

The northern dialects of Domari¹

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Abstract

Domari is an archaic Indo-Aryan language spoken by the Middle-Eastern Gypsies whose self-appellation is Dom. The language, known to us from various word lists from the 19th century, two descriptions of the variety spoken in Palestine and a grammatical sketch of the dialect of Aleppo, remains largely under-studied. This paper presents original data collected amongst speakers of two undocumented varieties -Beirut Domari and Saraqib Domari (northern Syria)- and contrast them with Palestinian Domari and Aleppo Domari. It appears clearly that the dialects of Aleppo, Saraqib and Beirut are closely related and diverge to a large extent from Palestinian Domari. It is therefore possible to postulate the existence of two dialectal areas: northern Domari to which the varieties of Aleppo, Saraqib and Beirut belong and southern Domari, represented by the dialect spoken in Palestine.

Introduction

Domari is an Indo-Aryan language spoken throughout the Middle-East by the Dom. The Dom are often called the “Gypsies of the Middle-East” because of the similarities they bear with the Roma of Europe. The ethnonyms Dom and Rom are themselves cognate with the Indian caste name *dom* still in use today to refer to a variety of peripatetic communities in the Indian subcontinent. Nowadays, Dom communities are reported to exist in Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Israel/Palestine and possibly Iran. Dom are also reported in the town of Al-Arish in northern Sinai in Egypt and are most probably linked with the small Dom community of Gaza (MATRAS 1999:5).

The Dom, although now mostly settled, were originally commercial nomads who used to adapt their migrations to rural calendars and provide various services to sedentary or nomadic communities (such as Bedouins). Some of these traditional occupations are still practised today. The most comprehensive ethnographical account of the Gypsies of the Levant can be found in AL-JIBĀWĪ (2006). Al-Jibāwī included in his study all the peripatetic groups he could locate in the region, although most of the work deals with Syria. The picture is extremely diverse and the study reveals that only parts of these groups are actually Dom. Some communities speak varieties of Kurdish, Turkic, Persian and Domari. Al-Jibāwī’s assumption is that all these groups are ethnically Dom, but some of them lost their Domari language in earlier stages of their migration to the Levant. Unfortunately, this is impossible to validate in the current state of knowledge as it is equally possible that these groups only share a similar socio-economical profile and diverge in terms of ethnic background. Various names are given to these groups according to their main occupations. Amongst these traditional activities, one finds music (*maṭārbe*), dancing (*ḥaḡḡiyyāt*) or traditional dentistry (*qurbāt*). Some worked in perking old donkeys, feed them well and re-sell them to farmers or mule-breeding by mating horses with asses and selling the product of the union to rural communities. Although

¹ The abbreviations used in this paper follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules conventions, except for the following: AD (Adessive), CM (Contextualising Marker), DSM (Differential Subject Marker), IN (Inessive), INDEF (Indefinite), RM (Remoteness Marker), SUP (Superessive), VERS (Versative).

language is not a central focus in Al-Jibāwī's work, some word lists are given in the languages spoken by the groups he investigated. These lists reveal that different dialects of Domari are spoken in Syria, such as Palestinian Domari, carried over by Palestinian Dom who arrived in the refugee camps around Damascus after 1948.²

Sources

The language is known to us from a couple of word lists dating back to the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.³ The first reliable grammatical account was produced by R.A.S. Macalister who published a series of articles published in the Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society and subsequently gathered into one single volume (MACALISTER 1914), in which he sketched the variety spoken in Palestine. Most of what has been said so far about Domari relies almost entirely on Macalister's material. In the 90's of last century, Yaron Matras conducted original fieldwork amongst the Dom community of Jerusalem and published a new account in MATRAS (1999). It is a follow-up of Macalister's description, as they both investigated the same community. Another sketch of Palestinian Domari is available in MATRAS (2012). Data about other dialects of Domari were virtually inexistent, most notably varieties spoken in Syria. The first grammatical account of a Syrian variety appears in HERIN (2012), focusing on the dialect spoken by the Dom community of Aleppo. It appeared that although Aleppo Domari and Palestinian Domari may be treated as varieties of the same language, differences are significant enough to postulate an old split between Northern varieties of Domari, mostly spoken in Syria, Lebanon and probably Southern Turkey, and Southern Domari, represented mainly by Palestinian Domari.

Name of the language

The name Domari appears for the first time in Macalister's lexicon as *dōmāri*. Macalister himself does not use the term Domari but *nūri*, the derogatory term normally used in Levantine Arabic to designate a "Gypsy" (alongside with *nawari*). Other terms can be found in *Ethnologue*⁴ but none of them refers to self-appellations used by the Dom and cover a wide range of various groups and populations that have nothing or little to do with the Dom. According to MATRAS (1999:4), the Palestinian Dom, although aware of the name *domari*, mostly refer to their language as *dōm* or *dōmī*. The Dom of Aleppo call their language *dōmvārī*, which looks close enough to Macalister's *dōmāri*, although stress is placed differently as well as the additional approximant [v] in Aleppo. The approximant [v] is realised [w] in other dialects so the same name is mostly realised *dōmwārī* in other varieties. Interestingly, the Dom of Beirut (Lebanon) and Sarāqib (northern Syria), do not refer to their language as *dōmwārī* and restrict this appellation to the dialect of Aleppo. The Dom of Beirut call their language *dōm-ā gāl* and the Dom of Sarāqib *dōm-ā ġib*, which in both dialects mean "the language of the Dom". The word *ġib* is commonly used in all varieties of Domari to designate the "tongue" but only in Aleppo and Sarāqib can it also mean "language". The word *gāl* is shared by all varieties and means "word, speech". This is also reflected in the way these

² AL-JIBĀWĪ (2006) gives for instance in Arabic script *biddi ġām* "I want to go" or *krēn* "where" which are Palestinian and Jordanian forms.

³ A list of these works can be found in MATRAS (1999), more developments in HERIN (2012).

⁴ See LEWIS (2009) for the Domari entry in *Ethnologue*.

dialects express the verb “speak”. In Aleppo and Sarāqib, *ǧib kar-* is used, while Beirut Domari employs *ǧāl k-*, which means “say” in Aleppo and Sarāqib. Two possible etymologies arise for the formative *vārī*: the Old Indo-Aryan suffix *-vari* “speech, language” (TURNER 1962-1966:660, lemma 11327) or the Persian derivational suffix *-vari* found also in Turkish to derive adjectives (GÖKSEL & KERSLAKE 2005:62) which express the idea “the X way”. Interestingly, the formative *-wari* also appears in the lexicon provided by MACALISTER (1914:197) for Palestinian Domari in the item *ṭaṭwāri* that he translates “the Arabic language”. This item is clearly composed of *ṭaṭ* and *-wari*. The term *ṭaṭ* (realised *ṭāṭ* in Aleppo, Beirut and Sarāqib), besides its common meaning “sedentary, settled” (as opposed to *qlāra* “nomadic”), is commonly used in all varieties of Domari to designate Arab peasants. It appears thus that *-wari*, whatever its etymology may be, is an old shared suffix that derives language names from nouns. In Arabic, the language is referred to by the Dom themselves as *il-luǧa n-nawariyye* or *il-luǧa l-qurbāṭiyye* “the Gypsy language”.

Present work

As mentioned above, apart from Palestinian Domari that was investigated by Macalister at the beginning of the 20th century, and Matras who reported about the state of the contemporary dialect, nothing was available about other varieties. While on a trip in Aleppo in summer 2009, I came across speakers of what appeared to be Domari. I had the chance to elicit and record linguistic material from two speakers, such as lexical items, paradigms and a couple of sentences. In 2010, I decided to go back to Aleppo to collect more data, in a more organised manner. I used a linguistic questionnaire designed by MATRAS AND ELŠÍK (2001) to collect more comprehensive grammatical information about the dialect of Aleppo. The outcome of this research can be found in HERIN (2012). The questionnaire was in English so I had to translate orally the sentences into Arabic and to present them to my informants who would then translate them into Domari. Such a method is very useful to collect phonological, morphological and lexical data, but much less so for syntactic and textual structures, that can only be uncovered by large corpora of transcribed spontaneous speech. Other problems arise from the translation process itself, as many grammaticalised patterns in the source language (in this case English) are absent from the medium language (in this case Arabic), so their existence is very hard to confirm or infirm in the target language (in this case Domari). Overall though, the use of the questionnaire proved efficient enough to uncover the essentials of the dialect of Aleppo. Compared to what was known about Domari, that is Palestinian Domari, Aleppo Domari showed unsuspected innovations as well as archaisms. In a nutshell, the most striking innovations are the loss or partial loss of gender as an inflectional category, the restructuring of case marking, and at the predicate level, the grammaticalisation of a future marker *kā* and a progressive stem using the copula *št-*. A striking conservatism, amongst others, is the retention of the Indic reflexive morpheme *pā-*. When Palestinian Domari was the only documented variety of Domari, MATRAS (2009) rightly suspected that it may not represent the language as a whole. New data on Aleppo Domari, thus, bridged a gap and allowed to realise the extent of variation that exists in the language. However, a question remained: is Aleppo Domari representative at all of any sub-group within Domari, or is it an isolated divergent dialect? To provide a tentative answer, I decided to record another dialect of Domari in summer 2011. My initial goal was to cover the variety spoken in Damascus, the capital of Syria, mainly because a big Dom community was reported there (MEYER 1994 &

2005, AL-JIBĀWĪ 2006), especially in the area of Sitt Zēnab, a suburb area of Damascus. For security reasons, this turned out to be impossible. I then decided to investigate the language of the Dom community in Beirut (Lebanon), more precisely in Sabra.⁵ There are no official figures about the Dom of Lebanon. In Sabra itself, their number must not exceed a couple of hundreds. Poverty, marginalisation, segregation, unemployment and illiteracy are what characterise most of the members of Dom community. Most the time was also devoted to fill in the questionnaire (MATRAS & ELŠIK 2001), supplemented with structures I felt were not explicit enough. I had the opportunity to work with most members of one family: the father, the mother, and three sisters. This allowed me also to document a possible inter-generational variation. Besides the questionnaire, more time was devoted to collect spontaneous speech, through interviews in Domari. While walking around in Beirut, I noticed children and young men who were working as shoepolishers. As I suspected them to be Dom, I went to them and asked them where they were from. Most of them turned out to be Syrian Dom from Latakiah (a coastal town) and Sarāqib (northern Syria, near Idlib). One of them, a 25 year old man from Sarāqib, showed interest in what I was doing and accepted to sit down with me every day for a week to fill in the questionnaire. I was also able to collect short narratives from him in his dialect. I thus left Lebanon with two corpuses, one in the dialect of Beirut, and one in the dialect of Sarāqib. The goal of this paper is double-tiered. First of all, it aims at documenting two unknown varieties of Domari: Beirut Domari and Sarāqib Domari. Secondly, since it is now possible to put the dialect of Aleppo in contrast with these two other varieties, this paper will attempt to establish to what extent one can speak of northern Domari as a dialect group and what are main the characteristics of this group.

