Be, become or remain
The grammaticalisation of the copulative perfect in Classical Armenian

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The Lexicon-Grammar Interface in the Synchrony and Diachrony of Armenian
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Reminder: the copulative perfect in Classical Armenian

- Classical Armenian exhibits three synthetic tenses (PRS, PST, AOR) and two analytical ones (PF, PLPF) – setting aside modal forms

- the analytical tenses are traditionally explained as consisting of the past participle in -eal and a form of the copula *em* ‘to be’

- the synthetic tenses follow NOM-ACC alignment, the analytical ones are tripartite (S: NOM – A: GEN – O: ACC; cf. Meyer fthc.)

- by the 8th c., the analytical tenses have stabilised as NOM-ACC, too
Caveats

- the origin of this alignment pattern is still under discussion (see e.g. Kölligan 2013; Meyer 2017)

- the use of the copula is not common in the earliest 5th-c. texts, and not yet obligatory in the later ones

- yet, when it occurs, the copula with transitive verbs (almost) always takes the 3sg form

- the past participle can be used independently as a passive-intransitive ADJ and perfective cvb – the latter being its principal use
Questions

1. How is the diachronic development of the perfect in Classical Armenian best described?

2. Does the construction described above exhibit any variation? If so, of what kind and to what effect?

3. What—if anything—do these developments tell us about the origin of the analytical tenses?
Structure of this talk

Reminders & Questions

Preliminary notes

Diachrony: CVB → PF

Synchrony: AUX em

Synchrony: AUX limi

Synchrony: AUX kam

Diachrony: the role of WMIr.

Conclusions
Preliminary notes

- the data analysed are taken from 5th (and early 6th) c. historiographical texts (Koriwn, Agat’angełos, P’awstos Buzand, Łazar P’arpec’i, Elišē)
- translated texts are eschewed to avoid potential influence from Greek (cf. Coulie 1994; Meyer 2018)
- the focus lies on the presence or absence of AUX in the perfect and its semantics
- setting aside morphosyntactic considerations

Grammaticalisation: here broadly all interacting semantic, syntactic, ... processes in diachrony and synchrony leading to novel encodings of meaning or function
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The -eal participle as cvb

- the predominant function of the PTCP in -eal is converbial
- compare *participia coniuncta* in Latin or Greek
- they express an action subordinate or secondary to the action expressed by the matrix verb
  - cvb: e.g. ‘nonfinite verb form whose main function is to mark adverbial subordination’ (Haspelmath 1995:3)
  - type: free/varying-subject converb (may but need not share matrix verb subject; Nedjalkov cf. 1995:110–11)

- statistical distribution in the corpus:
  - earliest: Koriwn 56.7% of all PTCPS
  - maximum: Łazar P'arpec'i: 67.9% of all PTCPS
  - minimum: P'awstos Buzand: 47.3% of all PTCPS

- cp. use as ADJ: 12.3–17.6%
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- cp. use as \( \text{adj} \): 12.3–17.6%
Examples of cvb use: ITR

Shared subject

(1) isk na hawaneal valvalaki barbařal asēr
PTC 3SG.NOM believe.CVB suddenly speak.CVB say.3SG.PST
‘And being convinced, he suddenly spoke and said …’ (Ag. §794)

Different subject

(2) ew ankeal zawrawork‘=n i sur t‘šnameac‘=n meraw k‘aj=n
and fall.CVB soldier.NOM.PL=DET into sword enemy.GEN.PL=DET die.3SG.AOR valiant=DET
Mamikonean Vasak
PN PN
‘And as the soldiers engaged the enemies in battle (lit. fell on the swords of the enemies),
the valiant Vasak Mamikonean died.’ (ŁP‘ §69)
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Examples of cvb use: TR

Shared subject

(3) ew amenayn əst asac‘eloy patuirani=n arareal handerjeal
and all according-to say.ptcp.gen.sg command.gen.sg=det make cvb prepare cvb
kazmeal patrastec‘in
decorate cvb prepare 3pl.aor

