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## Linguistic Typology: An Iranian Perspective\*

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### Abstract

The Iranian languages spoken in Iran reveal a very intriguing typological peculiarity. They all strongly benefit from agreement as a typological parameter. In this paper, I will begin with Comrie (1978) in which he has proposed the five possible language types based on case-marking and verb-agreement and will address the

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\* The data from the varieties of Kurdish spoken in Iran as well as Talyshi and Davani are taken from an extensive corpus which I have collected through a questionnaire that I have designed for my research on Modern Iranian languages and dialects. The audio-recorded materials collected this way, supplemented with the frequent follow up interviews and consultations with the same informants, have been used in my analysis of the data. I am grateful to my informants for their valuable information they shared with me and made this research possible. The data from other sources are directly quoted without any change in the transcriptions used by the authors.

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status of several varieties of Kurdish, as well as a dialect of Talyshi and Davani with respect to agreement. I will show that type (d), i.e., the Tripartite system in Comrie's terminology where S, A, and P each has a distinct marking, and type (e), for which he has not proposed any name but is a type in which A and P are identically marked, are highly productive and stable systems in the mentioned Iranian languages. The observations reported have implications for the notion of type, language change, and linguistic variation.

Keywords: agreement system, Kurdish, Talyshi, Davani, clitic

## 1. Introduction

The notion of 'type' has always been a basic preoccupation of the typologists. The typologists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries practiced 'the holistic typology,' equally called 'the *individualizing* approach' to typological classification by Greenberg (1974), and typologized languages on the basis of individual morphological parameters. The typologists of the twentieth century and the present time have practiced 'the partial typology,' equally called by Greenberg (ibid.) 'the *generalizing* approach' to typological classification, as they aim at typologizing languages based on specific structural strategies. In this paper, I intend to shed more light on the notion of type by discussing the status of the Iranian languages with respect to agreement as a structural strategy. This discussion has implications for language change and variations as well as linguistic theory.

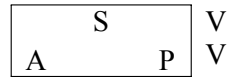
## 2. Agreement

Bernard Comrie in his seminal article entitled "Ergativity"

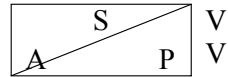
(1978) provides Figure 1 below to illustrate the five possible language types based on case-marking systems (p. 332):

Figure 1. Case-Marking Systems for S, A, and P<sup>1</sup>

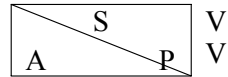
(a) Neutral



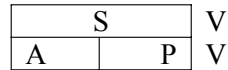
(b) Nominative-Accusative



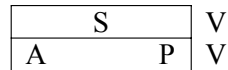
(c) Ergative-Absolute



(d) Tripartite



(e)



Comrie provides examples for types (a-c). As for type (d), he mentions that “Type (d), with three different morphological markers, is relatively *rare* across the languages of the world. Some

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<sup>1</sup> The symbols S, A, and P (also called O) stand for the subject of the intransitive verbs, the Subject/Agent of the transitive verbs, and the Patient/Object, respectively. Furthermore, there are a number of other abbreviations used in this paper which are listed below:

- |          |                        |
|----------|------------------------|
| CLC      | clitic                 |
| p/pl./PL | plural                 |
| PST      | past                   |
| s/sg.    | singular               |
| SAP      | Speech Act Participant |

languages have this system of case-marking for a *limited* number of noun phrases: in the Australian language Dyirbal, for instance, the interrogative pronoun ‘who?’ has distinct forms for S (*wan<sup>y</sup>a*), A (*wan<sup>y</sup>d<sup>y</sup>u*), and P (*wan<sup>y</sup>una*) (Dixon 1972: 53), but this is not true of noun phrases in general . . . Motu, an Austronesian language of New Guinea, might appear to be a type (d) language from the data cited by Capell (1969: 36, 43, 54), with the postposition *na* for S, *ese* for A, and *no overt* marker for P . . . Motu, however, is *not a pure* type (d) language, since the A postposition *ese* is in fact optional, and the conditions on the occurrence of the S postposition *na* are more complex (and vary from dialect to dialect), so that some instances of S also lack any overt marker.” (p. 333-334). Comrie, then, refers to type (e) as a “logical possibility” and claims that “Type (e), with the same marker for both A and P and a different marker for S, seems *not to occur* as an *attested* case-marking system . . .” (p. 334). It is worth mentioning that Comrie has not given any name to type (e).

In another section of his article, Comrie adds a new dimension to the notion of ‘type’ which is my concern in this paper. He announces that “Just as case-marking can operate in accordance with the five logically possible systems of Figure 1 (though, as already noted, (e) seems not to occur in practice), so too can verb-agreement.” (p. 338). Comrie seems to believe that all the five logically possible types are actually attested. Most interesting to us is what he says about type (e). In his words

“Even type (3) [actually (e)] is occasionally found with verb-agreement, as in the Iranian dialect Dānesfāni (Yar-Shater 1969: 204), where the past participle agrees with S, but with no constituent of a transitive sentence:

- (1) Hasan                      buma.  
       Hasan-(Masc.)      came-Masc.  
       ‘Hasan came.’

- (2) Zeynaba                      bumia.  
 Zeynaba-(Fem.)              came-Fem.  
 ‘Zeynaba came.’
- (3) Hasan                      /Zeynaba                      šet-  
 Hasan-(Masc.)              /Zeynaba-(Fem.)              milk-(Masc.)  
 eš                                  uxa.  
 -Aux.-3sg.A                  drank  
 ‘Hasan/Zeynaba drank the milk.’
- (4) Hasan                      /Zeynaba                      āwa-  
 Hasan-(Masc.)              /Zeynaba-(Fem.)              water-(Fem.)  
 š                                      uxa.  
 Aux.-3sg.A                  drank  
 ‘Hasan/Zeynaba drank the water.’

In all such instances known to me, however, the verb agrees with S, and shows no agreement whatsoever with either A or P; moreover, the examples with which I am familiar are all in languages where the ergative system is breaking down, being replaced by a nominative-accusative or neutral system. It seems likely that at an intermediate stage in the development from ergative-absolute to nominative-accusative, a situation can be reached where the conflict between moribund ergative-absolute morphology and nascent nominative-accusative morphology is resolved by simply omitting all morphological markers, giving rise to the type illustrated above from Dānesfāni: in the intransitive sentence there is no conflict, and the participle agrees with S; in the transitive construction, there is conflict as to whether the participle should agree with A or with P. The compromise reached is for it to agree with neither. Thus we expect type (e) to arise only as a result of conflict of this kind.” (p. 341-342).