Sounds

The three dialects under consideration here share much of their phonology. As far as vowels are concerned, they all distinguish short vowels from long vowels. Phonemic contrast seems to be available between two short vowels: /a/ and /ə/. As the research was not lexicon-oriented, only few minimal pairs were spotted: *qər* “son” vs. *qar* “donkey”. Length is distinctive, as shown by the following pairs: *qar* “donkey” vs. *qār* “penis”, *par* “go back” vs. *pār* “buy”. The inventory of long vowels appears to be the following: /ā/, /ā̄/, /ī/, /ū/, /ō/ and /ē/. Contrast between /ā/ and /ā̄/ is illustrated by the following pairs: *pnāra* “old” [pna:ra] vs. *pnāra* “white” [pna:ra], *māsī* [ma:si] “meat” vs. *māsī* [ma:si] “months”. Final /ā/ is mostly realised short. While a slight nasalisation was perceived in Aleppo [ã], this was recorded neither in Beirut nor in Sarāqib. In the dialect of Sarāqib, /ā̄/ may be realised slightly higher, until [ʌ]: *sā* [sʌ] “all”. As far as consonants are concerned, all the varieties of Domari in contact with Arabic borrowed a set of velarised consonants (/ɖ/, /ʂ/, /ɟ/ and more marginally /z/; respectively I.P.A. [ɖ], [ʂ], [ɟ] and [z]) as well as the pharyngeals /ħ/ (I.P.A. [ħ]) and /ʕ/ (I.P.A. [ʕ]). The most striking difference appears in the dialect of Beirut where the uvular stop /q/ has been replaced by the glottal stop /ʔ/ (I.P.A. [ʔ]). Most often, this glottal stop is realised with a double articulation involving pharyngealisation: [ʔ̕], making it at times sound close to [ʕ]. This feature was already attested in the dialect of Beirut in the 19th century, as evidenced by an item given by POTT (1846:176) which he transcribes as *îch* “leg”. In contemporary Beirut Domari, the same realisation was recorded: *ʔč*. In Aleppo and Sarāqib, the word is

⁵ I would like to thank Catherine Mourtada for introducing me to Dom families in Beirut, Fadia Turkmani for being an excellent consultant and Jérôme Lentin for helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper.

realised *qīč*. The passage of /q/ to /ʔ/ affected all layers of the language, inherited, pre-Arabic and Arabic: *ʔālā* “black” (Aleppo and Sarāqib *qālā* < Old Indo-Aryan *kālā*), *ʔāpī* “door” (Aleppo and Sarāqib *qāpī* < Turkish *kapı*), *ʔamár* “moon” (< Lebanese Arabic *ʔamar*; Aleppo and Sarāqib Domari use either *qamar* or *hayf* “moon”). The shift from /q/ to /ʔ/ is of course contact-induced as it is attested in most sedentary dialects of Levantine Arabic. What is interesting also is that the pharyngealised feature of /ʔ/ in Beirut Domari may also be contact-induced, as a similar phenomenon is reported in the traditional Arabic dialect of Beirut (GERMANOS 2009:171).

Nominals and related categories

Formally, nouns in Domari end in *-ī*, *-a* or a consonant. This is attested in all known varieties of the language. Historically, the ending *-ī* most often marks feminine nouns, whereas *-a* indicates masculine. This pattern is found in many modern Indo-Aryan languages that kept gender distinction. In Palestinian Domari, gender as an inflectional category is well preserved since it governs declension class, noun dependents marking such as adjectives and demonstratives, and also –although marginally– verbal agreement. In Aleppo Domari, it was found that this system had undergone extreme restructuring and that gender distinction had been neutralised everywhere. One exception is the residual maintenance of the feminine ending *-ī* in some items such as *vəddī ~ drōngī* “old woman”. This does not qualify as gender marking as it pertains to derivational morphology. And even as such, it seems to have lost much of its productivity. Palestinian Domari and Aleppo Domari thus seemed as one extreme each, along the scale of gender distinction. What about other varieties of Domari? At first glance, Sarāqib Domari exhibits the same pattern as Aleppo Domari. Gender marking is neutralised everywhere: declension group, demonstratives, adjectives and verbal agreement. However, one formal distinction surfaced with adjectives used as predicates:

- (1) a. *hā lāftī tnōṭy = e*
 DEM girl small.F=COP
 “This girl is small”
- b. *hā qar tnōṭ = e*
 DEM boy small.M=COP
 “This boy is small”

This seems to suggest that the underlying form in (1a) is *tnōṭī*, and *tnōṭa* in (1b). The cliticisation of the copula erases the ending in the case of *-a*, but not with *-ī*, in which case a glide appears. What is surprising is that when the adjective modifies a noun, gender distinction does not surface any longer, the vowel becoming invariably /ə/ (as in Aleppo Domari):

- (2) a. *tnōṭə qr-ō-m aḥsan qar = e pāsōm*
 small boy-SG-1SG best boy=COP 1SG.AD
 “My youngest boy is the best one I have”
- b. *tnōṭə lāftī-ā āyraq*

small girl-INDEF come.PFV.3SG
 “A small girl came”

In the dialect of Beirut, the distinction between the masculine and the feminine is rather straightforward and promptly apparent, whether the adjective is used as a predicate (3) or a nominal modifier (4). One formal difference with Sarāqib is that the vowel /a/ is not elided by the cliticisation of the copula (4a), provoking a hiatus whose phonetic realisation is [ɛɪ].

(3) a. *hanā tnōta čēžək = e*
 DEM small.M boy=COP
 “This is a small child”

b. *hā tnōti lāfty = e*
 DEM small.F girl=COP
 “This is a small girl”

(4) a. *ō ʿər drōna = e*
 DEM boy big.M=COP
 “That boy is big”

b. *ō lāfti = ši drōny = e*
 DEM girl=FOC big.F=COP
 “That girl too is big”

It can thus be concluded that the loss of gender marking on adjectives is not attested everywhere in the dialects under consideration. It also appears that the loss is gradual. Aleppo Domari is the most innovative variety, having neutralised gender marking everywhere, with adjectives used as predicates and modifiers. Sarāqib Domari stands in between, having neutralised it only in adjective-noun constructions but keeping it with adjectival predicates, while Beirut Domari kept gender marking in both adjective-noun constructions and adjectival predicates.

In all the dialects considered here, plural marking on nouns is *-ī(n)*: *mənsīn* “men” (singular *mnəs*), *kčīlīn* “old men” (singular *kčīla*, only used in Beirut Domari). The consonant /n/ is often elided: *nārni* “men” (singular *nārna*). With nouns ending in *-ī*, a glide appears: *kəryīn* “houses” (singular *kri*). The phonetic realisation most commonly recorded is [i:n], and more marginally slightly lower towards [e:n]. The consonant /n/ appears systematically when material is added to the right, most typically the copula:

(5) *hnērīn tnōtə lāfty-īn = e*
 DEM.PL small girl-PL=COP
 “These are small girls”

As far as plural marking on adjectives is concerned, Sarāqib Domari and Beirut Domari show different patterns. In Sarāqib, adjectives invariably end in the central vowel [ə], as shown in

(5). In Beirut Domari, gender marking appears also in the plural, at least with adjectives used predicatively:

- (6) a. *ē čāg-īn bū trōṭa = e*
 DEM child-PL very small.M=COP
 “These children are very small”
- b. *ē lāṭy-īn bū trōṭy = e*
 DEM girl-PL very small.F=COP
 “These girls are very small”

With adjectives used as modifiers, the ending *-a* was recorded (7a), but also *-ī* (7b). One way to account for this difference would be to consider that gender marking is neutralised in non-nominative cases.

- (7) a. *drōnga ġəwr-an dakərdēn*
 old woman-ACC.PL see.PFV.1SG
 “We saw the old women”
- b. *trōtī lāṭy-īn mānənde lağğī karənde*
 small.F girl-PL stay.IPFV.3PL be.shy.IPFV.3PL
 “Young girls remain shy”

Items borrowed from Arabic are also marked with the plural suffix *-ī(n)*: *daftar-īn* “notebooks”, *ʿalam-īn* “pens”. This also occurs in non-nominative positions, as shown in (8a), where the Arabic singular *ġaraḍ* “thing” is augmented with the accusative plural suffix *-an*. Very marginally, Arabic plurals can surface, as in (8b), where *zrūf* is the plural of *zarf* “circumstance”. In colloquial Arabic, the use of the singular is hardly attested and the noun appears almost exclusively in its plural form. This is why the speaker retrieved the plural, not singular.

- (8) a. *štālare ġaraḍ-an əkrī*
 carry.IPFV.3SG thing-ACC.PL house
 “He carries the things home”
- b. *garōm zrūf-am-ma*
 go.PFV.1SG circumstances-OBL.PL-IN
 “I went through circumstances”

Demonstratives

All of Beirut, Sarāqib and Aleppo Domari share the same forms of demonstratives. Two sets were identified, one used adnominally, and another one used pronominally. The Aleppo corpus (HERIN 2012) revealed three demonstrative forms: *hā*, *ē* and *ō*. It was concluded that *hā* was in the singular a nominative form and that *ē* was an oblique/accusative form. However, the Beirut and Sarāqib corpuses revealed that while *hā* does only appear in subject position, *ē*

is actually unmarked for case, as it can appear in every syntactic position, as shown in (9). As in Aleppo Domari, no gender or number distinctions were recorded. Also recorded in Beirut Domari is the long form *hanā* used adnominally: *hanā mnəs* “this man”, *hanā ḥkāya* “this story”, *hanā kərsi* “this chair”.

- (9) a. Subject (Beirut Domari)
hanā ē mnəs səkištar dōm-a gāl
 DEM.PROX DEM man learn.PROG.3SG Dom-OBL speech
 “This man is learning the language of the Dom”
- b. Object (Sarāqib Domari)
dārdōr ē lāfti-əs?
 see.PFV.2SG DEM.PROX girl-ACC
 “Did you see this girl?”
- c. Oblique (Beirut Domari)
biğūz ē mās-a-ma warsare
 maybe DEM.PROX month-OBL-IN rain.IPFV.3SG
 “It may rain this month”

In the plural, *ē* is also used in all syntactic positions, as exemplified in (10).

- (10) a. Subject (Beirut Domari)
ē čāg-īn āyrēnde bū z-dūra
 DEM.PROX kid-PL come.PRF much from-far
 “These kids have come from far away”
- b. Object (Sarāqib Domari)
nērōm ē glūlk-ən z-bēn-ō-m-ki
 take.PFV.1SG DEM.PROX flower-ACC.PL from-sister-SG-1SG-ABL
 “I took these flowers from my sister”
- c. Oblique (Beirut Domari)
kā gāl kam ē štār ʿər-an-sa
 FUT speak.SBJV.1SG DEM.PROX four boy-OBL.PL-COM
 “I want to speak with these four boys”

The distal form recorded in all dialects is *ō*. Examples (11a-c) show that it does not inflect for case in the singular. In the plural, the only syntactical position that surfaces in the corpus is object, as shown in (11d). In this case too, *ō* remains invariable.

- (11) a. Subject (Sarāqib Domari)
ō lāfti drōng ənniye
 DEM.DIST girl big NEG.COP.3SG
 “That girl is not big”

- b. Object (Beirut Domari)
nə-fčard(a) *ō* *lāfti-as*
 NEG-ask.PFV.3SG DEM.DIST girl-ACC
 “He didn’t ask that girl”
- c. Oblique (Beirut Domari)
tanēn-a *dīs* *garōm* *ō* *məns-a-ka*
 second-OBL day go.PFV.1SG DEM.DIST man-OBL-AD
 “On Monday, I went to that man’s place”
- d. *kō* *wāyra* *ō* *’r-an*
 who hit.PFV.3SG DEM.DIST boy-ACC.PL
 “Who hit those boys?”

It is now possible to establish the set of demonstratives used as modifiers in the three dialects under consideration, as shown in figure (1). This inventory appears to be shared by all northern varieties of Domari and can be used as a classificatory category.

Figure 1 Demonstratives used adnominally

Proximal	<i>hā</i> (<i>hanā</i>) ~ <i>ē</i>
Distal	<i>ō</i>

A function often associated with demonstratives is that of deictic and anaphoric pronouns. In all the varieties investigated, the demonstratives used as modifiers do not appear in pronominal functions, at least *ē* and *ō*. The form *hā* can be used pronominally, and is the short form of *hanā*, as shown in (12a, Sarāqib Domari) and (12b, Beirut Domari). The distal form *hanū* does not surface very often and contrary to what was observed in Aleppo Domari where it functions as a 3sg pronoun, it appears to have kept its distal meaning (12c, Sarāqib Domari).

- (12) a. *hā* *bū* *ğib karre*
 DEM much speak.IPFV.3SG
 “This one speaks a lot”
- b. *waḷḷa* *hanā* *’ar=e* *šəkl-ō-s*
 by God DEM donkey=COP look-SG-3SG
 “This one really looks like a donkey”
- c. *xəğ* *mišt-ā* *hnū*
 yesterday sick-RM DEM.DIST
 “Yesterday, that one was sick”

The forms *hanā* and *hanū* and their variants only appear in subject position. In other syntactic positions (object and oblique), the following forms were recorded:

(13) Object, proximal (Beirut Domari)

- a. *ksē bandōr ēr-as*
why break.PFV.2SG DEM.PROX-ACC
“Why did you break this?”

