

# The Origins of Clitic Placement in Aluan and Udi

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Aluan (or Caucasian Albanian) is an ancient Nakh-Daghestanian language known from palimpsest texts, *The Caucasian Albanian Palimpsests of Mount Sinai* (Gippert et al. 2009). This language is the direct ancestor or closest indirect relative of modern Udi. Both languages have remarkable distribution of verbal clitics, and in Aluan one can see an early and less rigid stage of the Udi system. Both languages have endoclititics that occur between certain morphemes, but Udi also has endoclititics inside simple verb roots. In both languages, clitic placement depends upon diverse factors, including tense-aspect-mood category, focus, internal structure of the verb, and perhaps stress (Harris 2002, 2021). The rules for placement in Aluan follow.

Aluan Rule 1. If the verb stands in the future II, the present, the imperfect, or the imperative, the PM must be enclitic to the verb, no matter what other conditions exist.

Aluan Rule 2.

- a. Agreement clitics are enclitic to a clausal negator if one occurs.
- b. Agreement clitics are enclitic to a question word, if one occurs.
- c. Agreement clitics may be enclitic to a focused constituent, if one occurs.

Aluan Rule 3. In clauses with zero copulas, PMs are enclitic to predicate nominals.

Aluan Rule 4.

- a. In a causative, PMs occur between the infinitive (in *-es*) and the light verb.
- b. PMs occur between the Incorporated Element (noun, adjective, adverb, simplex verbstem, borrowed verb, unidentified element, or locative preverb) and the light verb or verb root in a complex verb.

The effects of these (partially flexible) rules are illustrated in (1-4b). The verb ‘say’ in (1) and (2a) is suppletive, *owka* in present, and *pē* in the past. In (4b), *ta-dage* ‘give’ is a single, complex verb, separable only by certain clitics.

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| (1)  | owka= <b>zow</b> = <b>vfas</b><br>say= <b>1SG</b> = <b>2PL.DAT</b><br>‘I say to you’                                       | Mt 5: 20    |
| (2a) | te= <b>zow</b> = <b>vfas</b> pē<br>NEG= <b>1SG</b> = <b>2PL.DAT</b> say.PST<br>‘I did not say to you’                      | John 16: 4  |
| (2b) | hašu= <b>ne</b> hāya-hē      ihesun-aḫ<br>who= <b>3</b> believe.PST-PST      hearing-DATIII<br>‘who has believed hearsay?’ | John 12: 38 |
| (2c) | ćowdowaḫoṣṭay= <b>zow</b> aci-bāhē=ka<br>heaven.from= <b>1SG</b> down-go.PST=QUOT<br>“‘I have come down from heaven’”      | John 6: 42  |
| (3)  | ayz-i      xaš= <b>zow</b><br>world-GEN    light= <b>1SG</b><br>‘I am the light of the world’                              | John 9: 5   |
| (4b) | ta= <b>qa</b> = <b>n</b> =dagē<br>thither= <b>FUT</b> = <b>3</b> =give<br>‘[the brother] will deliver’                     | Mt 10: 21   |

Aluan was part of a *Sprachbund*, its core consisting of North Eastern Neo-Aramaic, certain “aberrant” Armenian dialects, Northern Tati, and some varieties of Talyshi (Noorland and Stilo 2015). In this presentation, I try to tease apart what in the complex systems of clitic placement found in Aluan and Udi is inherited, what may have originated with Aluan itself, and what is the effect of contact with other

languages in the *Sprachbund*. I distinguish the different roles of tense-aspect-mood category, focus, internal structure of the verb, and stress, together with the origins of each.

## References

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