❑ **Donald STILO**[1]

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# A PERSONAL NARRATIVE IN NORTHERN TALYSHI WITH GRAMMATICAL COMMENTARIES AND NOTES ON THE AREAL DISTRIBUTION OF GRAMMATICAL FEATURES

## DİL BİLGİSEL AÇIKLAMALAR VE DİL BİLGİSİ ÖZELLİKLERİNİN BÖLGESEL DAĞILIMINA İLİŞKİN NOTLAR İLE KUZEY TALIŞÇADA KİŞİSEL BİR ANLATIM

**Abstract:** In this article Mammad Piriyev (b. 1948), a man from a small Talyshi-speaking mountain village in the Republic of Azerbaijan, narrates some events from his great-grandfather's life probably some time in the late nineteenth century. Talyshi is a Northwest Iranian language spoken along the Caspian littoral and adjacent mountainous areas in Azerbaijan and Iran. Mr. Piriyev's narrative is transcribed, translated and provided with morpheme divisions. The article then presents ample commentary on grammatical points from the narration. In addition, some brief notes are also provided on the areal nature of some of these grammatical points (word order of possessor and adjective modification, numeral classifiers, adpositional typology, clitic movement, verbs of existence and possession, and the typology of the copula) that are also features found in neighboring languages such as Azerbaijani, other Iranian languages, Armenian, and Neo-Aramaic, among others.

**Keywords**: Talyshi, case system, areal distribution, Araxes-Iran, linguistic area, typology.

**Öz:** Bu makalede, Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti'nde Talışça konuşulan küçük bir dağ köyünden Mammad Piriyev (d. 1948), büyük büyükbabasının hayatından muhtemelen on dokuzuncu yüzyılın sonlarında gerçekleşen bazı olayları anlatmaktadır. Talışça, Hazar kıyı bölgesinde ve Azerbaycan ve İran'daki komşu dağlık alanlarda konuşulan Kuzeybatı İran dilidir. Piriyev'in anlatısı yazıya dökülmüş, tercüme edilmiş ve biçimbirim bölümleri verilmiştir. Daha sonra makalede anlatımdan alınan dil bilgisi konularına dair geniş kapsamlı yorumlar sunulmuştur. Buna ek olarak, bu gramer konularından bazılarının bölgesel yapısı hakkında kısa notlar da verilmektedir (sahiplik sözdizimi ve sıfat değişimi, sayısal sınıflandırıcılar, edat tipolojisi, biçimce mekanizması, var olma ve sahip olma fiilleri ve koşaç tipolojisi). Bunlar, aynı zamanda başka dillerin yanı sıra Azerice, diğer İran dilleri, Ermenice ve Neo-Aramice gibi komşu dillerde bulunan özelliklerdir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler**: Talışça, ad durumu sistemi, bölgesel dağılım, Aras-İran, dilbilimsel alan, tipoloji.

[1] Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany (retired). ORCID: 0000-0001-6012-3393

## 1.1 Introduction

### 1.1.1 Generalities

Talyshi is a Northwestern Iranian language spoken along the southwestern Caspian seacoast and adjacent mountainous areas in the Republic of Azerbaijan and in Iran. Within Iranian languages, Northwestern Iranian languages (NWI) are in immediate contradistinction to Southwestern Iranian languages (SWI), which consist of, among others, Persian and its closest relative, the varieties of Caucasian Tat. A putative time depth of approximately 3000 years is assessed for the split between NWI and SWI. NWI itself divides into some seven groups, of which Tatic (Tati-Talyshi) is of key relevance to the present article.

The varieties within Northern Talyshi (NT)[2,3], are fully mutually intelligible but are not really intelligible with Central or Southern Talyshi. NT has four dialect zones each with many subvarieties, including transitional dialects between each zone: Masalli (in the northern areas), Lankaran (central east, coastal), Lerik (central west, mountainous) and Astara (south, including small adjacent areas of Iran) (see also Stilo, 2008: 365).

### 1.1.2 The Araxes-Iran Linguistic Area (AILA)

In addition to the Piriyev text and grammatical discussions relevant to it, this article also includes brief notes on the *areal* distribution of some of these grammatical patterns that are shared by various other languages, both Iranian and non-Iranian, of the area, based on my ongoing work on the *Atlas of the Araxes-Iran Linguistic Area* (see Stilo, 2018c). This area includes – progressing clockwise from the north – Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, most of Iran, northern Iraq and eastern Turkey.

My research within this area includes five language families as well as two genera of Indo-European: 1) Turkic (spoken Azerbaijani of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, dialects of E. Turkey); (2) colloquial Yerevan Armenian and dialects; (3) Iranian (Talyshi-Tati of Iran, Caucasian Tat of Azerbaijan and Daghestan, varieties of Kurdish, Caspian languages (Gilaki, Mazanderani, and spoken Persian, among others); (4) Neo-Aramaic (many widely diverging varieties of Iraq, Turkey, NW Iran); (5) Udi (Daghestanian), now spoken in two villages in Azerbaijan and one in Georgia; and (6) Kartvelian (colloquial Tbilisi Georgian, Laz). While there are clear subdivisions within the larger AILA area, many isoglosses in the domains of phonology, grammar, and lexicon unite the whole zone.

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[2] My fieldwork in all four dialect zones of NT conducted during the months of October in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2006 and my additional in-house research related to it were conducted under the auspices of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Max Planck Society for its support of this fieldwork.

[3] I would also like to thank Dr. Steven Kaye for his careful reading of this article, for his suggestions for alternate analyses, and for pointing out various mistakes and typos in the text.

1.1.3 The Piriyev personal narrative and the Lerik dialect zone

My work in the Lerik district centered on Peshtatuk (Peştətük[4]), a village of 197 inhabitants. For the grammatical discussions below I have used material from the narrative of this article. In this article I present a short spoken personal narrative by Mammad Piriyev[5] of Peshtatuk. The text was recorded in 2003. It is then followed by a selection of grammatical notes relevant to the text. Often, this short narrative does not provide enough data about a given topic, in which case I have provided additional examples from other recordings of Mr. Piriyev and from my fieldwork in villages close to Peshtatuk.

## 2.1 Personal narrative of Mammad (Məmməd) Piriyev

2.1.1 The spoken text, interlinears, translations

(1) *či-mï* *yol-æ* *bobo* *lik-í* *ræyon-í* *anzülü* *di=ædæ*
GEN.PR-I.OBL big-LNK grandfather Lerik-OBL district-OBL Anzulu village=ÆDÆ

> *yašæmíš b-æ-n°.* °(The plural 'they' here is deferential.)
lived.AZ COP.PST-PPL-3P1

'My great-grandfather (named Kælbo Mænsïm, see sent. 10 below) lived in the village of Anzulu of the Lerik district.'

(2) *či-mï* *bobo* *yol-æ* *sipríš=e*[6] *b-æ-Ø* *bævónædæ.*
GEN.PR-I.OBL (intended: great-grandfather) big-LNK whitebeard=?? COP.PST-PPL-3S1 then

'My great-grandfather was a great wise elder in those times.'

(3) *dï* *anzülü hamsiyæ di* *hést-e,* *tangabïn*
with Anzulu neighbor village exist-3S1 Tængæbin

'There is a village neighboring with Anzulu – Tængæbin (Az. Təngəbin).'

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[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peştətük, accessed November 7, 2022. This Wikipedia entry also gives the geographic coordinates of Peştətük as 38°47′N 48°32′E. Peştətük is located approximately 37 km west of Lankaran and 14 km east of Lerik.

[5] I dedicate this article to the narrator of this text, my friend, Mammad Piriyev, who passed away in 2020 from the coronavirus. He was a kind, generous, educated, open-minded man who helped me unstintingly with my work. I am grateful to him and his family for all their help, hospitality and kindness during the times I stayed with them.

[6] This *=e* particle for now remains a mystery in my mind. I have some ideas about its function, but I also find problems with each of my alternate analyses. I will need more tokens of its use in order to make a definitive statement. There are five tokens in the text presented here (sent. 2, 4, 7, 17, 20).

(4) *tangabïn=æn b=æ vaxt-í yol-æ di=e b-æ-Ø.*
Tængæbin=ADD to=that time-OBL big-LNK village-?? COP.PST-PPL-3S1
'And Tængæbin at that time was a big village.'

(5) *tædríjæn γædimí tangæbïnïž-ón dï anzulož-ón köčmíš*
gradually old Tængæbini-PL with Anzului-PL migrated.AZ
> *b-æ̀-n om-á́-n bæ jaynævü.*
COP.PST-PPL-3P1 come.PST-PPL-3P1 to Jænginævud
'Gradually the old Tængæbinis migrated with the Anzuluis and came to Jænginævud.'

(6) *jaynævü=dæ i poæ tangæbïnïž b-æ-Ø, i poæ anzulož.*
Jænginævud=ÆDÆ one part Tængæbini COP.PST-PPL-3S1 one part Anzului
'In Jænginævud there were partly Tængæbinis and partly Anzuluis.'

(7) *tangæbïnĭ́ž jaynævü=dæ bæ sæ anzulož-í ve=ye b-æ-Ø.*
Tængæbini Jænginævud=ÆDÆ to on Anzului-OBL *many=??* COP.PST-PPL-3S1
'The Tængæbinis in Jænginævud were more than the Anzuluis.'

(8) *tangæbïnïž-ón bævædæ dï anzulož-ón bæ ro š-æ ni-n*
Tængæbini-PL then with Anzului-PL to road go.PPL AUX.NEG-3P1
'The Tængæbinis at that time did not get along with the Anzuluis.'

(9) *yædï=žon kü-æ. gurgur=ïžon kard-æ.*
one.another=3P2.AG beat-PPL thunder=3P2.AG do.PST-PPL
'They fought (lit: beat) each other. They rumbled.'

(10) *æv=e ki anzulož-ón bævædæ kælbo mænsïm-í=kü tælæb=ïžon*
that=COP.3S1 SUB Anzului-PL then Kælbo Mænsïm-OBL=KÜ request=3P2.AG

> *kard-æ ki æv b-o-Ø jaynævü=dæ yašæmíš bï-bu-Ø.*
do.PST-PPL SUB he IRR-come.PRES-3S1 Jænginævud=ÆDÆ lived.AZ IRR-COP.SBJ-3S1

'It is for this (reason) that the Anzuluis then requested Kælbo Mænsïm to come live in Jænginævud.'

(11) *kælbo mænsïm=æn č-æv-ón tælæb=ïž bæ vïræ ros-n-y-é.*
Kælbo Mænsïm=ADD GEN.PR-he-PL request=3S2.AG to place arrive.CAUS-CAUS-PST-PPL

'And Kælbo Mænsïm fulfilled (lit: delivered into place) their request.'

(12) *ki æv=æn köčmíš b-æ̀-Ø om-é-Ø bæ jaynævü.*
SUB he=ADD migrated be.PST-PPL-3S1 come.PST-PPL-3S1 to Jænginævud

'For he migrated and came to Jænginævud.'

(13) *jaynævü=dæ yašæmíš b-æ̀-Ø.*
Jænginævud=ÆDÆ lived.AZ COP.PST-PPL-3S1

'(So) he lived in Jænginævud.'

(14) *jaynævü=dæ yašæmiš b-æ bæ pešt, tangæbïnïž-ón=æn bæ*
Jænginævud=ÆDÆ lived.AZ COP.PST-PPL to after Tangæbïni-PL=ADD to

> *kælbo mænsïm-í hörmæt=ïžon kard-æ dï anzulož-ón*
Kælbo Mænsïm-OBL honor=3P2.AG do.PST-PPL with Anzului-PL

> *hayküy=žon kard-æ ni.*
uproar=3P2.AG do.PST-PPL AUX.NEG

'After living in Jænginævud, the Tængæbinis also paid honor to Kælbo Mænsïm (and) didn't make (any more) conflicts with the Anzuluis.'

(15) *yædĺ́=žon kü-æ ni. bæ kælbo mænsïm-í hörmæt=ïžon*
one.another=3P2.AG beat-PPL AUX.NEG to Kælbo Mænsïm-OBL honor=3P2.AG

> *kard-æ.*
do.PST-PPL

'They didn't fight each other. They paid honor to Kælbo Mænsïm.'

