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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLASSICAL ARMENIAN AORIST IN MODERN DIALECTS

This paper aims to present a sketch on the development of the Classical Armenian aorist in the dialects with particular attention on Hamšen, Aramo, and other peripheral dialects, as well as some related issues, such as the aorist augment *e-* and the vowel *-a-* of the first person plural endings in the aorist and imperfect paradigms[1].

1. Classical Armenian aorist

The active endings are: *-i*, *-er*, zero, *-akʿ*, *-ē/ikʿ*, *-in*; 3 sg. augment *e-* when the stem is monosyllabic.

Table 1. The aorist paradigms of Classical Armenian

	lam	**berem**	**sirem**	**tʿoɫum**
	'to weep, cry'	'to bring'	'to love'	'to let, leave'
1 sg.	*lacʿi*	*beri*	*sirecʿi*	*tʿoɫi*
2 sg.	*lacʿer*	*berer*	*sirecʿer*	*tʿoɫer*
3 sg.	*e-lacʿ*	*e-ber*	*sireacʿ*	*e-tʿoɫ*
1 pl.	*lacʿakʿ*	*berakʿ*	*sirecʿakʿ*	*tʿoɫakʿ*
2 pl.	*lacʿē/ikʿ*	*berēkʿ/ikʿ*	*sirecʿē/ikʿ*	*tʿoɫē/ikʿ*
3 pl.	*lacʿin*	*berin*	*sirecʿin*	*tʿoɫin*

2. Spread of *e-*

In a number of inscriptions one observes a spread of *e-*: 3 pl. *e-tʿoɫin* (Vayocʿ Jor, the village of Tʿerpʿ, 1264 CE) instead of *tʿoɫin* (CArm. *tʿoɫum* 'to let, leave', cf. 3 sg. *e-tʿoɫ*); 3 pl. *e-barj-in* in Ani instead of *barjin* (CArm. *baṙnam* < **barj-nam* 'to lift, raise', cf. 3 sg. *e-barj*), etc. This is observable even in *cʿ*-forms the corresponding Classical paradigms of which never had an *e-*. Here are examples from

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the Loṙi and Tavuš regions, the 13th century: *ē-gnec'i* 'I bought' (Sanahin and Enok'avan); *e/ē-grec'in* 'they wrote' (Ōjun and Makaravank'). One also finds examples that combine the Middle Armenian forms with Classical ones, such as *e-tui* (vs. CArm. *etu* and MArm. *tu-i*), the 1 sg.aor. of *tam* 'to give' (Ani, Makaravank', etc.; the 11th century onwards); cf. 1 pl. *e-tua(n)k'* vs. CArm. and MArm. *tuak'*.

S. Avagyan [1986: 134–142] discusses the material and concludes that the vowel *e-* of these forms is due to insufficient grammar skills of the authors of these inscriptions. However, there is dialectal evidence pointing to the fact that at least in some cases we may be dealing with really existent forms. In § 6, the examples of *etui* and *etuak'* will be discussed in greater detail.

3. First person plural imperfect

The Classical Armenian 1 pl. imperfect ending is characterized by the presence of a vowel *-a-*; thus, for example, in the *e*-conjugation we have the following set of endings: *-ēi*, *-ēir*, *-ēr*, *-ēak'*, *-ēik'*, *-ēin*. In Modern Armenian and most of dialects, this *-a-* has been analogically eliminated, but some dialects have preserved it intact. In the Tables 2–3, I present the Classical imperfect paradigm of the verb *utem* 'to eat' and its corresponding tense forms (imperfect or past subjunctive) in the dialects of Akn [Ačaṙyan 1911: 223] (cf. *ibid.*, p. 227 on Sebastia), Hamšen [Ačaṙyan 1947: 136, 139], and SEA. I also include two paradigms from the region of Dersim, *grem* 'to write' in Xarberd/Erznka, and *k'ašem* 'to pull, drag' in Č'mškacag [Baḷramyan 1960: 22, 30]; the latter preserves the *-a-* intact whereas the former is innovative. Interestingly, the forms that are characterized by the archaic *-a-* show innovations too; in Hamšen we see analogical insertion of *-i/y-*, whereas the others have the innovative nasal.