There are a couple of points that I like to raise in regard to Comrie's examples (3) and (4). First, the mentioned examples *do show* 'agreement,' also called 'cross-referencing' and 'indexation,' with the A. The agreement/cross-referencing/indexation marker in (3) and (4) is realized as an enclitic and the direct objects 'milk' and 'water' host the enclitic. My assumption that cross-referencing/indexation enclitics are actually 'agreement' markers is compatible with the following proposal which I quote from Anderson (2005: 239-240): "I propose to regard clitic pronominals as in fact a form of agreement, differing from verbal agreement only in whether the functional content is realized as the morphology of a phrase or a word. This is not a novel proposal . . . The overt manifestation of agreement material by pronominal special clitics can appear in various places, as we have already seen. Clitics may appear with reference to the beginning of the clause—in second position . . ."

With this assumption, then I will be prepared to raise my second point. I suggest that sentences (1)-(4) are *not* examples of type (e) in Figure 1. They represent type (d), the tripartite type: S is encoded by agreement suffixes on the verb. A is encoded through pronominal enclitics which are hosted by the direct object, and the verb does not agree with the direct object. So the P is left without agreement.

### 3. Agreement in the Iranian Languages

The Iranian languages spoken in Iran show a very intriguing peculiarity. They all contain a rich agreement system. So, I propose that agreement should be viewed as a strong typological parameter in our characterization of these languages. The manifestation of the mentioned parameter in the Iranian languages as well as the range of *variations* that these languages show in this parameter will be relied on to shed more light on the notion of

type in *general* and of type in the Iranian languages in *particular*.

### 3.1. Kurdish

I begin this discussion with a review of this parameter in Sorani Kurdish, equally called the Central group of Kurdish, which embraces the varieties of this language spoken in the Kurdistan Province in Iran and Suleimaniyeh area in Iraq. According to McCarus (2009) “Linguistically, Kurdish as a whole occupies an intermediate position between North-Western and South-Western Iranian dialects.” (p. 587).

McCarus (ibid.) in a chapter on Kurdish which is devoted to “Sulaimani Kurdish” (p. 589) reports an interesting observation without providing any explanation for that. In a section entitled “Verb-Only Phrases” he notes:

“There are specific rules for sequencing past agent suffixes and patient endings after simple verb forms. The basic rule requires that the agent suffixes be attached directly to the verb form, followed by the personal ending marking the patient: VB + agent suffix + patient ending . . .” (p. 616)

Following a table called “PRETERITE AGENT AND PATIENT” in which he has listed what he calls “Agent/Enclitic” and “Patient/Ending” he presents representative examples for the above mentioned quotation (p. 617). His examples are directly quoted below. Next to each example I have repeated the example with a morphemic segmentation in which clitics/CLC are separated by an equal sign.

- (5)  $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}-m-\bar{i}t$ ; [ $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}=m-\bar{i}t$ ]  
 ‘I saw you-2s’
- (6)  $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}-t-im$ ; [ $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}=t-im$ ]  
 ‘you-2s saw me’
- (7)  $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}-m\bar{a}n-in$ ; [ $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}=m\bar{a}n-in$ ]  
 ‘we saw you-2p’
- (8)  $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}-t\bar{a}n-\bar{i}n$ ; [ $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}=t\bar{a}n-\bar{i}n$ ]  
 ‘you-2p saw us’
- (9)  $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}-t\bar{a}n-in$ ; [ $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}=t\bar{a}n-in$ ]  
 ‘you-2p saw them’
- (10)  $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}-y\bar{a}n-in$ ; [ $b\bar{i}n\bar{i}=y\bar{a}n-in$ ]  
 ‘they saw you-2p’

There are two points about these examples and Sulaimani Kurdish in general which deserve mentioning: (i) The Agent enclitic and the Patient suffix for the first person singular are homophones ( $im \sim m$ ) (see examples (5) and (6)). (ii) The second and third person plural patient suffixes are syncretized as *-in* (see examples (9) and (10)).

McCarus adds the following remark to his aforementioned rule about the order of the Agent enclitic with respect to the Patient suffixes.

“However, there are two exceptions, to this basic rule: (i) the 3s agent suffix  $-\bar{i}$  [my notation  $=\bar{i}$ ] is always second; (ii) the 1s-*im* [my notations  $=im \sim =m$ ], whether agent suffix or patient ending, precedes any *plural* subject or object:



3s agent second:

- (11) bīnī-m-ī; [bīnī-m=ī]  
 ‘he saw me’
- (12) bīnī-t-ī; [bīnī-t=ī]  
 ‘he saw you-2s (-ī(t))’
- (13) bīnī-n-ī; [bīnī-n=ī]  
 ‘he saw us/you-2p/them’  
 (bīnī-n < bīnī-īn, -in, -in)

1s before plural patient and agent:

- (14) bīnī-m-in; [bīnī=m-in]  
 ‘I saw you-2p’
- (15) bīnī-m-in; [bīnī=m-in]  
 ‘I saw them’
- (16) bīnī-m-tān; [bīnī-m=tān]  
 ‘you-2p saw me’
- (17) bīnī-m-yān; [bīnī-m=yān]  
 ‘they saw me’

The rule of 1s + plural agents may not apply to all varieties of Kurdish, as other varieties have different rules. In all other combinations, the agent comes before patient.”

It is interesting to note that McCarus (1958) has also reported the mentioned observation discussing Kurdish. He says “In the preterite, present perfect, and past perfect tenses, the subject and

object suffixes are both suffixed.” (p. 68). The examples he provides from the preterite tense are exactly the ones we witnessed in (5)-(17) above. The examples he presents for the present perfect and the past perfect tenses are directly quoted in (18)-(25) below (p. 69):

Present Perfect:

- (18) xwardúmə [xward-ú=m-ə]  
ate-participle-1sg.CLC-3sg.  
‘I have eaten [it]’
- (19) xwardúmin [xward-ú=m-in]  
ate-participle-1sg.CLC-2pl./3pl.  
‘I have eaten you (pl.)/them’
- (20) xwardútanə [xward-ú=tan-ə]  
ate-participle-2pl.CLC-3sg.  
‘you (pl.) have eaten [it]’
- (21) xwardútanin [xward-ú=tan-in]  
ate-participle-2pl.CLC-1pl.  
‘you (pl.) have eaten us’

Past Perfect:

- (22) xwárdibum [xwárd-ibu=m]  
ate-perfect-1sg.CLC  
‘I had eaten’
- (23) xwárdibumi [xwárd-ibu-m=i]  
ate-perfect-1sg.-3sg.CLC  
‘he had eaten me’

(24) xwárdibumit [xwárd-ibu=m-it]  
 ate-perfect-1sg.CLC-2sg.  
 ‘I had eaten you (sg.)’