(16) *æv-on č-æ-y bæ pešt, dæ yædĺ́ čok=ïžon vot-ǽ,*
he-PL GEN.PR-that-OBL to after with one.another good=3P2.AG say-PPL

> *čok=ïžon mæs-ǽ.*
good=3P2.AG hear-PPL

'After that they spoke well to each other (and) listened well.'

(17) *čok yašæmiš b-æ-n. kælbo mænsïm yol-æ sipríš=e*
good lived.AZ COP.PST-PPL-3P1 Kælbo Mænsïm big-LNK whitebeard=??

> *b-æ-Ø.*
COP.PST-PPL-3S1

'They lived well (together). Kælbo Mænsïm was a great wise elder.'

(18) *hǽmæ b=æ-y hörmæt=(ï)žon kard-æ, bæ č-æ-y*
all to=he-OBL honor=3P2.AG do.PST-PPL to GEN.PR-he-OBL

> *siprišæti hörmæt=(ï)žon kard-æ.*
whitebeardedness honor=3P2.AG do.PST-PPL

'Everyone paid him honor, they paid respect to his wisdom.'

(19) *æv bæ kærbælo š-æ-Ø bæ č-æ-y kærbælo ziaræt*

he to Karbala go-PPL-3S1 to GEN.PR-he-OBL Karbala pilgrimage

> *kard-e=žon hörmæt kard-æ ki hæmišæ č-æ-y*

do-INF=3P2.AG honor do.PST-PPL SUB always GEN.PR-he-OBL

> *hörmæt=(ï)žon o-gæt-é.*

honor=3P2.AG PVB-take-PPL

'He went to Karbala (and) they respected him for his making the Karbala pilgrimage for they always preserved respect for him.'

(20) *č-æ-y dövr=ædæ č-æv-on di=ædæ gïlæ=y hayküy*

GEN.PR-he-OBL era=ÆDÆ GEN.PR-he-PL village=ÆDÆ UNC=INDEF uproar

> *b-i=ædæ, gïlæ=y noroziyætí b-i=ædæ, æv æ*

COP.PST-INF=ÆDÆ UNC=INDEF discontent COP.PST-INF=ÆDÆ he that

> *noroziyætí æ hayküy-on hæmišæ hæl kard-ǽ kǽs=e*

discontent that uproar-PL always resolution do.PST-PPL person=??

> *b-æ-Ø.*

COP.PST-PPL-3S1

'In his time when there was a uproar in their village, when there was discontent, he was always a person that resolved that discontent and those uproars.'

(21) *i kæræ č-æv-on hamsiyæ di=ædæ gïlæ=y merd-í*

one time GEN.PR-he-PL neighbor village=ÆDÆ UNC=INDEF man-OBL

> *žǽ-y=dæ=n, kíšt=æ=n°.*

strike.PST-INF=DUR[7]=3P1 kill=DUR=3P1

'Once in their neighboring village they beat a man (indefinite specific) up (and) kill (him).' °(short-form Present: *kïšt-é=dæ=n > kíšt=dæ=n > kíšt=æ=n*, see 3.3.3.2)

[7] The formant *=dæ* (an original locative), is used in this narrative only in the formation of the present tense. However, I have labeled it a DUR (durative) here since it is also used to form the past durative, which only appears in the grammatical descriptions below (see 3.3.3.2 and ex. 73a, 76a,b below).

(22) *ïm merd-í žǽ-y=dæ=n, kíšt=æ=n, čï dï kæ-y dï gïlæ*

this man-OBL strike-INF=DUR=3P1 kill=DUR=3P1 from two house-OBL two UNC

> *aylæ ara=dæ xűn-æ davé e-gĭn=dæ-Ø.*

family between=ÆDÆ blood-LNK feud PVB-fall=DUR-3S1

'They beat this man up (and) kill (him) (and then) a blood feud breaks out (lit: occurs) between two houses, two families.'

(23) *ïn xùn-æ davé bast-e=ro, gïlæ=y sipriš-æ odǽm lazïm*

this blood-LNK feud stop[8]-INF=for UNC=INDEF whitebeard-LNK person necessary

> *b-e=dæ-Ø.*

COP-INF=DUR-3S1

'A wise elder is needed for stopping this feud.'

(24) *bo dave bast-e=ro, ve spriš-on vang kard-é=dæ-Ø.*

for feud stop-INF=for many whitebeard-PL sound do-INF=DUR-3S1

> *ve odæm-on vang kard-é=dæ-Ø.*

many person-PL sound do-INF=DUR-3S1

'To stop this feud, they call in many wise elders. They call in many people.'

(25) *č=ï mard-æ̀ kæs-í žen æ spriš-on γæbul*

GEN.PR=this die.PST-PPL person-OBL wife that whitebeard-PL acceptance

> *kard=æ ni-Ø.*

do.PST=DUR AUX.NEG-3S1

'This dead man's wife does not accept those wise elders.'

(26) *æv-on-í hǽmæ dï kobùd-æ gæp-í, æv-on-í tæhgir kard-é=dæ-Ø.*

he-PL-OBL all with coarse-LNK speech-OBL he-PL-OBL insult do-INF=DUR-3S1

'She insults all of them with coarse speech.'

[8] Pireĭko (1976: 25) lists two meanings for this verb: (1) 'tie (up)' and (2) 'brake (тормозить)'. I have translated it as 'stop' here throughout.

(27) *æv-on-í bæ dümo o-gord-ín=dæ-Ø.*

he-PL-OBL to back PVB-turn.CAUS-CAUS=DUR-3S1

'She turns them away (lit: back).'

(28) *ænæyó sipriš-on ve götürgóy*[9] *kàrd=æ=n° ki ki*

there whitebeard-PL much debate do=DUR=3P1 SUB who

> *bæ-zn-é-Ø xün-í bast-é.* °(See §3.3.3.2 for short forms of present tense)

FUT-know-INF-3S1 blood-OBL stop-INF

'There the wise elders debate a lot (over) who will be able to stop the feud.'

(29) *ki váng kæ̀-mon? næ.isæ vot=dæ=n ki, bǽle kælbo mænsïm*

who sound do.PRS-1P1 anyway.AZ say=DUR=3P1 SUB yes Kælbo Mænsïm

> *ïm xün-í bæ-bast-é-Ø.*

this blood-OBL FUT-stop-INF-3S1

'Who should we call? Well, they say, So, Kælbo Mænsïm will stop this.'

(30) *om-é=dæ=n sipriš-on kælbo mænsïm-í=kü ki bæs b-oy*

come-INF=DUR=3P1 whitebeard-PL Kælbo Mænsïm-OBL=KÜ SUB so IRR-come.IMPER

> *bo-š-ámon* [*pšámon*] *filon di=ædæ xün b-æ-Ø.*

IRR-go-1P1.SBJ such.and.such village=ÆDÆ blood COP.PST-PPL-3S1

'The wise elders come to Kælbo Mænsïm (saying), So, come let's go, there was a blood (feud) in such-and-such village.'

(31) *ïm xün-í bæpé tï bí́-bast-ïš.*

this blood-OBL must you IRR-stop-3S1a

'You must stop this blood feud.'

[9] This is an Azerbaijani loan. MP supplied the Talyshi equivalent: *pegæt-noy karde* 'to debate'. I thank Steven Kaye for suggesting that the Talyshi word is most likely a calque from Azerbaijani.

(32) *kælbo mænsïm razïlïγ*[10] *do-y=dæ-Ø.*

Kælbo Mænsïm agreement give.PST-INF=DUR-3S1

'Kælbo Mænsïm agrees.'

(33) *š-e=dæ-Ø č=ï odæm-í kæ-y hansï ki æ merd=ïžon*

go-INF=DUR-3S1 GEN.PR=this person-OBL house-OBL which.AZ SUB that man=3P2.AG

> *kïšt-æ.*

kill-PPL

'He goes to the house of this man that they killed.'

(34) *š-e=dæ-Ø č=æ žen-í kæ-y.*

go-INF=DUR-3S1 GEN.PR=that woman-OBL house-OBL

'He goes to that woman's house.'

(35) *ï žen vind=æ-Ø kælbo mænsïm om-é=dæ-Ø, æ žen*

this woman see=DUR-3S1 Kælbo Mænsïm come-INF=DUR-3S1 that woman

> *sïxán kàrd=æ-Ø.*

speech do=DUR-3S1

'This woman sees Kælbo Mænsïm coming (and) the woman speaks up.'

(36) *b=ï merd-í vót=dæ-Ø ki čï-mï kæ-y mǽ-vo!*

to=this man-OBL say=DUR-3S1 SUB GEN.PR-I.OBL house-OBL NEG.IMPER-come.PRS

'She says to this man, Don't come to my house!'

(37) *ve götürgoy kàrd=æ-Ø. kælbo mænsïm om-é=dæ-Ø,*

much debate do=DUR-3S1 Kælbo Mænsïm come-INF=DUR-3S1

> *dæ-várd=æ-Ø bæ kæ.*

PVB-pass=DUR-3S1 to house

'They discuss (it) a lot. Kælbo Mænsïm comes and passes into the house.'

[10] An Azerbaijani word of Arabic origin, but showing Azerbaijani derivational morphology for converting the adjective *razï* 'content' to an abstract noun. The NT equivalents are *rozi* > *roziyæti*.

(38) *žen-í=æn váng kàrd=æ-Ø.*

woman-OBL=ADD sound do=DUR-3S1

'And he calls the woman.'

(39) *vót=dæ-Ø, kæ.xob-í kinæ, i kæræ b-oy dáé-ši*

say=DUR-3S1 house.ruined-OBL girl one time IRR-come.IMPER PVB-go.IMPER

> *bæ kæ. hælæ b-ún-um čič=im vot-é=dæ.*

to house for.now IRR-see-1S1 what=AUX.1S1 say-INF=DUR

'He says, Damned woman (lit: Girl of ruined house/progeny)! Come (lit: enter) into the house for a minute, (and) see what I'm saying for now.'

(40) *kælbo mænsïm nav b=ï žen-í dæ-š=dæ-Ø bæ kæ, níšt=æ-Ø.*

Kælbo Mænsïm ahead to=this woman-OBL PVB-go=DUR-3S1 to house sit=DUR-3S1

'Kælbo Mænsïm enters the house ahead of this woman (and) sits down.'

(41) *pešï žen om-é=dæ-Ø bæ kælbo mænsïm-í kobùd-æ gáép=æn*

then woman come-INF=DUR-3S1 to Kælbo Mænsïm-OBL coarse-LNK talk=ADD

> *že-y=dæ-Ø.*

strike-INF=DUR-3S1

'Then the woman comes and again uses coarse words with Kælbo Mænsïm.'

(42) *vót=dæ-Ø tï čejuræ hæyosíz-æ odáém=iž ki hič sïxan*

say=DUR-3S1 you what.kind shameless-LNK person=COP.2S1 SUB none speech

> *bæ tï tæ:sir kàrd=æ ní-Ø?*

to you effect do.PST=DUR COP.NEG-3S1

'He says, What kind of shameless person are you that no words have any effect on you?'

(43) *kælbo mænsïm=æn vót=dæ-Ø ki ǽgær merd-í ïštæ nom=ïž*
Kælbo Mænsïm=ADD say=DUR-3S1 SUB if man-OBL self name=3S2.AG
> *sipriš no-a bu, sipriš-í lüz bæpe yol bǐ́-bu-Ø,*
whitebeard put.PST-PPL AUX.SBJ whitebeard-OBL belly must big IRR-COP.SBJ-3S1
> *bæ dæmžon-í=æn dözmiš bǐ́-bu-Ø, b=æ tæhgiræ*
to cursing-OBL=ADD endured.PPL.AZ IRR-COP.SBJ-3S1 to=that insult
> *gæp-í=æn, bevæ̀j-æ gæp-í=æn dözmiš bǐ́-bu-Ø,*
talk-OBL=ADD bad-LNK talk-OBL=ADD endured.PPL.AZ IRR-COP.SBJ-3S1
'Kælbo Mænsïm says if a man has called himself a wise elder, a wise elder's belly must be big (sense: he must be thick-skinned) in order to endure cursing and stand those insults, those words and bad talk.'