Table 2. The imperfect paradigm of the verb 'to eat' in Classical Armenian, the dialects of Akn, Hamšen, and Standard Eastern Armenian

	CArm.	Akn	Hamšen	SEA
1 sg.	*utēi*	*g-üdɛi*	*g-udɛyə*	*k-utei*
2 sg.	*utēir*	*g-üdɛir*	*g-udɛyd(ə)*	*k-uteir*
3 sg.	*utēr*	*g-üdɛr*	*g-udɛr*	*k-uter*
1 pl.	*utēak'*	*g-üdɛank'*	*g-uda**yk'ə*	*k-uteink'*
2 pl.	*utēik'*	*g-üdɛik'*	*g-udɛyk'ə*	*k-uteik'*
3 pl.	*utēin*	*g-üdɛin*	*g-udɛynə*	*k-utein*

Table 3. The imperfect paradigm of the verbs 'to pull' in the dialect of
Č'mškacag and 'to write' in the dialect of Xarberd/Erznka

	Č'mškacag	**Xarberd/Erznka**
1 sg.	*gə k'ašɛi*	*gə g'ərɛi*
2 sg.	*gə k'ašɛir*	*gə g'ərɛir*
3 sg.	*gə k'ašɛr*	*gə g'ərɛr*
1 pl.	*gə k'ašɛ**ank'***	*gə g'ərɛink'ʸ*
2 pl.	*gə k'ašɛik'*	*gə g'ərɛik'ʸ*
3 pl.	*gə k'ašɛin*	*gə g'ərɛin*

4. First person plural aorist and the *e-* augment

As we have seen in Section 1, the same 1 pl. *-a-* is seen in the aorist of Classical Armenian. Here again, some dialects preserve it intact, cf. e.g. the paradigms of *xałam* 'to play' and *sirem* 'to love' in Hamšen [Ačaṙyan 1947: 128, 131].

Table 4. The aorist paradigm of the verbs *xałam* 'to play'
and *sirem* 'to love' in Classical Armenian

	xałam	***sirem***
	'to play'	'to love'
1 sg.	*xałac'i*	*sirɛc'i*
2 sg.	*xałac'ir*	*sirɛc'ir*
3 sg.	*xałac'*	*sirɛc'*
1 pl.	*xałac'**ak'***	*sirɛc'**ak'***
2 pl.	*xałac'ik'*	*sirɛc'ik'*
3 pl.	*xałac'in*	*sirɛc'in*

In old monosyllabic aorist forms of this dialect we find yet another archaism, the augment *e-*[2]. Here is the example of *banam*, aor. stem *bac'-* 'to open' [Ačaṙyan 1947: 135].

Table 5. The aorist paradigm of the verbs 'to open'
in Classical Armenian and the Hamšen dialect

	CArm. act.	**CArm. med.**	**Hamšen**
1 sg.	*bac'i*	*bac'ay*	*pac'i*
2 sg.	*bac'er*	*bac'ar*	*pac'ir*
3 sg.	***e**-bac'*	*bac'aw*	*pac'aw*, *ɛ-pac'*

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[2] For a discussion of this Hamšen archaism, see [Vaux 2007: 265–266]. It is also present in a neighboring dialect of Xotorǰur [Kostandyan 1985: 60].

	CArm. act.	CArm. med.	Hamšen
1 pl.	*bacʻ**a**kʻ*	*bacʻakʻ*	*pacʻ**a**kʻ*
2 pl.	*bacʻēkʻ, -ikʻ*	*bacʻaykʻ*	*pacʻikʻ*
3 pl.	*bacʻin*	*bacʻan*	*pacʻin*

5. Hamšen *asuš*, aor. stem *ast-* 'to say'

CArm. *asem* 'to say, tell, speak' displays aorist forms based on *ast-* in Hamšen. According to Ačaṙyan [1947: 134–135], the *-t-* after *-s-* is an epenthesis of a phonetic nature, cf. *almas* 'diamond' > *almast*, *tʻasel* 'to puff' > *tʻastuš*, etc. This explanation is not entirely satisfactory because: 1) it is not clear why the *-t-* is only found in the aorist; 2) we expect to see the reflexes of the aoristic *cʻ-*. I therefore propose the following solution.

In Classical Armenian, the aorist stem of this verb is *asacʻ-*. This subtype displays both non-syncopated and syncopated aorist forms in Hamšen, namely *xaɫacʻi* and *xaɫcʻi* (see [Ačaṙyan 1947: 130–131]). It seems therefore likely that Hamšen *asti* etc. derive from the syncopated forms **ascʻi* etc.; the development **ascʻi > asti* is probably due to dissimilation, which may have been triggered or reinforced by the aforementioned *-(s)t-* epenthesis. For the inclusion of the 3 sg. aor. med. into the main paradigm, compare the aforementioned *pacʻaw* alongside *ɛ-pacʻ* (cf. MArm. 1sg. *gtay* vs. CArm. 1sg. *gti* 'I found', see Karst 1901: 327).

