Armeno-Albanica II[1]

Exchanging doves

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The article investigates the question of pre-historical linguistic contacts between Armenian and the East Caucasian languages. As a possible candidate for an early loan word from Armenian, it discusses the term denoting the 'dove', Arm. *aławni*, which may be related to Caucasian Albanian *luf* 'id.', attested in the palimpsests from Mt. Sinai, and its cognates in the Lezgic language family.

Early contacts between Armenian and the neighbouring Caucasian languages have for long been postulated, and much lexical material has been adduced to prove such contacts, esp. with the South-Caucasian or Kartvelian family with Georgian as its most prominent member. Leaving apart the huge amount of common words of Iranian origin Armenian and Georgian have shared since Antiquity,[2] it is especially a small set of native words borrowed from Proto-Armenian by its Kartvelian neighbours that are of interest here, given that they preserved certain phonological features which changed in Armenian itself before the beginning of literacy. These features comprise, among others, the retainment of pretonic *u* in O(ld) G(eorgian) *žurǧmul-i*[3] 'water hole' vs. O(ld) A(rmenian) *ǰrmowł* 'id.' (< **ǰur-*) or OG *ḳunʒul-i* 'island' vs. OA *kłzi* 'id.' (< **kuluzi* ?), the preservation of word-initial (aspirated) *pᶜ* and word-internal *on* in OG *pon-i* 'ford' vs. OA *hown* 'id.' (< **pᶜontᶜ-* < PIE

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*pont-), or the retention of word-initial (aspirated) t^c (and a peculiar ablaut scheme) in OG *tirķumel-i* (read *tirķụmeli*, with non-syllabic *u*) 'kidney' vs. OA *erikamun-k^c* (pl.t.) 'id.' (< PIE *$treig^w m\breve{o}n$- / *$trig^w men$-).[4]

With the detection and decipherment of the C(aucasian) A(lbanian) palimpsests from St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai,[5] investigations into early contacts of Armenian have become possible with respect to the East Caucasian language family, too. As a matter of fact, the 242 pages of CA text preserved in the palimpsests provide plenty of material suited for a comparison with the OA language of the early Middle Ages, all the more since there is good reason to believe that the Albanian texts, all of Biblical content, were translated from the Armenian Bible.[6] And indeed, contacts with Old Armenian manifest themselves in various forms throughout these texts.

1   Vocabulary shared with Armenian in the CA palimpsests

As in the case of Old Georgian, the remnants of the CA Bible translation reveal, first of all, a great deal of lexical correspondences with Old Armenian deriving from M(iddle) Ir(anian) stock.[7] This is true, e.g., for words shared by all three languages with but minor phonetic differences such as CA *ṭalavar* 'hut' ~ OA *ṭaławar*, OG *ṭalavar-i* (Parth. *talawār*), CA *hambaw* 'fame, rumour' ~ OA *hambaw*, OG *(h)ambav-i* (MIr. *ham-baw- ?)[8], or CA *avazan* 'pool, basin' ~ OA *awazan*, OG *avazan-i* (MIr. *$\bar{a}$-$wazān$- ?)[9]. In some cases,

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4   Cf. Vogt 1938 and Gippert 2005b as to details.

5   Cf. the edition by Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009.

6   Cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: I-34–37 and Gippert 2012: 240–243 as to details.

7   For a preliminary survey of such correspondences cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: II-79–82 and Gippert 2011a: 3–10; for the attestations of the CA words, Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: IV-4–42.

8   Cf. Androniḳašvili 1966: 222 ("*hambav") with reference to S(ans)k(ri)t *saṃbhavá*- ("sạbhava") 'existence, being, story' (" მდომარეობა, ყოფა, ამბავი"). Man(ichean) M(iddle) P(ersian) *hambāw* (occurring in M 4b I R=7; Müller 1904: 57 [*hâbāv*] ; Salemann 1908: 6 [4f: *h'b'w*]; Boyce 1975: 190 [dt 1: *hmb'w*]) with its plural *hambāwān* (M 543 V 8; Müller 1904: 80 [*hambâvân*]; Boyce 1975: 149 [cqa 3: *hmb'w'n*]) means 'adversary, foe' (Boyce 1977: 45 [*hmb'w*]; Müller 1904: 80 'Genossen', Salemann 1908: 84 'genoße, nebenbuler') and belongs to Zor(oastrian) MP *hambāy* (MacKenzie 1971: 40 [*hmb'g*] 'companion, partner; adversary').