(44) *æv=e ki kælbo mænsïm æ žen-í váng kàrd=æ-Ø. d=ïm-í*
that=COP.3S1 SUB Kælbo Mænsïm that woman-OBL sound do.PST=DUR-3S1 with=this-OBL
> *zïvon pæydo kard-é=dæ-Ø ïn xun-í bast-é=dæ-Ø.*
language manifest do.PST-INF=DUR-3S1 this blood-OBL stop-INF=DUR-3S1
'It's for this reason that Kælbo Mænsïm calls that woman (and) with this he finds the language (to use) (and) he stops this blood (feud).'

(45) *ko-y hæl kard-é=dæ-Ø.*
work-OBL solution do.PST-INF=DUR-3S1
'He solves the issue (lit: work, job).'

(46) *d=ïm-í=æn, č=ï dï gïlæ aylæ ara=dæ, ayl-on*
with=this-OBL=ADD GEN.PR=this two UNC family between=ÆDÆ family-PL
> *várd=æ-Ø dæ yædǐ́ dust kard-é=dæ-Ø.*
bring.PST=DUR-3S1 with one.another friend do.PST-INF=DUR-3S1
'And with this – between these two families – he brings the families and makes them friends with each other.'

(47) *č-æv-on ko d=æ-y=æn o-ræx-é=dæ-Ø.*

GEN.PR-he-PL work with=that-OBL=ADD PVB-end.INTR-INF=DUR-3S1

'And with that their issue ends.'

2.1.2 Pronunciation of place names

The differences in place names between Talyshi and Azerbaijani are often substantial. This is due to diachronic sound changes that NT underwent. First, the original NT vowels *æ* and *a* shifted to *a* and *o*, respectively, but not consistently. The Azerbaijani pronunciation probably reflects the older phonology, e.g., NT *Tangabïn* vs. Az. *tængæbin* (spelled: Təngəbin). This change also partially affects the name Karbala/Kærbæla (Iraq) in NT (*kærbælo̱*). While on the topic of vowels, please note that I have not found any contrast between the *u* and *ü* vowels and in Mr. Piriyev's pronunciation they often alternate.

Another sound change involves the Talyshi loss of *-r-* after a vowel (VrC, Vr#, and VrV), NT *kælbo* (< *Kærbæla(i)*), a title for a person having made the pilgrimage to Karbala), also with a metathesis of original *-r-* and *-l-*. Also, when an intervocalic *-r-* was dropped, a whole syllable was lost, e.g., NT *Lik* from original *Lerik*. The above vowel changes plus the intervocalic loss of *-r-* are also at play in the name Lænkæran (Russ: Lenkoran) to NT *lankon.*

Also note that for referring to inhabitants of a specific place, the NT suffix *-ïž ~ -ž* is added: *tangæbïn-ïž, anzulu-ž, lik-ïž, iron-ïž* 'Iranian' – but note the different formation of *Tolïš* (Talysh person) vs. *Tolïš-í* (Talyshi as adjective or name of the language). Note that since I have decided not to show any morpheme divisions pertaining to derivational morphology in this article, this morpheme has not been separated throughout the article.

## 3.0 GRAMMATICAL NOTES PERTINENT TO TEXT

### 3.1 Generalities on nouns and pronouns

Nouns and pronouns formally distinguish case and number, but gender is not a grammatical category in Northern, Central or Southern Talyshi. There are three types of case marking systems in NT, two of which also have subtypes. In the first type, the nominal has two cases: Direct and Oblique, but only in the singular. There is no distinction of case in the plural, as the direct plural has merged with the original oblique plural *-on* (see Stilo, 2008: 703).

Table 1: Case system 1: Nouns in Northern Talyshi

| | Singular | Plural |
|---|---|---|
| Direct | *sipriš* | *sipriš-ón* |
| Oblique | *sipriš-í* | |

'elder, wiseman (lit: *sipi* white + *riš* beard)'

3.1.1 Functions of the cases

Nouns and pronouns in the Direct case have the following functions: (1) the subject of intransitive verbs in all tense-aspect-mood (TAM) categories; (2) the subject of all transitive verbs in those verb paradigms that trigger Nominative-Accusative alignment (see 3.4.1 below), including most verb paradigms formed synthetically (subjunctive, optative, imperative, imperfect, past subjunctive, but not the preterite) and those tenses formed analytically on the use of the adpositions plus infinitive and the present copula (present, past durative, future) (see 3.3.3.2); (3) all direct objects (nouns only) of transitive verbs in those paradigms requiring Ergative alignment (see 3.4.1); (4) the non-salient (i.e., indefinite, generic) direct objects of transitive verbs in all tenses; (5) the stimulus argument of experiencer constructions; (6) adjuncts of certain adpositions.

Nouns in the Oblique case have the following functions: (1) nominal possessive (but genitive case for pronouns); (2) noun/pronoun agents of transitive verbs in the past system (see 3.4.1.1); (3) salient (i.e., specific, definite) direct objects of transitive verbs in those paradigms requiring Accusative alignment; (4) adjuncts of certain adpositions; (5) GOAL arguments that are not marked with an adposition (optional); (6) experiencer arguments of experiencer verbs. See the relevant sections below for all these categories.

3.1.2 Case system 1: Noun-noun Possessive Modification (see Table 1)

Modification in the NP is encoded differently for possessors and adjectives (see 3.2.1), but both strategies are exclusively head-final (i.e., left-branching) and a head-initial (right-branching) Persian *ezafe*-like construction is not encountered. Possession involves the use of the oblique case of the possessor nouns and the genitive of possessor pronouns:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (01 | *sipriš-í* | *lüz* | *mard-æ̀* | *kæs-í* | *žen* |
| a,b) | whitebeard-OBL | belly | die.PST-PPL | person-OBL | wife |
| | 'a wise elder's belly (43) | | 'the dead man's wife' (25)[11] | | |

Since there are no case distinctions in plural nouns in Northern Talyshi, plural possessors are encoded by juxtaposition with no overt linking morphology.

(02) *müæyyæn xæstælik-on dæmon*°
certain illness.AZ-PL medicine
'the medicine for (lit: of) certain illnesses' (LOr: 16)
°(*dæmon* is a singular form, cf. Pers., Azer.: *dærman*)

Nouns ending in certain vowels, e.g., *-æ* or *-i*, generally do not take oblique singular morphology in order to avoid the formation of certain glides:

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (03 | *æli* | *kinæ* | *væyæ* | | *mir-talïb* | *müællim-i* | *zoæ* | *væyæ* |
| a,b) | PN | daughter | wedding | | PN | honorific-OBL | son | wedding |
| | 'Ali's daughter's wedding' | | | | 'Mir-Talib Müællim's son's wedding' | | | |

3.1.3 Case system 2: Pronouns

The second type of case system occurs in pronouns and is more complex than that of nouns. Pronouns show three subtypes according to the person of the pronoun and distinguish a maximum of four cases (1st sg., 3rd sg.), but other persons show either a three-case system (2nd sg., 1st pl., 3rd pl.) or a two-case system (2nd pl.), as shown in Table 2.

[11] In the references to sources for data provided in the sample sentences in this article, those that consist of a simple number, e.g., (43) and (25) here, refer directly to the Piriyev narrative given above in this article. All other references with more complex labels indicate data taken from my field notes in the Lerik area and those marked by an additional 'MP' refer to other texts spoken by Mammad Piriyev.

Table 2: Pronominal cases in Northern Talyshi

| | 1st sg. | 2nd sg | 3rd sg. | 1st pl. | 2nd pl | 3rd pl. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Direct | *az* | *tï* | *æ, æv* | *æmæ* | *šïmæ* | *æv-on* |
| Oblique | *mï(n)* | *tï* | *æ-y* | *æmæ* | *šïmæ* | *æv-on* |
| Genitive | *čï-mï(n)* | *iš-tï* | *č-æ-y* | *č-æmæ* | *šïmæ* | *č-æv-on* |
| Accusative | *mïn-í* | *tï-ní* | *æv-í* | *æmæ-ní* | *šïmæ-ní* | *æv-on-í* |
| | 4-term | 3-term | 4-term | 3-term | 2-term | 3-term |

While the distal demonstratives *æv* and *ævon* are the most commonly used 3rd person pronouns, the proximal demonstratives may also be used as pronouns: *ïm* 's/he, it, this (one)' – with the case forms Gen. *č-ïm-i*, Obl./Acc. *ïm-i*, Dir./Obl. plural *ïm-on*, Acc. plural *ïm-on-i*. The pronominal genitive formation also occurs with the interrogative pronoun *ki* 'who': *č(ï)ki væyæ* 'whose wedding' (LOr2: 4).

The genitive formant *č(ï)- ~ iš-*, derived from the Old Iranian word *hača* 'from', is unique to Tatic languages (Tati and Talyshi) within Western Iranian, thus making it a primary diagnostic for identifying Tatic languages.

Genitive pronouns

| (04, | *čï-mí* | *kæ* | *iš-tï* | *tævælüd* | *č-æ-y* | *sipríšæti* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a,b,c) | GEN.PR-I.OBL | house | GEN.PR-you | birthday | GEN.PR-that-OBL | whitebeardedness |
| | 'my house' (36) | | 'your birthday' (L3: 2) | | 'his wisdom' (18) | |

The accusative case *-(n)í* of pronouns is a NT innovation that has spread to all persons from the diachronically original 1st person sg. Obl. form *mï(n)*. The *-n-* was then transferred to the case marker – *mï(n)* > Acc. *mïn-í* > *mï-ní*) – and inserted in other persons:

| (05 | *mï-ní=æn* | *o-kïrïn=dæ=n.* | *æmæ-ni* | *axtær* | *kárd=æ=ž.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a,b) | I-ACC=ADD | PVB-pull=DUR=3P1 | we-ACC | attention? | do=DUR=2S1 |
| | 'They are pulling me, too (LGr4: 27) | | 'You are paying attention to us (lit: you notice us).' (L3: 18) | | |

The accusative case of pronouns is mostly used in the present system of tenses. See the section on ergative alignment for the case of pronouns in the past system.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (06 | *tï* | *mïn=ï* | *vind=e.* | *ïm-i* | *mï* | *bárd=ïš=e.* |
| a,b) | you | I.OBL=2S2.AG | see=AUX | this.one-OBL | I.OBL | take.away=3S2.AG=AUX |
| | 'You saw me.' (L3: 28) | | | 'He took me away.' (L3: 4) | | |

3.1.4 Case system 3: Adnominal demonstratives

The third type of case-marking system is unique to NT. Here the pronominal possessive formant *č(ï)-* precedes adnominal demonstratives that precede nouns in the oblique case. I have marked *č(ï)=* in this function as a proclitic in this article:

| | Proximal demonstrative | | | Distal demonstrative | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (07 | *č=ï* | *odæm-í* | *kæ* | *č=æ* | *žen-í* | *kæ* |
| a,b) | GEN.PR=this | person-OBL | house | GEN.PR=that | woman-OBL | house |
| | 'this man's house' (33) | | | 'that woman's house' (34) | | |

**3.2 Other NP issues**

3.2.1 Adjectival modification

Adjectival modification is also head-final and is encoded in two basic ways:

(1) either by the use of an unstressed linker morpheme *-æ* suffixed to the adjective or (2) by simple juxtaposition requiring no special morphological marking.

