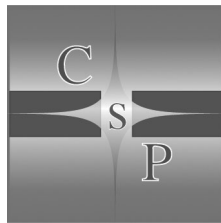


Aspects of Iranian Linguistics

Edited by

Simin Karimi, Vida Samiian and Donald Stilo



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Marking of Arguments in Balochi Ergative and Mixed Constructions

Agnes Korn

1 Introduction

Balochi (Bal.), a contemporary language of the Iranian (Ir.) branch of Indo-European languages, is spoken in Western Pakistan, South Western Afghanistan, South Eastern Iran and some other countries by several millions of people. Its dialects may be divided into a Western (WBal.), a Southern (SBal.) and an Eastern (EBal.) group.¹ While many Balochi dialects pattern ergatively in the PAST domain, many sentences show deviant constructions. These patterns and their combination in one and the same language are interesting from a typological point of view; they are the topic of this paper. The approach will be a comparative one, contrasting Balochi dialects with each other, and with data from earlier Iranian languages.

1.1 Ergative constructions

Nominative constructions are characterised by marking the subject of intransitive constructions (S) in the same way as the agent of transitive constructions (A) while the patient of transitive constructions (P) is marked differently. Ergative constructions, on the other hand, show identical marking of subject and patient, with the agent being marked differently (see e.g. Payne 1998:555). As a rule, ergativity in Iranian languages is of the split ergativity type, with nominative patterning of verb forms from the present stem and ergative for the tenses formed from the past stem. These domains will here be referred to as PRESENT and PAST domain, respectively.² So

¹This three-way division of Balochi dialects follows Jahani 2000:11 (see also Korn 2005:41 for further discussion). Although undeniably descending from a common protolanguage, it is questionable to which degree the Balochi dialects spoken today should be termed one language (see Korn, *ftbc.* 2). – I wish to thank Jost Gippert, Thomas Jügel and Donald Stilo for their comments and discussion.

²The two terms are capitalised to indicate that not all forms from the present stem necessarily denote some sort of present tense, nor do all formations based on the past stem function as past tenses. For details as to which constructions pattern ergatively and which ones nominatively in Balochi, see Korn (*ftbc.* 1).

the patterns in Tables 1 and 2 coexist in the grammatical system in Ir. languages that show ergativity.³ The case used for the patient in nominative constructions is the same as the one used for the ergative agent (underlined).

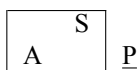


Table 1: Marking of arguments in nominative constructions

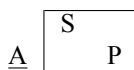


Table 2: Marking of arguments in ergative constructions

1.2 The Balochi case system

Before embarking on the discussion of ergative Bal. constructions, a short look at the nominal system of Balochi is necessary. Table 3 shows the case system that I assume to underly all Bal. dialects.⁴

| | Direct | Oblique | Object | Genitive | Vocative |
|-----|--------|------------|-------------|---------------------|----------|
| sg. | -Ø | <u>-ā</u> | -ārā | -ai, -ē, -ī, -a, -Ø | -Ø |
| pl. | -Ø | <u>-ān</u> | -ānā, -ānrā | -ānī | -ān |

Table 3: Balochi case system

Apart from the vocative, there are four cases: direct, oblique and object case (derived from the oblique), genitive and vocative. The direct case has the ending -Ø both in the singular and the plural. In ergative constructions,

³Cf. e.g. Windfuhr 1992:31-32. It will be seen that this statement requires modification (as indeed mentioned by Windfuhr), see section 7.

⁴For discussion of this case system, see Korn (fthc. 2); for its history, see Korn 2005a. For the case system of the Bal. dialects of Iran, see section 3.1. The transcription of Balochi has been put to a unified system; the same applies to the glosses of the examples (for the abbreviations see the end of the article), some of which are based on the authors', and others of which are mine. Translations are literal rather than idiomatic to reflect the Bal. constructions. The right column of the examples specifies the dialect group and the subdialect (where known) of the sentences.

the dir. case is used for the patient while the obl. case (underlined) is used to mark the agent.

For the personal pronouns, it is necessary to list the forms of the three major dialect groups (Table 4). In most varieties of Balochi, there is no distinction between direct and oblique case of the 1st and 2nd person pronouns. The WBal. dialects⁵ have only one form for the direct and the oblique case, which derives from the Middle Iranian oblique case. This form is classified as direct case in the remaining dialects, new oblique and object case forms being added to the system. However, even in the dialects that have a neo-oblique case, it is predominantly the forms deriving from the old oblique that are used for the agent of ergative constructions and after prepositions (underlined).

For the 3rd person, demonstrative pronouns are used, which are for the most part inflected like nouns. In addition, there are pronominal clitics. These are found in all functions of the oblique cases, including the agent of ergative constructions.⁶

| | | | Direct | Oblique | Object | Genitive |
|-----|-----|-------|--|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| sg. | 1st | WBal. | <u>man</u> | | manā | m(a)nī |
| | | SBal. | <u>man</u> | manā | manārā | manī |
| | | EBal. | mā, ma, mā | <u>mā</u> | manā, manā | maī, maī |
| | 2nd | WBal. | <u>tau, ta</u> | | tarā | taī, tī |
| | | SBal. | <u>tau, tō</u> | t(a)rā | tarārā | taī |
| | | EBal. | <u>t^hau, t^ha</u> | | t ^h arā | t ^h aī, t ^h ī |
| pl. | 1st | WBal. | (am)mā | | (am)mārā | (am)mai |
| | | SBal. | <u>mā</u> | | mārā | mē |
| | | EBal. | <u>mā</u> | | mār(ā) | maī |
| | 2nd | WBal. | š(u)mā | | šumārā | šumai |
| | | SBal. | šumā | | šumārā | šumē |
| | | EBal. | š(a)wā, šā | | š(a)wār, šār | š(a)wāī, šaī |

Table 4: Inflection of Balochi personal pronouns

⁵The forms *am(m)ā* etc. are used in Afghanistan and Turkmenistan Balochi while other WBal. dialects have *mā* etc.