‘And they made, prepared, decorated, and arranged everything according to the command given.’ (Ag. §760)

Different subject

(4) z=ors [...] iwrov isk anjamb=n awrinak c‘uc‘eal, aɾeal
obj=rel.acc.pl [...] 3poss.ins.sg ptc self.ins.sg=det example.acc.sg show cvb take cvb
z=omans y=ašakertac‘=n [...] z=aɾawreak=n [...] včarēin
obj=indf.acc.pl from=student.gen.pl=det obj=daily=det [...] settle 3pl.pst

‘These things he demonstrated […], with himself as an example, taking some of his students … [they] settled [with their daily, vegetarian diet].’ (Kor. XXII.1)
Examples of cvb use: tr

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Non-converbial use

- in exx. (1–4) co-occurred next to an inflected matrix verb
- this is not the case in all instances: PTCPs without AUX can serve as matrix verbs

(5) \( ew \) andēn vałvałaki dahič‘=n hraman ařeal \( y=eric‘ \)
and then suddenly executioner.NOM.PL=DET command receive.PTCP from=three.ABL
naxararac‘=n srov hatanel \( z=paranoc‘ \) eranelwoy=n
noble.ABL.PL=DET sword.INS.SG cut-off.INF OBJ=neck.ACC.SG blessed.GEN.SG=DET

“And then, the executioners immediately received a command from the three nobles to cut
off the head of the Blessed.” (Eł. p. 169)

(6) omanc‘ cneal, \( ew \) oč‘ snuc‘eal, i č‘ap‘ hasuceal, \( ew \)
INDF.GEN.PL give-birth.PTCP and NEG rear.PTCP in manhood cause-to-arrive.PTCP and
anargeal t‘šnamanōk‘.
dishonour.PTCP insult.INS.PL

“Some are born but were not nurtured, reached maturity, and were dishonoured by
insults.” (P’B IV.5)
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“And then, the executioners immediately received a command from the three nobles to cut off the head of the Blessed.” (Eł. p. 169)
CVB → PF

- the CVB use accounts for more than 40% of ptcps across the corpus
- the rest is distributed among adjectival use (<18%) and matrix verbs

- of these matrix verbs, an AUX occurs:
  - minimum & earliest: Korìwn 11.8%
  - maximum & latest: Elišē 77.7%

- this suggests that:
  - the AUX perfect is a secondary (= non-inherited) development
  - it develops over the course of the 5th century

- potential corollary: variability of the construction (grammaticalisation-in-progress)
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Synchrony: **AUX em**

**Intransitive verbs (S=nom)**

(7) *ew orpēs etun zroyc‘ ork‘* and *nma ekeal ēin*

and as give.3PL.AOR news REL.NOM.PL with 3SG.DAT come.PTCP be.3PL.PST

‘And as those, who came with him, reported ..’ (P‘B IV.5)

(8) *ayl duk‘ or ayžm y=erec‘unc‘ ašxarhac‘* ekeal=d ēk‘

but 2PL.NOM REL.NOM now from=three.ABL country.ABL.PL come.PTCP=DET be.2PL.PRS
tanuteark‘ *ew sepuhk‘
magnate.NOM.PL and noble.NOM.PL

‘But you magnates and nobles, who have now come from three countries, ..’ (ŁP‘ (2)§27)
Synchrony: **AUX em**

Transitive verbs (A=GEN, O=ACC)

(9) *ew* gitem *tē* lueal *ē* z=xorhurds *mer* Parskac’
and know.1SG.PRS COMP hear.PTCP be.3SG.PRS OBJ=plan.ACC.PL 1PL.POSS Persian.GEN.PL
kapen *z=na* *ew* vštac‘uc‘anen
bind.3PL.PRS OBJ=3SG.ACC and torment.3PL.PRS
‘I know that [if] the Persians have heard our plans, they [will] imprison and torment him.’
(ŁP’ (3)§66)