Adjective with unstressed *-æ* linking suffix

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (08 | *yòl-æ* | *bobó* | *hæyosïz-æ* | *odǽm* |
| a,b) | big-LNK | grandfather | shameless-LNK | person |
| | 'great-grandfather' (1) | | 'shameless person' (42) | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (09 | *bevæ̀j-æ* | *gǽp* | *šàt-æ* | *dó* |
| a,b) | bad-LNK | talk | crooked-LNK | tree |
| | 'coarse speech/words' (43) | | 'crooked tree' (LStr3: 18) | |

Adjective-Noun juxtaposition

(10 *sàrd óv=ïm hárd=e müæyyæ̀n xæstælik-ón*
a,b) cold water=1$S_2$.AG eat.PST=AUX certain illness.AZ-PL
'I drank cold water.' (L2: 7) 'certain illnesses' (LOr: 16)

(11 *möhkæ̀m hír iminjì dæfé*
a,b) strong fog first time
'thick fog' (MP: L3: 20) 'the first time' (LGr3: 20)

3.2.2 Noun-Noun compound

The above *-æ* linker morpheme is also used with noun-noun structures, but these seem to be restricted to nominal compounding:

(12 *pæ̀s-æ pašmé sèf-æ lü*
a,b) sheep-LNK wool apple-LNK peel
'sheep's wool' (LStr3: 17) 'apple peel' (LStr3: 17)

(13 *xün-æ davé asfàlt-æ ró*
a,b) blood-LNK feud asphalt-LNK road
'blood feud' asphalt(-paved) road' (MP: conv1)

Areality: NT falls firmly within the two nearly-overlapping isoglosses of possessor-Head and adjective-HEAD. This area begins with East Caucasian languages, including Udi, extending southward through Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani, and within northern Iran includes Caspian languages (Gilaki, Mazanderani), N., C., and S. Talyshi, and N., C., and S. Tati. On the southeast, the possessor isogloss just starts to fade out with Vafsi, the southernmost Tati variety, which has a highly mixed typology of possessor-HEAD and HEAD-possessor. Vafsi adjectival modification, however, is more predominately head-initial but with slightly more head-final typology than, say, Bakhtiari or Persian to the south. On the west, these two isoglosses stop when we reach the Zagros area with all varieties of Kurdish and Neo-Aramaic, where these two isoglosses are exclusively head-initial.

3.2.3 Numeral Classifiers; Indefinite articles

When a numeral in Talyshi precedes a noun, a universal numeral classifier (UNC) *g(ï)læ*, meaning 'seed, kernel, grain' is regularly placed between the numeral and the noun, whether human, other animate, or inanimate:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (14 | *dï gïlæ aylæ* | *penj gïlæ mašin* | *šæš gïlæ hunduška* |
| a,b,c) | two UNC family | five UNC car | six UNC turkey |
| | 'two families' (22) | 'five cars' (L3: 21a) | 'six turkeys' (LGr4: 22/117) |

The numeral *i* 'one' often appears as an enclitic form after the UNC (*glæ=y*), which is used either as a numeral (ex. 15) or an indefinite article (ex. 16). See also sent.[12] (20) above for additional examples of *glæ=y* as indefinite articles.

(15) *glæ=y pæs e-si-ǽ=y°* *čï pæs-on=kü.* ° < *e-si-æ-ǽ=y*

UNC=one sheep PVB-break-PPL=3S$_1$ from sheep-PL=KÜ PVB-break-PST-PPL=3S$_1$

'One sheep broke away from the (other) sheep.' (MP: L3: 20)

(16) *glæ=y neči ištæ šï do-y°* *bæ pæs-on dïlæ.*

UNC=one wolf self throwing? give.PST-AUX to sheep-PL inside

'A wolf threw itself into the middle of the sheep.' (MP: L3: 20)

°(This verb in other NT varieties is *šo do-e*, see Pireĭko: 262)

An indefinite article, however, is not obligatory in NT:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (17 | *neči guduz neči=e.* | *tævæ čï-mï dast=ædæ be-Ø.* |
| a,b) | wolf rabid wolf=COP.3s | axe GEN.PR-I.OBL hand=ÆDÆ COP.PST-3S$_1$ |
| | 'The wolf is a rabid wolf.' | 'There was an axe in my hand.' |
| | (LGr4: 25) | (MP: L3: 20) |

[12] Cross references in the body of the article that begin with 'sent.' or are unmarked refer to sentences in the Piriyev narrative, while those with 'ex.' refer to other example sentences provided in the body of article in the grammatical descriptions.

Areality: The areal distribution of simple numeral classifier systems, including use with the lexeme meaning 'how many, a few' (NT: *čan(d)*) is treated more fully in Stilo (2018b). Briefly stated, the NC systems of many Iranian languages, Azerbaijani, and Armenian usually have two or three basic classifiers, depending on the language, with at least one of these optionally devoted to humans. Except for Gilaki, Mazanderani, all Northern, Central, Southern Talyshi varieties and Caucasian Tat in the Caspian area, where numeral classifiers are obligatory or nearly so, NCs in other languages (e.g., colloquial Persian) are often optional. Gilaki and Mazanderani also seem to have only one classifier, =*ta* with no separate NC for human nouns. It is of note that the form of the universal numeral classifier of many Iranian languages, *dane*/*dánæ*, which, like Talyshi *g(ə)læ* and Armenian *haṭ*, means 'seed, kernel, grain', has also been borrowed into Turkic, Neo-Aramaic and Udi (most likely via Azerbaijani).

### 3.2.4 Adposition typology

Adpositions in Talyshi present various complex issues centering around two points: (1) their formal typology, which includes prepositions, postpositions and circumpositions (all of which can be simplex or compound), and adpositions that double as either prepositions or postpositions; and (2) the fact that some adpositions are highly polysemous. For a fuller exposition of adpositions in Talyshi and the larger area, please see Stilo (2009, 2012).

Postpositions are only slightly more numerous than prepositions in NT, but some can vacillate between both categories. On the other hand, a careful assessment of the typology and frequency of circumpositions remains to be conducted.

We can see a sample of adpositional polysemy in the following four postpositions as given in Pireĭko (1976). The categories of ablative and comparative, for example, may be encoded by three postpositions each (in addition to compounds and circumpositions not included here), although each one may show certain differences in nuance from the others. Note also that ex. (19) shows an additional fourth strategy, =*o*, for encoding an ablative (see also ex. (63b) for another token of =*o* and ex. (75) for the ablative preposition *čï*):

Table 3: Polysemies of four common postpositions

| Adpos. | Adpositional Polysemies | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| =*ædæ* | ablative | locative | | comparative | + 2 add'l uses |
| =*kü* | ablative | locative | allative | comparative | + 5 add'l uses |
| *čï* | ablative | | | | |
| =*sæ* | superessive | | | comparative | + 2 add'l uses |

Postpositions

(18 a,b) *kælbo mænsïm-í=kü* *az ræ-ræ o-gard-ím aγl-on=kü.*
Kælbo Mænsïm-OBL=KÜ I quick-quick PVB-turn-$1S_{1B}$ child-PL=KÜ
'from Kælbo Mænsïm.' 'I quickly turned back toward the kids.'
(10) (L4: 24)

(19) *pæs-on e-šé-n tækæbæleli=o.*
sheep-PL PVB-go.PST-$3P_1$ PN=from
'The sheep went down from Takabaleli (village)' (MP: L3: 20)
(Note here a fourth adposition for encoding the ablative)

Other polysemies of adpositions are also found commonly cross-linguistically:

Prepositions

| | Goal: *bæ* 'to' | Recipient: *bæ* 'to' | Addressee: *bæ* 'to' |
|---|---|---|---|
| (20 a,b,c) | *še-m bæ boku* | *bǐ-dæ bæ mï* | *bæ štæ bibi vot=e* |
| | go.PST-$1S_1$ to Baku | IRR-give.PRS to I.OBL | to self aunt say=AUX |
| | 'I went to Baku.' | 'Give (it) to m | 'He told his aunt.' |
| | (L3: 8) | (L3: 4) | (L3: 2) |

| | Instrumental: *dï* 'with' | Comitative: *dï* 'with' |
|---|---|---|
| (21 a,b) | *dï dast-í æ-dïv-i-n?* | *dï anzulož-on köčmíš b-æ̀-n.* |
| | with hand-OBL AUG-harvest-IMPF-$3P_1$ | with Anzului-PL migrated COP.PST-PPL-$3P_1$ |
| | 'Would they harvest hand?' (MP: L3: 9) | 'They migrated with the Anzuluis.' (5) |

Benefactive, purposive: *bo_=ro, bo_ , _=ro* 'for'

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (22 | *bo* | *dave* | *bast-e=ro,…* | | *čič* | *bǐ-nvišt-o-m* | *az* | *bo* | *tï?* |
| a,b) | for | feud | brake-INF=for | | what | IRR-write-OPT-1S1 | I | for | you |
| | 'For stopping the feud (i.e., in order to stop the feud),…' (24) | | | | 'What should I write for you? (L3: 3) | | | | |

Circumpositions

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (23 | *bæ* | *sæ* | *anzulužˇ-í=sæ* | | *bæ* | *pæs-on* | *dïlæ* | |
| a,b) | to | on | Anzului-OBL=on | | to | sheep-PL | within | |
| | '…than the Anzuluis (lit: upon the Anzuluis).' (7) | | | | 'into the middle of the (herd of) sheep' (MP: L3: 20) (for full sentence see ex. 67.) | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (24 | *čï* | *pæs-on=kü.* | | *čï* | *dï* | *kæ-y* | *ara=dæ* | |
| a,b) | from | sheep-PL=KÜ | | from | two | house-OBL | between=ÆDÆ | |
| | from the (other) sheep.' | | | 'between two houses' (22) | | | | |

For other circumpositions see exx. 15, 16.

Areality: NT and its nearest Iranian neighbor, Caucasian Tat – although both located in the heart of a head-final postpositional zone – display highly mixed adpositional typology (noun-ADP, ADP-noun, ADP-noun-ADP). The languages surrounding these two groups – that is, East Caucasian, Georgian, Armenian, Caspian languages, Central and Southern Talyshi and North, Central and Southern Tati – are all predominately head-final. Vafsi, to the south of S. Tati, and the Central Dialects north of Esfahan form a transitional zone with highly mixed typology of prepositions, postpositions, circumpositions and alternating adpositions. The Kurdish area also shows mixed typology with prepositions (dominant) and circumpositions, but Neo-Aramaic in the same area is exclusively prepositional.

### 3.3 Generalities on verbs

3.3.1 Northern Talyshi verb stems

In order to understand ergativity (see 3.4.1) in its details in NT, it is first important to understand the morphological relationship between present and past verb stems in this language. The point here is that a considerable number of stems, including many high-frequency verbs, have merged the present and past stems in favor of past stems. This feature is not shared by Central and Southern Talyshi but is shared by some varieties of N. Tati (see Stilo 2015). The stems of most verbs directly

affect the triggering of split alignment in the language, leading to special considerations in NT in light of this innovation in verb stem formation. There are four categories of present-past verb stems in NT, as shown below. Types A, B, C are very common, while the type D is quite restricted.

(A) past stems that add *-æ* to present[13]:

| Intransitive | | | Transitive | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pres. | Past | | Pres. | Past | |
| *ræs* | *ræsæ* | 'arrive' | *kæš* | *kæšæ* | 'pull' |
| *liv* | *livæ* | 'move (intrans.)' | *kü* | *kü(y)æ* | 'pound' |
| *næv* | *nævæ* | 'walk around, go for walk; look for | *zïn* | *zïnæ* | 'know' |
| | | | *mæs* | *mæsæ* | 'hear' |

(B) past stems that add *-i* to present:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *gïn* | *gïni* | 'fall' | *viž(ï)n* | *viž(ï)ni* | 'choose, pick out' |
| | | | *bïr(ï)n* | *bïr(ï)ni* | 'cut' |

All types of causative verbs belong to type B, although their intransitive counterparts may belong to types A or C:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *ræs* | *ræsæ* | 'arrive' | *ros(ï)n* | *ros(ï)ni* | 'send, deliver, accompany to destination' |
| *o-ræx* | *o-ræxæ* | 'end (intrans.)' | *o-rox(ï)n* | *oroxni* | 'end (trans)' |
| *gard* | *gard* | 'turn (intr.), turn around, go for walk, go around | *gordïn* | *gordïni* | 'turn (trans.), take on a walk/trip, take smne around' |

(C) those whose present and past stems have merged, generally in favor of the past stem – mostly those verbs whose past stem ends in *-d* or *-t*:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *nïšt* | *nïšt* | 'sit' | *kïšt* | *kïšt* | 'kill' |
| *mand* | *mand* | 'stay' | *hand* | *hand* | 'read, study, sing' |
| *mard* | *mard* | 'die' | *arïšt* | *arïšt* | 'break' |
| *gard* | *gard* | 'turn, go for trip' | *nïvïšt* | *nïvïšt* | 'write' |
| *vit* | *vit* | 'run; flee' | *vit* | *vit* | 'sift' |

(D) A handful of verbs distinguish the two stems in irregular ways, as in most other Iranian languages and are among the most common verbs in Talyshi (not all verbs of this category are listed here):

[13] The distinction of present vs. past stems of Type A, *ræs*/*ræsæ*, here was first pointed out by Kaye (2013: 201). Pireĭko (1976) does not recognize this distinction, but she does recognize Type B here. Miller (1953) makes no specific mention to Types A or B.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *(v)o* | *omæ* | 'come' | *žæn* | *žæ* | 'strike, hit' |
| *šü ~ ši* | *še* | 'go' | *kæ* | *ka(rd)* | 'do, make' |
| *bü ~ b* | *be* | 'be, become' | *dæ* | *do* | 'give' |
| | | | *næ* | *no* | 'put' |
| | | | *væ* | *va(rd)* | 'bring' |
| | | | *s(t)æn* | *sæ* | 'take, get, buy |

In all cases but type A above, the infinitive of the verb is formed by adding the formant *-e* to the past stem. In the case of type A, the final *-æ* of the past stem is dropped: (B) *gïni-e* 'to fall', (C) *nïšt-e* 'to sit', (D) *do-e* 'to give', but (A) *ræsæ > ræs-e* 'to arrive'.