(25) xwárdibutanin [xwárd-ibu=tan-in]  
 ate-perfect-2pl.CLC-1pl.  
 ‘you (pl.) had eaten us’

MacKenzie (1961) has also reported this peculiarity in Suleimaniyeh Kurdish.

“When the verbal ending is other than 3rd sg., it normally *follows* the Agential suffix. A general exception to this is the 3rd sg. Agential suffix *-ī* [i.e., Agent enclitics] which always follows the verbal ending. Particular exceptions are noted below.” (p. 112, section 228) [my emphasis]

MacKenzie, then, presents a table in which examples that support the mentioned quotation can be found (p. 113). The examples are from the verbs *dīn* ‘see’ and *nārdin* ‘send.’ In examples (26)-(30) below, I have quoted examples which show the past tense conjugation of the verb *dīn*. Morphemic segmentation is added by me. In examples (26)-(28) the Agent enclitics occur *before* the patient agreement suffixes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> However, MacKenzie’s hesitation in referring to P, or in his terminology Direct Affectee, verbal suffixes as agreement is voiced in the following statement:

“A Direct Affectee when present, whether expressed by a nominal form or not, is always manifested in a verbal ending of the appropriate tense . . . It is, however, an over-simplification to state that the verb ‘agrees’ with such a Direct Affectee, as is demonstrated by the frequent intrusion of the Agential suffix between verbal stem and personal ending . . .” (1961: 110)

(26)  $d\bar{i}=m-\bar{i}t$   
'I saw thee'

(27)  $d\bar{i}=m-in$   
'I saw you/them'

(28)  $d\bar{i}=t\bar{a}n-\bar{i}n$   
'you saw us'

However, in examples (29) and (30), the Agent enclitics occur *after* the patient agreement suffixes.

(29)  $d\bar{i}-t=\bar{i}$   
'He saw thee'

(30)  $d\bar{i}-n=\bar{i}$   
'He saw you/them'

Another interesting dimension is added to this discussion by MacKenzie. He noticed that "The 3 pl. Agential suffix  $-y\bar{a}n$  [i.e.,  $=y\bar{a}n$ ] may either precede or follow the verbal ending, more commonly the former." (1961: 114, section 5). Examples (31)-(34), which I quote from the aforementioned table (ibid.: 113) illustrate this alteration.

(31)  $d\bar{i}=y\bar{a}n-im \sim d\bar{i}-m=y\bar{a}n$   
'they saw me'

(32)  $d\bar{i}=y\bar{a}n-\bar{i}(t) \sim d\bar{i}-t=y\bar{a}n$   
'they saw thee'

(33)  $d\bar{i}=y\bar{a}n-\bar{i}n \sim d\bar{i}-n=y\bar{a}n$   
'they saw us'

- (34)  $d\bar{i}=y\bar{a}n-in \sim d\bar{i}-n=y\bar{a}n$   
 ‘they saw you/them’

Haig (2008) has also discussed some of the examples which MacKenzie has brought to our attention in regard to the past transitive verbs in “Suleimani” Kurdish (p. 288). This is what he says about the function of the Agent clitics:

“. . . the A-past clitic in fact exhibits the features of an agreement marker, i.e., it *obligatorily* cross-references a different constituent, and is prosodically dependent rather than independent. As Corbett (2003) points out, the distinction between agreement markers and pronouns is often a gradual one; the A-past clitics of Suleimani are a case in point. Below I will point out further features of the A-past clitics which bring them closer to a canonical form of agreement.” (p. 288-289) [my emphasis]

In discussing the construction whose sole constituent is the past transitive verb and both the Agent clitic and the Patient/Object agreement suffix are encoded in the verb, Haig states the following:

“On the assumption that the verbal agreement suffix is a suffix, and the A-past marker is a clitic, one could reasonably expect to find that the clitic would attach outside the suffix. Unfortunately, this is not the case. It is more often the supposedly clitic—A past marker which attaches directly to the verb stem, while the O-past agreement suffix follows it . . .” (p. 291)

The example which he quotes from Fattah (1997: 220) is given in (35).

- (35) sand=im-in  
take-PST=1s:CLC-3PL  
'I took them'

At this stage Haig refers to MacKenzie (1961) and the relevant pages where I quoted examples (26)-(34) from and announces that:

“It turns out that the order of argument cross-referencing markers is not always Verb-A-O, as in (329) [i.e., example (35) above]. Instead, it interacts with the *person* of the arguments. The relevant person categories are SAP (Speech Act Participants) vs. non-SAP, whereby non-SAP is further divided into singular and plural.” (p. 292) [my emphasis]

I would consider this quotation as Haig’s explanation about the *ordering* of the argument cross-referencing on the verb in Suleimani Kurdish. Haig’s final step in this discussion is that he attempts to put the behavior of this variety of Kurdish in the perspective of the known facts in the typological literature. His remarks are cited below:

“Thus we find in Suleimani a pocket of what is, according to Nichols (1992), a cross-linguistically rare alignment type. The agreement facts of Suleimani of course reflect a well-known typological generalization, noted for example by Croft (2001: 318-319): The typologically least marked constellation of A and O is when A is a SAP and O is a non-SAP, in Croft’s notation SAP → non-SAP (SAP acts on non-SAP). When these conditions are met in Suleimani, the A-past clitic appears to act as a suffix rather than a clitic.” (p. 293)

Haig’s discussion of the “Suleimani Morphosyntax” begins with

the examples (36)-(39) below which “were supplied by Sorani native speakers<sup>3</sup>” (p. 278). The first two examples contain intransitive past verbs. As it is expected, in these examples, the S is cross-referenced with agreement suffixes.

(36) min hāt-im                      bō erā  
       1s    come:PST-1s            to    here  
       ‘I came here’ (Haig 2008: 279, ex. (293))

(37) ewā hāt-in                      bō erā  
       2PL come:PST-2PL        to    here  
       ‘you (PL) came here’ (ibid., ex. (294))

However, in examples (38) and (39) whose verbs are transitive past, the As are cross-referenced by the Agent clitics and the direct objects are the hosts for them. The P arguments themselves are *not* cross-referenced as the verb has appeared in its past stem form.

