_M$** saw (lit. her) your$_{MS}$ wife.'
L-SET + L-SET	[−1,2]	[±1,2]	*ḥzé-**le**-la baḥtoḥ*
	-L	-L	'**He** saw (lit. her) your$_{MS}$ wife.'

Source: *Based on Jastrow (1988).*

Dialects like C. Hertevin, therefore, not only have a person-driven differential marking of the P (*gniw-**a**-li* 'I stole **it$_F$**' vs. *ḥzé-la-**li*** 'She saw **me**'), but also a person-driven differential marking of the A (*ḥzé-**le**-la* '**He** saw her' vs. *ḥzé-**l-én**-na* '**I$_M$** saw her'). The use of the E-set as patient indexes for third person forms (*gniw-**a**-le* 'I stole **it$_F$**') mirrors its incorporation as agent indexes in the L-E-set for first and second person forms (*ḥzé-**l-én**-na* '**I$_M$** saw her').

Consequently, although scholars widely recognize that the parallelism between the 'L-E-set' and the E-set in the 'imperfective' (e.g. Pennacchietti 1994), it seems to me that their usage in the preterit gives rise to an unmistakably ergative alignment pattern[153] for non-third person arguments. The following schema illustrates this.

(102) **Ergative pattern for non-third person reference in C. Hertevin** (SE Turkey; Jastrow 1988)

a. (intransitive)
*dméḥ-**leḥon*** '**You$_{PL}$** fell asleep.'
sleep$_{PFV}$-S:2PL

b. (transitive)
*ḥzé-l-áḥ-**leḥon*** 'We saw **you$_{PL}$**.'
see$_{PFV}$-A:1PL-P:2PL

[153] Khan (2017) recently came to a asimilar point of view. By contrast, the inverted 'perfective' construction is simply taken for granted as ergative in Barotto (2015:244-245). She considers the first/second person rather accusative and the third person ergative. Also, Coghill (2016:63, 65) subsumes Hertevin under dialects with accusative alignment.

The L-series groups the S and P. The L-E-series expresses the isolated A. Neutral alignment would be found in most other contexts where S, A and P are all marked by the L-set (*wéd-la-le* 'She made him')[154]. One should recall that the ergative alignment found for the preterit in Jewish NENA dialects is sensitive to the person reference of the P. In C. Hertevin, the ergative alignment in the preterit is sensitive to the person reference of the A.

4.5. Summary

The L-set functions as agent indexes in the expression of the perfective past. The marking of the P in the inverted 'perfective' construction is restricted in most NENA dialects. When the P outranks the A on the person scale, the E-set is more acceptable to speakers. This person role split is generally attributed to ergativity (e.g. Mengozzi 2005; Doron and Khan 2012) but we noted that such splits occur regardless of alignment type (see also the person split in the progressive in §5.3.1). The absence of a person role split does seem to correlate with accusative alignment, since it appears that only in dialects that group the S and A, person marking can be unrestricted. Coincident with this person constraint, the ergative alignment of the S with the P in South Eastern Trans-Zab Jewish varieties (roughly Iraqi and Iranian Kurdistan) is confined to contexts of third person reference. They mark the first and second person necessarily and third person alternatively (i.e. [±1,2]) through an independent set of person forms based on the dative preposition (*ʔəl*)*l-*, the *ʔəll*-series, resulting in tripartite person marking. Jewish and Christian dialects that pattern accusatively throughout are similar in this respect. The person split depends on the type of coding strategy. Transitive constructions are largely uniform but intransitive constructions diverge. Cliticization of the *ʔəll*-series in post-verbal position leads to a considerable degree of overlap up to virtually full neutralization with the L-suffixes in J. Saqqiz.

Alignment does seem to correlate more strongly with valency alternations. Several passive voice constructions are available to dialects. They are generally preferred over the agentless 'perfective' (such as the combination of the resultative participle and the 'copula' or the verb *hwy* 'be'). The agent is usually not overtly expressed in passives. Virtually all effective transitive verbs are labile in both the ergative Trans-Zab Jewish varieties and the dynamic-stative varieties of

[154] This is apart from the alternative pattern for 3fs. and 3pl. where the P may be marked by the E-set (*wid-**a**-le* 'He made **her**').

NENA. Semantic and morphological factors indicate that the agentless 'perfective' form, although interpretable as passive, is essentially anticausative and the patient-like argument is the S.