The verbs of the first group of examples below are of type D stem formation:

Irregular forms

(25 *…ki æv b-o-Ø* *omǽ-ym bæ kæ.*

a,b) SUB He IRR-come.PRS-3S1 come.PST-1S1 to house

'…that he come' (10) 'I came home.' (L3: 8)

(26 *ki váng kǽ-mon* *váng=ïžon kàrd=e*

a,b) who sound do.SBJ-1P1 call=3P2.AG do.PST=AUX

'Who should we call?' (29) 'They called.' (DLS)

---

The verbs in the group below do not distinguish present from past stems. Paradigms on the left would have been (diachronically) formed with the present stem while those on the right are all formed with the past stem:

Subjunctive Preterite

(27 *xün-í bæpé bǐ́-bast-iš.* *xün=ïž bast=e.*

a,b) blood-OBL must IRR-stop-2S1 blood=3S2.AG stop=AUX

'You must stop the blood (feud).' (31) 'He stopped the blood (feud).' (DLS)

Optative Present Perfect

(28 *az bæpé bǐ́-nïvïšt-o-m.* *ïm=ïm nïvïšt-ǽ.*

a,b) I must IRR-write-OPT-1S1 this=1S2.AG write-PPL

'I must write' (LGr: 2) 'I have written this.' (L3: 3)

| | Imperfect | Past Perfect |
|---|---|---|
| (29 | *taxïl æ-kašt-í-yon?* | *æ merd=ižon kíšt-æ.* |
| a,b) | grain AUG-plant-IMPF-2P$_1$ | that man=3P$_2$.AG kill-PPL |
| | 'Did you use to plant grain?' (MP: L3: 8) | 'They killed that man.' (33) |

3.3.2 Preverbs

The preverbs of most Iranian languages are lexical prefixes of the verbs that add a slight modification to the semantics of the verb root but in many cases make a drastic shift in sense that doesn't seem to have any apparent connection to the meaning of the basic root.

| Basic verb root | Derived verb root | |
|---|---|---|
| *nïšt* 'sit' | *dæ-nïšt* | 'bathe (take bath), go for a swim' |
| | *o-nïšt* | 'mock, make fun of' |
| | *pe-nïšt* | 'mount (horse, etc.)' |
| *kïšt* 'kill' | *o-kïšt* | 'put out fire, turn off light' |
| | *e-kïšt* | 'beat (in contest); excel over' |
| | *dæ-kïšt* | 'stick into a stack (e.g., book)' |
| | *pe-kïšt* | 'pester by asking repeatedly' |

3.3.3 Synthetic vs. Analytic Tense-Aspect-Mood paradigms of the verb

NT has both synthetic and analytic verb paradigms. Some additional low frequency paradigms have been ignored in this article (but see Stilo, 2018a).

3.3.3.1 Synthetic typology

The first five paradigms below, exemplified by the Type D verb *sæn~stæn/sæ* 'take, buy, get', use the present stem of the verb (PR). The preterite and perfects, using the past stem (PT), make a sharp morphological distinction according to transitivity:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| subjunctive: | *bí-sæn-ïm* | (IRR-PR-Set$_{1a}$) |
| imperative: | *bí-sæn* | (IRR-PR) |
| optative: | *bí-sæn-o-m* | (IRR-PR-OPT-Set$_{1a}$) |
| imperfect: | *æ-sæn-í-m* | (AUG-PR-IMPF-Set$_{1a}$) |
| past subjunctive: | *b-ǽ-sæn-i-m* | (IRR-AUG-PR-IMPF-Set$_{1a}$) |
| preterite (trans): | *sǽ=m=e* | (PT=Set$_2$=AUX) |
| preterite (intrans): | *vít=im* 'I ran' | (PT=Set$_{1b}$) |

3.3.3.2 Analytic typology and short forms

One type of analytic paradigm builds three tenses on formulas using locative or allative adpositions and the copula as AUX. The first two of these also have short forms:

| Present; Past Progressive | Future |
|---|---|
| [infinitive + adpos.$_{locative}$ + copula$_{pres/past}$] | [adpos.$_{allative}$ + infinitive + copula] |

(Infinitive: *vot-é* 'to say')

Present tense: *vot-é=dæ=m* 'I say, am saying'; short form: *vót=dæ=m*[14]

Past Progressive: *vot-é=dæ b-im* 'I was saying'; short form: *vót=dæ b-im*

Future: *bæ-vot-é=m* 'I will say'

Analytic tense formations with adpositions are cross-linguistically common, e.g., German *ich bin am essen*, Dutch *ik ben aan het eten*, Azerbaijani *mən yeməkdəyəm*, Turkish *ben yemekteyim*, but this typology is reserved for progressive forms in these languages, whereas for NT it is used for the simple Present and the Past Progressive/Durative, but see also the comments in Tables 6 and 7 below for the comparison of these forms in NT and Central Talyshi. As we shall see below, the copular element in the Lerik zone is leftwardly mobile.

Another type of analytic typology forms the perfect tenses – Present Perfect, Past Perfect, and Subjunctive Perfect – on the formula [past participle + AUX/copula] (see paradigms under 3.3.9 Evidentiality below).

3.3.4 Negation of the verb

Negation in NT differs partially from most West Iranian languages since in those analytic paradigms formed with a copula/AUX (present, future, past durative, the perfect tenses) the negative is expressed in the AUX in NT and follows the verb root. In the paradigms formed synthetically (subjunctive, optative, preterite, imperfect, past subjunctive) the negator morpheme appears at the beginning of the word, as in most Iranian languages:

[14] Both short forms here delete the infinitive formant *-e* and move the stress to the verb stem.

Prefixed negator morpheme

Preterite

(30 a,b) *n-ómæ-y bæ kæ.*
NEG-come.PST-3S1 to house
'S/he didn't come home.'
(L3: 2)

Imperfect

*næšæ n-ǽ-zn-i-m čič=e.*
drugs NEG-AUG-know-IMPF-1S1 what=COP.3S1
'I didn't know what narcotics are.'
(L3: 5)

Subjunctive

(31) *bï-dæ pæs mïrdol nǻ́-bu-Ø.*
IRR-give sheep carrion NEG-COP.SBJ-3S1
'May the sheep not become *hæram* (i.e., religiously inedible due to the way it was killed, in this case, potentially by a wolf).' (L3: 22)

Postposed negative AUX

Present tense

(32 a,b) *zïn=dæ=š čič=e?*
know=DUR=2S1 what=COP.3S1
'Do you know what it is?'
(L3: 2)

*mïn=æn zïn=dæ ni-m bo.či.*
I=ADD know=DUR AUX.NEG-1S1 for.what
'And I don't know why.' (L3: 4)

Present perfect

(33) *tangæbïniž-ón dï anzulož-ón bæ ro š-æ ni-n.*
Tangæbini-PL with Anzului-PL to road go-PPL AUX.NEG-3P1
'The Tangabinis did not get along with the Anzuluis (evidential form).'

(For the contrast of negation in the preterite vs. present perfect see also exx. 48a, b below)

Past perfect

(34) *mï heč neči vind-æ nǘ-be.*
I.OBL no wolf see-PPL NEG-AUX.PST
'I had not seen any wolf.'(MP: L3: 20)

3.3.5 $Set_1$/$Set_2$, intransitive and transitive conjugations

Verbs built synthetically on the present stem of the verb show no distinction in transitivity. As mentioned above, however, there is a strict distinction between intransitive and transitive verbs in the preterite and the various perfect tenses. The distinction centers mainly around the use of the two types of Person-Agreement Markers (PAMs), $Set_1$ and $Set_2$. As we shall see below (3.4.1.3), those TAM paradigms built with $Set_1$ trigger Nominative-Accusative alignment, while those formed on $Set_2$ trigger Ergative alignment.

Table 4, Two sets of Person-Agreement Markers and subtypes

| Direct PAMs ($Set_1$) | | | Conjugations | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Suffix: Subjunct. ($Set_{1a}$) | Suffix: Intrans. Preterite ($Set_{1b}$) | Clitic: Copula/AUX | Subjunctive 'to sit' | Intrans. Preterite |
| *-ïm* | *-im* | *=im* | *bǘ-nïšt-ïm* | *nǘšt-im* |
| *-ïž ~ -iš* | *-iž ~ -iš* | *=iž ~ -iš* | *bǘ-nïšt-ïž* | *nǘšt-iž* |
| *-ï* | *-e* | *=e* | *bǘ-nïšt-ï* | *nǘšt-e* |
| *-ïmon#* | *-imon* | *=imon* | *bǘ-nïšt-ïmon* | *nǘšt-imon* |
| *-ï(š)on°* | *-(iš)on* | *=(iš)on* | *bǘ-nïšt-ïšon* | *nǘšt-išon* |
| *-ïn* | *-in* | *=in* | *bǘ-nïšt-ïn* | *nǘšt-in* |

#Pireĭko (1976: 342) gives the above 1st person plural subjunctive form, but Miller (1953: 146) only lists the person marker as *-æmon* and gives (pp. 147-8) ample examples. These two morphemes may represent alternate forms. In my recordings, I also hear *b(ï)-š-ámon* [*pšámon*] 'let's go'. This point needs further investigation.

°While the 2nd pl. form in most NT varieties is *še-yon,* the usual Lerik form is *še-šon ~ še-žon*. The more widespread form *še-yon* is also heard here, e.g., M.P.: *piadæ še-yon omæ-yon?* 'Did you go and come (back) on foot?'

| Oblique PAMs ($Set_2$) | Conjugations | |
|---|---|---|
| | Preterite, trans. | Experiencer |
| | 'wrote' | 'want', Present |
| *=ïm* | *nïvíšt=ïm=e* | *pidǽ=m=e* |
| *=ï* | *(nïvíšt=ï=e)°* | *(pidǽ=ï=e)°* |
| *=ïž ~ =ïš* | *nïvíšt=ïž=e* | *pidǽ=ž=e* |
| *=ïmon* | *nïvišt=ïmon=e* | *pidǽ=mon=e* |
| *=on ~ =ïn* | *nïvíšt=ïn=e* | *pidǽ=n=e* |
| *=ïžon ~ =ïšon* | *nïvíšt=ïžon=e* | *pidǽ=žon=e* |

°The 2nd sg. forms are phonologically awkward because the vowel of the $Set_2$ marker merges with the following *=e* and is lost. To resolve this issue, the marker may be either (1) deleted, since past transitive verbs with no PAM in any person are often encountered in discourse (see 3.4.2.1 below) or (2) fronted to a preceding word in the clause (see ex. 6 above).

$Set_{1b}$ as copula

$Set_{1b}$ PAMs commonly occurs as clitics in their use as a copula:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (35 | *ægrænom=im.* | *tï č-æmæ fæxrí γonaγ=iš.* |
| a,b) | agronomist=$1S_{1b}$ | you GEN.PR-we honored guest=$2S_{1b}$ |
| | I am an agronomist.' | 'You are our honored guest.' |
| | (L3: 17) | (L3: 19) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (36 | *norozi ni-mon.* | *ïš-tï familya čič=e?* |
| a,b) | dissatisfied COP.NEG-$1P_1$ | GEN.PR-you last.name what=COP.$3S_1$ |
| | 'We are not dissatisfied.' | 'What is your last name?' |
| | (L3: 18) | (L3: 4) |

Areality: The $Set_1$ clitic that functions as a present tense copula is a widespread areal feature in the AILA zone that includes most Iranian languages of the area (with some variation of the vowel, especially in the 3rd sg., depending on the language), Azerbaijani (*gedir**sən*** vs. *türk=**sən***), Neo-Aramaic varieties (with some modifications), Armenian and its dialects, and Udi. This isogloss stops with the Kartvelian family in the northwest of the zone, where there is an independent copula base, and with Arabic dialects in the southwest of the zone, where there is no present tense copula.