(10) *ew* lueal *ews* *ē* im [t‘ē i Parsiks xōsi]
and hear.PTCP further be.3SG.PRS 1SG.GEN [COMP to Persian.ACC.PL say.3SG]
‘And I have also heard that he is talking to the Persians.’ (P’B V.4)
Synchrony: **AUX em**

- In the corpus, the **AUX em** ‘to be’ is the most common.
- The perfect in later Classical and Middle Armenian retains this **AUX** as the standard (cf. Karst 1901:354–5).
- The aspectual semantics of the perfect are not the same as those of the **PTCP qua CVB**.
  - The converbial use is restricted to perfective actions in the past (backgrounded information).
  - The **em**-perfect (& the **PTCP** used as matrix verb) largely function as present perfects / resultative perfects (cf. Lyonnet 1933; Ouzounian 2001).
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Synchrony: AUX linim

- of the c. 7'000 PTCPs in the corpus, c. 100 co-occur with *linim* ‘to become’
- in all but a handful of instances, it is clear that the PTCP and the form of *linim* form a periphrastic perfect
- (11) is an example of these exceptions, where the participle could be interpreted as a ‘pure’ adjective

(11) **ew amenayn ontanik’ t’agaworin, cařayk’ ew spasawork’ ar conj all household.NOM.PL king.GEN.SG slave.NOM.PL and servant.NOM.PL in hasarak, haruacovk’ harealk’ linēin common, torment.INS.PL afflicted.NOM.PL become.3PL.PST**

“All the king’s household, slaves and servants alike, were afflicted with torments. (Ag. §213)”

- “were afflicted” / “became afflicted” / “had become afflicted”?
- logically, either PST or PLPF
- additional question: participle agreement
**Synchrony: AUX *linim***

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▶ (11) is an example of these exceptions, where the participle could be interpreted as a ‘pure’ adjective

(11) *ew amenayn* *ontanik*’ *t*’agaworin, *ca*’ayk’ *ew spasawork*’ *ar*
*conj* all *household.nom.pl* *king.gen.sg* *slave.nom.pl* and *servant.nom.pl* in
*hasarak, haruacovk*’ *harealk*’ *linēin*
*common, torment.ins.pl* *afflicted.nom.pl* *become.3pl.pst*

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▶ additional question: participle agreement
Synchrony: AUX linim

▶ of the c. 7’000 PTCPs in the corpus, c. 100 co-occur with linim ‘to become’
▶ in all but a handful of instances, it is clear that the PTCP and the form of linim form a periphrastic perfect
▶ (11) is an example of these exceptions, where the participle could be interpreted as a ‘pure’ adjective

(11) ew amenayn \textit{ontanik}’t’agaworin, cašayk’ew spasawork’ar
CONJ all \textit{household.NOM.PL} king.GEN.SG \textit{slave.NOM.PL} and \textit{servant.NOM.PL} in
\textit{hasarak, haruacovk}’\textit{harealk}’\textit{linēin}
common, \textit{torment.INS.PL} \textit{afflicted.NOM.PL} become.3PL.PST

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▶ additional question: participle agreement
A clearer idea of the semantics

(12) *ew darjeal ɔr əst ɔrē matakaraɾēr alk’atac’=n ew aynm*
CONJ again day after day.ABL.SG administer.3SG.PST beggar.DAT.PL=DET and DEM.DAT.SG
*stēp stēp lc’eal linēr*
continually fill.PTCP become.3SG.PST

“And so day after day he distributed [the content of jars] to the poor and they were
incessantly refilled.” (P’B II.12)

(13) *bayc’ vasn k’o zi mec vastakk’ en aɾ is z=or*
CONJ because 2SG.GEN COMP great service.NOM.PL be.3PL.PRS to 1SG.ACC OBJ=REL.ACC.SG
*inč’ xndrec’er=n ert’ tueal lic’i k’ez*
INDEF.INAN desire.2SG.AOR=DET go.2SG.PRS.IMV give.PTCP become.3SG.AOR.SBJV 2SG.DAT