(38) min    ewā=m                      bīnī  
       1s        2PL=1s:CLC            see:PST  
       ‘I saw you (PL)’ (ibid., ex. (295))

(39) ewā    min=tān                      bīnī  
       2PL    1s=2PL:CLC            see:PST  
       ‘you (PL) saw me’ (ibid., ex. (296))

If we take examples (36)-(39) into consideration, then undoubtedly the following position on Suleimani is quite understandable:

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<sup>3</sup> In a footnote Haig informs the reader on his informants: “The speakers who kindly supplied the information are a married couple, in their late 30’s, who were born in Suleimanye and spent most of their lives there. They have been living in Germany for the last six years.” (p. 278, n. 1)

“Personally I prefer to analyze agreement in past tenses as tripartite: S, A, and O each determines a distinct, though partially overlapping, type of agreement.” (p. 302)

Haig’s position is reiterated in the “Summary of the Central Group” section which I quote below:

“Just how the Past Transitive construction should be classified in terms of the accepted taxonomies of alignment systems *remains an open question*. My tentative conclusion is that case marking is neutral, while agreement is tripartite.” (p. 305) [my emphasis]

I believe that a detailed analysis of the examples presented in McCarus (1958) clearly reveals the actual type of Suleimaniyeh Kurdish. Examples (40) and (41) contain intransitive verbs. Examples (42)-(44) have transitive verbs formed with present stems. In all of them S and A are encoded on the verb by agreement suffixes. Morphemic segmentation and glosses are provided by me.

- (40) min-iš ye-m  
I-too come-1sg.  
‘I’ll come too’ (McCarus 1958: 97, part 5.231, ex. (2))
- (41) hát-im  
Came-1sg.  
‘I came’ (ibid.: 59)
- (42) kurdi’ ?ə-zán-i(t)  
Kurdish Imperfect-know-2sg.  
‘Do you know Kurdish?’ (ibid.: 58)



- (43) ?ə-xo'-n  
 Imperfect-eat-3pl.  
 'they eat' (McCarus 1958: 58)
- (44) də'st-it      mác    ?ə-kə-m  
 hand-your    kiss    Imperfect-do-1sg.  
 'I kiss your hand' (ibid.: 97, part 5.231, ex. (3))

In examples (45)-(50), both A and P are encoded in the verb. The A appears as a verbal suffix and the P is realized as an oblique enclitic whose host is the imperfect aspect/Indicative mood prefix ?ə-. The examples are cited from McCarus (ibid.: 68). I have provided the segmentation and glosses.

- (45) ?ə=m-nás-e  
 Imperfect-1sg.CLC-know-3sg.  
 'he knows me'
- (46) ?ə=t-nás-e  
 Imperfect-2sg.CLC-know-3sg.  
 'he knows you'
- (47) ?ə=y-nás-e  
 Imperfect-3sg.CLC-know-3sg.  
 'he knows him'
- (48) ?ə=man-nás-e  
 Imperfect-1pl.CLC-know-3sg.  
 'he knows us'
- (49) ?ə=tan-nás-e  
 Imperfect-2pl.CLC-know-3sg.  
 'he knows you'

- (50) ʔə=yan-nás-e  
 Imperfect-3pl.CLC-know-3sg.  
 'he knows them'

These examples clearly reflect a Nominative-Accusative agreement system. Examples (42)-(44) whose objects are third singular inanimate (whether overt, i.e., (42) and (44), or covert i.e., (43)) also represent the same system. The only difference is that the P is *not* cross-referenced. It may be noted that in examples (45)-(50) an affix boundary separates the oblique clitic from the stem.

Now we can turn to the transitive verbs which are formed from the past stem. Sentences (51)-(53) have an overt P. In these sentences, the P hosts the A-clitics and the P itself is *not* cross-referenced. Again segmentation and glosses are provided by me.

- (51) márek=im                      kušt  
 snake-1sg.CLC                    killed  
 'I killed a snake' (McCarus 1958: 104)

- (52) min to=m                      bin-i'  
 I    you-1sg.CLC                  see-past  
 'I saw you' (ibid.)

- (53) du' helkə'=m                  xwárd  
 two egg-1sg.CLC                  ate  
 'I ate two eggs' (ibid.)

These sentences exemplify an oblique A-cross-referencing and *no* cross-referencing for P. Considering the fact that the S in intransitives with the past stem (e.g., example (41)) is cross-referenced with verbal suffixes, it is justified to call the agreement system represented by this set a Tripartite system: The S being nominative, the A being oblique, and the P showing *no*

cross-referencing.

However, there are many examples of transitive verbs formed with the past stems which encode the covert P in the verb. Examples (54)-(58) illustrate this possibility. In (54) the preposition hosts the A-clitic and the past stem of the verb encodes the suffix which cross-references the P. This suffix is the one which cross-references the S (e.g., (40) and (41)) as well as the A of the transitive verbs formed with the present stems (e.g., (44)). In (55)-(58), the imperfect aspect prefix hosts the A-clitics and the verb stem carries the suffixes which encode the P.

(54) pe=t                      wút-im  
to-2sg.CLC            told-1sg.  
‘you told me’ (McCarus 1958: 106)

(55) ?ə=y-kúšt-it  
Imperfect-3sg.CLC-killed-2sg.  
‘he was killing you’ (ibid.: 68)

(56) ?ə=y-kúšt-in  
Imperfect-3sg.CLC-killed-1pl.  
‘he was killing us’ (ibid.: 68)

(57) ?ə=man-kúšt-it  
Imperfect-1pl.CLC-killed-2sg.  
‘we were killing you (sg.)’ (ibid.: 68)

(58) ?ə=tan-kúšt-in  
Imperfect-2pl.CLC-killed-3pl.  
‘you (pl.) were killing them’ (ibid.: 68)

It should be noted that in examples (55)-(58), the A-clitic is separated from the stem by an affix boundary. Most importantly, the agreement markers realized in (54)-(58) are Oblique clitics for

the A and the Direct suffix for the P. Thus, these examples illustrate an Ergative-Absolute agreement system.

MacKenzie's (1961) meticulous survey of the Kurdish dialects of "Iraqi Kurdistan" (p. xvii) also substantiates my interpretation of the exact nature of the Suleimaniyeh Type based on the agreement parameter. But before I cite the relevant examples, I quote MacKenzie's stance on the case in the dialect under study:

"In Sul . . . there are no inflective morphemes, and hence no distinction of *grammatical* gender or case." (p. 56)

As for agreement, sentences, (59) and (60) contain intransitive verbs formed with the present and past stems respectively. Sentence (61) is a transitive verb formed with the present stem. In all of them and likewise similar examples the S and A are always expressed in the personal ending of the verb. In these examples, I have followed MacKenzie's convention and have put the optional pronoun or noun subjects in the brackets. Morphemic segmentations and glosses are provided by me.