3.3.6 Existence and predicative possession

3.3.6.1 Existence ('there is/are')

The existence verb ('there is/are') in NT, *hést-e ~ hĺst-e*, is related to Persian هست/ *hæst* but is used slightly differently. This verb in NT is only used for existence and does not assume a copular usage, as it can in Persian, e.g., when stressed or when it stands alone. Also, in NT it combines with the past AUX to form its past tense *hïst be* 'there was'.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (37 | *íyo mivǽ hĺst-e.* | *muzikant=æn hïst be-Ø?* |
| a,b) | here fruit EXIST-3S$_{1b}$ | musician=ADD EXIST AUX.PST-3S$_1$ |
| | There is fruit | 'Were there musicians, too?' |
| | here.' (L2: 6) | (MP: L2: 5) |

Areality: Iranian, Turkic, Armenian, Neo-Aramaic and Udi have a distinct defective verb or verb-like particle to encode existence (Kartvelian lacks an equivalent). Some languages have a dedicated negative form (Turkic) while others affix the usual negator to the affirmative (Armenian, Neo-Aramaic, Udi); Iranian has neither. Some languages form a past by adding an affix of pastness (or a past copula) to the present form (Talyshi, Turkic, Armenian, Neo-Aramaic, Udi, but not most Iranian varieties other than Talyshi). In all these languages, the paradigms (including negative and past in Iranian) that lack an existence form (subjunctive, future, etc.) supplement these forms with the paradigms of 'be' or 'become'.

3.3.6.2 Predicative possession ('have')

The existence verb *hĺst-e* is also used to encode 'have' in NT: the possessor noun is in the oblique case – genitive for pronouns – and a Set$_2$ is usually (but optionally) hosted by the possessum. The Set$_2$ oblique clitic can move to a position between the verb/verboid and the AUX: *hĺst=ïš=e* 's/he has', cf. *var=ïm=dï* 'I have' in colloquial Azerbaijani. The usual copula may occasionally also alternate with the existence verb in this construction:

| | Analytic Predicative Possession | Copula as existence |
|---|---|---|
| (38 | *žïgo prablem-on=ïšon hĺst-e.* | *ko=m=e.* |
| a,b) | such problem-PL=3P$_2$.PO exist-3S$_{1b}$ | work=1S$_2$.PO=COP.3S$_1$ |
| | 'They have problems like | 'I have something to do (lit: I |
| | these.' (L4: 23/119) | have business).' (LStr3: 13b) |

Negative Predicative Possession

(39 *čï-mï dï gïlæ zoæ hïst-e, kinæ=m ni.*

a,b) GEN.PR-I.OBL two UNC son exist-AUX daughter=1P2.PO NEG.COP

'I have two sons; I don't have daughters.' (L3: 4)

Areality: A transitive 'have'-verb exists east of a line that groups together Gilaki, Mazanderani, S. Talyshi, most Tati languages, Bakhtiari, Persian, etc. To the west of this line, Northern and Central Talyshi, Northern Tati, Caucasian Tat, as well as Kurdic, Zazaki, Hawrami, Azerbaijani, Udi, Georgian, and Semitic have periphrastic 'have'-constructions formed with existence particles/verboids. Armenian and its dialects, which have a transitive have-verb, represent an island inside the western periphrastic zone.

3.3.7 Subjunctive vs. Optative

While the other NT dialect zones generally retain a distinction between subjunctive and optative, the varieties of the Lerik district have mostly merged these two moods in favor of the latter form (see also exx. 22b, 28a, 43, 45b, 56). The subjunctive still occasionally appears in my Lerik corpus, as well (see also sent. 10, 29; exx. 27a, 31).

| | Optative | Subjunctive |
|---|---|---|
| (40 | *γásdi bǐ-z(ï)n-o-Ø.* | *xün-í bæpé bǐ-bast-ïš.* |
| a,b) | perhaps IRR-know-OPT-3S1 | blood-OBL must IRR-stop-2S1 |
| | 'Perhaps he knows.' (LStr: 10) | 'You must stop the blood (feud).' (31) |

3.3.8 Modals

The dependent verb after modals usually appears in the optative (or subjunctive) mood, but with some modals there is the possibility – or the preference – for the infinitive:

Infinitive with *zïn/zïnæ* 'can, know'

With *z(ï)n/z(ï)næ* 'can', the infinitive is the preferred form of the subordinate verb and the latter usually follows the modal, but it may also precede it. This modal often loses the *z-* of the stem in the future tense (see sent. 28 in the narrative for the form with -z-):

Modal + infinitive

(41 a,b)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *ïm* | *ko-y* | *bæ-n-é=š* | | *ïm* | *pæs-on=ïm* | *nḯ-zn-æ=y* | |
| this | work-OBL | FUT-know-INF= COP.2S1 | | this | sheep-PL=1S2.AG | NEG-know-PST= AUX | |
| > | *kard-é?* | | | > | *va* | *do-y.* | |
| | do-INF | | | | ? | give-INF | |

'Will you be able to do this thing?' (L3: 3)

'I couldn't leave these sheep (behind).' (L4: 21)

Infinitive + Modal

(42 a,b)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *ro-y* | *pæydo* | *kard-é* | *zïn=dæ* | *ni-Ø* | *tufan-í=ko* | |
| road-OBL | manifest | do-INF | know=DUR | NEG.COP-3S1 | storm-OBL=KÜ | |

'He can't find the road because of the storm.' (LOr: 24)

Modal *p/pe* 'want'

An overt experiencer 'subject' of the verb *p/pe* 'want' is oblique-case marked and is usually co-indexed by an oblique PAM ($Set_2$) clitic. The $Set_2$ clitic has optional leftward mobility ('fronting') in all tenses – similarly to the fronting of $Set_2$ encoding the agent of past tense transitive verbs (see 3.4.2 below). As 'want' *p/pe* may take either (1) an optative/subjunctive subordinate verb which follows the modal (ex. 43), or (2) an infinitive which usually precedes the modal (ex. 44a) but may also follow it (ex. 44b):

(43)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *æ-y* | *hežo* | *pí=dæ=ž=e* | *kitob* | *bá-hand-o-Ø.* | |
| s/he-OBL | always | want=DUR=3S2.EX=AUX | book | IRR-head-OPT-1S1.EX | |

'S/he always likes to read books.' (L2: 7)

°(irrealis *bḯ-* > *bá-* due to vowel harmony)

$Set_2$ fronted (44 a,b)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *dï* | *ti=š=æn* | | *om-e* | *pi=dæ?* | |
| with | you=3S2.EX=ADD | | come-INF | want=DUR | |
| 'Does he want to come with you, too?' (LOr: 9) | | | | | |

$Set_2$ unfronted, modal precedes

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *piæso* | *pí=dæ=ž=e* | | *š-e.* |
| PN | want=DUR=3S2.EX=AUX | | go-INF |
| 'He wants to go to Pirasora.' (Lor: 11) | | | |

Modal *bæpe* 'must' + subjunctive/optative

The modal *bæpe* 'must' is formed on the same verb root as 'want' in an invariable future-tense form but is neutral for tense. It takes an optative/subjunctive and precedes the subordinate verb. The lack of a $Set_2$ clitic formally distinguishes this modal from 'want'. Also the subject of *bæpe* 'must' is never marked by the oblique case (see 45b, 46a, b):

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (45 | *sipriš-í* | *lüz* | *bæpe* | *yol* | *bǐ-bu-Ø.* | | *az* | *bæpe* | *bǐ-vot-o-m.* | |
| a,b) | whitebeard-OBL | belly | must | large | IRR-COP.SBJ-3S1 | | I | must | IRR-say-OPT-1S1 | |
| | 'A wise elder's belly must be big.' (43) | | | | | | 'I have to say (it).' | | | |

Since *bæpe* is tense-neutral, past time is encoded in the subordinate verb. Only the past subjunctive is used in past time, even in the Lerik zone, since the optative has no equivalent past paradigm. To form the past subjunctive, the irrealis morpheme *bǐ-* is prefixed to the imperfect, but *bǐ-* is suppressed with preverbs, while initial stress is retained:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (46 | *az* | *bæpe* | *b-ǽ-vot-i-m°.* | | *az* | *bæpe* | *d-ǽ-ništ-i-m°,* | *ov* | *nǐ-be-Ø.* | |
| a,b) | I | must | IRR-AUG-say-IMPF-1S1 | | I | must | PVB-AUG-sit-IMPF-1S1 | water | NEG-COP.PST-3S1 | |
| | 'I had to tell him ~ I was supposed to tell him.' | | | | 'I was supposed to bathe, (but) there wasn't any water.' (LStr: 7) | | | | | |

(LStr: 5) °(**bǐ-æ-vot-i-m > b-ǽ-vot-i-m*; **dǽ-æ-ništ-i-m > d-ǽ-ništ-i-m*)

3.3.9 Evidentiality and the Present Perfect

The present perfect of NT is used instead of the preterite in cases of evidentiality, that is, when a speaker shows that her assertion about a past event is not from direct observation. Since the above narration of Mr. Piriyev portrays events that he himself did not observe, he used the perfect throughout, except in cases of direct speech or the historical present, which includes all of segments 21 to 47 of this text.

The preterite and present perfect are distinguished as follows: (1) the intransitive preterite is formed on the past stem + $Set_{1b}$ PAMs (*vít-im* 'I ran', but (2) in transitive preterite verbs $Set_2$ PAMs are used and an invariable AUX appears in final position (*vót=ïm=e* 'I said'). (3) In the perfect, a stressed participial formant *-ǽ* is suffixed to the stem (*vit-ǽ=m* 'I have run', *vot-ǽ=m(=e)* 'I have said'); (4) The AUX mentioned in point 2 seems to be optional in the present perfect, cf. Lerik field notes (*nïvïst-ǽ=šon=e* 'they have written', but *hard-ǽ=šon* 'they have eaten' (the lexical choice has no bearing on the issue); (5) the negatives of the two tenses are formed differently (see negation above); (6) With polysyllabic intransitive stems, the PAMs of the preterite are $Set_{1b}$ while the perfect

PAMs are Set$_{1a}$: (Pret.) *ræsǽ-ym*[15] 'I arrived' vs. (Pres. Perf.) *ræsǽ-m* 'I have arrived'; (7) With monosyllabic intransitive stems, the contrast in the two tenses is realized by different vowels: (Pret.) *be-m* 'I was' vs. (Pres. Perf.) *b-æ-m* 'I have been', as we see in Table 5:

Table 5, Preterite vs. Present Perfect, NT, Lerik zone

| Monosyllabic stems | | | | Polysyllabic stems | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Preterite | | Pres. Perfect | | Preterite | Pres. Perfect |
| *še-m* | *be-m* | *šæ-m* | *bæ-m* | *nævǽ-ym* | *nævǽ-m* |
| *še-š* | *be-š* | *šæ-š* | *bæ-š* | *nævǽ-yš* | *nævǽ-š* |
| *še-Ø* | *be-Ø* | *šæ-Ø* | *bæ-Ø* | *nævǽ-y* | *nævǽ-Ø* |
| *še-mon* | *be-mon* | *šæ-mon* | *bæ-mon* | *nævǽ-ymon* | *nævǽ-mon* |
| *še-šon* | *be-šon* | *šæ-šon* | *bæ-šon* | *nævǽ-yšon* | *nævǽ-šon* |
| *še-n* | *be-n* | *še-n* | *bæ-n* | *nævǽ-yn* | *nævǽ-n* |
| 'go' | 'be' | 'go' | 'be' | 'go around, go for walk/drive' | |

Preterite vs. evidential use Present perfect in narratives

| | Direct knowledge | Indirect knowledge (Present Perfect) |
|---|---|---|
| (47 | *omæ-yn tækæbileli=o.* | *om-ǽ-n bæ jaynævü.* |
| a,b) | come.PST-3P1b PN=from | come.PST-PPL-3P1a to Jænginævud |
| | 'They came from Takabileli (village).' (MP: L3: 20) | 'They came to Jænginævud.' (5) |
| (48 | *tï væy nǻ-b-iš.* | *tï væy b-æ n-iš.* |
| a,b) | you there NEG-COP-PST-2S1b | you there COP-PPL NEG-2S1b |
| | 'You weren't there.' (LGr3: 28) | '(I heard) you weren't there.' (LGr3: 28) |

[15] In other dialects of NT, the glide in such words monophthongizes: (Lerik) *ræsǽ-ym* > (other dial.) *ræsém* (Pret.) *vs. ræsǽm* (Perf.). This process also seems to explain the different vowels of the preterite in monosyllabic roots (point 7 here).