9   Cf. Sogd. *"w'z "p* 'water', *"wzyy* 'pond, lake', and *"wz'k "p*- '(a certain type of) water' (Henning 1940: 51 [52]; 1945: 471 [175] with n. 2); Androniḳašvili 1966: 218

CA shows peculiar sound changes as in the metatheses discernible in CA *čaṭar* 'temple' vs. OA *tačar*, OG *ṭaʒar-i* (O(ld) P(ersian) *tačara-*) and CA *dagin* 'dinar, penny' vs. OA *dang*, OG *dang-i* (MP *dāng*), in the loss of the rounding in CA *xarṭaḳ-biyesun* 'break, crack, grind' vs. OA *xortakem* 'id.', (Modern) Georgian *-xurda-* 'small, cash money' (MP *xwurdag* 'something small, particle', NP *xurda* 'small, fine, minute') or in the representation of *-(r)š-* by a laryngeal /ˁ/ in CA *vaˁamaḳ* 'cerecloth, napkin' vs. OA *varšamak*, OG *varšamag-i* (cf. Sogd. *wšˁmy*, NP *bāšāma*), CA *xoˁaḳ* 'heat' vs. OA *xoršak*, OG *xoršaḳ-i* (MP *hōšāg* 'heat' contaminated with *xwar, xwar(x)šēd* 'sun' ?), or *mowˁak* 'worker' vs. OA *mšak*, OG *mušaḳ-i* (with no Iranian etymology available).[10] Sometimes the CA deviation can be taken to indicate an independent borrowing from another Iranian source as in the case of *bodˀvar* 'censer' with a palatal stop vs. OA *bowrvaṝ*, OG *bervar-i* with the "typical" substitution of MIr. *δ* by *r* (*bōδiβār*), and sometimes CA has preserved an Iranianism that is not met with in the neighbouring languages as in the case of *bamgen* 'blessed' (MIr. *bāmgēn* 'full of splendour')[11] or *durud* 'beam, wood' (cf. Parth. *dārūβδag* 'crucified').

In some instances, Caucasian Albanian proves to be closer to Old Armenian by sharing Iranianisms with it that are not met with in Georgian as in the case of CA *xoran* 'tent' = OA *xoran* (MIr. *xwaδān* ?)[12], CA *p̣ačaṝ* 'reason' ~ OA *patčaṝ* (MIr. *pat-čār-*), CA *varṭ/dap̣eṭ* 'teacher' ~ OA *vartapet* (MIr. *wardapet*)[13] or, with considerable phonetic differences, CA *afre(-pesown)* 'praise' ~ OA *awrhnem* (MIr. *ā-frī-*) or CA *ašarḳeṭ* 'disciple' ~ OA *ašakert* (cf. NP *šāgird*). A peculiar term shared by the two languages is the pair of CA *marǧaven* and OA *margarē* 'prophet', both representing a MIr. compound meaning 'augur', lit. 'bird-seer' but with different verbal stems included (*marya-wēn-* vs. *marya-δē-*).[14]

In a similar way, CA matches OA in some G(ree)k terms pertinent to the Biblical sphere such as CA *salmos* 'psalm' = OA *salmos* (Gk. *ψαλμός*) vs. OG *psalmun-i* (Gk. *ψαλμόν*) or, even more salient, CA *hetanos* 'heathen, Gentile' = OA *hetˁanos* (Gk. *ἔθνος*, vs. OG *çarmart-i*), and the same is true for Semitisms like CA *kahana* 'priest' ~ OA *kˁahanay* (Syriac *kāhnā*, vs. OG *mǧdel-i*).

("*ā-vāzān").

10 For the latter terms cf. Gippert 2009: 131–137.

11 For the latter terms cf. Gippert 2007: 101–104.

12 For the etymology cf. Gippert 2009: 131.

13 Cf. Benveniste 1929: 10 for the presumed Iranian etymology of the OA word.

14 Cf. Gippert 2005b: 163–164.

However, there are also clear correspondences between CA and OG in contrast to, or with the exclusion of, OA as in the case of CA *eḳlesi* 'church' ~ OG *eḳlesia* (Gk. ἐκκλησία) vs. OA *eḳełecʿi* with a remarkable phonetic adaptation, or CA *angelos* ~ OG *angeloz/s-i* (Gk. ἄγγελος) vs. OA *hreštak* < MIr. **fr̄eštak-*; and we even find four religious terms that were clearly borrowed from Georgian, viz. CA *aχc̣/siba(y)* 'Easter' < OG *aġvseba-y*, lit. 'fulfilment', CA *madil'* 'grace, gift, favour' < OG *madl-i*, CA *saʿowrzel* 'throne, see' < OG *savrʒel-i* 'seat', and CA *saxē* 'image, vision' < OG *saxē* 'face, vision'.