(59) [min] a-rō-m  
 I Indicative-go-1sg.  
 'I go' (MacKenzie 1961: 106)

(60) [min] rōīšt-im  
 I went-1sg.  
 'I went' (ibid.: 107)

(61) [pyāw-aka] sag-aka a-kuž-ē  
 man-definite dog-definite Indicative-kill-3sg.  
 '[the man] kills the dog' (ibid.: 106)

Examples (62)-(67) also illustrate transitive verbs formed with the present stem. In these examples, the verb is the only (major)

constituent of the sentence and hence it encodes both the A and the P. The former is expressed as agreement suffixes and the latter as the oblique enclitics which is hosted by the Imperfect/Indicative prefix.

- (62) a-y-ē ħim [a=y-ē ħ-im]  
 Imperfect-3sg.CLC-leave-1sg.  
 ‘I shall leave it’ (MacKenzie 1961: 88)
- (63) amdōzītawa [a=m-dōz-īt-awa]  
 Imperfect-1sg.CLC-find-2sg.-postverb  
 ‘thou wilt find me’ (ibid.: 91)
- (64) a-y-kužē [a=y-kuž-ē]  
 Imperfect-3sg.CLC-kill-3sg.  
 ‘he kills it’ (ibid.: 107)
- (65) a-m-dāt-ē [a=m-dāt-ē]  
 Imperfect-1sg.CLC-give-3sg.  
 ‘he gives me to (him)’ (ibid.: 107)
- (66) amkužē [a=m-kuž-ē]  
 Imperfect-1sg.CLC-kill-3sg.  
 ‘she will kill me’ (ibid.: 134)
- (67) ba das aygirīn [ba das a=y-gir-īn]  
 with hand Imperfect-3sg.CLC-take-1pl.  
 ‘we shall take it by hand’ (ibid.: 134)

Examples (59)-(67) clearly manifest a Nominative-Accusative agreement system. In these examples, the S and A are identically expressed as agreement suffixes in the verb (vide all the mentioned examples) and the P if overtly present in the sentence is not cross-referenced (e.g., example (61)) or obligatorily

cross-referenced with the oblique enclitic if the verb is the only (major) constituent of the sentence (e.g., examples (62)-(67)).

Now we turn to the transitive verbs formed with the past stems. MacKenzie has called constructions containing these verbs Agential construction. In this construction the A is obligatorily cross-referenced with oblique enclitics. The P if overtly expressed is not cross-referenced. In examples (68) and (69), the P, or “Direct Affectee” as MacKenzie has named it hosts the oblique enclitic which cross-references the A, however, the P which are plural nouns are not cross-referenced. Segmentations and glosses are provided by me.

- (68) *mināḷ-ak-ān=ī*                      *nwān*  
 child-definite-pl.-3sg.CLC    put to bed  
 ‘she put the children to bed’ (MacKenzie 1961: 131)

- (69) *sag-ak-ān=ī*                      *kušt*  
 dog-definite-pl.-3sg.CLC    killed  
 ‘he killed the dogs’ (ibid.: 131)

Examples (70)-(72) substantiate the above mentioned observation. In these examples the P is an independent pronoun. As MacKenzie has pointed out “when an independent personal pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person appears as the Direct Affectee of the Agential construction . . . then the verb does not agree with it in person but appears in the 3rd person singular . . .” (ibid.: 75).

- (70) *min=it*                      *dī-w-a*  
 I-2sg.CLC    saw-participle-is  
 ‘thou hast seen me’ (ibid.: 75)

- (71) *ēma=t*                      *dī-w-a*  
 we-2sg.CLC    saw-participle-is  
 ‘thou hast seen us’ (ibid.: 75)

- (72) *tō=yān*                      *nārd-uw-a*  
 you (sg.)=3pl.CLC      sent-participle-is  
 ‘they have sent thee’ (MacKenzie 1961: 75)

If we take into consideration example (60) which contains an intransitive verb whose S is expressed in the verb by an agreement suffix on the one hand and examples (68)-(72) which contain transitive verbs formed with the past stem whose As are cross-referenced by oblique enclitics and their Ps are not cross-referenced on the other hand, then we can conclude that this set represents a Tripartite agreement system.

However, examples (73)-(82) which also contain transitive verbs formed from the past stem and As and Ps are not overtly present but are cross-referenced by the oblique enclitics and the verbal agreement suffixes respectively, manifest an Ergative-Absolutive agreement system. Morphemic segmentation and glosses are added by me.

- (73) *dī-w=it-im*  
 saw-participle-2sg.CLC-1sg.  
 ‘thou hast seen me’ (ibid.)
- (74) *dī-w=it-īn*  
 saw-participle-2sg.CLC-1pl.  
 ‘thou hast seen us’ (ibid.)
- (75) *bō*    *čī*    *šet=tān*    *kird-im*  
 for    what    mad-2pl.CLC    did-1sg.  
 ‘Why did you make me (out to be) mad?’ (ibid.: 109)
- (76) *rā=y*                      *kešā-n*  
 preverb-3sg.CLC    dragged-3pl.  
 ‘he dragged them’ (ibid.: 109)

- (77)  $\bar{l}\bar{e}-\bar{m}\bar{a}n=\bar{i}$                                    $sand-in$   
 from-1pl.CLC-3sg.CLC    took-3pl.  
 ‘he took them from us’ (MacKenzie 1961: 114)
- (78)  $sand-in=\bar{i}$      $\bar{l}\bar{e}-\bar{m}\bar{a}n$   
 took-3pl.-3sg.CLC      from-1pl.CLC  
 ‘he took them from us’ (ibid.: 114)
- (79)  $aw-\bar{a}n=\bar{i}$                                    $\bar{l}\bar{e}$        $sand-\bar{i}n$   
 he-pl.-3sg.CLC    from    took-1pl.  
 ‘he took them from us’ (ibid.: 115)
- (80)  $\bar{l}\bar{e}=y$      $sand-in-\bar{i}n$   
 from-3sg.CLC    took-3pl.-1pl.  
 ‘he took them from us’ (ibid.: 115)
- (81)  $p\bar{e}-\bar{m}\bar{a}n=\bar{i}$                                    $d\bar{a}-n$   
 to-1pl.CLC-3sg.CLC    gave-3pl.  
 ‘he gave them to us’ (ibid.: 114)
- (82)  $d\bar{a}-n=\bar{i}$      $p\bar{e}-\bar{m}\bar{a}n$   
 gave-3pl.-3sg.CLC      to-1pl.CLC  
 ‘he gave them to us’ (ibid.: 114)

In examples (70)-(72) and (79) we notice that the P is the host for the A enclitics. In (75) the nonverbal constituent of the compound verb is the host for the enclitic. In (76) the preverb is the host. In (77) and (81) the prepositional phrase is the host. And in (80) the preposition itself serves as the host for the A enclitic. These observations are supplemented by examples (83)-(86) in which the negative prefix, the imperfect prefix, the past tense stem, and the past participle stem are the host for the A enclitics respectively. I have added the segmentation and the glosses.