Object, distal (Beirut Domari)

- b. *waḷḷa na-dkərdōm ōr-as*
by God NEG-see.PFV.1SG DEM.DIST-ACC
“I swear I didn’t see that one”

Oblique, proximal (Sarāqib Domari)

- c. *kāy gāl kōr ēr-ə-ta*
what say.PFV.2SG DEM.PROX-OBL-SUP
“What did you say to this one?”

Oblique, distal (Sarāqib Domari)

- d. *n-ōr-ə-sa wala bār-ō-s-sa məṣrī aṣṭi*
NEG-DEM.DIST-OBL-COM NEG brother-SG-3SG-COM money there.is
“Neither that one nor his brother has money”

In the plural nominative, the base forms are *ērīn* for proximal (13a, Sarāqib Domari), and *ōrīn* for distal (13b, Sarāqib Domari), to which the formative *han-* can attach to the left: *hanērīn*, *hanōrīn*. In allegro speech, the vowel /a/ may drop: *hnērīn*, *hnōrīn*. The Sarāqib corpus contains one instance of *hērīn*, so also highly likely is the form *hōrīn*.

- (13) a. *ērīn aḷḷah-əs nə-biyānde*
DEM.PROX.PL God-ACC NEG-fear.IPFV.3PL
“These don’t fear God”
- b. *ōrīn daktōr (h)rēnd*
DEM.DIST.PL doctor became.PFV.3PL
“Those became doctors”

In non-subject positions, accusative and oblique are not distinguished, for both proximal and distal. Examples (14a, Sarāqib Domari) and (14b, Beirut Domari) show the suffixation of the accusative/oblique marker *-an /-ən* in oblique positions. No utterances of object positions surfaced in the corpus but the following examples were judged grammatical by the Sarāqib informant: *dārdōm ēr-ən* “I saw these ones” and *dārdōm ōr-ən* “I saw those ones”.

- (14) a. *lagīš kēn ēr-ən-sa*
quarrel.PFV.1PL DEM.PROX-OBL.PL-COM
“We quarrelled with these”
- b. *waḷḷa nə-gāl krōm wāššyā ōr-an-sa*
by God NEG-speak.PFV.1SG 3PL.COM DEM.DIST-OBL.PL-COM
“I swear I didn’t speak to them, those ones”

It is now possible to draw the table of all the forms of the pronominal demonstratives, as shown in figure (2). These are shared by all the dialects investigated here, Aleppo, Beirut and Sarāqib. It is therefore very likely that all northern dialects of Domari exhibit the same or very similar forms.

Figure 2 Demonstratives used pronominally

	Proximal	Distal
Nominative singular	<i>hanā ~ hā</i>	<i>hanū ~ hnū ~ hū</i>
Nominative plural	<i>ēr-īn</i>	<i>ōr-īn</i>
Oblique singular	<i>ēr-a-</i>	<i>ōr-a-</i>
Accusative singular	<i>ēr-as</i>	<i>ōr-as</i>
Accusative/oblique plural	<i>ēr-an</i>	<i>ōr-an</i>

Indefinites

The two basic forms recorded in Beirut and Sarāqib are *kyā* “something” (15a, Sarāqib Domari) and *kwā* “someone” (15b, Sarāqib Domari). Final /ā/ in both *kyā* and *kwā* is the short allomorph of the indefinite marker *-āk*.

- (15) a. *har dīs kyā tōme ṭāwl-ē-ta*
every day something put.IPFV.1SG table-OBL-SUP
“Every day I put something on the table”
- b. *kā l-mārēm kwā*
FUT SBJV-kill.SBJV.1SG someone
“I want to kill someone”

The morpheme *kyā* shows many surface variations. As mentioned above, the full form is *ky-āk* but the consonant /k/ mostly appears when material attaches to the right. The full form was recorded only once (16, Beirut Domari). Also common is the germination of initial /k/. Final /a/ also appears to be epenthetic.

- (16) *kā b-dēm-ər əkkyāka*
FUT SBJV-give.SBJV.1SG-2SG something
“I will give you something”

The full form *kw-āk* was not recorded independently and the consonant /k/ in both *kw-āk* and *ky-āk* appears most often in oblique positions, that is, when material attaches to the right, as evidenced in (17a, Sarāqib Domari) and (17b, Beirut Domari)

- (17) a. *kwāk-ə-sa lagīš nə-kēn*
someone-OBL-COM fight NEG-do.PFV.1PL
“ We didn’t quarrel with anyone”
- b. *nā-nwištōm əkkyāk-a-ta*

NEG-search.PROG.1SG something-OBL-SUP

“I’m not looking for anything”

In Sarāqib Domari, Layer II markers (see below) can attach directly at least to *kwā*, without oblique marker, as in (18a), where *kwā-t* surfaces instead of the full form **kwāk-ə-ta*. In (18b), the elision of the oblique marker is probably due to the succession of two /k/: *kwāk-ə-ki* > *kwāk-ki*. This was not recorded with *kyā*.

- (18) a. *mēna* *gāl* *nə-kōm* *kwā-t* *kyāmōr*
 1SG.DSM word NEG-do.PFV.1SG someone-SUP anything
 “Me, I didn’t say anything to anyone”
- b. *hā* *qər* *kyāmōr* *nə-ttə* *kwāk-ki*
 DEM boy anything NEG-give.PFV.3SG someone-ABL
 “This boy didn’t give anything to anyone”

Most often though, *kyā* and *kwā* are augmented by the morpheme *mōr*, as shown in (19a, Beirut Domari) and (19b, Sarāqib Domari).

- (19) a. *ny-e* *kyāmōr*
 NEG-COP anything
 “There is nothing”
- b. *tēn* *dārdōr* *kwāmōr*
 2SG.DSM see.PFV.2SG anyone
 “Did you see anyone?”

The attachment of *mōr* to its host creates a new phonological word as stress falls on the last syllable: *kyāmōr* and *kwāmōr*. The oblique marker and additional Layer II markers are suffixed to the right, as evidenced in (20a, Beirut Domari) and (20b, Sarāqib Domari). This, however, appears to be quite marginal and oblique marking and Layer II markers are most typically suffixed to the full forms *kyāk* and *kwāk*, as in (17). There are thus phonological and morphological evidence that *mōr* should be considered an affix, as it creates a new phonological and morphological word with its host.

- (20) a. *nə-pārdōm* *kwāmōr-a-ki* *məşrī*
 NEG-take.PFV.1SG anyone-OBL-ABL money
 “I didn’t take money from anyone”
- b. *fattiş* *n-āštōme* *kyāmōr-ə-ta*
 search NEG-do.PROG.1SG anything-OBL-SUP
 “I’m not looking for anything”

The Beirut corpus contains one instance of *mōr* used as a free morpheme. The informant, a 23 year old woman, was being asked what work she had, and gave the following answer:

- (21) *mōr* *əkkyā, wala kyā, iyyām ašti dī gaḡḡī*
 no thing no thing days there.is two non-Dom.woman
trən gaḡḡī ḡāme kʷam kame abōsa
 three non-Dom.woman go.IPFV.1SG work do.IPFV.1SG 3PL.BEN
kəry-a-ma
 house-OBL-IN
 “Nothing, nothing, sometimes there are a couple of non-Dom women, I go and work for them home”

One possibility is that in the speech of this innovative speaker, *mōr* is reinterpreted as a free morpheme to match the syntactical behaviour of the Arabic pre-nominal modifier *wala* “no” (< Arabic *wala šī* “no thing”). This is further suggested by the repetition of “nothing”, first using Domari *mōr*, and then Arabic *wala*. One other indefinite involves the morpheme *tā*, (< *tāw* “place”) and *mōr*: *tāmōr* “anywhere, nowhere”, as shown in (22, Sarāqib Domari). Although this is found neither in the Sarāqib corpus nor the Beirut corpus, data from Aleppo (HERIN 2012) showed that *mōr* can attach to any nominal element: *māni*‘-*mōr* “no hindrance”, *dōm-mōr* “no Dom”.

- (22) *kānye tāmōr ḡēr ē tāw-ə-ki ḡānə wēšī*
 there.is.not nowhere except DEM place-OBL-ABL go.SBJV.1PL 3SG.VERS
 “There is nowhere for us to go except that place”

The numeral *yēka* ~ *yōka* “one” is often used in positive sentences in the sense of “someone, somebody” in both Sarāqib and Beirut Domari (23a, Beirut Domari). Its use in negative sentences was extended only in Beirut Domari (23b) which shows a higher degree of convergence with Arabic.

- (23) a. *ōta kill yōka kəry-a-ma mānəre*
 there each one house-OBL-IN stay.IPFV.3SG
 “Over there, everyone stays home”
 b. *wala yōka tōrdōme wēššyā*
 no one put.PRF.1SG 3PL.ABL
 “I haven’t put any of them (at school)”

Layers of case marking

The term layers of case marking was first used by MASICA (1991) to describe the various layers of case marking in modern Indo-Aryan languages, and subsequently applied by MATRAS (2002) to Romani and Domari. Both languages are strikingly similar both formally and structurally as far as case marking is concerned. MATRAS (1999) identified up to three layers of case markers. The first layer is an oblique/accusative marker that attaches directly to the nominal root. The second layer is a set of morphemes that are attached to the noun via the oblique marker. The third layer, in the case of Palestinian Domari, consists of prepositions borrowed from Arabic (adapted from MATRAS 1999:17):

<i>min</i>	<i>kur</i>	<i>ya</i>	<i>ki</i>
from (Arabic)	house	OBL	ABL
III		I	II

In Palestinian Domari, gender distinction is reflected in the Layer I marker: *-(y)a* is feminine, while masculine nouns select the extension *-as*. In the plural, gender distinction is neutralised and the morpheme *-an* is selected by both masculine and feminine nouns. It was found that the Domari dialect of Aleppo (HERIN 2012) had restructured this system and had neutralised gender distinction, reallocating the feminine *-a* (realised *-ə*) to a general oblique marker, and the masculine *-as* (realised *-əs*) to a general accusative marker. The same pattern was found both in Beirut and Sarāqib Domari.

Layer I

The singular oblique marker *-a* / *-ə*

The oblique marker is realised [a] in Beirut, and more centralised in the dialect of Sarāqib, towards [ə]. It has two functions. The first one, as mentioned above, is to mediate between the nominal root and Layer II markers. In (23, Beirut Domari), the oblique marker mediates between the nominal base *‘ārd* “ground” and the inessive Layer II marker *-ma*.

- (23) *wēštī ‘ārd-a-ma*
sit ground-OBL-IN
“Sit on the floor”

Another allomorph of the oblique marker in the singular is *-ē*. It surfaces mostly with borrowings from Arabic that end in the feminine marker *-e* / *-a*: *ḥar-ē-ma* “in town” (< Arabic *ḥāra* “neighbourhood”). It also appears in pre-Arabic items: *āwīn-ē-ma* “in the mirror” (< Kurdish *ayîne* “mirror”). Indo-Aryan material was also recorded with this allomorph: *z-wārsīnd-ē-ki* “from the rain” (< *wārsīnda* “rain”).⁶

The second function of the oblique marker in both Beirut and Sarāqib Domari is to mark the modifier in genitive constructions. This is ultimately its original function and its retention in the dialects investigated here is a striking archaism. In this case, the linear order is always modifier-head.

Beirut Domari:

- kčily-a ngōštārī* “the ring of the old woman” (old.woman-OBL ring)
dōm-a gāl “the language of the Dom” (speech-OBL Dom)

Sarāqib Domari:

⁶ Interestingly, TURNER (1962-1966:665, lemma 147) traces *wārsīnda* to Old Indo-Aryan *varṣakāla* through Middle Indo-Aryan **varīṣanta* but notes that “both eur. [European Gypsy, that is Romani] *brīšind* and pal. [Palestinian Gypsy, that is Domari] *warsīnda* have been influenced by Pers. *barsanda* to which pal. verb also owes its *s* in place of expected *ṣ*”. This however is inaccurate as the three Old Indo-Aryan sibilants /s/, /ś/ and /ṣ/ merged into /s/ in Domari (MATRAS 2002:34).