⁶On the placement of these clitics, see Dabir-Moghaddam (fthc.).

2 “Model” ergative constructions

Bal. ergative constructions of the standard type show the agent in the oblique and the patient in the direct case:

- (1) sābir-ā ē hawāl-Ø uškit WBal. (Pakistan)
 PN-OBL DEM news-DIR heard.PST
 “Sabir heard this news.” (Elfenbein 1990/I:62 no. 5)⁷
- (2) āy-ā gōk-Ø kušt SBal. (Karachi)
 DEM-OBL cow-DIR kill.PST
 “He/she killed the cow.” (Farrell 1990:39)
- (3) a. hawē čāθ-Ø k^hay-ā jāθ-a EBal.
 this.very well-DIR who-OBL strike-PERF
 “Who has dug this well?”
 b. hawē čāθ-Ø mā jāθ-a
 this.very well-DIR I.OBL strike-PERF
 “I have dug this well.” (Gilbertson 1923:121)

The manuscript Codex Additional 24048 of the British Library is the oldest known Bal. manuscript;⁸ it may date from around 1820 (Elfenbein 1983:1-4). As demonstrated in the examples quoted in what follows, Bal. ergative constructions at that period had more or less the same form as those of contemporary dialects. An example for the standard form is ex. 4:

- (4) mard-ā hamē zāl-Ø gipt SBal. (19th c.)
 man-OBL this.very woman-DIR take.PST
 “The man took (i.e. married) this woman.”
 (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 1a, l. 3)⁹

In Bal. ergative constructions, the verb does not agree with the agent:

- (5) āh-ā tōbī jāθ-a EBal.
 DEM-OBL.PL diving strike-PERF
 “They have dived (lit.: have struck a dive).” (Gilbertson 1923:59)

⁷This sentence is from a story in the dialect of Kharan in Pakistan.

⁸For an edition, see Elfenbein 1983. In what follows, the text will be quoted according to folio (f.) and line (l.) of the manuscript plus page of Elfenbein’s edition. The transcription and the analysis are not always identical with those suggested by Elfenbein; glosses are mine.

⁹Elfenbein 1983:10.

Conversely, the verb may agree with the patient.¹⁰ There is no agreement in person of the verb with the patient in any dialect of Balochi, but a 3rd person patient may agree with the verb in number, i.e. the 3pl. ending is optionally added if the patient is understood to be plural. Since the direct case has the ending -Ø both in the singular and the plural, agreement of the patient with the verb, i.e. the 3pl. ending of the verb, is the only indicator (besides the context) of plurality of the patient. Animacy and definiteness are not relevant here: plurality of animate as well as inanimate patients may be marked, neither need the patient be definite (see ex. 28).

- (6) bānuk-ā zahm-Ø kaššit drust-Ø jat-ant SBal. (19th c.)
 lady-OBL sword-DIR draw.PST all-DIR strike.PST-3PL
 “The lady drew a sword [and] struck [them] all.”
 (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 4a, l. 2)¹¹
- (7) āhī-ā kull-ē bandī-Ø yala kuθ-aγ-ant EBal. (Marri)
 DEM-OBL all-ADJ prisoner-DIR free do-PERF-3PL
 “He has freed all the prisoners.” (Bashir 1991:104)¹²
- (8) zī āhī-ā māī jarr-Ø EBal. (Marri)
 yesterday DEM-OBL my clothes-DIR
 šušt-ag-ā
 wash-PERF-3PL
 “Yesterday s/he washed my clothes.” (Bashir 1991:104)¹³

Ergative constructions that use a pronominal clitic to index the agent have been treated as a separate type by some authors.¹⁴ These ergative constructions are indeed quite common. However, it does not seem necessary to establish a separate type: pronominal clitics function as unstressed variants of

¹⁰Since there is no gender in Balochi, there is obviously no agreement in gender either.

¹¹Elfenbein 1983:14. Elfenbein transcribes *durust*, but the usual form is *drust*.

¹²Bashir has *kullē*, which she interprets (Elena Bashir, personal communication) as containing -ē “one” (for which see fn. 22), which would seem strange in this position; assuming an error for nasalised ē, i.e. the suffix appearing on attributive adjectives, seems more likely.

¹³Bashir 1991:104 interprets these two sentences as showing past perfect, but it seems that they are regular present perfect examples with agreement of the verb with the object. Bashir’s EBal. examples are from an informant from the Marri tribe and appear to be elicited.

¹⁴Thus e.g. Farrell 1995, Moškalo 1985:113-119 and Kalbāsi 1988:78-82. I am grateful to Moritz Flatow for bringing the latter article to my attention.

the oblique case pronouns, so they may naturally also be used for ergative agents. Some Bal. dialects have them for all persons, but in others, their use is limited to the 3rd person. It is significant that the Bal. dialects in which the distinction between direct and oblique case tends to be lost (see section 3.1) make ample use of the pronominal clitics, as their function is unmistakably oblique.

- (9) $\text{pīālā-}\emptyset=\bar{\bar{o}}$ zūrt-a SBal. (Karachi)
 bowl-DIR=PRON.1SG seize-PERF
 “I have taken the bowl.” (Farrell 1990:54)
- (10) $\text{bāgpān-}\emptyset$ $\text{gipt}=\bar{\bar{i}}$ SBal.
 gardener-DIR take.PST=PRON.3SG
 “He seized the gardener.” (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 4a, l. 7)¹⁵
- (11) $\text{maī gōš-}\emptyset$ $\text{buri}\theta\text{-ag-ant}=\bar{\bar{i}}\bar{\bar{s}}$ EBal.
 my ear-DIR cut-PERF-3PL=PRON.3PL
 “They cut off my ears.” (Gilbertson 1923:73)

The pronominal clitics may also occur in addition to an agent already expressed with a full nominal¹⁶ (see also example 19):

- (12) $\bar{\bar{a}}\bar{\bar{y}}\text{-}\bar{\bar{a}}$ hamā $\text{mard-}\emptyset$ $\text{kušt-ant}=\bar{\bar{i}}$ Bal.
 he/she-OBL that.very man-DIR kill.PST-3PL=PRON.3SG
 “He/she killed those men.” (Elfenbein 1966:9)

3 Marking of the agent

There are contexts in which the agent in the PAST domain is not in the oblique. This effects a marking of arguments that may be called neutral.¹⁷

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | S | |
| A | | P |

Table 5: Marking of arguments in Balochi neutral constructions

¹⁵Elfenbein 1983:14.