- (83) na=m-a-kird  
 Neg.-1sg.CLC-Imperfect-did  
 ‘I used not to do (so)’ (MacKenzie 1961: 79)
- (84) a=m-kird  
 Imperfect-1sg.CLC-did  
 ‘I used to do (so)’ (ibid.)
- (85) kird=im  
 did-1sg.CLC  
 ‘I did (so)’ (ibid.)
- (86) kird-uw=m-a  
 did-participle-1sg.CLC-is  
 ‘I have done (so)’ (ibid.)

Finally, sentence (87) in which the A is overtly expressed and the past stem is the enclitic host for the A substantiates the fact that Kurdish does not obey the Wackernagel’s Law.

- (87) xalq-aka            wut=yān  
 people-definite said-3pl.CLC  
 ‘the people said’ (ibid.: 50)

Now, I return to examples (5)-(17) quoted from McCarus (2009), examples (18)-(25) quoted from McCarus (1958), and examples (26)-(34) quoted from MacKenzie (1961), namely the examples which I started this paper with, and propose that they along with examples (68)-(87) follow one general pattern for the A enclitic placement in Suleymanieh Kurdish: The first constituent of the verb phrase serves as the clitic host for the A. I suggest that examples (5)-(34) as well as examples (73), (74), (78), and (82) where the simple past tense verb is the only available constituent of the sentence or is the only constituent which

encodes both A and P, the past tense stem itself is the host for the A enclitic. Thus, I analyze examples such as (11)-(13), (16), (17), (23), (29), (30), (78), and (82) where the A enclitic follows the P agreement suffix as instances which signal a drift towards the stabilization of the past stem plus the P agreement suffix as a base which serves as a host for the A enclitics. The variations which we observe in (31)-(34), which permit the occurrence of the third person plural A enclitic after the past stem itself or the past stem plus the P agreement suffix, can be interpreted as transitional stages in the mentioned drift. Examples (14)-(17) which show that the first person singular whether A enclitic or the P suffix precedes any plural subject or object, are aptly explained by Haig's observation that the Speech Act Participants (SAP) act on, i.e., precede the non-SAP. Furthermore, it should be noted that the order of argument cross-referencing markers Verb-A-O in which the enclitic precedes the agreement suffix is by no means an isolated and unique phenomenon. As example (83) shows, here the A enclitic occurs in between two prefixes (i.e., Negative and Imperfect prefixes). In example (84), this enclitic occurs after the Imperfect prefix and before the past stem.

Now, I turn to another Sorani/Central Kurdish variety as it is spoken in Sanandaj in the Kurdistan Province in Iran. My informants' response to examples (5)-(17) are presented and then discussed below. In each instance, I read the meaning given for each example and asked them in separate sessions to express it in the Sanandaj dialect. Their responses to items (5)-(10) are given in (88)-(93).

- (88) di'=t=əm  
 saw-2sg.CLC-1sg.CLC  
 'I saw you (sg.)'

- (89) di'=m=o  
 saw-1sg.CLC-2sg.CLC  
 'you (sg.) saw me'
- (90) di'=tan=man  
 saw-2pl.CLC-1pl.CLC  
 'we saw you (pl.)'
- (91) di'=man=tan  
 saw-1pl.CLC-2pl.CLC  
 'you (pl.) saw us'
- (92) di'=yan=tan  
 saw-3pl.CLC-2pl.CLC  
 'you (pl.) saw them'
- (93) di'=tan=yan  
 saw-2pl.CLC-3pl.CLC  
 'they saw you (pl.)'

In these examples the transitive past stem is followed by the P cross-referencing enclitic and the A cross-referencing enclitic, respectively. Hence the mentioned examples illustrate an Oblique-Oblique agreement system. Examples (94)-(96) correspond to examples (11)-(13) in which the third person singular A enclitic always appears after the agreement suffix which cross-references the P. Although in Sanandaji variety too the A enclitic is final but the P cross-referencing marker is also an enclitic. Thus, examples (94)-(96) also manifest an Oblique-Oblique agreement system.

- (94) di'=m=i  
 saw-1sg.CLC-3sg.CLC  
 'he saw me'

(95) di'=t=i  
saw-2sg.CLC-3sg.CLC  
'he saw you (sg.)'

(96) di'=man=i  
saw-1pl.CLC-3sg.CLC  
'he saw us'

Finally, corresponding to examples (14)-(17), which illustrate that the first person singular agreement marker whether cross-referencing the A or the P, precedes any plural subject or object, there are examples (97)-(100) which uniformly reflect an Oblique-Oblique agreement system. In these examples too the A enclitic is always final.

(97) di'=tan=əm  
saw-2pl.CLC-1sg.CLC  
'I saw you (pl.)'

(98) di'=yan=əm  
saw-3pl.CLC-1sg.CLC  
'I saw them'

(99) di'=m=tan  
saw-1sg.CLC-2pl.CLC  
'you (pl.) saw me'

(100) di'=m=yan  
saw-1sg.CLC-3pl.CLC  
'they saw me'

Additional examples which strengthen the same conclusion are provided in (101)-(104) below. These examples correspond to examples (30) and (32)-(34), respectively.

(101) di'=yan=i  
 saw-3pl.CLC-3sg.CLC  
 'he saw them'

(102) di'=t=yan  
 saw-2sg.CLC-3pl.CLC  
 'they saw you (sg.)'

(103) di'=man=yan  
 saw-1pl.CLC-3pl.CLC  
 'they saw us'

(104) di'=yan=yan  
 saw-3pl.CLC-3pl.CLC  
 'they saw them'

Interestingly, in examples (105)-(107) below, which contain a compound verb, the P enclitic and the A enclitic are both directly attached in that order to the non-verbal constituent of the compound. Obviously, the agreement system here is also Oblique-Oblique.