“But because your services to me have been great [let] what you have requested be given
to you!” (P’B III.7)
Synchrony: **AUX linim**

- the data suggest that—as compared to instances with *em*—the perfects with *linim* indicate a change of state that is seen as completed
  (‘unafflicted’ → ‘afflicted’; ‘empty’ → ‘filled’; ‘not yet given’ → ‘given’)
- the co-occurrence ofPRS, PST & SBJV forms suggest that this periphrasis is primarily aspectual

(14) zi  mi  erbēk‘ amač‘esc‘en      oyk‘      yusac‘eal  linin      i
    COMP NEG.MOD ever   be-ashamed.3PL.AOR.SBJV REL.NOM.PL hope.PTCP become.3PL.PRS in
    k‘ez
    2SG.AOR

“So that those who [have come to] hope in Thee may never suffer shame.” (PB V.4)
Synchrony: AUX linim

► these forms account for 7.9% of perfects on average:
  ► 60% in Koriwn
  ► 20.6% in Agat‘angełos
  ► 8.0% in P‘awstos Buzand
  ► 5.0% in Łazar P‘arpec‘i
  ► 1.9% in Ełišē
  [not accounting for the occasional form of elanim]

► the diachronic trend suggests that this construction fell out of use

► early on, the use of linim may have contributed to the rise of em in the perfect (which in Koriwn still occurs largely without copula)

► forms of linim were required to provide the change-of-state connotation – forms of em were, over time, added by analogical extension
Synchrony: **Aux kam**

- the verb *kam* ‘to stay, remain’ can on rare occasions also function as **AUX**, it appears
- in the 5th-c. corpus, there are however only c. 20 instances, some of which are unclear
- (15) illustrates a common conundrum: *kam* as a **AUX + PTCP** or matrix verb + **CVB**?

(15) *ew dadarec‘in novaw handerj minč‘ew i pahs errord ew aynpēs*

*CONJ remain.3PL.AOR 3SG.INS together until to watch.ACC.PL third and thus*

*xalaleal kac‘in i k‘un amenek‘e\ an*

*be-calm.\PTCP stay.3PL.AOR in sleep each.NOM.SG*

“... they remained with him until the third watch and thus calmed they all slept ...” (Eł. p. 150)
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*be-calm.ptcp* stay.3pl.aor in sleep each.nom.sg

“... they remained with him until the third watch and thus calmed they all slept ...” (El. p. 150)
Synchrony: aux kam

Less ambiguous examples

(16) isk ibrew etes etē arhamarheal kayr hayr i mardkanē,
CONJ when see.3SG.AOR COMP scorn.PTCP stay.3SG.PST father.NOM.SG by mankind.ABL.SG
xalacʿ ekn ēj y=ajmē atˈoɾoy anti
move.3SG.AOR come.3SG.AOR descend.3SG.AOR from=right.ABL.SG throne.GEN.SG from
“But when he saw the Father scorned by mankind, he arose and come down from the right
hand of the throne.” (PʻB IV.5)

(17) ayr du zi kas zarmacʿeal ew očʿ i mit
man.NOM/VOC.SG 2SG.NOM/VOC why stay.2SG.PRS amazed.PTCP and NEG in mind.ACC.SG
aṙnus z=mecamecs Astucoy
take.2SG.PRS OBJ=miracle.ACC.PL God.GEN.SG
“O man, why do you stand in amazement without pondering the miracles of God?” (Ag.
§741)
Synchrony: **aux kam**

- this construction does not lend itself to closer numerical analysis

- it is, however, possible that a marginal pattern **aux kam + APTCP** existed

- where **linim + APTCP** emphasised a *change* of state,
  *kam + APTCP* seems to denote the *(resultative) state* (and perhaps its endurance)

- once more, this is a primarily aspectual construction, since PST and PRS forms of *kam* occur
Diachrony: the role of WMIr.