¹⁶This specifically occurs when the agent is a pronoun (Elfenbein 1966:9, Moškalo 1985:119-120).

¹⁷To my knowledge, this term (Kalbāsī 1988:71 uses *xonṣā* “hermaphrodite, neutral”) and those used in section 4. have not been applied to Balochi so far, the relevant instances being treated as deviant ergative constructions.

The agent and the patient of transitive verbs, and the subject of intransitive verbs are all marked identically. This pattern is found under two entirely different conditions in Balochi, viz. in all dialects in sentences with a pronoun of the 1st or 2nd pronoun as agent and a 3sg. as patient, and in the dialects spoken in Iran in the PAST domain in general.

3.1 Neutral constructions in Iranian Balochi

Irrespective of their affiliation to one of the major dialect groups, the Bal. dialects spoken in Iran share a case system which markedly differs from that of other Bal. dialects, presumably owing to the influence of Persian, hence they will be collectively termed “Iranian Balochi” (IrBal.) here. The genitive may be replaced by the *ezāfe* construction.¹⁸

| | Nominative | Object | Genitive (or <i>ezāfe</i>) |
|-----|------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| sg. | -Ø | -ā(rā) | -ey |
| pl. | -ān | -ānā | -ānī |

Table 6: Case system of Iranian Balochi

Direct and oblique cases tend to merge and yield a case that may be called nominative, with an ending -Ø in the singular and -ān in the plural. The object case is used for patients in the PRESENT domain and for indirect objects. Being the conflation of the direct and the oblique cases, the nominative of Iranian Balochi marks both the agent and the patient in the PAST domain, and also the subject of intransitive verbs.

So “neutral marking” in Iranian Balochi means that agent, patient, and subject are in the nominative case in the PAST domain. Here are IrBal. examples for the subject in the nominative:

- (13) ostād-ān ez tehrān-Ø a yaht-ent IrBal. (Sarawani)
 teacher-NOM.PL from PN-NOM IPF come.PST-3PL
 “The teachers were (lit.: were coming) from Tehran.”
 (Baranzehi 2003:93)
- (14) kār-ān=o tamām kapt-e-Ø IrBal.
 work-NOM.PL=PRON.1SG finish fall-PERF-3SG
 “My works have become (lit.: fallen) finished.”
 (Mahmoodi Bakhtiari 2003:143)¹⁹

¹⁸See Jahani 1994 and 2003 for a discussion of the IrBal. case system, for the affiliation of IrBal. dialects and some of their features, see Korn 2005:256.

The same case marks the agent:

- (15) ē sey-ē bačak-ā (...) rōza=yeš wārt-a
 this three-ADJ boy-NOM.PL fasting=PRON.3PL eat-PERF
 “These three boys have broken the fast.” (Baranzehi 2003:94)
 IrBal. (Sarawani)

The plurality of the patient may still be marked on the verb:

- (16) nū gwāt-Ø čanḍ-ēnt-ē IrBal. (Sarawani)
 now wind-NOM swing-CAUS.PST-3PL
 “Now the wind swung them [= the clothes].” (Baranzehi 2003:82)
- (17) mō-Ø dāt-ē ramazān-a ke ra-Ø IrBal. (Sarawani)
 I-NOM give.PST-3PL PN-OBJ SUB go.PST-3SG
 “I gave them to Ramazan, who [then] went.” (Baranzehi 2003:83)

It is noteworthy that in Iranian Balochi, the agent is expressed by a pronominal clitic in all persons wherever possible (see section 2.). Indeed, the use of these clitics is convenient in a system that would otherwise mark agent and patient identically.

- (18) ketāb-Ø=ō wānt IrBal. (Lashari)
 book-NOM=PRON.1SG read.PST
 “I read (past tense) the book.”²⁰
- (19) tān do sāl dega ma-Ø lōg-Ø=o zort-a
 until two year next I-NOM house-NOM=PRON.1SG seize-PERF
 “I will have bought a house by the next two years.” (Mahmoodi Bakhtiari 2003:143)²¹ IrBal.

¹⁹This sentence was not elicited via Persian according to Mahmoodi Bakhtiari 2003:143 and indeed does not entirely correspond to its Persian equivalent:

i. kār-hā=yam=rā tamām kard-e-am NP
 work-PL=PRON.1SG=DO finish do-PERF-1SG
 “I have finished my works (now that I am talking to you).”

²⁰Elicited by the author from Dōdā Mahmūdzhāhī, Iranshahr.

²¹This sentence is the translation of the Persian sentence (i.e. elicited)

ii. tā do sāl-e dīgar xāne xarīd-e-am NP
 until two year-EZ next house buy-PERF-1SG
 “I will have bought a house by the next two years.”

- The agent is expressed both by a noun and a pronominal clitic specifically when it is a 3sg. Here, the use of the pronominal clitic disambiguates sentences that otherwise would be open to two different analyses: as the pronominal clitic may not be suffixed to the agent, the noun that carries the clitic must be the patient in examples 24-26, so Ali is the agent in 25-26.

- ²²The clitic *-ē* is usually called “indefinite article”, but this does not seem quite adequate: its cooccurrence with the oblique ending shows that it rather denotes e.g. “one (specific)”, not “a (any)” (see also fn. 42 and Daniel Paul’s contribution in this volume).