In contrast to this, the CA share of native words from Armenian seems to be restricted off-hand, and not so clearly connected to Christian thought. As to the latter, we may first of all adduce CA *marmin/n'* 'body, flesh', which with no doubt reflects OA *marmin* 'id.'. Another relevant term is OA *žołovowrd* 'crowd, people, congregation' which is likely to be concealed in the CA abbreviation *ž̃d* occurring throughout the palimpsests in the same sense; a comparable case would be abbreviated CA *n'̃n* 'eternal, for eternity' if this reflects OA *i* (< **in*) *yawitean* 'forever' (a borrowing from MIr. **yāwēt(ān)*). As for non-Christian terms, we may consider all-purpose words like CA *ḳor* 'back(wards)' if this pertains to OA *kor* 'bent', CA *ḳala* 'lame' if cognate with OA *kał* 'id.' (but cf. also the OG verbal root *ḳel* meaning 'limp'), and CA *avel* 'much, many' if this reflects OA *-awel-* as represented in *aweli*, *aṙ-awel* 'more', *y-awel-owm* and *aṙ-awel-owm* 'to increase' (cf. Greek ὀφέλλω 'foster, further, increase, add', < PIE **h₃bʰel-*).[15]

Meager as it is, this evidence proves that there were contacts between Caucasian Albanian and Armenian by the time of the emergence of Christianity-based literacy in the region;[16] on the other hand, it is clear that none of the presumable borrowings adduced so far sheds new light on the prehistory of Armenian in terms of sound changes.

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15 For the Armenian etymology cf. Pedersen 1906: 336 and Klingenschmitt 1982: 236 and 238.

16 The contacts are likely to have increased in later centuries, given that the modern successor of Caucasian Albanian, Udi, has substituted the Iranian-based complementiser *-ḳe-* of the ancestor language by *-te*, obviously a borrowing from Armenian; cf. Gippert 2011b: 209 and 228.

2   The word for 'dove' – a prehistorical borrowing?

A possible candidate for a true prehistorical borrowing is the word denoting the 'dove', OA *aławni*, which is attested about 50 times in the Bible translation always rendering Gk. περιστερά, as well as many other texts of notable age.[17] From the Biblical attestations, it is clear that the word is a stem in *i/a*, with the genitive plural appearing as *aławneacͨ* throughout[18] (Lk. 2.24; Lev. 1.14; 5.7, 11; 12.8; 14.22, 30; 15.14, 29; Num. 6.10; IV Reg. 6.25); this is further supported by the diminutive *aławneak* occurring alongside *aławni*, as if to avoid a repetition, in Cant. 2.13–14 (Արի՛ եկ մերձաւոր իմ, գեղեցիկ իմ, աղաւնի իմ եւ եկ դու աղաւնեակ իմ ընդ հովանեաւ վիմիդ առ պատուարաւ պարսպիդ ~ ἀνάστα ἐλθέ, ἡ πλησίον μου, καλή μου, περιστερά μου, καὶ ἐλθὲ σύ, περιστερά μου, ἐν σκέπῃ τῆς πέτρας ἐχόμενα τοῦ προτειχίσματος). In addition, the stem formation is confirmed by the *e* Fugenvokal (< *-ea-*) in the compound *aławnevačaṙ* 'dove-monger' in Mt. 21.12, Mk. 11.15, and Lk. 19.45 (rendering Gk. πωλούντες τὰς περιστεράς).[19]

2.1   Etymological considerations

For OA *aławni* and its family, there is no generally accepted etymology available.[20] Early attempts compared it to Lat. *albus*, Gk. ἀλφός and related terms meaning 'white', with OHG *albiz* 'swan' and cognates providing examples for the use of this term in denoting birds.[21] Different from this, Gert Klingenschmitt sought the origin of *aławni* in a formation with word-initial *p-* ("*pl̥h-bʰ-niə₂* (?)"), thus drawing it near to "lat. *palumbēs* 'Ringeltaube', gr.