The agentless form is more complicated in 'accusative dialects' and allows for a kind of impersonal labile alternation. It shares properties with the passive (referential reducation of the A) and ergative type (referential continuity of the A), and seems to me to neatly fit in neither category. The possible addition of a dative agent to the agentless 'perfective' form (*qṭil-* 'kill$_{PFV}$') is found mostly in early textual witnesses and this may point to more ergative-like treatment of the A. The combined marking of the agent through the prepostion (*ʔəl*)*l-* and the L-suffixes does not occur. It is possible that the agent agreement is dropped to focalize the agent. The agent may be marked by (*ʔəl*)*l-* and this tends to add agent focus which is not characteristic of the passive. This might be an instance of optional ergative case-marking conditioned by agent focus that is peculiar to the 'perfective'. The person marking, however, is best characterized as tripartite.

Both person-restricted and unrestricted dialects can avail themselves of alternative strategies in person marking. As summarized below, independent prepositional Ps, the double L-set construction, the L-E-series and the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction seem to share one basic property, and that is to render the L-suffixes that follow agent coding as they do in the 'imperfective' (V-A-P) to become the regular expression of pronominal patients throughout the verbal system instead of the inverted 'perfective' (V-P-A) (cf. Hoberman 1989:111, Mengozzi 2002b:46). It seems that what differentiates these constructions is at what cost the L-suffixes become available in patient-marking in accordance with the 'imperfective'.

(103) **Alternative strategies to mark the P**

		A	P	
a.	*qṭil*	-L		INDEFINITE FULL NOMINAL P
b.	*qṭil-*	-L	*ʔəll-*	PREPOSTIONAL P (§4.1.2)
c.	*qṭil*	-L	-L	DOUBLING OF L-SET (§4.4.1)
d.	*qṭil*	-L-E-	-L	BLENDING OF L-SET AND E-SET (§4.4.3)
e.	*qam-qaṭəl*	-E	-L	THE *qam-qaṭəl*-CONSTRUCTION (§4.4.2)
	°*qaṭəl*	-E	-L	E-SET AND L-SET IN THE 'IMPERFECTIVE'

Several dialects systematically employ a special transitive *qam-qaṭəl*-construction in the preterit that can be characterized as ergative in grouping the S and P through L-suffixes, while the A is isolated through the E-suffixes. The L-suffixes mark the P attached to an 'imperfective' (°*qaṭəl*-) form inflected for the A that is marked for perfective past aspect through the prefix *qam*-. This construction is dedicated to the expression of a transitive perfective past clause involving obligatory verbal person marking of both A and P as an alternative to the (person-restricted) E-series as patient markers.

Dialects with neutral alignment include Jewish varieties in Iranian Azerbaijan such as J. Urmi and western peripherial Christian in SE Turkey dialects such as C. Hertevin and Bohtan. These varieties employ the L-set to mark the patient attached to the same L-set that marks the agent in a double L-set construction (*xzé-li-lax* 'I saw you$_{FS}$').

Unlike C. Bohtan and J. Urmi, C. Hertevin disallows neutral alignment for first and second person patients and subverts this by the in(ter)vention of a new set of agent markers, termed the 'L-E-suffixes'. The 'L-E-suffixes' blend together E-suffixes (akin to the 'imperfective' system) and a preceding /l/-element taken from the L-suffixes. The first and second person pattern ergatively in the preterit in C. Heretevin, as they are isolated through a special set of person forms.

Apart from independent person forms, the strategies to mark the P that are employed as an alternative to the E-set seem to have infiltrated the verbal inflection of the preterit in analogy to the 'imperfective'. Although they are analogical to the 'imperfective' (*qaṭəl*-), they are paradigmatically linked with constructions based on the 'perfective' (*qṭil*-) that do not involve patient indexing. The morphosyntactic pattern of the 'imperfective' appears to be favored in constructions that do involve patient indexes and incidentally triggers morphological adaptation ranging from partial to complete adaptation. It seems that what differentiates these constructions is at what cost the L-suffixes become available in patient-marking in accordance with the 'imperfective'. This is at the cost of role discrimination in the double L-set construction (*xzé-li-la* 'I saw her') because all roles are treated the same way, at the cost of the marking of the A through the L-series being replaced by the blended L-E-suffixes (*ḥzé-l-én-na* 'I saw her'), and at the cost of the inflectional base as a whole in the *qam-qaṭəl*-construction (*qam-xaz-ən-nax* 'I$_M$ saw her'). At the same time, what differentiates neutral alignment from the L-E-series and *qam-qaṭəl*-construction seems to be the avoidance of doubling the L-set or at least approximating the 'imperfective' more closely to maintain role discrimination between the A and P. Dialects, thus, differ to what extent they tolerate ambiguity.