- (25) go-ě alī-Ø ĵanī-Ø=ī košt-a o
 say.PRES-3PL PN-NOM wife-NOM=PRON.3SG kill-PERF and
 ĵest-a-Ø IrBal.
 jump-PERF-3SG
 “They say that Ali has killed his wife and run away.” (Mahmoodi
 Bakhtiari 2003:143)²³
- (26) alī-Ø hasan-Ø=ī zat IrBal. (Lashari)
 PN-NOM PN-NOM=PRON.3SG strike.PST
 “Ali hit Hasan.”²⁴

3.2 Personal pronouns as agent

As shown in Table 4, the 1st and 2nd person pronouns have the same form in the direct and oblique case in Western and Eastern Balochi. In Southern Balochi, the form of the direct case is used for the agent in ergative constructions. The only exception is the EBal. 1sg. pronoun, which has a separate form for the oblique case that is also used for the agent (see ex. 3b).²⁵

Except for the EBal. 1sg., a 1st or 2nd person agent expressed by a full pronoun is in (what is also) the direct case. So sentences with 1st and 2nd person agent and a 3rd person patient show neutral marking (examples 27-28).²⁶ To avoid the ambiguities of the neutral pattern, many Bal. dialects tend to index the agent by a pronominal clitic instead of a full 1st or 2nd person pronoun (see examples 9, 18, 20-22).

- (27) man-Ø watī lōg-Ø prōšt-ag SBal. (Kech)
 I-DIR own house-DIR break-PERF
 “I have broken my own house.” (Mockler 1877:86)

²³This sentence is the translation of the Persian sentence

iii. mī-g-an alī zan=eš=o košt-e-Ø o farār
 PRES-say-3PL PN wife=PRON.3SG=DO kill-PERF-3SG and escape
 kard-e-Ø NP
 do-PERF-3SG
 “They say that Ali has killed his wife and run away.”

²⁴Elicited by the author from Mohammad Yūsef Parvareš (Raʿīsī), Espake.

²⁵This form (apparently not used in all EBal. dialects) is likely to have been introduced secondarily to match the pattern of agent marking in the oblique (see Korn, fthc. 1).

²⁶For 1st and 2nd person patients, see 4.3.

- ²⁹ Farrell 1995:222, 224. However, their occurrence is also noted by Rzehak 1998:178. As Collett does not differentiate between what is oblique and object case here, and as he does not give examples, it is not clear whether the note about the existence of unusual ergative constructions (Collett 1983:21) refers to the patterns classed here as double oblique or to tripartite constructions (see 4.2), or to both.

| | |
|---|---|
| S | |
| A | P |

Table 7: Marking of arguments in Balochi double oblique constructions

- (29) bačakk-ā watī dantān-ā prōšt WBal. (Pakistan)
 boy-OBL own tooth-OBL.PL break.PST
 “The boy broke his teeth.” (Barker/Mengal 1969/I:348)

This pattern of oblique patient (and oblique agent, if any) already existed in the 1820s (see also ex. 37):

- (30) nām-ā har kas-ā zānt SBal. (19th c.)
 name-OBL every person-OBL know.PST
 “Everyone knew the name.” (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 13b, l. 13)³⁰
- (31) ē haps-ā ō ē zahm-ā killāh-ā SBal. (19th c.)
 DEM horse-OBL and DEM sword-OBL fort-OBL
 pač=ī gipt
 open=PRON.3SG take.PST
 “He got hold of this horse and this sword [and] the fort.”
 (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 5b, l. 1-2)³¹
- (32) tīng-ā kāzī[-ē] kēr-ā =ē būn-ā
 slave.girl-OBL officer[-GEN] penis-OBL from base-OBL
 burrit SBal. (19th c.)
 cut.PST
 “The slave girl cut the officer’s penis from its base.” (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 4a, l. 5-6)³²

³⁰Elfenbein 1983:30.

³¹Elfenbein 1983:16. Elfenbein reads *zahm* (against the photo of the manuscript). For what I assume to be *killāh-ā*, the photo indicates *kulāhā*, which Elfenbein transcribes as *kullāhā* and translates “entirely”, but it is not clear how *kullāhā* might be derived from *kull* “whole”, and in several other places in the story (cf. f. 4b, l. 2 and f. 6b, l. 9-10), *zahm*, *haps* and *killāh* are enumerated as the possessions that are taken away first and given back later. Maybe the copyist mistook a *šadda* sign in the original for a *ḍamma*.

³²Elfenbein 1983:14. (I apologise for this example.) – The manuscript, which often confuses vowel length, writes *burrit*, which is surely an error. Elfenbein transcribes *tīnga* (probably a misprint), *kīrāe* (but the word is *kēr* in all other Bal. sources) and *bōn*, which is not known to me from other sources. The usual word is *bun*, so maybe it is a writing error. However, as the word is written <bwn> throughout in this

This pattern is ergativoid in that the verb does not agree with the agent, but may show agreement with the patient:

- (33) *mā zahm-ā ārθ-aγ-ant* EBal.
 I.OBL sword-OBL.PL bring-PERF-3PL
 “I brought the swords.” (Gilbertson 1923:113)

In all examples of a patient marked in the oblique in the PAST domain that I have found so far, the patient is definite: it seems that definiteness is a necessary condition for the patient being marked this way. However, definiteness does not imply that the patient needs to be in the oblique as is shown, for instance, by examples 1-3. So oblique marking of a patient in the PAST domain (not very common anyway, but occurring in all major Bal. dialect groups) is obviously optional and might depend on pragmatic factors.