In the Table 6, I have combined the Classical and Hamšen paradigms with that of Šamaxi/Kʻⁱärkʻⁱänǰ, an easternmost dialect (on which see [Baɫramyan 1964: 166]):

Table 6. The aorist paradigm of the verbs 'to say' in Classical Armenian and the dialects of Hamšen and Šamaxi/Kʻⁱärkʻⁱänǰ

	CArm.	Syncope	Hamšen	Šamaxi
1 sg.	*asacʻi*	**ascʻi*	*as-t-i*	*ascʻi, assi*
2 sg.	*asacʻer*	**ascʻer*	*as-t-ir*	*ascʻir, assir*
3 sg.	*asacʻ*	**as(a)cʻ-aw* (med.)	*as-t-av*	*asɛcʻ, asɛc*
1 pl.	*asacʻ**a**kʻ*	**ascʻ**a**kʻ*	*as-t-**a**kʻ*	*ascʻinkʻ, assinkʻ*
2 pl.	*asacʻēkʻ, -ikʻ*	**ascʻēkʻ, -ikʻ*	*as-t-ikʻ*	*ascʻikʻ, assikʻ*
3 pl.	*asacʻin*	**ascʻin*	*as-t-in*	*ascʻin, assin*

6. The aorist forms of *tam* 'to give' in Aramo and other dialects

In Classical Armenian, the irregular verb *tam* 'to give' is characterized by the *e*-augment throughout the paradigm except for 1 pl. and the absence of the vowel *i/e/ē* in 1 sg., 2 sg., 2 pl., and 3 pl. In Middle Armenian (see Karst 1901: 333), dialects and modern Armenian one finds analogical developments:

1) the root **tu* is recovered in the 3 sg. form: *et → etu*;

2) the augment *e-* is eliminated from the paradigm but in some dialects it is preserved in the 3 sg. form;

3) the regular endings are added to this new basis: *etu → tu-i*, *etur → tu-i-r*, etc.

The vowel *-a-* in 1 pl. forms and the augment *e-* are both present in the Aramo dialect, where, for example, *ədvunkʻ* reflects **e-tuankʻ* and stands for the CArm. *tuakʻ*, 1 pl. aorist of the verb *tam* 'to give'. In what follows I shall discuss this remarkable case in more detail since it simultaneously represents an illustrative combination of archaisms and innovations.

The Classical Armenian aorist forms *etu*, *etur*, and *et*, have been replaced in Aramo by *ədva*, *ədvɛy*, and *ida* respectively. Łaribyan [1958: 47] (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 19, 21) derives 3 sg. aorist *ida* from **etu* (for the vocalic reflections, cf. *ere/ikun* 'evening' > *irgäun*, *katu* 'cat' > *gada*, *heru* 'last year' > *hira*, *heřu* 'far' > *həřřa*, etc.) but gives no explanations for the other forms. The Classical 3 sg. form *et* was thus replaced by **etu*, and all the other personal forms, as we shall see, have been reshaped by attaching the regular set of aorist endings to this base **etu*.

The 1 sg. aor. form *ədva* may reflect **etu-i*, in which the ending *-i* is taken from the Classical aorist ending *-i*. The vocalic developments are regular: 1) *e-* > *ə-*, cf. *ezr* 'edge' > *əzzír(ä)*, *erekʻ* 'three' > *ərkʻ*, *erkir* 'earth' > *ərgayr*; 2) word-final *-i* > *-a*, cf. *agi* 'tail' > *akka*, *aygi* 'garden' > *əkka*, *oski* 'gold' > *əska*, etc. (see [Łaribyan 1958: 19, 20]). The existence of such an analogical form is confirmed by some inscriptional evidence from the 11th century onwards, *ētvi* (Ani, 1058 CE) and *ētui* (Makaravankʻ)[3].

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[3] See [Ōrbeli et. al. (eds.) 1960: 13, Nr 51; Avagyan 1986: 136–137].

The 2 sg. aor. form *ǝdvεy* in all probability reflects an analogical **etu-er*, with the CArm. 2 sg. aor. ending *-er* (cf. *gišer* 'night' > *kišεyr*, *ver* 'up, above' > *vεyr*, etc.). As to the alternation *-εy* vs. *-ε(y)r*, compare the 1 sg. pres. perf. forms: affirmative *ǝdver im* vs. negative *č'ǝm idvεy*. See below on the contrast between the archaic *-er* in Aramo and Svedia on the one hand and the innovative *-ir* (seen in Middle and Modern Armenian) in Zeyt'un on the other hand.