(105) æziyæt=tan=əm                      kərd  
 harm-2pl.CLC-1sg.CLC              did  
 'I harmed you'

(106) xošhal=man=tan                      kərd  
 happy-1pl.CLC-2pl.CLC              did  
 'you (pl.) made us happy'

(107) mučyari=tan=yan                      kərd  
 advice-2pl.CLC-3pl.CLC              did  
 'they advised you (pl.)'

However, in examples (108)-(110) the non-verbal part of the compound hosts the A enclitic and the verbal part (i.e., the light verb) encodes the agreement suffix which refers to the P. These examples represent an Ergative-Absolutive agreement system.

(108) *æziyæt=ət*          *kərd-ən*  
 harm-2sg.CLC      did-3pl.  
 ‘you (sg.) harmed them’

(109) *xošhal=ət*          *kərd-īn*  
 happy-2sg.CLC      did-1pl.  
 ‘you (sg.) made us happy’

(110) *mučyari=man*      *kərd-en*  
 advice-1pl.CLC      did-2pl./3pl.  
 ‘we advised you/them’

In all of the examples we have discussed so far the P is not overt in the sentence. In (111) and (112) the P is overtly expressed as a pronoun and a noun respectively. In these and similar examples the A is encoded through enclitic and the P is not cross-referenced. Taking into consideration the fact that S is always cross-referenced by agreement suffixes in the verb, then one can speak of this set as representing a Tripartite agreement system: S being nominative, A being oblique, and P showing no agreement.

(111) *mən to=m*                              *di*  
 I      you (sg.)-1sg.CLC      saw  
 ‘I saw you (sg.)’

(112) *æw-an*      *ow*      *žən-gæl=yan-æ*                              *di*  
 he/she-pl.      that      woman-pl.-3pl.CLC-definite      saw  
 ‘they saw those women’

Now, the question is what the Type in the Kurdish of Sanandaj is. I reserve my answer for a little while later when I have dealt with the data from Kalhori Kurdish, a Southern Kurdish variety spoken in Eslāmābād-e Gharb in the Kermanshah province. Examples (113)-(118) which correspond to examples (5)-(10) are highly revealing.

- (113) di'-m=æd  
 saw-1sg.-2sg.CLC  
 'I saw you (sg.)'
- (114) di'-d=æm  
 saw-2sg.-1sg.CLC  
 'you (sg.) saw me'
- (115) di'-men=ædan  
 saw-1pl.-2pl.CLC  
 'we saw you (pl.)'
- (116) di'-n=æman  
 saw-2pl./3pl.-1pl.CLC  
 'you (pl.)/they saw us'
- (117) di'-n=eyan  
 saw-2pl./3pl.-3pl.CLC  
 'you (pl.)/they saw them'
- (118) di'-n=ædan  
 saw-3pl.-2pl.CLC  
 'they saw you (pl.)'

The agreement system manifested in these examples is uniformly Nominative-Accusative. In these examples the A is encoded as a verbal agreement suffix and the P is cross-referenced

by an oblique enclitic which systematically follows the agreement suffix. Examples (119) and (120) which contain an overt P substantiate this conclusion. In these examples the A is encoded by a verbal agreement suffix and the P is not cross-referenced.

(119) me            te            di-m  
       I            you (sg.) saw-1sg.  
       ‘I saw you (sg.)’

(120) te            me            di-d  
       you (sg.) I            saw-2sg.  
       ‘you (sg.) saw me’

Finally, we may notice example (121) which is the present tense counterpart of example (113). In this example too, the A is encoded as a verbal agreement suffix followed by the oblique enclitic which cross-references the covert P.

(121) dūn-em=ad  
       see-1sg.-2sg.CLC  
       ‘I see you (sg.)’

At this stage, I address the main point of this section, namely the identification of the exact type of the varieties of the Kurdish studied here. I start with Kalhori Kurdish. Kalhori Kurdish is uniformly Nominative-Accusative with respect to the agreement parameter. Thus, I call it a Strict Agreement Type. On the other hand, the two varieties of the Sorani Kurdish do not fall under a single categorization. In these varieties of Kurdish the sentences containing the intransitive verbs as well as the transitive verbs formed with the present stem manifest a Nominative-Accusative system. But the behavior of transitive verbs formed with the past stems is not uniform. In Sanandaji, the sentences which contain verbs formed with the past stems illustrate three patterns: (i)



Tripartite (cf. examples (111) and (112)), (ii) Oblique-Oblique (cf. examples (88)-(107)), and Ergative-Absolutive (cf. examples (108)-(110)). Taking for granted the fact that the S is always encoded as a verbal agreement suffix, then it is appropriate to propose that the Tripartite pattern is manifested in sentences in which the P is overtly present in the sentence. The Oblique-Oblique pattern is realized predominantly if the P is not overtly expressed but is cross-referenced by oblique enclitics. The Ergative-Absolutive pattern may be observed if P is not overtly expressed and the verb is a compound verb. So, to what type the Kurdish of Sanandaj belongs? I would suggest that it manifests a Split Agreement Type: Nominative-Accusative versus Non-Nominative-Accusative (which embraces the Tripartite, the Oblique-Oblique, and the Ergative-Absolutive patterns). The Sorani variety of Kurdish spoken in Suleimaniyeh could also be described as revealing a Split Agreement Type, i.e., Nominative-Accusative versus Non-Nominative-Accusative. However, it differs from the Kurdish of Sanandaj in that the former manifests two patterns with the verbs formed with the past stems. If the P is overtly expressed it is Tripartite (cf. examples (38), (39), and (51)-(53)). If the P is not overtly expressed but it is cross-referenced by an agreement suffix, then we witness an Ergative-Absolutive pattern (cf. examples (5)-(35), (54)-(58), (73)-(78), and (80)-(82)). In (79), the verb agrees with the prepositional object but not P. Thus, I conclude my characterization of Kurdish and suggest that the Sorani/Central Kurdish manifests a Split Agreement Type (namely Nominative-Accusative versus Non-Nominative Accusative) but the Kalhori Kurdish/Southern Kurdish reveals a Strict Agreement Type (namely a uniformly Nominative-Accusative Type).

Before I move on and turn to the typology of other Iranian languages based on the agreement parameter, I would like to briefly discuss the theoretical implications of my findings for our understanding of a general theory of human language.

In Figure 1, Comrie's proposed case-marking systems for S, A, and P were presented. Later, we learned that Comrie extended his case-marking system to verb-agreement. What our description of the Suleimaniyeh and Sanandaj dialects of Sorani Kurdish shows is that Comrie's type (d), the Tripartite system, and his type (e), which he has not given any name to it, that is the system whose A and P are identically marked and are distinct from S, are highly productive systems. This is an important lesson on type which we learn from the Iranian languages. The importance of this lesson becomes more transparent when we consider the more recent literature on this topic.