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17 The results of a query in the TITUS corpus of Armenian can be found on http://tinyurl.com/titusalawni.

18 The genitive singular is regularly *aławnwoy* (Gen. 8.9; Lev. 12.6; Ps. 54.7; 67.14); *aławnoy* is a later form.

19 In Lk. 19,45, τὰς περιστεράς seems to be secondary, occurring only in the cod. Bezae Cantabrigensis (D) and a few other witnesses (plus the Latin Itala); its addition can easily be explained as an influence of the synoptic parallels in Matthew and Mark. – Formations like *aławnakerp* (denoting the Holy Spirit as 'dove-shaped') are later.

20 Note that Heinrich Hübschmann in his *Armenische Grammatik* (1897) did not treat the word.

21 Cf. Pokorny 1959: 30–31 and the literature referred to there.

πέλεια 'wilde Taube', preuß. *poalis* 'Taube'".[22] Yet another reconstruction was put forth by the addressee of the present volume, who proposed a tentative preform $*h_2l̥h_3b^hih_1niio$-, obviously basing herself on the Gk. term ἀλωφός recorded as a hapax legomenon in the Hesychian gloss ἀλωφούς· λευκούς.[23]

It is clear that the proposals quoted above are not compatible with each other and not equally well founded. This is, first of all, true for the word-initial *p*- in Gert Klingenschmitt's etymology, which is not matched by either the group of Lat. *albus* nor Gk. ἀλωφός. It is true that $*p$- might have been lost (via $*p^h$- > $*h$- ?) in this position as in Arm. *ar̄* 'to, at' if < $*ár̄a$ < $*pr̥h$-[24] (via $*p^har̄a$-), or Arm. *otn* 'foot' < $*pod-m̥$[25] (via $*p^hotan$). However, the parallels adduced are not compelling enough to reinforce this assumption, given that only Lat. *palumbēs* supports the assumption of a word-internal labial[26] while the identification with both Gk. πέλεια (attested since Homer) and OPruss. *poalis* (only attested as item no. 761 in the Elbing glossary as the equivalent of German *Tewbe*) remains restricted to a mere root etymology ($*pel$- 'grey').[27]

In contrast to this, the word-internal labial seems much better substantiated if Arm. *aławni* is related to Lat. *albus* etc. In this case, however, the vowel before the labial requires a special justification. This would well be provided by Olsen's reconstruction with internal $-l̥h_3$-, which would be match Gk. ἀλωφός but, at the same time, contradict the identification with Gk. ἀλφός.[28]

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22 Klingenschmitt 1982: 165 and 68 n. 11; pre-Neogrammarian attempts to also include Lat. *columba* and OCS *golǫbĭ* are listed in Ačaṙyan 1971: 122–123.

23 Olsen 1999: 776 and, for the suffix, 831.

24 Klingenschmitt 1982: 165 with n. 19.

25 Klingenschmitt 1982: 165–166 with n. 11.

26 The actual word structure may be influenced by Lat. *columba*, -*us*, cf. Pokorny 1959: 805 and further 547.

27 "6. *pel*-" in Pokorny 1959: 804–805. The assumption of a root-final laryngeal to match Arm. *ała*- (< -*l̥h*-) is not supported by the adduced comparanda nor by other cognates mentioned there, not even OInd. *palitá*- 'grey, hoary' as there are extra-Indo-Iranian formations with -*i*-, too (e.g., Gk. πελιός, πελιτνός). If the root had ended in a laryngeal, we would not expect Lith. *paĺvas* 'light yellow', among others, if it pertains to it. If Gk. πέλεια is taken into account, only h_1 would be justifiable off-hand (if we do not want to assume a secondary levelling of the suffix as in the case of πλατεῖα, fem. of πλατύς 'wide, broad', vs. -α- retained in the place name Πλαταιαί, < $*pl̥th_2uih_2$- ~ OInd. *pr̥thivī́*-).

28   The connection of ἀλωφός as a "zweisilbige Wzf." alternating with the "einsilbige Wz. $*al$-" in *albus* etc. in Pokorny 1959: 31 with reference to Brugmann 1906: 388 (who reconstructs "$*alō[u]$-*bho*-" for ἀλωφός) is no longer tenable.