4.2 Patient in the object case

Other examples from the PAST domain have the patient in the object case (with double underlining):

- (34) *kučik-ā hamā jīnik-ā^ā dīst* SBal. (Karachi)
 dog-OBL that.very girl-OBJ see.PST
 “The dog saw that girl.” (Farrell 1995:221)
- (35) *mā mard-ā^ā jaθ-a* EBal.
 I.OBL man-OBJ.PL hit-PERF
 “I have struck the men.” (Gilbertson 1923:197)

This construction is likewise already present in the 1820 manuscript:

- (36) *dīt=iš mard-ā^ā* SBal. (19th c.)
 see.PST=PRON.3PL man-OBJ
 “They saw the man.” (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 4b, l. 3-4)³³

manuscript, it could be an existing variant, cf. NP *bon* besides *būn*, which might be different developments from Proto-Ir. **budna*-. – The genitive ending on *kāzī* is not written, maybe due to some uncertainty how to write word-final *-ī-ē*, but it is there in a variant of the same sentence occurring later on in the story: *kāzī-ē kēr-ā=ē būn-ā burritag* “someone has cut...” (f. 6a, l. 12, Elfenbein 1983:18). The parallel in f. 6b, l. 3 (Elfenbein 1983:18) has *drust āyī būnā burritag-ant* “someone cut everything from the base”, *-ant* agreeing with the patient, makes clear that *drust* here and *kēr-ā* in the other sentences is the patient and that *būnā* has locative function.

³³ Elfenbein 1983:16.

- (37) watī mardum-ānā lōṭ-āēnt watī SBal. (19th c.)
 own man-OBJ.PL want-CAUS.PST own
 huštir-ān=ī
 camel-OBL.PL=PRON.3SG
 “He had [someone] ask (= sent someone to ask) for his men [and]
 his camels.” (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 2a, l. 3-4)³⁴

As this pattern has agent, patient and subject each in different cases, it may be called “tripartite.”³⁵ The difference between these examples and those in the preceding section is that here, a patient marked with the object case ending is human while (as shown in 4.1) terms for things, body parts and animals would have the oblique ending. This statement seems to be contradicted by one example in Collett 1983 (ex. 38).

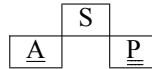


Table 8: Marking of arguments in Balochi tripartite constructions

- (38) tō-Ø āy-rā ārt SBal. (Oman)
 you.SG-DIR/OBL DEM-OBJ bring.PST
 “You brought it.” (Collett 1983:10, Collett’s translation)

Similarly, Mockler 1877:18 states that any noun has the endings -Ø or -*ārā* when functioning as a patient of an ergative construction, e.g.

- (39) a. mard-ā aps-Ø kušt-a SBal. (Kech)
 man-OBL horse-DIR kill-PERF
 b. mard-ā aps-ārā kušt-a
 man-OBL horse-OBJ kill-PERF
 “The man has killed the horse.” (Mockler 1877:21)

It is not quite clear how this should be interpreted. The data adduced here by Collett and Mockler are clearly not derived from free speech, but appear to

³⁴ Elfenbein 1983:12. Elfenbein translates “he asked for his man (sic), his drivers”, and transcribes *lōṭāint* and *mardumān*. The photo of the manuscript clearly shows مردمان (sic); this seems to indicate *mardumānā*, the morphology of which may have been unclear to the scribe or the copyist (who probably were not Baloch according to Elfenbein 1983:3-4): in the same way, *bāgpānā* (OBL of *bāgpān* “gardener”, usually spelled باگ پان) is written باگ پان in f. 2b, last line - f. 3a, l. 1.

³⁵ Comrie 1978:332. Kalbāsi 1988:72 translates the term as *se-gūne*.

be elicited, if not even constructed by the authors themselves. It is not excluded, though, that some SBal. dialect(s?) pattern(s) somewhat differently than the others. At any rate, one might say that in Balochi dialects of all major groups, human patients (and maybe in some SBal. varieties also other patients) may be marked with the object case ending if they are definite. Again, this marking is clearly optional, since sentences like example 4 show a definite human patient in the direct case. According to Farrell 1995:224, the marking depends on the presence of a specific emphasis on the patient. It remains to be investigated, however, whether more specific conditions can be found.

4.3 Personal pronouns

As pronouns of the 1st and 2nd persons are by definition human and definite, it is to be expected that they can appear in the object case when functioning as a patient in the PAST domain as well. Indeed, nowadays they apparently have to be in the object case. In Southern Balochi, the use of the oblique is also possible.

- (40) ta-Ø be čākar-Ø man-ā baxšet IrBal. (Khash)
 you.SG-NOM to PN-NOM I-OBJ give.PST
 “You gave me to Chakar.” (Jahani 2003:126)
- (41) rāh-ā mn-ā tunn-ā jat-a WBal. (Afghanistan)
 way-OBL I-OBJ thirst-OBL strike-PERF
 “On the way, thirst has struck me.” (Rzehak 1998:178)³⁶
- (42) man-Ø ta-rā gitt SBal. (Karachi)
 I-DIR you.SG-OBL take.PST
 “I caught you.” (Farrell 1995:224)
- (43) bādšāh-ā man-ā k^hušt^h-a EBal.
 king-OBL I-OBJ kill-PERF
 “The king has killed me.” (Grierson 1921:352)

Again, the 19th century manuscript shows the same structures:

³⁶The Bal. dialect of Afghanistan is otherwise entirely nominative. However, epic poetry shows ergative and other patterns as well.

- (44) \bar{e} man- \emptyset bīt-ag-ān ki ta-rā=un SBal. (19th c.)
 DEM I-DIR be-PERF-1SG SUB you.SG-OBL=PRON.1SG
 āwurt-ag yā digar= \bar{e} bīt- \emptyset
 bring-PERF or other=one be.PST-3SG
 “Was it me who (lit.: that I) has brought you, or was it another one
 (= someone else)?” (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 8a, l. 5)³⁷
- (45) man-ārā \bar{e} kamuk-ā na- \dot{y} at= \bar{i} SBal. (19th c.)
 I-OBJ DEM bit-OBL NEG-hit.PST=PRON.3SG
 “She did not hit me this bit (= not even a bit).”
 (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 3a, l. 13)³⁸

However, in this manuscript, the pronoun also appears in the direct case when functioning as a patient:

- (46) man- \emptyset = \bar{i} \dot{y} at SBal. (19th c.)
 I-DIR=PRON.3SG hit.PST
 “She hit me.” (CodOrAdd 24048: f. 3a, l. 7)³⁹

The data seem to indicate a language change within the last 200 years, starting with an optional object case marking of human definite patients in general and leading to the 1st and 2nd person pronouns always being in the object case.