Croft (2003) assumes that "The Conceptual categories defined by S, A, and P are points in the conceptual space." (p. 144). He then presents four alignments between these conceptual categories which correspond to the (a-d) systems proposed in Figure 1 which I quoted from Comrie (1978). Croft describes these systems ". . . as semantic maps on the conceptual space . . ." (p. 145). His position on two logical types based on the case-marking is highly relevant to our present discussion. In his words:

"The fourth semantic map [i.e., system (d) in Figure 1] . . . , with all three distinct [namely the tripartite system], is quite rare, except with limited subclasses of S, A, and P. Dixon reports several languages in which tripartite marking is found on a subset of nouns, or in a subset of contexts; the only languages in which all noun phrases are reported to be consistently marked with distinct forms for S, A, and P are some Australian languages in southeast Queensland, including Wangkumara and Galali (Dixon 1994: 41). The one unattested type is the one in which one category subsumes A and P, and another S. This type would violate the Semantic Map Connectivity Hypothesis with respect to the conceptual space . . . , because there is no direct link between A and P. The only

instance of this pattern that I know of is found in the past tense only of Rushan, an Iranian language, and is restricted to pronouns and demonstratives (Payne 1980: 155; see also Dixon 1994: 39, n. 1). Moreover, the anomalous pattern is being replaced by the nominative-accusative present tense alignment by younger speakers.” (p. 145-146).

### 3.2. Talyshi

Talyshi is a North-Western Iranian language. The variety of Talyshi whose data will be discussed here is spoken in the Anbarānbālā village forty kilometers north of the city of Ardebil close to the Republic of Azerbaijan border. This variety belongs to the Northern Talysh group.

With the intransitive verbs and the transitive verbs formed with the present stem, S and A are encoded by verbal agreement suffixes. Examples (122) and (123) illustrate this point.

(122) az umæn-æm  
       I come-1sg.  
       ‘I come’

(123) az kitob-ə sæn-æm  
       I book-oblique buy-1sg.  
       ‘I buy the book’

These examples reflect a Nominative-Accusative system with respect to the agreement parameter.

However, in the sentences containing the transitive verbs formed with the past stem, the A is cross-referenced by the agent enclitic whose host can be the P or the verb itself. Sentences (124) and (125) support this observation. In these sentences the P is never realized by the verbal agreement suffixes.

(124) man æv-ün=əm                      zənæ  
 I      he/she-pl.-1sg.CLC      knew  
 ‘I knew them’

(125) man æv-ün      zənæ=me  
 I      he/she-pl.      knew-1sg.CLC  
 ‘I knew them’

In this variety of Talyshi, the P is always overtly expressed and is never encoded in the verb. Sentence (126) provides another supporting example for this observation.

(126) æmæ=š              zæ  
 we-3sg.CLC      hit  
 ‘he/she hit us’

Thus, I propose that in the sentences with the verbs formed with the past stem, Talyshi of Anbarānbālā manifests a Tripartite system based on the agreement parameter: S is expressed by the verbal agreement suffixes. A is cross-referenced via oblique enclitics and the P is not encoded through agreement at all. Therefore, this language has grammaticalized a Split Agreement system.

### 3.3. Davani

Davani is a South-Western Iranian language spoken in the village [dævan], locally called [dovū] in the North-East of Kazerun in the Fars province.

In the sentences with the intransitive verbs and the transitive verbs formed with the present stem, the verb always encodes the S and A by identical verbal agreement suffixes. Examples (127) and (128) represent this situation:

(127) ušu me:-r-en  
 they Incomplete-come-3pl.  
 ‘they come’

(128) ušu ketav-æku me:-sen-en  
 they book-definite Incomplete-buy-3pl.  
 ‘they buy the book’

In (128) the P is not cross-referenced. Hence, the system revealed in these examples is Nominative-Accusative based on the agreement parameter.

In the sentences with the transitive verbs formed with the past stem, I have observed three possibilities. Most productively is the possibility in which the A is cross-referenced by an oblique enclitic and the P is not expressed through agreement suffix in the verb. This is shown in (129).

(129) ušu=šu mu di  
 they-3pl.CLC we saw  
 ‘they saw us’

This example along with example (127) in which S is encoded via the agreement suffix manifests a Tripartite system based on the agreement parameter.

Very infrequently, I have come across examples such as (130) and (131) below in which the A is expressed via oblique enclitics and the P, which is overt in the sentence, is encoded by verbal agreement suffixes. This represents an Ergative-Absolutive system.

(130) mæ=t deð-e  
 I-2sg.CLC saw-1sg.  
 ‘you (sg.) saw me’

- (131) to=t                                      deð-u  
       you (sg.)-2sg.CLC                saw-1pl.  
       ‘you (sg.) saw us’

Finally, in compound verbs I have noticed the occurrence of two oblique enclitics both on the non-verbal constituent of the compound verb. The first of them cross-references the P and the second cross-references the A. Examples (132) and (133) substantiate this observation.

- (132) næsihæt=eš=omu                      ce  
       advice-3sg.CLC-1pl.CLC            did  
       ‘we advised him/her’

- (133) ĵar=emu=tu                              ze  
       call-1pl.CLC-2pl.CLC                hit  
       ‘you (pl.) called us’

The agreement system reflected in these examples is Oblique-Oblique.

Thus, I conclude that Davani has a Split Agreement system. Sentences with the present tense stem are Nominative-Accusative. Sentences with the past tense stem encompass three situations: (i) Tripartite, (ii) Ergative-Absolutive, and (iii) Oblique-Oblique.

#### 4. Conclusions

I conclude that the Iranian languages described here save Kalthori Kurdish, would best be classified into two types: (i) Nominative-Accusative and (ii) Non-Nominative-Accusative. The latter embraces a number of possibilities including (a) Tripartite, (b) Oblique-Oblique or I here suggest Bipartite system, and (c)

Ergative-Absolutive. Thus, it will be an oversimplification to label any tense-sensitive Iranian language as Split-Ergative. I propose that this conclusion might be valid for many modern Iranian languages and that this observation for the state-of-the-art in modern Iranian languages might be equally valid for our understanding of the formation and development of modern Iranian languages diachronically. Namely a number of the Iranian languages in the past also simultaneously contained more than one system. I suppose that this is a valuable lesson that synchrony teaches us about diachrony, a perspective which I call synchronic diachrony.

These multi-system languages may stay in this position for several centuries. Thus, they should not necessarily be viewed as transitional, unstable, and temporary systems.

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