In this context, we must note that the evidence for the former word is rather week – it is only attested in the Hesychian gloss (no. 3382) quoted above, alongside a parallel gloss ἀλφούς· λευκούς <ἢ λευκάς> (no. 3344), which also occurs in other lexicographical works beginning with the lexicon of Platonic words by Timaeus the Sophist.[29] The text the latter gloss refers to is with no doubt Plato's dialogue Timaios (!) where we read (85a, 3–5): καταποικίλλει δὲ τὸ σῶμα λεύκας ἀλφούς τε καὶ τὰ τούτων συγγενῆ νοσήματα ἀποτίκτον "it (the white phlegm) mottles the body, producing white (spots of) leprosy and diseases akin to them".[30] The "mirroring" gloss containing ἀλωφούς thus becomes suspicious, and it is conceivable that ἀλωφός is nothing but a ghost-word that cannot be taken to match aławni.

2.2 Caucasian Albanian luf

Of the 11 text passages of the New Testament where doves are mentioned,[31] only one is represented in a reliable form in the CA palimpsests from Mt. Sinai, viz. Mt. 10.16.[32] As part of a lectionary, it forms the initial verse of a pericope extending up to Mt. 10.22, which is entitled ǯow-daġesown mowç̣˜rå˜y, i.e. 'Gospel (reading) of the Saints'[33] and introduced by the beginning of Ps. 31.1 [32.1] (bamgen-ne bartay-hanayoowķe čomeown˜x 'Blessed is (he) whose transgressions are forgiven').[34] The text runs: aha zow baa-z vˤaẋ bˤeowẋ-anķe owlowġoẋ büwġa : ihanan eṭowaẋay båġala-hüwķ båẋowr-anķe : sa-hüwķ-al lowfowr-anķe 'Look, I send you (forth) like sheep among the wolves; therefore be wise like serpents (and) reliable like doves'. It matches the Armenian text word by word, including the "emphatic" subject pronoun, CA zow ~ OA es, and the formation of båġala-hüwķ 'wise', lit.

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29 Lexicon Platonicum, 974b, 8: Ἀλφούς· λευκοὺς ἢ λευκάς, quoted by Photius (Λέξεων Συναγωγή 1077, 1) and Suda (1457, 1).

30 The passage forces us to assume that ἀλφός was a feminine noun by the time of Plato, not a masculine as in Liddell-Scott's dictionary.

31 Mt. 3.16; 10.16; 21.12; Mk. 1.10; 11.15; Lk. 2.24; 3.22; 19.45; Jo. 1.32; 2.14; 16.

32 Two further passages that are included in the palimpsests are Jo. 2.14 and 16, which are on the "dove-mongers" thrown out of the temple by Jesus (on fols. 1r and 7r of ms. Sin.georg. N 13); here, however, the reading is not certain enough to be usable in the present context (cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: V-9–10).

33 Cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: VI-2 as to the lection in question.

34 The lection begins at the top of fol. 12r of ms. Sin.georg. N 13 under the heading mateosi mowç̣owr ǯowdaġes˜wnaẋoc 'From the holy Gospel of Matthew'; cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: VI-24.

'deep-mind(ed)' and *sa-hüwk* 'candid', lit. 'one-mind(ed)', which mirror OA *xora-gēt* and *mia-mit* 'id.': Անհաւասիկ ես առաքեմ զձեզ իբրեւ զոչխարս ի մէջ գայլոց, եղերուք այսունհետեւ խորագէտք իբրեւ զաւձ. եւ միամիտք իբրեւ զաղաւնիս ։.

The last element in the CA verse is the plural of the word for the 'dove' in the absolute case, <lowfowr> = /lufur/,[35] combined with the postpositional conjunction *anḳe* 'as, like'. The plural formation with a suffix *-ur* is restricted to monosyllabic stems[36] so that *luf* can be taken to be the (singular) stem of the word. This stem seems no longer to exist in Udi, the modern successor of Caucasian Albanian, which uses the Turkicism *gegär* instead; this word appears, among others, in the Gospel translation by the Bežanov brothers,[37] which has the following text in Mt. 10.16: *migila, zu yaḳazbesa efaʿx, etärte eg̣elg̣ox ulurg̣o ḳati: metär bakanan aba, etärte diziḳ, vaʿ tämiz, etärte gegär* (translating Russ. *Вот, Я посылаю вас, как овец среди волков: итак будь-те мудры, как змеи, и просты, как голуби*).[38] In contrast to this, a cognate of CA *luf* is found in several other languages of the Lezgic family; cf. Aghul and Tabasaran *luf*,[39] Lezgi *lif*,[40] and Kryts *ləf*.[41] As the word seems not to oc-cur in other East Caucasian languages,[42] it is likely to pertain to the common

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35 Note that the vowel *u* is always rendered by a digraph <ow> in Caucasian Alba-nian just as in Old Armenian and Old Georgian.