The logic for this may be the following: as the form of these pronouns is (identical to) the direct case when it functions as an agent, there is a strong motivation to mark it differently when occurring as a patient. The reason for the marking being oblique or object case in Southern Balochi (rather than object case throughout) is likely to be that the object case marking is a rather recent system.⁴⁰

³⁷The reading *tarā-un* is cautiously suggested by Elfenbein 1983:20 for the manuscript's *ترن*.

³⁸Elfenbein 1983:14. Elfenbein transcribes *manārā- \bar{i}* , so that the sentence would contain two pronominal clitics of the 3sg. The photo seems to indicate \bar{e} as it is marked with a diacritic sign which in other places of the manuscript is used to differentiate \bar{e} from \bar{i} .

³⁹Elfenbein 1983:14. – Note that *man* is followed by a clitic. It is possible that without a clitic, the form *man-ārā* would have been used (as it is in example 45), although example 44 suggests that a combination of such a form with a clitic would also have been possible.

⁴⁰The function of *tarā* etc. as oblique is due to a rearrangement of the SBal. pronominal system, which uses a doubly marked form (*tarārā* etc.) for the object case (see Table 4). The use of *tarā* etc. here may be said to reflect the stage prior to this

5 Summary of case use in ergative constructions

Table 9 presents the result of a counting of case uses in ergative and mixed constructions in the first story in the British Library manuscript (Elfenbein 1983:10-21). The numbers here are not to be taken too literally, as some sentences may be open to different interpretations, neither are they meant to be representative. Nevertheless, the table might give an idea of the relative frequency of sentence patterns.⁴¹

| overall number of transitive verb forms in the PAST domain: 221 | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| plurality of patient marked on these: 11 | | | |
| Noun | | Pronoun of the 1st, 2nd person | |
| Agent: | | | |
| Oblique: 118 | Direct case: 2 | Direct case: 15 | |
| “one” + oblique: 2 ⁴² | | | |
| agent = pronominal clitic: 18 | | | |
| Patient: | | | |
| Direct case: 64 | OBL/OBJ case: | Direct case: 1 | <i>manārā</i> : 1 |
| Direct + “one”: 12 + | sg.: -ā: 5, -ārā: 1 | 1 | <i>tarā</i> : 1 |
| 17 possible nominal parts | pl.: -ān: 1, -ānā: 1 | | |
| of compound verbs | | | |

Table 9: Marking of agent and patient in the first story in CodOrAdd 24048

We may conclude that in Bal. sentence patterns of the PAST domain, the choice of the case of the patients seems to be governed by criteria of adjustment.

⁴¹“Transitive verb forms” is meant to include compound verbs that function like simple transitive verbs (see Farrell 1995:232-233, Korn, fthc. 1, section 2.4). Multiple patients of one verb are counted as one if they are in the same case. Examples 44-46 are the only ones in the story with a 1st and 2nd person as patient of a PAST sentence.

⁴²These cases are:

- *yak rōč-ē mardum-ē-ā čārit* “one day, a man looked” (f. 4a, l. 10-11); Elfenbein 1983:14 reads *mardumiyā*, which would be morphologically unclear, and *čārīt*, which is indeed what the manuscript has and would be the 3sg. present tense, but the past stem suffix *-it* is frequently written *-īt* in this manuscript (cf. fn. 32);
- *yakk-ē-ā gušt* “someone said” (f. 5b, l. 4); Elfenbein 1983:16 reads *yakkayā*, but translates “somebody said”, in which function his form would not be clear. In Balochi, the suffix *-ē* “one” comes before the OBL ending in all dialects that allow this combination (see Korn 2005a:292).

definiteness and animacy (Table 10): if the patient is definite, things and animals are optionally in the oblique, thus identical with the agent, while humans may show a specific patient marking which is not used for inanimate patients or agents, but also for animate patients in the PRESENT domain.

| | Indefinite | Definite |
|----------------------------|------------|--|
| Non-human | DIR | OBL (optional) |
| Human | DIR | OBJ (optional) |
| Pronoun 1st, 2nd person | – | OBL/OBJ (1820 optional, today regular) |

Table 10: Marking of patients in Balochi ergative and mixed constructions

To the extent that Bal. neutral, double oblique and tripartite constructions have been noticed at all, they have been explained as mixtures of the nominative and the ergative construction, i.e. by a mixing of the structures seen in Tables 1 and 2.⁴³ Such language-internal factors may certainly play a role, but it seems worthwhile to check for additional factors that might have influenced the Bal. sentence patterns.

6 Definiteness and animacy in ergative constructions of neighbouring languages

6.1 Urdu

Indic languages likewise display split ergativity, and the marking of the patient depends on criteria of definiteness and animacy. One might thus wonder whether influence from Urdu might have caused the Bal. mixed patterns.⁴⁴

However, a comparison of the Urdu system (Table 11) with the Balochi one reveals that they are not parallel: inanimate patients are not marked in Urdu, no matter whether they are definite or not, while they may be marked in Balochi if they are definite (cf. Klaiman 1987:76).

Conversely, marking of definite animate patients is regular in Urdu while it is optional in Balochi even if the patient is animate and definite. The animacy split is also different: while in Urdu, it is animates vs. inanimates, it

⁴³Cf. e.g. Moškalo 1985:121, who uses the term “contamination.”

⁴⁴For Urdu influence on Balochi, see e.g. Farrell 2003, Korn 2005:48-50, for more on Urdu cases, see e.g. Butt/King 2004.

| | Indefinite | Definite |
|----------------------------|------------|----------|
| Inanimate | NOM | NOM |
| Animate (humans & animals) | NOM | ACC |

Table 11: Marking of patients in Urdu/Hindi ergative constructions

is humans vs. the rest in Balochi. So the Bal. system of marking of patients is not likely to have been influenced by the Urdu system, so one might look for other factors of influence.