<i>ḥōš-ə qāpy-ə-t</i>	“at the door of the house”	(house-OBL door-OBL-SUP)
<i>dangəz-ə qnār-ə-t</i>	“on the seaside”	(sea-OBL side-OBL-SUP)

The singular accusative marker *-as* / *-əs*

The marker *-as* (Beirut Domari) / *-əs* (Sarāqib Domari) marks the object of transitive verbs. All the varieties of Domari so far documented exhibit the same pattern of (differential) object marking, that is, object marking only occurs when the object is high on the scale of topicality, which happens when the entity encoded by the object is referential and identifiable. In (24a, Beirut Domari) the “cup” (*fiṅḡān*) is referential and identifiable to both the speaker and the addressee, and therefore marked with *-as*. In (24b, Beirut Domari), the cup being introduced for the first time into the discourse and therefore indefinite and non-topical, remains unmarked.

- (24) a. *dakərdōm-ər* *bandōr* *fiṅḡān-as*
 see.PFV.1SG-2SG break.PFV.2SG cup-ACC
 “I saw you break the cup!”
- b. *pīrōm* *fiṅḡān* *ʾaḥwa*
 drink.PFV.1SG cup coffee
 “I drank a cup of coffee”

The other allomorph of the accusative marker is *-ēs*. It also appears mainly with Arabic items ending in the feminine marker *-e* / *-a*: *risāl-ēs* (letter-ACC < Arabic *risāle* “letter”), *qaḥw-ēs* (coffee-ACC < Arabic *qahwa* “coffee”). This allomorph was also recorded in inherited items: *gōr-ēs* (horse-ACC).

The marker *-an* / *-ən*

It is realised *-an* in Beirut and *-ən(ə)* in Sarāqib. This marker fulfils two functions: it marks accusative plural and oblique plural. The distinction that appears in the singular between these two functions is thus neutralised in the plural. This is in-line with Palestinian Domari and Romani in which the same forms and functions are reported. Similarly to what was noted for the singular, plural nouns in object position are marked with *-an* only when they are referential and identifiable. Contrast for that matter (25a) in which *bakra* “lamb” remains unmarked for case as it is newly introduced in the discourse, whereas in (25b), it receives accusative marking because it has been made identifiable to the addressee (the context is a description of how weddings take place in the Beirut community).

- (25) a. *ʾāyīš* *xōnānde*, *bakr-īn* *mārande*
 food cook.IPFV.3PL lamb-PL kill.IPFV.3PL
 “Food is prepared, (some) lambs are killed”
- b. *məns-īn* *mārande* *bakr-an* *slax* *kan(d)-san-e*
 man-PL kill.IPFV.3PL lamb-ACC.PL slaughter do.IPFV.3PL-3PL-CM
 “The men kill the lambs and slaughter them”

The second function shared by all varieties under consideration is that of a plural oblique marker that mediates between the nominal root and Layer II markers (26a, Beirut Domari; 26b, Sarāqib Domari).

- (26) a. *n-siknām-san-e* (ē)hān kam-an-ta
 NEG-teach.IPFV.1SG-3PL-CM such thing-OBL.PL-SUP
 “I don’t teach them such things”
- b. *ēr-əs* *səndōm* *z-lāfty-ən-ki*
 DEM-ACC hear.PFV.1SG from-girl-OBL.PL-ABL
 “That I heard from the girls”

It was found that in the dialect of Sarāqib, the marker *-ən(a)* also marks frequently (singular) nouns in non-object positions, as shown in (27a). In most instances, the morpheme *-ən(a)* marks left-dislocated subjects, as a short pause is heard between the dislocated constituent and the rest of the clause. Cross-linguistically, left-dislocation is usually seen as a device “to reintroduce given information that has not been mentioned for a while” (FINEGAN 2011:282), and as such, is used to flag a topic shift. The other morpheme most commonly marked with *-ən(a)* is the indefinite *kwā(k)* “someone, anyone” in subject position (27b). Since subjects in Domari usually remain unmarked, the use of *-ən(a)* to mark them in (at least) these two specific conditions (left-dislocation and indefinite) is a clear case of differential subject marking. It is now common knowledge that cross-linguistically, subjecthood and topicality are closely related, it comes therefore as no surprise that less topical subjects are more prone to differential marking. Left-dislocated elements are by nature non-topical, as left-dislocation is a topic shift device, hence the potential need to overtly mark them when they appear as subjects. The same explanation holds for the marking of the indefinite *kwā* “someone”, which, intrinsically, scores lower on the topicality scale than a definite NP. A look at the distribution of differential subject marking on the indefinite morpheme suggests that transitivity is a relevant triggering parameter, as no instances of *kwā* augmented with *-ən(a)* were recorded with intransitive predicates. It appears thus that differential subject marking is a device available to the speaker in order to disambiguate the core participants of the event. This does not hold true with referential NP’s used as subjects of intransitive predicates, as they can be marked with *-ən(a)* (27e). In this case, the subject is differentially marked to signal a topic shift, irrespective of the valency of the predicate. Finally, it must be added that differential subject marking in Domari may also be sensitive to animacy. This is suggested by the fact that only phrases encoding animate entities were recorded with the marker *-ən(a)*. In the same vein, it appears that amongst the indefinites, only *kwā* “someone” is marked, never *kyā* “something”.

In the light of the Sarāqib corpus, it is now possible to provide an explanation for forms recorded in Aleppo Domari and that were simply mentioned in HERIN (2012), such as the distal demonstrative *ōr-* ~ *hanōr-* “that one” (27c) and the indefinite *kwāmōr* (27d), both augmented with the differential subject marker *-ən* (epenthetic /a/ was not recorded in Aleppo). This function of *-ən(a)* was not recorded in Beirut Domari so it cannot be taken as a

distinctive feature of the northern dialects of Domari. Nothing similar is reported for Palestinian Domari.

- (27) a. *ē nārn-ənə mčərdə ē lāfty-əs z-zāwr-ō-s-ki*
 DEM man-DSM kiss.PFV.3SG DEM girl-ACC from-mouth-SG-3SG-ABL
 “This man kissed this girl on her mouth”
- b. *kwāk-ənə dārdōs-ər ġāštōre ōta*
 someone-DSM see.PFV.3SG-2SG go.PROG.2SG there
 “Did anyone see you go there?”
- c. *hanōr-ən n-ġāšte vyār*
 DEM-DSM NEG-go.PROG.3SG town
 “That one doesn’t want to go to town”
- d. *quzīn kardōm kwāmōr-ən nə-səndōs-əm*
 scream do.PFV.1SG nobody-DSM NEG-hear.PFV.3SG-1SG
 “I screamed (but) nobody heard me”
- e. *ē məns-ən bū pīre*
 DEM man-DSM much drink.PRF.3SG
 “This man is very drunk”

Layer II

The inventory of Layer II markers in Beirut and Sarāqib Domari is similar to what was recorded in the dialect of Aleppo (Figure 3). Inessive *-ma*, superessive *-ta*, adessive *-ka*, comitative *-sa* and ablative *-ki* are shared by all dialects, whereas versative *-wa* and benefactive *-kē* exhibit idiosyncrasies in each dialect. Only the ablative, the versative and the benefactive will be discussed here. As noted above, Layer II markers attach to the right of the oblique stem of the nominal root, although instances of direct suffixation without the mediation of any Layer I marker were recorded with indefinites in Sarāqib Domari (18).

Figure 3 Layer II markers in northern Domari

Label	Form	Primary meaning
Inessive	<i>-ma</i>	“in”
Superessive	<i>-ta</i>	“on”
Adessive	<i>-ka</i>	“at”
Ablative	<i>-ki</i>	“from”
Comitative	<i>-sa</i>	“with”
Versative	<i>-wa</i>	“towards”
Benefactive	<i>-kē</i>	“for”

Ablative *-ki*

The label “ablative” for the marker *-ki* was first introduced by MACALISTER (1914) in his sketch of Palestinian Domari and subsequently used by MATRAS (1999 & 2012). This term can be kept in the description of the varieties in consideration here, as one of its functions indeed is to encode source (28a, Sarāqib Domari; 28b, Beirut Domari). This morpheme exhibits slight surface variations. The consonant /k/ is geminated and a glide appears when the copula attaches to the right: *z-ēr-ə-kky=e* (from-DEM-OBL-ABL=COP).

- (28) a. *har dīs kəry-ə-ki kənəme*
 each day house-OBL-ABL go.out.IPFV.1SG
 “Every day I go out of the house”
- b. *bibby-ō-m xəğ rasra wyār-a-ki*
 aunt-SG-1SG yesterday arrive.PFV.3SG Damascus-OBL-ABL
 “My aunt arrived yesterday from Damascus”

The other main function of the marker *-ki* is to encode destination. This was recorded in Beirut (29a), Sarāqib (29b), as well as in Aleppo Domari (HERIN 2012).

- (29) a. *pənd-ō-m-ma kəry-a-ki dakərdōm ġəwr-ā*
 way-SG-1SG-IN house-OBL-ABL see.PFV.1SG woman-INDEF
 “On my way home I saw a woman”
- b. *kā partyən hār-ē-ki xamīs-ə dīs*
 FUT return.SBJV.1PL town-OBL-ABL Thursday-OBL day
 “We’ll go back to town on Thursday”

The syncretism between the ablative and the allative was found to be rather rare cross-linguistically (HERIN 2012) and it appears to be shared by all the northern dialects of Domari. Another common way of encoding destination in all the dialects investigated here is to leave the noun simply unmarked, as in (30a-b, Sarāqib Domari). In comparison to the ablative marking strategy however, this appears quite marginal and lexically restricted.

- (30) a. *na-skame ġām kərī*
 NEG-can.IPFV.1SG go.SBJV.1SG house
 “I can’t go home”
- b. *har dīs wyār ġām-āši*
 each day market go.IPFV.1SG-RM
 “Every day I used to go to the market”

In Palestinian Domari, destination is encoded by way of the marker *-ta*, whose primary meaning is “on”. This appears to be a case of pattern replication from Levantine Arabic, in which destination is also encoded by way of a preposition whose primary meaning is “on” (‘a ~ ‘ala). Although any attempt to explain these developments diachronically will always

remain conjectural, a possible pattern is that the marker *-ki* is primarily an ablative marker and as such prototypically encodes source. The allative function, although now marginal, may have been unmarked. The fact that *-ki* further extended to encode destination may have been triggered by the borrowing of the Iranian preposition *z-* “from” (see below). The ablative marker subsequently became a prepositional marker. Its functional range was then extended to encode destination. Synchronically, it is striking to see that all these options are still in competition in all the varieties considered here. The use of the marker *-ta* in the Palestinian variety would then have to be seen as a later contact-induced innovation (see also below for the use of personal pronouns marked for case).

Another function of *-ki* shared by the dialects investigated here is to mark the recipient-like argument in ditransitive constructions. This was only recorded with a limited number of verbs (*fkn-* “sell”, *tət-* / *dē-* “give”, *dəknā-* “show”), as shown in (31, Beirut Domari). In the speech of innovative speakers of Beirut Domari, benefactive marking may replace ablative marking on the recipient-like argument, as in (31d) where the relational noun *kēra* forms a genitive construction with *bārēr* “your brothers”. This is obviously the result of alignment with Arabic in which recipient-like arguments in ditransitive constructions are marked with the preposition *la* “for, to”.

- (31) a. *fkəndōm* *ğīrān-ō-m-ki* *ʾar-as*
 sell.PFV.1SG neighbour-SG-1SG-ABL donkey-ACC
 “I sold the donkey to my neighbours”
- b. *pānžī* *tta* *bār-ō-r-ki* *məşrī*
 3SG give.PFV.3SG brother-SG-2SG-ABL money
 “He gave money to your brother”
- c. *dəknāwištar* *ʾr-a-ki* *nawa* *ngōštary-as*
 show.PROG.3SGson-OBL-ABL new ring-ACC
 “He shows the new ring to (his) son”
- d. *tōm* *bār-ē-r* *kēra* *tīka* *mana*
 give.PFV.1SG brother-PL-2SG BEN little bread
 “I gave some bread to your brothers”

Versative *-wa*

The morpheme *-wa* was recorded in all the dialects investigated here. It appears in temporal expressions, in which case its meaning is “since, for” (32a, Beirut Domari), and spatial expressions, meaning “in the direction of” (32b, Beirut Domari). There is a clear difference between the ablative marker *-ki* that encodes destination and *-wa* that encodes direction.