## 3.4 SYNTACTIC ISSUES

### 3.4.1 Alignment in Northern Talyshi

Talyshi, like many Iranian languages except for Persian (among others), shows a split in alignment: (1) those tenses that are based on the present stem of the verb (3.3.3 above) show *Nominative-Accusative* (henceforth 'accusative') *alignment*. Analytically-formed tenses built on infinitives and copulas also show accusative alignment. (2) With transitive verbs, all tenses based on the past stem – (synthetic) the preterite and (analytic) the perfect tenses – show *Ergative alignment*, as discussed below.

The term 'alignment' for NT refers to a constellation of features in two domains of the clause syntax: (A) what the case marking of A ('agent', the subject of transitive verbs) and P ('Patient', direct object) is in relationship to the S ('subject' of intransitive verbs), and (B) the role of the two sets of PAMs, $Set_1$ ('direct') and $Set_2$ ('oblique'), in verbal agreement. For example, in languages with accusative alignment, e.g., Azerbaijani, Persian, Russian, English, etc., there is no tense-based split and the A and the S always *align* with each other by using the 'Nominative' case, while the direct object (P) is marked differently ('accusative' case). The verb here agrees with both A and S arguments.

In ergative alignment, a common typology in the languages of the world, the case of the subject of intransitive verbs (S) and the direct object (P) align with each other, that is, are marked alike (Nominative or, in NT, Direct case) and the *subject/agent* of transitive verbs in these paradigms is marked differently (Ergative case or, in NT, Oblique case). As NT has split alignment, ergativity only appears in the preterite and perfect paradigms.

Future tense, accusative alignment

(49) *az toliši zïvon-i o-bæ-mut-é=m.*
1 Talyshi language-OBL PVB-FUT-learn-INF=$1S_1$
'I will learn Talyshi.' (LGr: 18)

Preterite tense, ergative alignment

(50) *mï toliši zïvon=ïm o-müt=e°.* °(< *o-müt=ïm=e*
I.OBL Talyshi language=$1S_{2.AG}$ PVB-learn.PST=AUX 'I learned')
'I learned Talyshi.' (LGr: 18) (the $Set_2$ PAM here is fronted to the object

#### 3.4.1.1 Ergative agents encoded by the oblique case

The central defining feature of ergative alignment in the past tenses in NT is the oblique-case marking of the subject/agent of transitive verbs, as in the sentences below. Note, in addition, that the direct objects in (51) and (52b) are not oblique marked as they would be in the paradigms of the present system, where accusative alignment is in effect:

(51) *ǽgær merd-í ištæ nom=iž sipriš no-a bu,…*
if man-OBL self name=3$S_2$.AG whitebeard put-PPL AUX.SBJ
'If a man has called himself a wise elder,…' (43)

(52 a,b) *æ-y čič vot=e?* *æv mï nǘ-gæt=e.*
s/he-OBL what say=AUX s/he-OBL I.OBL NEG-take=AUX
'What did he say?' (L3: 4) '*That*, I didn't take.' (L3: 7) (OSV word order)

(53) *ræjæbov-í vot=e háydi bï-nïvišt.*
PN-OBL say=AUX come.on! IRR-write
'Rajabov said come on and write (it down)!' (L3: 6)

Since there is no distinction in case in the plural in NT, all plural agents of transitive verbs and subjects of intransitive verbs are marked alike, i.e., they show neutral alignment:

(54) *tangæbïniž-on hayküy=žon kard-æ ni.*
Tangæbïni-PL hullabaloo=3$P_2$.AG do-PPL AUX.NEG
'The Tængæbinis didn't make (any) conflicts.' (14)

The 1st person singular pronoun as a direct object in the past tense, is an exception to the usual ergative alignment. This pronoun in this situation appears in the oblique case. Hence, the 1st sg. shows Double Oblique alignment in the past tense (see ex. 6b above).

In addition, in Ergative constructions in many languages, the verb agrees with the object (P) rather than the subject as, e.g., in Kurmanji Kurdish. This feature, however, is missing in NT and agreement is only with the agent, encoded with $Set_2$ (oblique) PAMs:

| | Intransitive | | | Transitive | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (55 | *az* | *o-gard-im* | *aγl-on=kü.* | *mï* | *pæs-on=ïm* | *gïrd* | *kard=e.* | |
| a,b) | I | PVB-turn-1S$_1$ | child-PL=KÜ | I.OBL | sheep-PL=1S$_{2.AG}$ | round | do.PST=AUX | |
| | 'I turned around to the kids.' (L4: 24) | | | 'I rounded up the sheep.' (MP: L3: 22) | | | | |

The split in alignment in NT is morphological in nature. That is, the use of the ergative corresponds to those tenses that are built upon the past stem of the verb, irrespective of the grammatical aspect or semantics of the verb. In NT, however, there are some complications in this regard since a significant number of verbs have lost the distinction in present vs. past stems. The alignment split with these verbs, however, is still retained and those same tenses of the verb stem types (A), (B) and (D) given above that are formed on the present stem and trigger accusative alignment, also trigger accusative alignment with type C verb stems, even though the original past stem now also serves as the present stem. Note in example (56) that the direct object has accusative-type (oblique) marking of the direct object in the optative, paralleling the alignment of all other stem types:

Optative (accusative alignment)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (56) | *pi=dæ=ž=e* | *bí-kïšt-o-Ø* | *odæm-i.* | |
| | want=DUR=3S$_2$.EX=AUX | IRR-kill-OPT-3S$_1$ | person-OBL | |

'It was going (lit: wanted) to kill someone.' (LOr: 14)

Preterite (ergative alignment)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (57) | *æ* | *merd=ïžon* | *kíšt-æ.* |
| | that | man=3P$_{2.AG}$ | kill-PPL |

'They killed that man.' (33)

The present tense (here, the historical present), formed analytically using a copula, also shows accusative alignment and the direct object is oblique-case marked:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (58) | *hamsiyæ* | *di=ædæ* | *gïlæ=y* | *merd-í* | *kíšt=æ=n°.* |
| | neighbor | village=ÆDÆ | UNC=INDEF | man-OBL | kill=DUR=3P$_1$ |

'In the neighboring village they kill a man.' (21) °(< *kíšt-é=dæ=n*, full form)

3.4.1.2 Northern Talyshi (here: Leriki) vs. Central Talyshi (Asalemi[16])

Tables 6 and 7 compare NT with Asalemi (Central Talyshi (CT), Iran). These comparisons allow us to envision what the most likely former (diachronic) organization of tenses in NT was before the loss of the present stem in type C verb stems.

Table 6: Verb paradigms triggering

Accusative alignment in two varieties of Talyshi

| | Present | Future° | Subjunct. | Imperfect | Past Subj. I |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NT | *gæt-é=dæ=m* | *bæ-gæt-é=m* | *bǐ-gæt-ïm* | *æ-gæt-í-m* | *b-ǽ-gæt-i-m* |
| CT | → → → | *bæ-gæt-í=m* | *bə́-ger-om* | *æ-ger-í-m* | *b-ǽ-ger-e-m* |

°This paradigm represents the future tense in NT but is the present tense in Central Talyshi (Asalemi). For a likely historical scenario in Leriki in which an original present tense became a future tense as an areal tendency, and the subsequent innovation of a new present tense, see Noorlander & Stilo, 2015). I have used the verb CT *ger*/*gæt* and NT *gæt*/*gæt* 'to take, grab, seize'.

Table 7: Verb paradigms triggering

Ergative alignment in two varieties of Talyshi

| | Preterite | Pres. Perf. | Past Perf. | Past Subj. II |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NT | *gǽt=ïm=e* | *gæt-ǽ=m=e* | *gæt-ǽ=m be* | *gæt-ǽ=m b-æ-bæ-y* |
| CT | *gǽt=əm=æ* | *gæt-ǽ=m=æ* | *gæt-ǽ=m bæ* | *gæt-ǽ=m b-e* |

The point of this comparison of Northern and Central Talyshi is to show that the morphological structure of the verb in Asalemi refects a likely parallel diachronic stage of NT. While present and past verb stems of some verbs have merged in NT, the role that the older forms must have played in triggering accusative alignment in those tenses that were built on the present stem of the verb has remained and has not changed after the expansion of the past stem into the realm of the verb paradigms of the present tenses.

3.4.1.3 Analytic verb paradigms that do and do not trigger ergativity rules

Having introduced the crucial factor of the diachronic relationship of past stems of transitive verbs to the triggering of ergative alignment in Northern Talyshi, it is also important to point out some major exceptions to this phenomenon. Analytical paradigms that are constructed via the use of infinitives and adpositions and the copula as AUX are not affected by these rules, even though the

[16] Asalemi materials presented here were collected in 1976 in Tehran from Mr. Amini of Siah-Bil, Asalem district, some 12 ½ KM south of Asalem city and some 89 KM northwest of Rasht. Some verb paradigms have been omitted from the tables presented here.

infinitive is formed on the original past verb stem. The important factor to keep in mind is that it is the intransitivity of the copula/AUX that blocks the need for ergative alignment in the following tenses: the present (formula: INF-LOC=AUX$_{PRES}$), past durative (formula: INF-LOC=AUX$_{PAST}$), future tense (formula: ALLATIVE=INF=AUX$_{PRES}$). That is, the AUX here is much more similar to a true copula (Progressive: 'I am in/at going', cf. older modern English: 'I'm a-going', with a- < 'at').

Note, however, that the perfect paradigms also use a copula/AUX but in fact show ergative alignment. Here the AUX does not have a true copular sense and it is the past participle that trigggers ergative alignment. In addition, the imperfect and imperfect subjunctive, which belong to the past domain semantically, are *morphologically* formed on the present stem of the verb and thus trigger accusative alignment:

Imperfect, present stem, accusative alignment (Object in oblique case)

(59) *ko æ-kæ-y-mon ištæ pul-í æ-stæn-í-mon.*
work AUG-do.PRS-IMPF-1P$_{1a}$ self money-OBL AUG-take.PRS-IMPF-1P$_{1a}$
'We used to work and get our money.' (L3: 3)

Present perfect, past stem, ergative alignment (Object in direct case)

(60) *kælbo mænsïm=æn č-æv-on tælæb=iž bæ vïræ ros-n-y-é.*
*Kælbo Mænsïm*=ADD GEN.PR-he-PL request=3S$_2$.AG to place arrive-CAUS-PST-PPL
'And Kælbo Mænsïm fulfilled their request.' (11)

Leftward mobility of Set$_1$ and Set$_2$ person-agreement markers (Fronting)

3.4.2 The mobility of Set$_2$ PAMs

Set$_2$ clitics that usually (but optionally) coindex the subject of past transitive verbs are quite mobile, most often fronting to some element to the left of the verb within the clause. These agreement clitics in NT are never hosted by the subject of the clause nor can they move to an element to the right of the verb. It is not uncommon to find Set$_2$ hosted by the verb, even when another element to the left is available. In this case they encliticize directly after the past stem and are most often followed by an AUX.

| | Unfronted | Fronted |
|---|---|---|
| (61 | *pát=ïm=e, sardon be-Ø.* | *čoštæ=m pat=e bo æγl-on.* |
| a,b) | cook=1S2.AG= AUX cool become.PST-3S1 | lunch=1S2.AG cook=AUX for child-PL |
| | 'I cooked (it) (and) it cooled off.' (LOr: 1) | 'I cooked lunch for the guys.' (LOr: 2) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (62 | *mol-on sæ=žon=e?* | *æv-on yandï=žon vind=e.* |
| a,b) | livestock-PL take.PST=3P2.AG=AUX | he-PL one.another=3P2.AG see=AUX |
| | 'Did they take the livestock?' (MP: L3: 13) | 'They saw each other.' (LOr: 3) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (63 | *mï č-æ-y=kü* | *ïm sïxan č-æ=y* |
| a,b) | I.OBL GEN.PR-he-OBL=KÜ | this speech GEN.PR-that-OBL |
| | > *mæs-é=m=e.* hear-PPL=1S2.AG=AUX | > *gav=o=m mæs-é.* mouth=from=1S2.AG hear-PPL |
| | 'I have heard (it) from him.' (LGr: 3) | 'I have heard this talk from his mouth.' (LGr: 3) |

The $Set_2$ agent clitic is also usually fronted from a light verb to the non-verbal element (NVE) in a light verb construction:

(64) *anzulož-on kælbo mænsïm-í=ku tælæb=ïžon kard-æ ki...*
Anzului-PL Kælbo Mænsïm-OBL=KÜ request=3P2.AG do.PST-PPL SUB
'For this (reason) the Anzuluis requested Kælbo Mænsïm to...' (10)

The immediately preverbal position is the most common destination for $Set_2$ fronting when other elements are available (see also exx. 10a, 50). But $Set_2$ clitics may also move farther to the left, as the next sentence shows (see also ex. 51). It is possible that the clitic placement, at least in some measure, is affected by information structure and prosodics, but this is a topic that will have to remain for future investigation.