6.2 Bactrian

The animacy split of humans vs. not-humans recalls a phenomenon observed in Bactrian, a Middle Ir. language spoken in Northern Afghanistan and beyond, which in several respects occupies an intermediary position between Eastern and Western Iranian. Bactrian shows split ergativity with agreement of the verb with the patient in person and number:

- (47) $\sigma\tau\sigma=\mu\sigma$ $\tau\sigma$... $\alpha\zeta\alpha\delta\sigma$... $\nu\iota\rho\tau\text{-}\eta\mu\sigma$ Bactr.
 and=PRON.1SG you.SG.DIR free release.PST-2SG
 “I released you.”⁴⁵

The preposition $\alpha\beta\sigma$, which has directional function, is also used to mark patients in the PRESENT and PAST domain if these are human and definite (Sims-Williams 1998:86, 2004a:2). In this example from the PRESENT domain, the first $\alpha\beta\sigma$ marks the patient while the second and third have local function:

- (48) $\sigma\delta=\alpha\lambda\delta\sigma$ $\underline{\alpha\beta\sigma}$ $\tau\omega\mu\alpha\chi\sigma$ $\alpha\beta\sigma$ $\lambda\alpha\delta\sigma$ $\sigma\delta=\alpha\beta\sigma$ $\rho\alpha\zeta\sigma\gamma\sigma\lambda\sigma$ Bactr.
 and=or to you.PL.OBL to court and=to royal tribunal
 $\sigma\iota\eta\lambda\text{-}\alpha\mu\sigma$
 bring.SBJ-1PL
 “...or we should take you to court and to the royal tribunal.”⁴⁶

The same marking is found for definite human patients in the PAST domain:

⁴⁵From a deed of manumission (ed. Sims-Williams 2000:45, document F, l. 8, maybe from 480 AD).

⁴⁶From a contract for the purchase of an estate (Sims-Williams 2000:59, document J, l. 24, possibly from 528 AD). $\tau\omega\mu\alpha\chi\sigma$ is only attested in oblique function (Sims-Williams 2000:227).

- (49) αγγιτ=ιδο αμακο μανο βαβο οδο πιδοκο αβο ραλικο ολο
 receive.PST=PTC we I.OBL PN and PN to PN wife
 “We received – I, Bab, and [I], Piduk – Ralik [as our] wife.”⁴⁷
 Bactr.

The Bactrian constructions, and the occurrence of various mixed patterns in many new Iranian languages (see section 7.2) indicate that criteria of animacy and definiteness were already relevant in Iranian languages of the region in Middle Iranian times.”

6.3 Parthian

If this is the case, this might open an interesting aspect for Parthian, which is particularly relevant here since it is the Middle Iranian language that is most closely related to Balochi.⁴⁸ Like Bactrian, Parthian shows split ergativity with verbal agreement with the patient in person and number:

- (50) u=t az hišt h-ēm sēwag Parth.
 and=PRON.2SG I.DIR leave.PST COP-1SG orphan
 “... and you have left me as an orphan.”⁴⁹
- (51) u=šān ō murdān ēdwāst h-ēm Parth.
 and=PRON.3PL to dead-OBL.PL lead.PST COP-1SG
 “... and they have led me to the dead.”⁵⁰

In many Parthian examples from the PAST domain, a plural patient⁵¹ is not in the direct, but in the oblique case, thus marked identically with the agent. In example 54, the agent is expressed by the pronominal clitic *-um*, the patients,

⁴⁷From a marriage contract (Sims-Williams 2000:33, document A, l. 15-16, maybe from 333 AD). *αμαχο* serves both as direct and as oblique case of the 1pl. pronoun (Sims-Williams 2000:179).

⁴⁸So far, ergativity in New Iranian languages has mostly been compared to Old Persian sentences employing the past participle, although the Middle Iranian data and Avestan would suggest themselves as at least as suitable candidates. – Parthian and Bactrian are (genetically and areally) rather closely related (Sims-Williams 2004:543).

⁴⁹Fragment M 42 R i l. 15-16, quoted from Durkin-Meisterernst p. 282.

⁵⁰Fragment M 7 II V ii, l. 1-3 (transliteration and German translation in Andreas/Henning 1934:874).

⁵¹In the singular, nouns (including family terms, cf. Sims-Williams 1981:170) are not differentiated for case.

which are definite and human, are marked with the oblique ending, and the verb agrees with them:

- (52) abāw=um harw-īn brādar-ān ud Parth.
 there=PRON.1SG all-OBL.PL brother-OBL.PL and
 wxār-īn pad kirbāg windād ah-*ēnd*
 sister-OBL.PL in piety find.PST COP-3PL
 “There, I found all brothers and sisters in piety.”⁵²

Such examples have been interpreted as showing the obl.pl. ending being generalised as a plural marker. This process is well-known to have happened in Middle Persian.⁵³ It remains to be investigated, however, to what degree it operated in Parthian, i.e. how many of the instances of an unexpected Prth. obl.pl. suffix involve the marking of a patient in an otherwise ergative sentence, and whether animacy and definiteness might play a role here as well.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Balochi sentence patterns

The discussion above has revealed the existence of a considerable variety of sentence patterns in Balochi: in addition to nominative and ergative patterns, there are neutral, double oblique and tripartite patterns. Bal. neutral, double oblique and tripartite patterns are characterised by the verb optionally agreeing with 3pl. patients.

These patterns interact in complex ways: Balochi as a whole patterns nominatively in the PRESENT domain, and in sentences of the PAST domain that have a pronoun of the 1st or 2nd person⁵⁴ both as agent and as patient.

⁵²Transliteration and German translation in Andreas/Henning 1934:858. Part of the example is also cited in Rastorgueva/Molčanova 1981:223.

⁵³Cf. e.g. Sundermann 1989:155. The same process also takes place in IrBal. dialects (see 3.1).