The 1 pl. aor. form *ǝdvunk'* reflects **e-tuank'* according to regular sound laws (cf. *aprank'* > *abrunk'*, *p'orjank'* > *p'ɔrc'unk'*), and 2 pl. and 3 pl. forms derive from **etu-ik'* and **etu-in* respectively (cf. *cic* > *jäyj*, *hing* > *häyng*), analogically acquiring thus the corresponding Classical endings *-ik'* and *-in*. The existence of 3 pl. aor. **etuank'* is confirmed by, for example, an inscription from the Šxmurat monastery (Tavuš, the village of Całkavan) in 1248 CE, which has the form *ētvank'*; cf. three earlier attestations (12th and early 13th centuries) from the same regions with no nasal — *etuak'*, *ētuak'*, and *ētvak'* [Avagyan 1986: 136].

In the tables below, I have combined these paradigms with those of Middle Armenian [Karst 1901: 333 (= 2002: 315–316); Ant'osyan 1975: 213; Hovsep'yan 1997: 68–69], Modern Western and Eastern Armenian [Ant'osyan 1975: 214], and the following dialects:

1) Western grouping: Svedia in Syria [Ačaṙyan 2003: 494, 498], Zeyt'un in Cilicia [Ačaṙyan 2003: 243], Hamšen in the North-Western intergroup [Ačaṙyan 1947: 137], Muš in the South-Central group [Bałdasaryan-T'ap'alc'yan 1958: 169] and neighboring Sasun [Petoyan 1954: 59], Polis/Constantinople [Ačaṙyan 1941: 149], Moks [Muradyan 1982: 173]; cf. Šatax, see [Muradyan 1962: 148], 1 sg. *tǝvi*), Van [Ačaṙyan 1952: 173];

2) Eastern grouping: Marała [Ačaṙean 1926: 262], Agulis [Ačaṙean 1935: 260], Šamaxi [Bałramyan 1964: 129, 162, 167], Kṙzen [Bałramyan 1961: 151], Hadrut' [Połosyan 1965: 212], Ararat/Loṙi [Asatryan 1968: 141]. Brief outlines of individual dialects and dialectal maps can be found in [Martirosyan 2013].

Table 7. The paradigm of the verb 'to give' in Classical Armenian, the dialect of Amaro, inscriptions, and the Modern Armenian

	CArm.	Aramo	Proto-Aramo	Inscriptions (11th cent. +)
1 sg.	*etu*	*ǝdva*	**etu-i*	*ētvi*, *ētui*
2 sg.	*etur*	*ǝdvεy*	**etu-e(r)*	
3 sg.	*et*	*ida*	**etu*	

	CArm.	Aramo	Proto-Aramo	Inscriptions (11th cent. +)
1 pl.	*tuakʻ*	*ədvunkʻ*	**etua(**n**)kʻ*	*e/ētuakʻ, ētva**n**kʻ*
2 pl.	**e***tukʻ*	*ədväkʻ*	**etu-ikʻ*	
3 pl.	**e***tun*	*ədväyn*[4]	**etu-in*	

	MArm.	SWA	SEA
1 sg.	*tu-i*	*tu-i*	*tv(ecʻ)**i***
2 sg.	*tu-ir*	*tu-ir*	*tv(ecʻ)**i**r*
3 sg.	**e***tu-r, eret, tu-aw*	*tu-aw*	*tvecʻ*
1 pl.	*tuakʻ*	*tu-**in**kʻ*	*tv(ecʻ)**in**kʻ*
2 pl.	*tuikʻ*	*tu-ikʻ*	*tv(ecʻ)ikʻ*
3 pl.	*tuin*	*tu-in*	*tv(ecʻ)in*

Table 8. The paradigm of the verb 'to give'
in the Western grouping of the dialects