(65) *kælbo mænsïm č-æv-on tælæb=ïž bæ vïræ ros-n-y-é.*

Kælbo Mænsïm GEN.PR-he-PL request=3S2.AG to place arrive.CAUS-CAUS-PST-PPL

'Kælbo Mænsïm fulfilled (lit: delivered into place) their request.' (11)

As we saw above with the modal 'want' (3.3.8), an experiencer argument is also coindexed by $Set_2$ clitics. However, $Set_2$ clitics coindex the experiencer argument in all tenses of these verbs and do not show any present-past split in their alignment. Again, the $Set_2$ clitics may remain with the verb or be fronted:

(66) *dï tï=š=æn om-e pi=dæ?*

with you=3S2.EX=ADD come-INF want=DUR

'Does he want to come with you, too?' (LOr: 9)

3.4.2.1 $Set_2$ deletion

It is occasionally possible to delete $Set_2$ in NT when the overt agent is present or the identity of the agent is otherwise clear from the context of discourse, as in the two examples below. For additional examples see sent. 20 and exx. 16, 34, 52a, 52b, 53.

(67) *žï še ištæ šï do=y bæ pæs-on dïlæ*

some thing self throwing? give=AUX to sheep-PL inside

'Something threw itself into the middle of the sheep.' (MP: L3: 20)

(That is, because of the fog MP could not see that it was a wolf.)

(68) *mï heč neči vindæ ni-be.*

I.OBL no wolf see.PPL NEG-AUX.PST

'I had not seen any wolf.' (MP: L3: 20)

3.4.2.2 $Set_1$ fronting and the leftward mobility of the AUX

In an unusual pattern for West Iranian languages, $Set_1$ AUX clitics are also leftwardly mobile in NT, but the triggering factor here is information structure and prosody: the $Set_1$ clitics generally move to the element in the clause that bears the main stress (marked with double stress accents here):

(69 *maštæ kæ=dæ bæ-b-ḗ=ž? maštæ kḗ=dæ=ž bæ-be?*
a,b) tomorrow home=ÆDÆ FUT-be-INF=2S1 tomorrow home=ÆDÆ=2S1 FUT-be-INF
'Will you be home tomorrow?' 'Will you be *home* tomorrow?'
(neutral, no special focus)

(70 *mắštæ=ž? kæ=dæ bæ-b-e? maštæ kæ=dæ nḯ-bæ-be=ž?*
a,b) tomorrow=2S1 home=ÆDÆ FUT-be-INF tomorrow home=ÆDÆ NEG-FUT-be-INF=2S1
'Will you be home *tomorrow*?' 'Won't you be home tomorrow?'
(no special focus; negatives always bear main stress in the clause)

(71) *inson-í hæyat=ædæ maraγlï an-on vḗ=n b-e=dæ.*
person-OBL life=ÆDÆ interesting moment-PL very=3P1 be-INF=DUR
'In a person's life interesting moments are many.' (LGr4: 24)

As opposed to $Set_2$ fronting, the $Set_1$ AUX clitics may even attach to subjects:

(72) *æhmắd=e ïm-í vot-é=dæ?* → *ne, ắz=im vot-e=dæ.*
PN=AUX.3S1 this-OBL say-INF=DUR no, I=AUX.1S1 say-INF=DUR
'Is *Ahmad* saying this?' → 'No, *I* am saying (it).' (LGr4: 24b)

The past copula is also leftwardly mobile on the same pattern as the present AUX:

(73 *tellḯ be-Ø° vot=dæ. tožắ b-im° om-ắ voyenkomæt*
a,b) PN AUX-PST-3S1 say=DUR fresh COP.PST-1S1b come-PPL PN
'*Telli* was saying (it).' 'I had *just* come to the military commissariat
(L3: 2) °(< *vot=dæ be*) (L3: 3) °(< *omắ bim*)

Question words are often focused prosodically and take stress. Thus, the leftwardly mobile $Set_1$ often moves leftward to encliticize to the question word (see also sent. 39 in the text):

Present

(74) *tï bo.čí=ž do-y=dæ?*

you for.what=2S1 give-INF=DUR

'*Why* are you giving (it)?' (L3: 6)

Future

(75) *æč-æ-y pül-í čï kovræ=ž bæ-va?*

GEN.PR-that-OBL money-OBL from where=2s1 FUT-bring.PST

'*Where* will you get its° money from?' (L3: 5) °(i.e., the money for that)

Fronting to the stressed word as host is the general rule but is not always obligatory. In both the following examples the interrogatives take sentence stress:

| | Usual form | | | | Occasional form | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (76 | *tï* | *číč* | *b-iž* | *vot-é=dæ?* | *tï* | *číč* | *vot-é=dæ* | *b-iž?* |
| a,b) | you | what | AUX.PST-2S1 | say-INF=DUR | you | what | say-INF=DUR | AUX.PST-2S1 |

'What were you saying?' (LStr: 14)

Areality: The areal distribution of the leftward mobility of the AUX as tense formant is described in an article (Stilo, 2008a) on this phenomenon. This pattern is found in four languages of the northern AILA area: two dialect zones of NT (only the Lerik and Astara zones), standard Armenian (Comrie, 1984; Dum-Tragut, 2009) and local dialects, Udi (Harris, 2002) and Neo-Aramaic (Stilo, informal fieldwork, Iranian Assyrian).

3.4.3 Subordinate clauses

Subordinate clauses constitute a vast and complex issue in any language. There is not enough space here to present their diversity in NT. Suffice it to say that the typology of subordination first divides into two types, each with two subtypes: (1) those with finite verb forms that either (1a) allow a lexical subordinate conjunction or (1b) also require, or optionally allow for, the invariable universal subordinating particle *ki*. Types (1a) and (1b) may each occur alone, may occur together simultaneously or can both be deleted. The latter, the asyndetic type, may turn out upon deeper and wider investigation to be the most common in everyday speech, although the use of the SUB *ki* alone is also a good candidate for this status. Type (2) subordination involves non-finite verb forms and has two subtypes: (2a) those based on infinitives and (2b) those based on participles. Various types of subordinate clauses can employ more than one of these strategies as alternate structures.

Several types of subordinate clauses appear in the Piriyev narrative. See sent. 20 for two basic temporal ('when') clauses formed on infinitives. There are participial formations in sent. 14 ('after')

and sent. 20 (relative clause), as well as a relative clause using a relativizer borrowed from Azerbaijani accompanied by the SUB *ki* (*hansï kï*) and a finite verb form in sent. 33. While the participial element is formally a past participle, it is essentially atemporal and can encode relative clauses within any time frame, although there is only one such example here (20), which encodes a past time frame.

COMP clauses always display main-subordinate word order and these types may optionally include *ki*. They may appear either with an indicative verb form in the subordinate clause (with *ki*: 29, 43; asyndetic: 35) or with subject or object control features with the subordinate clause requiring a subjunctive (10) or optative in the Lerik zone (no tokens in this corpus). In some cases, the use of the SUB *ki* implies a verb of saying and thus the say-verb itself may often be deleted (30). With verbs of saying, cognition and perception, direct speech is generally preferred, in which case the SUB *ki* is still (optionally) used (36). COMP clauses often include an interrogative word in the form of an indirect question, as well, and these strategies may also either include the SUB *ki* (28) or delete it (39).

Adverbial clauses may occur with a lexical subordinate conjunction (conditional: sent. 43, *ægær* 'if', no *ki*). The conjunction *čünki* 'because' always includes the SUB *ki*, but it appears rather rarely in my field recordings, as there is usually a preference either for asyndetic encoding of causal clauses (no tokens in this corpus) or for the use of a sole SUB *ki* (12, 19). There are also two tokens of clefted reason clauses (sent. 10, 44).

Two types of purpose clauses are found in the Piriyev narrative: one type with an asyndetic postposed purpose clause (sent. 43), although this postposed type may also be introduced by a universal SUB *ki* (no tokens in this text). In the second type, a preposed purpose clause formed with an infinitival nominalization accompanied by either a benefactive postposition (23) or a benefactive circumposition (24).

There is ample work still to be done on the grammar of subordination and on syntax in general in Northern Talyshi and its subdialects.

Interlinear abbreviations

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| $Set_1$ | Set of Person-agreement Markers (PAMs) with functions equivalent to Direct case | COP | copula |
| | | DUR | durative |
| | | EX | experiencer |
| $Set_1$ | Set of PAMs with functions equivalent to Oblique case | EXIST | existence verb/particle |
| | | FUT | future |
| $1S_1$ | 1st sg., $Set_1$ (see above) | GEN | genitive |
| $1S_2$ | 1st sg., $Set_2$ (see above) | IMPER | imperative |
| $2S_1$ | 2nd sg., $Set_1$ (see above) | IMPF | imperfect tense |
| $2S_2$ | 2nd sg., $Set_2$ (see above) | INDEF | indefinite article |
| $2P_1$ | 2nd pl., $Set_1$ (see above) | INF | infinitive |
| $3S_1$ | 3rd sg., $Set_1$ (see above) | INTR | intransitive |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| $3S_2$ | 3rd sg., $Set_2$ (see above) | IRR | irrealis |
| $3S_{1a}$ | 3rd sg., $Set_1$, type A (see 3.3.5) | KÜ | multifunctional enclitic |
| $3S_{1b}$ | 3rd sg., $Set_1$, type B (see 3.3.5) | | postposition with locative |
| $1P_1$ | 1st pl., $Set_1$ (see above) | | or ablative functions |
| $1P_2$ | 1st pl., $Set_2$ (see above) | LNK | general NP linker morpheme |
| $3P_1$ | 3rd pl., $Set_1$ (see above) | NEG | negative |
| $3P_2$ | 3rd pl., $Set_2$ (see above) | OBL | oblique case |
| ACC | accusative case | OPT | optative |
| ADD | additive enclitic | PL | plural |
| ÆDÆ | multifunctional postposition | PN | proper name |
| | with locative or ablative | PPL | past partciple |
| | functions | PR | pronoun, pronominal |
| AG | agent | PRS | present |
| AUG | augment | PST | past |
| AUX | auxiliary (indentical | PVB | lexical preverb |
| | in form to copula) | SBJ | subjunctive |
| AZ | Azerbaijani loanword | SUB | universal subordinator *ki* |
| CAUS | causative | UNC | universal numeral classifier |

*The mountainous environment above the village of Peştətük with the Piriyevs' home (located center left), (© D.L. Stilo, 2023)*

*Mammad (Məmməd) Piriyev (1948-2020) at home, October, 2003 (© D.L. Stilo, 2023)*

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