- (32) a. *mās-am-wa* *harōs-s* *wēsre* *ēta*
 month-OBL.PL-VERS become.PFV.3SG-3SG stay.IPFV.3SG here
 “He has been staying here for months”

- b. *kā* *raftē* *hē* *ğām^ˈ-a-wa*
 FUT walk.SBJV.2SG DEM mosque-OBL-VERS
 “You have to go towards the mosque”

The same distinction was recorded in the dialect of Sarāqib, in which *-wa* means “for, since” in temporal expressions (33a) and “towards” in spatial expressions (33b). One formal difference surfaces with the oblique marker whose phonetic realisation is rounded in the vicinity of [w].

- (33) a. *mās-ā* *nīm-ō-wa = e* *ḥār-ē-ma = štōm-ā*
 month-INDEF half-OBL-VERS=COP neighbourhood-OBL-IN=COP.1SG-RM
 “A month and a half ago, I was in the neighbourhood”
- b. *rawē* *mh-ō-r-ta* *ba^ˈdēn ləff(h)ōē* *šmāl-o-wa*
 go.IPFV.2SG face-SG-2SG-SUP then turn.IPFV.2SG left-OBL-VERS
 “You go straight ahead, and then you turn left”

Versative *-wa* was also recorded as a formative in adverbs and interrogatives such as *mzēwa* “from here” (34a, Beirut Domari), *məzkēwa* “where from” (34b, Beirut Domari), *kēwa* “where to” (34c, Sarāqib Domari). Initial /m/ in *mzēwa* and *məzkēwa* is most probably the result of the reduction of the Arabic preposition *min* “from”, while the consonant /z/ is in all likelihood the Iranian preposition *z-* “from”. This is suggested by another common way of expressing “from here” in Beirut Domari: *min z-ēta*, in which both Arabic *min* and Iranian *z-* are apparent (34d).⁷ Such hypercharacterised lexicalisations are possible in Beirut Domari because the preposition *z-* has a very light functional load and contrary to Aleppo and Sarāqib Domari, its use is attested only marginally.

- (34) a. *mzēwa* *ḥatt* *ōta* *ašti* *masāf-āk* *dūra = e*
 from.here until there there.is distance-INDEF long=COP
 “From here until there, there is a long distance”
- b. *tō* *məzkēwa = štōr* *aʃl-ō-r*
 2SG where.from=COP.2SG origin-SG-2SG
 “Where are you from?”
- c. *kēwa* *garrēse*
 where.to go.PRF.2PL
 “Where are you headed?”
- d. *awwal mā* *ğirsāwīrōm* *mā* *garōm* *fall arōm* *minzēta*
 as.soon.as marry.PFV.1SG 1SG go.PFV.1SG flee.PFV.1SG from.here
 “As soon as I got married, I left, I fled from here”

⁷ This item already appears in GROOME (1891:25) for Damascus so it doesn’t seem to be a recent lexicalisation.

Benefactive *-kē*

The Layer II benefactive marker *-kē* results from the reduction of the relational noun *kēra* “for”. This loss of phonetic substance of *kēra* is attested only in Palestinian Domari and Beirut Domari. There are competing forms as far as the marking of pronouns is concerned. The first option consists of the morpheme *ab-* to which bound pronouns attach, as in *ab-ōr* “for you” (35a). The second involves free pronouns augmented with the marker *-kē*, as in *mā-kē* “for me” (35b). The third one is a blend of the first two options: *ab-ōm-kē* “for me”. The long form *kēra* was also recorded and has not been totally taken over by the short allomorph: *amīn kēra* “for us”, *ab-ōs kēra* “for him”, *ʔər-an kēra* “for the boys” (see below for more on relational nouns).

- (35) a. *krōm* *ʔāyš-an* *abōr* *la* *bār-ē-r-kē*
do.PFV.1SG food-ACC.PL 2SG.BEN and brother-PL-2SG-BEN
“I made the food for you and your brothers”
- b. *yelli* *mangam-s-e* *karrə-s-e* *mā-kē*
REL want.IPFV.1SG-3SG-CM do.IPFV.3SG-3SG-CM 1SG-BEN
“What I want, he does it for me”

Proforms and case marking

All the dialects of Domari exhibit two series of free pronouns and bound pronouns. Free pronouns are used in isolation, while bound pronouns attach to verbs *āyrēnd-mā* (come.PFV.3PL-1PL) “they came to us”, nouns *tarbīl-ō-s* (car-SG-3SG) “his car” and a set of formatives used to mark personal pronouns for case *watōm* “on me” (1SG.SUP, see below).

Figure 4 Free and bound pronouns

	Free	Bound
1SG	<i>(a)mā</i>	<i>-m</i>
2SG	<i>tō</i>	<i>-r</i>
3SG	<i>pāṅḡī</i>	<i>-s</i>
1PL	<i>amī(n)</i>	<i>-mā(n)</i>
2PL	<i>(a)tmī(n)</i>	<i>-rā(n)</i>
3PL	<i>pāṅḡyā</i>	<i>-sā(n)</i>

It is not expected for the free pronouns to appear with any Layer I marking, such as the accusative marker, as pronominal objects are indexed on the verb by suffixing bound forms. This, however, was recorded twice in the dialect of Sarāqib (36a-b), in which the first singular bound pronoun *(a)mā* is augmented with the accusative marker *-s*. This occurs in marked constituent orders such as right-dislocated objects (36a) or fronted objects (36b).

- (36) a. *ksē* *nə-pčārdōr-əm* *mā-s*
why NEG-ask.PFV.2SG-1SG 1SG-ACC
“Why did you ask me?”

- b. *mā-s nə-pčārdōr garōr pčārdōr ē lāfty-əs*
 1SG-ACC NEG-ask.PFV.2SG go.PFV.2SG ask.PFV.2SG DEM girl-ACC
 “You didn’t ask me, (instead) you went and asked this girl”

The other Layer I marker that can mark free pronouns is the differential subject marker *-ən(a)*. This option is available only in the dialects of Sarāqib and Aleppo. The Sarāqib corpus contains only instances of 1SG (37a) and 2SG (37b). As mentioned above, this marker is used to flag a topic shift.

- (37) a. *mēn wēyrōm-əs*
 1SG.DSM hit.PFV.1SG-3SG
 “I’m the one who hit him”
- b. *tēn dārdōr kwāmōr*
 2SG.DSM see.PFV.2SG someone
 “You, did you see anyone?”

The 1SG may be realised *amēn ~ mēn ~ mēnə* and the 2SG *tēn ~ tēnə*. As far as other persons are concerned, the Aleppo corpus provided for the 3SG the distal demonstrative *ōr-* augmented with the marker *-ən*: *ōr-ən* (see above). In the 1PL and 2PL, *amārīn* and *tmārīn* were recorded. The only form that surfaces in the Aleppo and Sarāqib corpora for the 3PL is the distal demonstrative *ōr-* augmented with the plural suffix *-īn*: *ōrīn* (*~ hōrīn ~ hanōrīn*), as in (38, Aleppo Domari) in which *ōrīn* is left-dislocated.

- (38) *ōrīn dy-ə-mā ʿiṣ(h)rēnde*
 DEM.DIST village-OBL-IN live.PRF.3PL
 “Them, they live in the village”

The suffixation of Layer II markers is attested in all the dialects investigated here, but not for all markers. Generally, Layer II markers suffix to free pronouns when a constituent encoded by a pronoun appears in a marked context such as dislocation, fronting or focus marking. Figure (5) shows free pronouns augmented with the adessive marker *-ka*. Only the 2SG shows allomorphic variation and becomes *tər-*. In the 3rd persons, the demonstratives *ēr-* (proximate) and *ōr-* (distal) are used.

Figure 5 Free pronouns marked with adessive *-ka*

1SG	<i>mā-ka</i>
2SG	<i>tər-ka</i>
3SG	<i>ēr-ə-ka ~ ōr-ə-ka</i>
1PL	<i>amīn-ka</i>
2PL	<i>(a)tmīn-ka</i>
3PL	<i>ēr-ən-ka ~ ōr-ən-ka</i>

Ablative

Kinship terms are often marked twice with possession markers, once with a regular bound morpheme, and with a free pronoun marked for ablative: *mā-ki bāb-ō-m* “my father”, *mā-ki dād-ō-m* “my mother”, *mā-ki bēn-ē-m* “my sisters”, *mā-ki bīby-ō-m* “my aunt”, *qr-ō-m mā-ki* “my son”. Otherwise ablative marking on free pronouns occurs with dislocated pronominals that occur in genitive positions (39a, right-dislocation, Beirut Domari). Ablative marking on dislocated pronominal objects is possible but only with non-canonical objects, such as (39b, Sarāqib Domari) in which the first person bound pronoun *-m* attaches to the perfective stem of the verb *h-* “become”. The object of the verb *h-* is non-canonical precisely because accusative marking is not used in case of dislocation. Semantically also, the object does not encode a prototypical patient but rather something closer to a benefactive.

- (39) a. *kārdāk = e ml-ō-s ēr-a-ki*
 how.much=COP price-SG-3SG DEM.PROX-OBL-ABL
 “What’s the price of this?”
- b. *mā-k (h)arōs-əm pang wars ‘iś(h)rōme ē ddy-i-ma*
 1SG-ABL become-1SG five year live.PRF.1SG DEM village-OBL-IN
 “Me, I have been living in this village for five years”

Adessive

Adessive marking on free pronouns seems to be restricted to possessive clauses. These are existential clauses in which the possessor is encoded as an adverbial phrase marked for adessive in case of general possession, as shown in (40, Sarāqib Domari).

- (40) *mā-ka trambēl kānye*
 1SG-AD car there.is.not
 “I don’t have a car”

Comitative

Comitative marking is also commonly used in possessive constructions to express direct contact between the possessor and the possessee. As noted above, case marking on free pronouns appears mostly in marked sentences. In (41, Sarāqib Domari), the suffixation of *-sa* to the proximate pronominal demonstrative *ēr-* occurs because the constituent is right-dislocated.

- (41) *wāš məṣrī bū = ye ēr-ə-sa*
 3SG.COM money much=COP DEM-OBL-COM
 “This one has a lot of money”

Benefactive

The suffixation of the benefactive marker *-kē* to a free pronoun occurs only in Beirut Domari, as exemplified in (42). The marked nature of the context is signalled here through the use of the enclitic focus marker *šī*. In Beirut Domari, benefactive marking is available in possessive predicative constructions, as a replication of the Arabic preposition *la*, also used in possessive clauses in Levantine Arabic (Aleppo and Sarāqib Domari exhibit only comitative and adessive markings in possessive constructions).

- (42) *tər-kē=šī* *ašti* *bāl/w-āk* *dahab-a-k=e*
 2SG.OBL-BEN=FOC there.is bracelet-INDEF gold-OBL-ABL=COP
 “You too have a golden bracelet”

Personal pronouns and case-marking

In non-marked contexts, all the varieties considered here make use of a set of formatives augmented by bound pronominal forms. The full inventory of these forms is given in Figure (6) for Sarāqib Domari.