	Svedia	Pr.-Sved.	Zeytʻun	Pr.- Zeytʻ.	Hamšen
1 sg.	*dva*	**tu-i*	*dɐvɐ*	**tu-i*	*dvi*
2 sg.	*dvir*	**tu-er*	*dɐvɐy*	**tu-ir*	*dvir*
3 sg.	***i**-dör*	**e-tu-r*	*dɔvɔv*	**tu-aw*	*dvav, ɛrɛd*
1 pl.	*dvunkʻ*	**tu-a**nk**ʻ*	*dɔvɔ**nk**ʻ*	**tu-ankʻ*	*dvakʻ*
2 pl.	*dväkʻ*	**tu-ikʻ*	*dɐvɐkʻ*	**tu-ikʻ*	*dvikʻ*
3 pl.	*dvɛn*	**tu-in*	*dɐvɐn*	**tu-in*	*dvin*

	Muš	Sasun	Polis	Moks	Van
1 sg.	*təv(ɛcʻ)i*	*dväcʻə*	*duvi*	*təvə*	*tv(icʻ)**i***
2 sg.	*təv(ɛcʻ)ir*	*dväcʻər*	*duvir*	*təvir*	*tv(icʻ)ir*
3 sg.	*təvɛcʻ*	*dvəcʻ*	*duvav*	***i**-tu*	*tvecʻ, **i**-tu(r)*
1 pl.	*təv(ɛcʻ)**in**kʻ*	*dväcʻakʻ* (!)	*duvi**nk**ʻ*	*təvi**nk***ʻʸ	*tv(icʻ)**in**kʻ ʿʸ*
2 pl.	*təv(ɛcʻ)ikʻ*	*dväcʻəkʻ*	*duvikʻ*	*təvikʻʸ*	*tv(icʻ)ikʻ ʿʸ*
3 pl.	*təv(ɛcʻ)in*	*dväcʻən*	*duvin*	*təvin*	*tv(icʻ)in*

Table 9. The paradigm of the verb 'to give'
in the Eastern grouping of the dialects

	Marała	Agulis	Šamaxi
1 sg.	*tuv/řum*	*tvɛm*	*tur/vi*
2 sg.	*tuv/řir*	*tvɛs*	*tur/vir*
3 sg.	*tuv/řicʻ*	–	***u**-tur, tur/vav*

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[4] Printed as *ənväyn* in [Łaribyan 1958: 47]; probably a misprint.

	Marała	**Agulis**	**Šamaxi**
1 pl.	*tuv/řu**n**k'*	*tvɛk'*	*turi**n**k'*
2 pl.	*tuv/řuk'*	*tvɛk'*	*turik'*
3 pl.	*tuv/řun*	*tvɛn*	*turin*

	Křzen	**Hadrut'**	**Loři**
1 sg.	*tə/uvi*	*tuvɛ*	*təvi*
2 sg.	*tə/uvir*	*tuvɛr*	*təvir*
3 sg.	*ə-rɛt, təvuc'*	*tu/əvav*	*təvuc'*
1 pl.	*tə/uvi**n**k'*	*tuvɛk'ᶜʸ*	*təvi**n**k'*
2 pl.	*tə/uvik'*	*tuvɛk'ᶜʸ*	*təvik'*
3 pl.	*tə/uvin*	*tuvɛn*	*təvin*

Notes:

1) For Zeyt'un *dɐvɐ* < **tui*, cf. *nɐvɐg* < *nuik* 'arum lily' [Ačařyan 2003: 60, 331].

2) All the phonological developments of the vowel *i* in 1 sg. (*-i* > *-a*), 2 pl. (*-ik'* > *-äk'*) and 3 pl. (*-in* > *-ɛn*) are regular in Svedia. As for 2 sg. *dvir*, it goes back to **tu-er* rather than **tu-ir*, cf. *gišer* 'night' > *g'išir*, *siseřn* 'chick-pea' > *sisiř* on the one hand, and *karmir* 'red' > *g'ärmɛr*, *moxir* 'ash' > *mäxxɛr* on the other. For the material, see [Ačařyan 2003: 370–374, 377–383].

3) Agulis has no 3 sg. aor. in general [Ačařean 1935: 267]. According to Ačařyan [1935: 145–146, 243], Agulis 1 pl. aor. *-Vk'* comes from *-Vnk'* through the loss of the nasal. This is not necessarily the case.

7. Conclusion

Various analogical developments have taken place in dialects; some peripheral dialects preserve archaic features. One finds more than one line of developments from Classical Armenian to modern dialects (not always through Middle Armenian). Inscriptions from North-East of historical Armenia in the 11th century onwards deviate from Middle Armenian but correspond to a dialectal development in Aramo (Syria), the farthest and most isolated dialect in the South-West corner.

Abbreviations

CArm. — Classical Armenian; MArm. — Middle Armenian; SEA — Standard Eastern Armenian; SWA — Standard Western Armenian.

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