⁵⁴Here and in Table 12, “pronoun” denotes “full pronoun” (to the exclusion of pronominal clitics). For the EBal. 1sg. pronoun, see 3.2. The nowadays regular marking of 1st and 2nd person pronouns in a way that is different from that of 3rd persons may be described as an Identified Object Marking (IOM) or Differential Case Marking (DCM) phenomenon (see Farrell 1995:222). Farrell 1995:224 argues that the optional marking of patients (in Farrell’s view only with object case endings) is not a candidate for IOM as it does not depend on identification, but on

| | | Western Balochi | Southern Balochi | Eastern Balochi | Iranian Balochi |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| PRESENT domain | | nominative pattern (Table 1) | | | |
| PAST domain | agent and patient 1st, 2nd pronoun | nominative pattern (Table 1) | | | |
| | agent 1st, 2nd pronoun | | | | |
| | patient, 3rd | | | | |
| | agent and patient 3rd | | | | |
| | patient 3rd definite non-human | | | | |
| patient 3rd definite human | | neutral pattern (Table 5) | | | |
| patient 1st, 2nd pronoun | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | ergative pattern (Table 2) | | | |
| | | ergative pattern (Table 2) or double oblique pattern (Table 7) | | | |
| | | ergative pattern (Table 2) or tripartite pattern (Table 8) | | | |
| | | tripartite pattern (Table 8) | | | |

Table 12: Patterns of argument marking in Balochi dialects

Some WBal. varieties pattern nominatively also in all other contexts. The remaining dialects show neutral patterning for 1st and 2nd pronoun agents in sentences with a 3rd person patient. For other constructions, the dialects diverge considerably. For Iranian Balochi, the neutral type is the general pattern in the PAST domain, while the remaining dialects have ergative constructions. In the other dialects, the double oblique may be used instead of the ergative pattern for definite non-human patients and tripartite patterning for definite human ones.

So some WBal. dialects only show one pattern while Iranian Balochi shows nominative and neutral pattern and the remaining dialects appear to show all five patterns that have been observed in language typology. In fact, no Bal. dialect appears to exhibit (only) the two patterns shown in Table 1 and 2.

7.2 The context of Iranian ergative constructions

It seems rather plausible that a similar statement might apply to other Iranian languages as well, as can be inferred from the Bactrian examples given above. For instance, Stilo 2004:243 notes nominative, ergative and double oblique constructions for Vafsi (using other terminology). However, the Vafsi double oblique constructions differ from the Bal. ones in that the verb tends to agree with the subject (although agreement with the patient is still an option). In Middle Persian and Parthian, patients (and indirect objects) in the PRESENT and PAST domain may be marked by the directional preposition *ō*,⁵⁵ so that in the PAST domain, there is a kind of tripartite marking (albeit not by case morphology) besides ergative. There is also a certain tendency to neutral marking in sentences where *ō* is not used, as direct and oblique cases are in many instances not distinguished (see 6.3).

These data taken together might tend to speak against the framework in which Iranian neutral, double oblique and tripartite constructions in the

emphasis. However, the data suggest that only identified objects may be marked (albeit additional factors are also necessary) while unidentified ones may not, so the oblique and object case marking of patients may also be interpreted within an IOM framework.

⁵⁵Unlike in Bactrian, this marking seems to be independent of animacy, e.g.

iv. nidraxt *ō* haw-īn panj ahrewar Parth.
oppress.PST to that-OBL.PL five pit.of.death

“(The Prince of Darkness) subdued those five pits of destruction.” (Fragment M 507 V l. 14, transliteration and translation in Boyce 1952:441)

For the uses of *ō*, see also Brunner 1977:132-140 and Durkin-Meisterernst p. 230-238.

PAST domain have been described. So far, these types have been held to show a “decay” of ergativity and a “transition” between ergative and nominative constructions.⁵⁶ It goes without saying that from a diachronic point of view, such statements are evidently correct⁵⁷ insofar as the starting point is the ergative construction, and it is possible that the end point will be a consistent nominative patterning as is the case of New Persian and some WBal. varieties.

However, a terminology ascribing a somewhat ephemeral status to some types is somewhat misleading: the presence of neutral, double oblique and tripartite constructions in such a wide range of languages from the Middle and New Iranian period suggests that such types can be more stable than has been commonly assumed,⁵⁸ nor need nominative and ergative constructions always be the dominant ones. It seems that factors like animacy hierarchies and IOM trigger (and possibly stabilise) the coexistence of multiple patterns in one and the same language.

Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1sg., 1SG | 1st person sg. (other persons accordingly) |
| A | agent (of transitive verbs) |
| ACC | accusative case |
| ADJ | adjective suffix |
| Bal. | Balochi |
| CAUS | causative |
| CodOr 24048 | = ed. Elfenbein 1983 |
| COP | copula |
| DEM | demonstrative pronoun |
| dir., DIR | direct case |
| DO | marker of direct object |
| EBal. | Eastern Balochi |
| EZ | <i>eṣāfe</i> |
| f. | folio |
| gen., GEN | genitive case |
| IOM | identified object marking |

⁵⁶Cf. e.g. Farrell 1995:218, 240 and Sims-Williams/Cribb 1996:87, 90.

⁵⁷Agreeing with Comrie 1978:342, who discusses the mechanisms of such a transition.

⁵⁸See Antje Wendtland's paper in this volume for data that seems to point in the same direction.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| IPF | imperfective aspect |
| Ir. | Iranian |
| IrBal. | Iranian Balochi (= Balochi spoken in Iran) |
| l. | line |
| NEG | negation |
| NOM | nominative |
| NP | New Persian |
| OBJ | object case |
| obl., OBL | oblique case |
| P | patient |
| PAST | domain of ergativity (see 1.1) |
| PERF | present perfect |
| pl., PL | plural |
| PN | name |
| PPERF | past perfect |
| PRES | present tense |
| PRESENT | domain of nominative constructions |
| PRON | pronominal clitic |
| PST | past tense |
| PTC | particle |
| S | subject (of intransitive verbs) |
| SBal. | Southern Balochi |
| SBJ | subjunctive mood |
| sg., SG | singular |
| SUB | subordinating particle |
| WBal. | Western Balochi |

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