Figure 6 Free pronouns marked for case in Sarāqib Domari

	Inessive	Superessive	Adessive	Ablative	Comitative	Versative	Benefactive
1SG	<i>manğōm</i>	<i>watōm</i>	<i>pāsōm</i>	<i>dēšōm</i>	<i>wāšōm</i>	<i>wēšōm</i>	<i>abōm</i>
2SG	<i>manğōr</i>	<i>watōr</i>	<i>pāsōr</i>	<i>dēšōr</i>	<i>wāšōr</i>	<i>wēšōr</i>	<i>abōr</i>
3SG	<i>manğī</i>	<i>watī</i>	<i>pāsī</i>	<i>dēšī</i>	<i>wāšī</i>	<i>wēšī</i>	<i>abōs</i>
1PL	<i>manğōmā</i>	<i>watōmā</i>	<i>pāsōmā</i>	<i>dēšōmā</i>	<i>wāšōmā</i>	<i>wēšōmā</i>	<i>abōmā</i>
2PL	<i>manğōrā</i>	<i>watōrā</i>	<i>pāsōrā</i>	<i>dēšōrā</i>	<i>wāšōrā</i>	<i>wēšōrā</i>	<i>abōrā</i>
3PL	<i>manğyā</i>	<i>wattyā</i>	<i>pāssyā</i>	<i>dēššyā</i>	<i>wāššyā</i>	<i>wēššyā</i>	<i>abōsā</i>

The main surface variation occurs in the plural forms that may exhibit a final /n/. Final /n/ is well preserved in Beirut Domari, while in Aleppo Domari it surfaces mainly when followed by a vowel to avoid hiatus. In Sarāqib Domari, the hiatus is tolerated and the consonant surfaces only rarely: *abōmā=e* vs Aleppo and Beirut Domari *abōmān=e* “it’s for us” (3PL.BEN=COP). In both Sarāqib and Beirut Domari, final /i/ in the 3SG forms often drops in allegro speech: *manğ* “in it”, *wat* “on it”, *pās* “at it”, *dēš* “from it”, *wāš* “with it”, *wēš* “towards it”. It is striking to see that only benefactive *abōs* “for him” exhibits the regular 3SG bound pronoun *-ōs* while the other formatives select *-ī*.

These forms do not occur in all varieties of Domari. Inessive, superessive, adessive, comitative and benefactive are common to all dialects, while dissimilarities arise for the ablative and versative. In Sarāqib Domari, the distinction between these two cases is straightforward, as shown in (43a-b)

- (43) a. *səndēnd* *ē* *sālf-ēs* *dēšī*
 hear.PFV.3PL DEM story-ACC 3SG.ABL
 “They heard this story from him”
- b. *lāzim* *ağ* *pərtəəm* *wēšī* *ğēr* *dēf-ən-sa*
 must today return.SBJV.1SG 3SG.VERS other guest-OBL.PL-COM

“I have to go back to it today with other guests”

In Beirut Domari, the formative *wēš-* is used for ablative (44a), while the versative function has been taken over by the superessive morpheme *wat-* (44b). Sarāqib Domari ablative *dēš-* does not belong to the inventory of Beirut Domari. The extension *-īr* in the 2SG with the formative *wēš-* was also recorded once in Beirut: *wēšīr* “from you”.

- (44) a. *ǧū wēšōm, xr-ō-m milla(h)re wēšōr*
 go 1SG.ABL heart-SG-1SG get.tired.PFV.3SG 2SG.ABL
 “Get away from me, my heart is tired of you”
- b. *ē tāw illi garōr wat āxir warəs*
 DEM place REL go.PFV.2SG 3SG.SUP last year
 “The place you went to last year”

Compared to the forms given in MATRAS (2012) for Palestinian Domari, it appears that only the formatives *ab-* and *wāš-* are shared between southern and northern Domari. Moreover, Palestinian Domari selects exclusively the extension *-ī-*, now marginal in northern Domari, between the formative and the bound pronoun: southern *wāš-ī-m* vs. northern *wāš-ō-m* “with me”.

Case marking and interrogatives

The inventory of interrogative morphemes is not exactly the same in all the dialects considered here. Figure (7) shows that *kō* “who”, *kakī* “which” (and “what” in Beirut), *kēta* “where”, *kasma* “when”, *ksē* “why”, *ktī* “how many” and *karda(k)* “how much” are shared by all varieties. The inventory of Aleppo and Sarāqib Domari is essentially the same. One additional form for “how” was recorded in Sarāqib Domari: *kə-škəl*; an interesting compound between the inherited question marker *k-* and *škəl*, from Arabic *šikl* ~ *šakl* “style, way” (maybe borrowed from Kurdish). The Arabic interrogative *kēf* “how” made its way into Beirut Domari, but only in the question *kēf-ōr* ~ *kēf hāl-ōr* “how are you?” (< Levantine Arabic *kīf-ak* ~ *kīf hāl-ak*). Arabic *kam* “how many” appears in the speech of innovative speakers of Beirut Domari. This dialect also exhibits alternative forms for “how much”: *kīyāk* and *kēhāk*.

For “where”, the form *kān* surfaced once in Beirut Domari instead of *kā*. Aleppo Domari also has *kač(č)a* for “when” but this was recorded neither in Sarāqib nor in Beirut. It is worth noting that none of the forms given in MATRAS (2012) for Palestinian Domari matches those found in northern Domari.

Figure 7 Interrogatives in northern Domari

	Beirut	Sarāqib	Aleppo
“who”	<i>kō</i>		
“what”	<i>kak(ī)</i>	<i>kāy</i>	
“which”		<i>kak(ī)</i>	
“how”	<i>kasī</i>	<i>kat(ī)</i>	
“when”	<i>kasma</i>		

“why”	<i>ksē</i>	
“how many”	<i>ktī</i>	
“how much”	<i>karda(k)</i>	
“where”	<i>kēta ~ kā</i>	
“where to”	<i>kēta</i>	<i>kēwa</i>
“where from”	<i>z-kēta ~ mæzkēwa</i>	<i>kæzzēta</i>

Amongst these interrogatives, only “who” and “what” are eligible for case marking. Beirut Domari lacks *kāy* and uses *kak(i)* for both “what” and “which”. Example (44a) illustrates the use of *kakī* in object position in Beirut Domari, and (44b) the use of *kāy* in Sarāqib Domari.

- (44) a. *kakī ānda*
what bring.PFV.3SG
“What did she deliver? (= Did she give birth to a boy or a girl?)”
- b. *kāy mangaštōre*
what want.PROG.2SG
“What do you want?”

In oblique position, the distinction between “what” and “which” is neutralised and only *kak(i)* surfaces without any allomorphic variation, as the morpheme is simply augmented with the oblique marker. In (45a, Beirut Domari), *kak(i)* appears as the modifier in a genitive construction headed by the relational noun *xor* “heart”, itself marked for benefactive, and as such is marked with the oblique marker. Sarāqib Domari exhibits the same form (45b).

- (45) a. *kakky-a xr-a-kē kr(a) ē hān*
what-OBL heart-OBL-BEN do.PFV.3SG so
“What did he do that for?”
- b. *kakky-ə-ta nawaštōre*
what-OBL-SUP search.PROG.2SG
“What are you looking for?”

As far as “who” is concerned and as noted above, *kō* is found everywhere. It was not apparent in the Aleppo corpus whether *kō* inflected for case as it was recorded only in subject position. This was explicitly elicited in Beirut and Sarāqib Domari and the same forms were recorded in both dialects. Examples (46a-c, Sarāqib Domari) illustrate the use of the interrogative pronoun respectively in subject, object and oblique positions. It is striking to see that the pronoun does inflect for case and that the allomorph *kēs* surfaces in both object and oblique positions. There is no trace of the oblique marker *-a* and the only identifiable formative is final /s/, in all likelihood a historical reflex of the current accusative marker *-as*. It was noted above (see also HERIN 2012) that northern Domari had restructured the old Layer I markers still present in Palestinian Domari in which the oblique marker and the accusative marker are the same, reflecting a gender distinction: *-as* is selected by masculine nouns and *-a* by feminine nouns. It seems thus that the allomorph *kēs* in northern Domari is the only relic of an

older stage in the history of the language, in which oblique and accusative were not separated, and it confirms that the northern dialects innovated.

- (46) a. *kō mre*
who die.PRF.3SG
“Who is dead?”
- b. *kēs dārdōr dikkān-ə-mə*
who.ACC see.PFV.2SG shop-OBL-IN
“Who did you see in the shop?”
- c. *kēs-sa lagīš kōr*
who.OBL-COM fight.PFV.2SG
“Who did you fight with?”

Genitive constructions and relational nouns

As noted above, the common syntax of genitive constructions in northern Domari is modifier-head. Most typically, the modifier is simply augmented with the oblique marker: *mām-a lāfṭy-īn* “the daughters of my uncle” (uncle-OBL daughter-PL). Such a pattern however, is available only when the modifier is in the singular. In the plural, the modifier is marked for ablative and is also cross-referenced on the head by way of a bound pronoun. In Sarāqib Domari (47a), the order remains modifier-head. This is not the case in Beirut Domari, whose innovative speakers tend to replicate the Arabic syntax and reverse the order, as shown in (47b).

- (47) a. *hā dōm-ən-ki məxtār-ō-sā = e*
DEM Dom-OBL.PL-ABL chief-SG-3PL=COP
“This is the chief of the Dom”
- b. *pāṅṅī zakkər(h)ōre nām-ē-sa ḡəwr-an-ki tərən-an-ki*
3SG remember.IPFV.3SG name-PL-3PL woman-OBL.PL.-ABL three-OBL.PL-ABL
“She remembers the names of three women”

All the dialects considered here have at their disposal a set of morphemes used to express a variety of spatial relations. These are nominals that appear syntactically as heads of genitive constructions, although they behave as modifiers semantically. The inventory of these relational nouns is mainly the same in all three dialects, as shown in figure (8).

Figure 8 Relational nouns in northern Domari

“above”	<i>fātūn</i>
“under”	<i>bn(a)</i>
“next to”	<i>čanč-</i>
“in front of”	<i>wagər ~ qāršī</i> (<i>‘āršī</i> in Beirut Domari)
“behind”	<i>pačī</i>
“around”	<i>čōrm- ~ dōrmača</i>

“between”	<i>ār-</i>
“inside”	<i>manǧ-</i> ~ <i>xr-</i>
“outside”	<i>bāra</i>
“for”	<i>kēra</i> ~ <i>xorkēra</i>
“amount of”	<i>qatta</i> (‘atta in Beirut Domari)

Most typically, the oblique marker is simply suffixed to the modifier, as shown in (48a, Sarāqib Domari). The nominal status of these morphemes is evidenced by their compatibility with the preposition *z-* “from” and bound pronoun suffixing: *zə-bn-ōs* “from under it”, *z-fatūn-ōs* “from above it”. Most of these nouns may be used adverbially (48b-d, Beirut Domari).

- (48) a. *kəry-ō-s* *ḥēṭ-ə* *paččy = e*
house-SG-3SG wall-OBL behind=COP
“His house is behind the wall”
- b. *ǧū* *wāgər*
go ahead
“Go forward”
- c. *nang* *manǧī*
enter inside
“Come in”
- d. *dinya* *wārsinda = e* *bāra*
world rain=COP outside
“It’s raining outside”

A commonality of northern Domari dialects is the use of the morpheme *xor* “heart” as a relational noun. It can combine with the inessive marker *-ma* to express “inside”: *madīn-ē xr-ə-ma* “inside the city” (city-OBL heart-OBL-IN) as well as the ablative marker *-ki* to express “from inside”: *kəry-ə xr-ə-ki* “from outside the house” (house-OBL heart-OBL-ABL). In both Aleppo and Sarāqib Domari, *xor* also appears in collocation with *kēra* “for”: *xorkēra*. Its meaning is similar to *kēra* alone. Its use is extremely frequent, as shown in (49a, Sarāqib Domari). The lexicalisation of *xorkēra* in Aleppo and Sarāqib Domari is evident from the absence of oblique marking on *xor*: **xr-ə kēra*. Such a collocation is also available in Beirut Domari but has not led to lexicalisation, as shown in (49b, Beirut Domari). Here, *xor* is marked for oblique and the short allomorph of *kēra*, available only in Beirut Domari and included into the set of Layer II markers. Bound pronouns attach normally to *xor*: Aleppo *xr-ō-s kēra*, Beirut *xr-ō-s-kē* “for him”. Peculiar to Sarāqib Domari is the form *xork-ō-s kēra*, in which the formative /k/ is best analysed as the derivational diminutive suffix *-ək* replicated from Kurdish.

- (49) a. *z-ē* *kam-ə* *xorkēṛa* *nə-dārdōm-əs* *ōta*
 from-DEM thing-OBL for NEG-see.PFV.1SG-3SG there
 “That’s why I didn’t see her there”
- b. *kaki* *krōr* *lōz-ē* *xr-a-kē*
 what do.PFV.2SG throat-OBL heart-OBL-BEN
 “What did you do for (your) throat?”