- A periphrastic past tense composed of pTCP + AUX exists in West Middle Iranian (Middle Persian, Parthian) as well – on its potential relevance for Armenian, cf. Meyer (2017).
- Similarly, verbs with the same semantics as in Armenian can be used to serve as AUX
  - h- ‘to be’
  - bw /baw-/ ‘to become’
  - ‘(y)št- Pth. /išt-/ MP /ēst-/ ‘to stay’
- The ‘stay’-perfect denotes a state here, too (Durkin-Meisterernst 2014:384 Asatrjan 1989; Ghilain 1939; Skjærvø 2004).
- The semantics of bw- in this context are less clear; both an anterior past and a change-of-state reading occur (Durkin-Meisterernst 2014:376).
- These issues arise likely owing to the suppletive relationship of the h- and bw- paradigms and the absence of a synthetic past tense in (non-archaic) WMIr.
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Diachrony: the role of WMIr.

(18) $u=m$ was $xwēš$ $nām$ $gyāgīhā$ $abar$ $...$ $mādayān$ $nibišt$ $ēstēd$
\begin{align*}
\text{conj=1sg} & \quad \text{much} & \quad \text{own} & \quad \text{name} & \quad \text{in-places} & \quad \text{upon} & \quad \text{book} & \quad \text{write.} & \quad \text{stay.} & \quad \text{3sg.prs}
\end{align*}

“I have written my name many times all over [...] books (= and it remains there).”
(MP, KNRb, 24–5)

(19) $u=šān$ $bār$ $ud$ $mēw$ $az$ $draxtān$ $xward$ $ud$ $mahy$ $...$ $būd$ $hēnd$
\begin{align*}
\text{conj=3pl} & \quad \text{fruit} & \quad \text{and} & \quad \text{fruit} & \quad \text{from} & \quad \text{tree.pl} & \quad \text{eat.} & \quad \text{and} & \quad \text{bug} & \quad \text{become.} & \quad \text{be.} & \quad \text{3pl.prs}
\end{align*}

“And they ate various fruits from the trees and were / (as a result) became big.”
(MP, M7981/I/V/i/2–6)
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**Diachrony: the role of WMIr.**

- The existence of these constructions in WMIr. suggests that they may have contributed to (or even have been instrumental in) the development of similar constructions in Armenian.

- The differences in semantics (WMIr. simple past vs. Arm. perfect) may be explained by the retention of the Armenian imperfect.

- Owing to the suppletive relationship between *h*- and *bw*-, its potential role in this model–copy paradigm is as yet unclear.
Conclusions

▶ the different perfects (*em*, *linim*, *kam*) are not described in the standard grammatical literature (Jensen 1959; Meillet 1936) nor in research on the perfect (Lyonnet 1933; Ouzounian 2001)

▶ the stative-resultative nature of the *em*-perfect may explain why the *linim*-perfect (change of state) had greater currency than the *kam*-perfekt – the latter is too semantically similar to the former

▶ the existence of parallel constructions with very similar meanings in WMIr. seems to corroborate the model–copy relationship between these constructions in both languages
Conclusion

pre-attestation

▶ creation of perfect (PTCP + Ø / PTCP + linim) on / influenced by WMIr. model

early 5th c.

▶ gradual analogical extension of finite AUX to em
▶ aided by system pressure from synthetic tenses / cross-system harmony (cf. Haig 2008:193)

late 5th/early 6th c.

▶ dominance of PTCP + em perfect
▶ gradual loss of marginal / semantically more specific perfects (linim, kam)
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Conclusion

**pre-attestation**
- creation of perfect (PTCP + Ø / PTCP + *linim*) on / influenced by WMIr. model

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**late 5th/early 6th c.**
- dominance of PTCP + *em* perfect
- gradual loss of marginal / semantically more specific perfects (*linim, kam*)
Thank you for your attention!
References I


References II


References III


