

**SYNTACTIC PARALLELS BETWEEN WEST MIDDLE IRANIAN AND CLASSICAL ARMENIAN**  
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This paper discusses three syntagmata of Classical Armenian which have significant formal and functional parallels in the West Middle Iranian (WMIr.) languages, Parthian and Middle Persian; these patterns are taken to be indicators of larger linguistic and socio-historical processes.

The usage of Arm. *(e)t'ē* as complementiser and quotative marker, including before direct and indirect *wh*-questions, is typologically uncommon, but finds almost exact parallels in the functional distribution of WMIr. *kw/kū*/. Similarly, the use of Pth. *wxd/wxad*/, MP *xwd/xwad*/'self' as an intensifier, subject-indexed resumptive pronoun, and switch-function marker is reflected closely in the use of Arm. *ink'n* (cf. Meyer 2013). Finally, both Armenian and Iranian exhibit nominal, i.e. verbless, relative clauses, which may (but need not necessarily) be seen as a further indication of syntactic parallels (cf. already Meillet 1899-1900: 379 n. 1; 1906-08:21). It is argued that these parallels are not mere coincidence, but the result of extended language contact between Armenian and particularly Parthian during the Arsacid period; Iranian influence on Armenian is clearly observable in the lexicon (cf. Schmitt 1983), but more difficult to determine with regard to syntax.

For such patterns to have been adopted into Armenian, the extent of contact needs to have been even more significant than previously thought. This paper proposes that the replication of these syntagmata, amongst other linguistic and socio-historical indicators, suggests that the Parthian ruling class of Armenia were not only Parthian-Armenian bilinguals, but actively adopted Armenian as their main means of communication at some point between the fall of the Parthian Empire in 224 CE and the end of the Arsacid dynasty in 428 CE (cf. Meyer 2017).

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