A form peculiar to Sarāqib Domari is *dōrmača* “around” (50a). Interestingly, when bound pronouns are suffixed, the allomorph *dōrmačār-* surfaces (50b). Beirut Domari, like Aleppo Domari, employs the morpheme *čōrm-* as shown in (50c). It is augmented with the adessive marker *-ta*, which triggers the mediation of plural oblique *-an*. Arabic *ḥawāl(i)* “around” surfaces in the speech of innovative speakers of Beirut Domari: *ḥawāli* ‘*ard-a-ki* “around the earth”.

- (50) a. *ləff(h)rōm* *ğēm^ˈ-a* *dōrmača*
 turn.PFV.1SG mosque-OBL around
 “I walked around the mosque”
- b. *na-skardōm* *ləff(h)ōtyəm* *dōrmačār-ō-s*
 NEG-can.PFV.1SG turn.SBJV.1SG around-SG-3SG
 “I couldn’t walk around it”
- c. *ləff(h)ra* *kəry-a* *čōrm-an-ta*
 turn.PFV.3SG house-OBL around-OBL.PL-AD
 “He walked around the house”

The Turkish derived relational noun *ār-* “between” (< Turkish *ara-*) was recorded only in the dialects of Aleppo and Sarāqib. It appears always augmented with the inessive marker *-ma* (copying the Turkish pattern in which the morpheme is augmented with the locative *-da*). In the dialect of Beirut, Arabic *bēn* “between” is normally used, as in (51c) in which the Arabic formative *-āt* also surfaces. Interestingly, *bēn* is marked for inessive when bound pronouns are suffixed, but behaves as a preposition, triggering ablative marking on the modified noun in case of a full NP (51d). This syntax is replicated wholesale from Arabic and sharply contrasts with the constituent order exhibited in Sarāqib Domari (51a).

- (51) a. *tāwl-ē* *ār-ē-m* *la* *srīr-ə* *ār-ē-m*
 table-OBL between-OBL-IN and bed-OBL between-OBL-IN
 “Between the table and the bed”
- b. *ār-ō-m-ma* *la* *ār-ō-r-ma*
 between-SG-1SG-IN and between-SG-2SG-IN
 “Between you and me”

- c. *məndərde bēnāt-ō-sam-ma*
stand.PRF.3SG between-SG-3PL-IN
“He is standing amongst them”
- d. *bēn tāwl-ē-ki u taxt-a-ki*
between table-OBL-ABL and bed-OBL-ABL
“Between the table and the bed”

Innovative speakers of Beirut Domari also tend to reinterpret these relational nouns as prepositions, again replicating the syntactical patterns of Arabic. This was recorded with *bāra* (52a), although the original syntax is still available to these speakers (52b).

- (52) a. *pāṅṅyā bāra kəry-a-ki = štēnd*
3PL outside house-OBL-ABL=COP.3PL
“They are outside the house”
- b. *āšti kān lāfṭy-ā tnōṭi dikkān-ē bāra*
there.is PST girl-INDEF small.F shop-OBL outside
“There was a small girl outside the shop”

The relational noun *qattā* was found in all the dialects investigated. It expresses quantity, size, amount, time. It heads genitive constructions in which the oblique marker expectedly marks the modifier (53, Aleppo Domari).

- (53) *taqrīban nīm sāʿat-ə qattā sittōm*
about half hour-OBL amount sleep.PFV.1SG
“I slept about half an hour”

Reflexive *pā-*

A striking discovery in the dialect of Aleppo was the survival of an inherited reflexive morpheme *pā-* (< Old Indo-Aryan *atmán* and Middle Indo-Aryan *appā* “self”, TURNER 1962-1966:51, lemma 1135), cognate with the Romani reflexive *pe* (MATRAS 2002:101). This was so far undocumented in Domari because the Palestinian variety employs the Levantine Arabic reflexive *ḥāl-* (MACALISTER 1914:22-23). In (54a, Beirut Domari), *pā-* appears in object position and is augmented with the accusative plural marker *-ēn*. In (54b, Sarāqib Domari), the inessive marker *-mə* suffixes to *pā-* and the oblique marker is realised *-ē*.

- (54) a. *šār la-dkan(d) pā-ēn əmşiry-an-ta illi wāššya*
started SBJV-see.SBJV.3PL REFL-ACC.PL money-OBL.PL-SUP REL 3PL.COM
“They started to show off because of the money they have”
- b. *mā ḥurr = əšōme pā-ē-mə šarrəf(h)ōme kəškəl mangame*
1SG free=COP.1SG REFL-OBL-IN behave.IPFV.1SG how want.IPFV.1SG
“I’m free with myself, I behave the way I want”

Reciprocal *yēk-* ~ *yōk-*

Also striking in northern Domari is the use of the inherited morphemes *yēk-* ~ *yōk-* “one” in reciprocal constructions, whereas Palestinian Domari uses the Arabic reciprocal *baʿd-* (MACALISTER 1914:24). The root *yēk* ~ *yōk* is the numeral “one” in all varieties of Domari. It is often augmented with the indefinite marker *-ā(k)*. The underlying form is thus *yēkāk* ~ *yōkāk*, as apparent when the copula suffixes to the numeral: *yōk-āk = e*, literally “it’s one” (one-INDEF=COP). The dialect of Beirut has a clear preference for the root *yōk-* while Aleppo Domari and Sarāqib Domari favour *yēk-*. Two patterns are possible. The first option involves the suffixation of the accusative/oblique plural marker, and, if required by the syntactic context, any Layer II marker. The second pattern involves the use of a bound pronoun indexing the participants on the numeral. In (55a, Sarāqib Domari), *yēk-* is augmented with the accusative plural marker *-əna* (1st pattern). In (55b, Beirut Domari), the plural oblique marker *-an* mediates between the root and superessive *-ta* (1st pattern). In (55c, Beirut Domari), the numeral is augmented with the plural marker *-ē* and the 1PL bound pronoun *-man*, to which comitative marking applies (Layer II *-sa*). Example (55d) exhibits the same pattern but includes the indefinite suffix *-āk*. Examples (55c-d) illustrate the second pattern. Beirut Domari also has an additional oddity, in that the numeral “two” can be used, indicating the number of participants and following the second pattern.

- (55) a. *pāng(y)ā* *ğānənde* *yēk-əna*
 3PL know.IPFV.3PL one-ACC.PL
 “They know each other”
- b. *pāngya* *ʿarri(h)rēnde* *yōk-an-ta*
 3PL meet.PRF.3PL one-OLB.PL-SUP
 “They have met”
- c. *kill* *dīs* *lʿi(h)ōne* *yōk-ē-man-sa*
 each day meet.IPFV.1PL one-PL-1PL-COM
 “Every day we meet (with each other)”
- d. *īsa* *dakištan* *yōk-āk-ē-mā*
 now see.PROG.1PL one-INDEF-PL-1PL
 “Now we see each other”
- e. *nā-dkərdēn* *dədy-ē-mā*
 NEG-see.PFV.1PL two-PL-1PL
 “We didn’t see each other”

Verbs and related categories

Most of the verbal morphology is shared between the three dialects considered here. There are simple verbs, consisting of a root to which derivational and inflectional suffixes attach and complex verbs, consisting of a lexical element, carrying the semantic load, and a light verb carrying morphosyntactic information. There are two light verbs: *h-* “become” and *k(ar)-*

“do”. Four inflectional classes are identified: perfective, imperfective, progressive and subjunctive. The following morphological structure (Figure 9, adapted from MATRAS 1999:29) is essentially shared by all Domari dialects. Only the first slot “subjunctive” is not available in Palestinian Domari.

Figure 9 Morphological structure of the verbal word in northern Domari

subjunctive	Root	Valency	inflectional class	subject	object	Tense
	<i>sāw</i>	<i>nā</i>	<i>rd</i>	<i>ōr</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>a</i>
	Loose	CAUS	PFV	2SG	3SG	RM
“You had lost him”						
	<i>sāw</i>	<i>yā</i>	<i>ʔ</i>	<i>əm</i>		
	Loose	PASS	SBJV	1SG		
“(That) he gets lost”						
<i>l</i>	<i>dak</i>			<i>m</i>	<i>ər</i>	
SBJV	See			1SG	2SG	
“(That) I see you”						
	<i>fč (ft-)</i>			<i>am</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>e</i>
	Say			1SG	3SG	CM
“I tell him”						
	<i>way</i>	<i>yā</i>	<i>št</i>	<i>e</i>		
	Hit	PASS	PROG	3SG		
“He is being beaten”						

The first slot is optionally filled with the subjunctive marker *l*-. The lexical root occupies the second slot. Valency can be zero-marked, with the causative suffix *-nā*-, or the passive suffix *-ī-* / *-yā-*. Possible extensions for the perfective are *-r-*, *-d-* and *-rd-*. The imperfective is zero-marked. In the subjunctive, the extension is either *-ʔ-*, zero or *l-* / *b-* (the two latter suffix to the left of the verbal word). The progressive stem consists of the extension *-št-*. Subject agreement markers in the perfective are *-ōm*, *ōr*, *-a* (*-ōs-* with a bound object pronoun), *-ēn*, *-ēs*, *-ēnd* and *-m*, *-ē* (*-ō-* with a bound object pronoun), *-r*, *-n*, *-s*, *-nd* in the imperfective. Object markers optionally follow subject markers: *-m*, *-r*, *-s*, *-mā(n)*, *-rā(n)*, *-sā(n)*. The rightmost slot of the verbal word is occupied by what MATRAS (1999, 2012) labelled “tense”. Tense is zero-marked or instantiated through the “contextualising marker” *-e* or the “remoteness marker” *-ā(ši)*. Most of these forms are shared by all varieties of Domari. Specific features found in the dialects studied here but absent from Palestinian Domari are the treatment of the subjunctive, the future marker *kā* and the progressive.

Subjunctive

In Palestinian Domari, the general trend is to use the same stem in both the imperfective and the subjunctive. The only difference is that the imperfective is marked with the “contextualising marker” (*-i* in Palestinian Domari), whereas the verb remains unmarked in the subjunctive: *lahami* “I see” vs. *laham* “that I see”. Intransitive verbs exhibit a tendency to select the extension *-š-*, originating from the de-affrication of the original extension *-č-* that MATRAS (1999:33) traces back to the Indo-Aryan root *ačch-* “to stay”. This was more or less in line with what was found in Aleppo Domari. In this variety, the presence of the contextualising marker (realised *-e*) signals the imperfective, and his absence signals the subjunctive: *kar-me* “I do” vs. *kar-əm* “that I do”. Intransitive verbs also tend to select the extension *-č-*: *mān-əm-e* “I stay” vs. *mān-č-əm* “that I stay”. The selection of *-č-* by intransitive verbs is only a tendency as some transitive verbs were recorded with this extension: *dak-č-əm* “that I see/find”, *mangə-č-əm* “that I ask”. In the speech of one informant, this extension was also recorded *-ʃ-* and accordingly considered marginal, at least in Aleppo: *(h)ō-ʃ-ar* ~ *(h)ō-č-ar* “that he becomes”. The suffix *b-* to mark the subjunctive was found only in *b-dē* “give!” (imperfective *dyē* “you give”) and *b-nē* [pne:] “take!” (imperfective *nyē* “you take”), whereas *l-* surfaced only with the roots *pī-* “drink” and *vāy-* “hit”: *lə-pyər* “that he drinks” and *l-vām* “that I hit”. From these data, the only possible conclusion is that *l-* and *b-* are either losing ground, or simply lexically restricted. Additional data from Sarāqib Domari and Beirut Domari suggest that in fact, the realisation *-č-* of the subjunctive is marginal in northern Domari, as it was recorded neither in Beirut nor in Sarāqib. In these varieties, only *-ʃ-* surfaced: *saf-ʃ-am* “that I sleep” (< *sw-* “sleep”), *fər-ʃ-am* “that I fly”, *xaz-ʃ-am* “that I laugh”, *nāčə-ʃ-ar* “that he dances”, *kəl-ʃ-ar* “that he goes out”, *kēl-ʃ-ar* “that he plays”. In Sarāqib Domari, the phonetic substance may further erode and only *-t-* remains: *pā-t-ar* “that he comes”. Roots ending in /s/ change to /š/ when *-ʃ-* suffixes and the extension often shrinks to *-t-*. This was recorded cross-dialectally: *wēs-ʃ* > *wēšt-* “stay”, *ras-ʃ* > *rašt-* “arrive”, *las-ʃ* > *lašt-* “fall”. The general tendency in both Beirut Domari and Sarāqib Domari is also to restrict the extension *-ʃ-* to intransitive verbs. The root *dak-* “see, find”, contrary to Aleppo Domari, does not select *-ʃ-* in the subjunctive. Only one instance was recorded in Beirut Domari: *dək-ty-an* “that we see”; but *l-adk-an* surfaces more often. The root *mang-* “ask, want” appears without extension in Beirut: *mang-an* “that we ask”; whereas Sarāqib Domari (like Aleppo Domari) selects the extension: *manga-ty-əm* “that I ask”. It is still unclear what the original realisation is but a passage from [tj] to [tʃ] is not unknown cross-linguistically so an original [tj] is not to be ruled out. A possible origin is the integration of the verb *h-* “become” to the root to form a new stem. This is suggested by competing forms recorded in Sarāqib Domari for the imperative of the verb *āw-* “come”: *pā* “come”, pl. *pāwəs* alongside *pā ōtī* “come!” and pl. *pā ōtʃəs*. In these forms, the last element is strikingly similar to the imperative of *h-*: *(h)ōtī*, pl. *(h)ōtʃəs*. If [tj] was the original realisation, the etymology suggested by Matras (< Old Indo-Aryan *ačch-* “stay”, MATRAS 1999:33) would have to be reconsidered.

A salient feature of both Beirut Domari and Sarāqib Domari is the high frequency of the subjunctive prefix *l-*. As noted above, this was found to be marginal in Aleppo so it did not allow much speculation about its distribution. The new data clearly shows that *l-* optionally marks transitive verbs for subjunctive. Example (56a) is from Beirut Domari, while (56b-c) come from the Sarāqib corpus. The optional nature of *l-* is illustrated in (56b), in which the

verb *čnəm* “that I cut” lacks the subjunctive marker, whereas in (56c), the same verb appears with *l-*. It must be added that the marker *l-* also often surfaces in the imperative, in both Sarāqib and Beirut Domari: *lə-kū* “throw!”, *l-dō-s* “wash! (pl.)”. On the whole, the marker *l-* is best preserved in Beirut Domari, less in Sarāqib and only marginally in Aleppo. Its gradual loss is easily understandable as subjunctive marking is already flagged by the lack of the contextualising marker. The marker *l-* is therefore a case of morphological redundancy and as such more likely to fade away.

- (56) a. *na-skarda* *l-tō-r-mā* *bāb-ō-m*
 NEG-can.PFV.3SG SBJV-put-SBJ.3SG-OBJ.1PL father-SG-1SG
 “My father wasn’t able to put us (at school)”
- b. *byāšte* *lə-čnər* *kōpəry-əs*
 fear.PROG.3SG SBJV-cut.1SG bridge-ACC
 “(S)he’s afraid to cross the bridge”
- c. *kā* *čnəm* *əsr-ō-r*
 FUT cut.SBJV.1SG head-SG-2SG
 “I want to cut your head”

The subject agreement markers are the same in the imperfective and the subjunctive, except in the 2SG, in which the ending *-ē* is replaced by *-ā* (57a, Beirut Domari). When bound object pronouns attach, the marker invariably becomes *-ō-*. (57b, Beirut Domari).

- (57) a. *lāzim pāwā* *zūr(h)ōty-ō-m*
 must come.SBJV.2SG visit.SBJV-SBJ.2SG-OBJ.1SG
 “You have to come and pay me a visit”
- b. *lāzim bədy-ō-s* *məšrī*
 must give.SBJV-SBJ.2SG-OBJ.3SG money
 “You have to give her money”

Future marker *kā*

The future marker *kā* is already documented in the dialect of Aleppo. It is in all likelihood the outcome of the grammaticalisation of the pseudo-verb *kār-* “want” that inflects as shown in figure (10).

Figure 10 Inflections of *kār-* “want”

1SG	<i>kārme</i>
2SG	<i>kārre</i>
3SG	<i>kārse</i>
1PL	<i>kārmāne</i>
2PL	<i>kārrāne</i>
3PL	<i>kārsāne</i>

The root was also recorded as *kāy-* in *nə-kāyrāné* “you (pl.) don’t want”, which shows that the root is compatible with the negation marker *n-*, usually restricted to verbal predicates. Although the short form *kā* was recorded everywhere, the root *kār-* was not recognised by the informants from Beirut and Sarāqib. It seems thus that *kār-* is available only in Aleppo.

The functions covered by the morpheme are the same everywhere: it expresses volition (58a, Beirut Domari), as well as future reference (58b, Sarāqib Domari). It is always followed by the subjunctive.

- (58) a. *mā kā pārəm yōka wāry-a-kē*
 1SG FUT buy.SBJV.1SG one bride-OBL-BEN
 “I’ll buy one for the bride”
- b. *kā akkī karm-ər ġēm^c-a qāpy-i-ka*
 FUT eye do.SBJV.1SG-2SG mosque-OBL door-OBL-AD
 “I’ll wait for you at the door of the mosque”

Progressive

All the dialects investigated here have at their disposal the extension *-(i)št-* to form a progressive stem. It suffixes directly after the verbal root: *k-išt-* (do-PROG-), *dak-išt-* (see-PROG-), *čn-išt-* (cut-PROG-), *xīnā-št-* ~ *xīnaw-išt-* (cook-PROG-). Subject markers attach after the extension *-št-*, as shown in Figure (11). Beirut Domari exhibits no surface variation as the cluster /št/ is stable. The “contextualising marker” *-e* most often drops in Beirut but is compulsory when bound object pronouns are suffixed: *ftišt-ōm* “I’m saying” vs. *ftišt-ōm-s-e* “I’m saying it” (say.PROG-SBJ.1SG-OBJ.2SG-CM). In Sarāqib Domari, the “contextualising marker” *-e* never drops, and the cluster /št/ often shrinks to /š/: *akī kašōmse* “I’m waiting for him” (< *akī kašt-ōm-s-e* eye do.PROG-SBJ.1SG-OBJ.3SG-CM). The extension *-št-* may also surface as /h/ or ‘zero’ when followed by the allomorph of the 3SG subject marker *-ər* and an object pronoun: *ġbər kahərse* “he is forcing him” (< *ġbər kašt-ər-s-e* force do.PROG-SBJ.3SG-OBJ.3SG-CM). An interesting peculiarity of the dialect of Beirut is the unique allomorph of the 3SG subject marker *-ar*, while the dialects of Aleppo and Sarāqib exhibit a ‘zero’ allomorph, and *-ər* when followed by a bound object pronoun: *mangašt-Ø-e* “he wants” vs. *nə-mangašt-ər-s-e* “he doesn’t want it”.

Figure 11 Inflections of the progressive stem of *k(ar)-* “do”

	Beirut Domari	Sarāqib Domari
1SG	<i>kišt-ōm(-e)</i>	<i>kašt-ōm-e</i>
2SG	<i>kišt-ōr(-e)</i>	<i>kašt-ōr-e</i>
3SG	<i>kišt-ar</i>	<i>kašt-e</i>
1PL	<i>kišt-ann(-e)</i>	<i>kašt-inn-e</i>
2PL	<i>kišt-ass(-e)</i>	<i>kašt-iss-e</i>
3PL	<i>kišt-and(-e)</i>	<i>kašt-ind-e</i>

The progressive stem covers mainly two functions. The first, the most obvious, is the progressive aspect, indicating that the process is on-going within the time of reference (59a,

Beirut Domari). The second function, also shared by all the dialects investigated here, is to express non-volition in case of negative polarity (59b, Beirut Domari).

- (59) a. *məns-ō-m* *wēsre* *na-kišt-ar* *əkkȳā*
 husband-SG-1SG stay.IPFV.3SG NEG-do.PROG-3SG thing
 “My husband stays (home), he is not doing anything”
- b. *ksē* *n-sā'id* *kišt-ōr-m-e*
 why NEG-help do.PROG-SBJ.2SG-OBJ.1SG-CM
 “Why don’t you want to help me?”

Diachronically, the progressive stem arose from the affixation of the copula to the verbal root. All the dialects investigated here exhibit similar copular forms, involving the root *št-* augmented with subject markers, as shown in Figure (11). Interestingly, Beirut Domari has alternative forms in the plural. These must have arisen through analogy of the perfective subject markers, already similar for the 1SG *-ōm* and 2SG *-ōr* and further extended in the plural. These alternative plural endings only surface with the copula, not the progressive stem. Syntactically, the copula cliticises to the right of the predicate (60b, Beirut Domari), and is phonologically deficient, as it does not bear stress, nor does it modify the placement of stress on the host (60a, Beirut Domari).

- (60) a. *tərnēs = əštēnd*
 three=COP.3PL
 “They are three”
- b. *ktī* *tān = əštass*
 how.many unit=COP.2PL
 “How many are you?”

Figure 12 Copula *št-* “to be”

	Beirut Domari	Sarāqib Domari
1SG	<i>št-ōm(-e)</i>	<i>št-ōm-e</i>
2SG	<i>št-ōr(-e)</i>	<i>št-ōr-e</i>
3SG	<i>-e</i>	<i>-e</i>
1PL	<i>št-ann(-e) ~ št-ēn</i>	<i>št-inn-e</i>
2PL	<i>št-ass(-e) ~ št-ēs</i>	<i>št-iss-e</i>
3PL	<i>št-and(-e) ~ št-ēnd</i>	<i>št-ind-e</i>

Conclusion

In this paper, data about two undocumented varieties of Domari were presented and contrasted with the varieties spoken in Jerusalem and Aleppo. All the features discussed here unambiguously separate the dialects under discussion and Palestinian Domari. Amongst the most striking divergences, one finds the loss of gender as an inflectional category. Contrary to the dialect of Jerusalem, gender distinction has been neutralized in demonstratives, Layer I case marking and verbal agreement. The only lexical category that still shows partial gender

distinction is the adjectives. Here again, it varies from one dialect to another. Aleppo Domari exhibits total loss, Sarāqib Domari maintained a distinction only with adjectives used predicatively and Beirut Domari preserved the distinction with adjectives used predicatively and adnominally. This, however, appears to be available only with a close set of inherited adjectives. As far as case marking is concerned, all the dialects considered here agree in that the old masculine oblique/accusative marker *-as* was reallocated to a general accusative marker, while feminine *-a* was reallocated as a general oblique marker. The only vestigial trace of the conflation between oblique and accusative marking in northern dialects is found in the oblique/accusative allomorph *kēs* of the interrogative *kō* “who”. Data presented here also indicate that the three dialects behave coherently as far as case marking on other pronominal categories is concerned, such as demonstratives, personal pronouns, indefinites, reflexive, and reciprocal. Peculiar to Aleppo Domari and Sarāqib Domari is the use of the Layer I accusative/oblique plural marker *-ən(a)* to mark differentially the subject. Layer II markers are mostly shared by all the dialects. Only Beirut Domari shares with Palestinian Domari benefactive *-kē*. An interesting shared idiosyncrasy is the reinterpretation of the Kurdish postposition *-va* / *-(a)wa* as a Layer II marker. As far the verb is concerned, it was found that all the dialects investigated here have at their disposal the copular extension *-št-*, also used to form a new stem whose main function is to express progressive aspect. In addition, these varieties stand apart from Palestinian Domari in having to the left of the verbal word a morphological slot to mark the subjunctive of transitive verbs using the morpheme *l-*. Subjunctive marking on intransitive verbs is instantiated mainly by the extension *-tʰ-*, realised only marginally *-č-*. The Palestinian realisation *-š-* clearly originates from *-č-* but it is still unclear which of *-tʰ-* and *-č-* is the original form. Cross-linguistically, sound change seems to occur more often in the direction of *-č-*, leaving *-tʰ-* a better candidate. This implies that the traditional etymology *(a)ččh-* may have to be reconsidered. The last shared innovation as far as the verb is concerned is the future marker *kā*, presumably available in all northern dialects of Domari, but absent from the variety spoken in Palestine. It can be concluded from all this that northern Domari is a coherent dialectal group that can be defined in terms of the features discussed here. Data on more dialects of Domari will for sure refine the present classification.

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