36 Cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: II-22 as to the formation of nominal plurals.

37 Bežanov & Bežanov 1902; the word appears in all Gospel passages quoted in n. 31 above for OA *aławni*. The Bežanov's translation represents the Udi dialect of Vartashen (now Oğuz).

38 The new translation of the Gospel of Luke (Ağacani et al. 2011), which is based upon the Nij dialect of Udi, has *göyerçin* (Lk. 2.24, alongside *giyər* 'turtle dove', Russ. горлица / OA *tatrak*, and Lk. 3.22); theTurkish etymon is Azeri *göyerçin* (Turkish *güverçin*), itself derived from the Turkic word for 'sky, heaven', Azeri *göy* / Turkish *gök*; cf. Räsänen 1969: 287 (*kȫkärčin* and *kȫk*). Udi *gegär* and *giyər* may pertain to the same family, cf. the formations gathered by Räsänen ib. Note that the Turkic word for 'sky, heaven' was also borrowed into Udi (*gög / göy*), replacing CA *ćowdow* 'id.'.

39 For Aghul cf. Dirr 1907: 133 and 171, who notes the gen.sg. *lufuran* and the abs.pl. *lufar*.

40 Cf. Talibov & Gadžiev 1966: 225, who note the erg. and loc.sg. *lifre* and the abs.pl. *lifer*.

41 Cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: II-67 and IV-22 as to the cognates.

42 In Avar, the 'dove' is called *miḳḳi* (pl. *maḳḳal*; Saidov 1967: 342), Lak has *hhi* (хьхьи: Džidalaev 1987: 69), and Chechen and Ingush, *qoqa* (кхокха) and *qoq* (кхокх).

Lezgic stock, possibly going back to Proto-Lezgic times. The Rutul corre-
spondent, *lirẋʷ* (besides *lirf*), suggests a reconstruction **ləẋʷ*.[43]

2.3   Exchanging doves?

Considering the restricted distribution of *luf* and its cognates among the
East-Caucasian languages and the remarkable match of its consonantal
elements with those that have been assumed in the reconstruction of the
etymon of Arm. *aławni*, the question arises whether the word for the 'dove'
might have been exchanged between (Proto-)Lezgic and (Proto-)Armenian.
This assumption has several implications that must be considered off-hand.

First of all, we would have to admit that it would be easier if we assume
a stem-final *-f* instead of *-xʷ* for the Proto-Lezgic preform. In this case, the
Rutul variant *lirẋʷ* would have to be regarded as secondary, not its variant
lirf.[44] Given the frequent exchange of *f* and *xʷ* in other languages (cf., e.g.,
the doublet of *hvala* and *fala* 'thanks' in South Slavic or that of *xʷarənah-* and
farnah- 'fortune, glory' in Old Iranian), this assumption is unproblematical.

Second, it must be noted that the Lezgic words show no trace of a word-
initial vowel, let alone a trace of a former *pᶜ-* or *h-* before it as presupposed
by Klingenschmitt's etymology. The initial vowel might have been lost in a
borrowing from (Proto-)Armenian into (Proto-)Lezgic in a similar way as
that of Arm. *ałačᶜem* 'pray' must have been lost if the word was the source
for Georgian *loc-va* 'id.'.[45] On the other hand, it might have emerged as a
prothetic vowel before word-initial *ł* if the Armenian word was borrowed
from Lezgic.

Third, the suffix present in Arm. *aławni* has no equivalent in the Lezgic
word either. This can either be explained by another loss in borrowing from
(Proto-)Armenian, or the suffix must be regarded as secondary within Ar-
menian.[46]

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43   Cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. 2009: II-67 as to the reconstruction, and Dirr 1911: 3,
157, and 188 as to the Rutul variants ("лирһ̌w, лирф"). For Tsakhur, Dirr 1913: 182
and 223 notes *qünelẋe* ("ќунелһ̌е"); Archi has *xurḳ* ("хурӄ" in Dirr 1908: 190 /
206 and "x̌urkʼ" in Kibrik et al. 1977, 338 / 355).

44   The Rutul *-r-* must be secondary in any case.

45   Cf. Gippert 2005b: 154 with n. 68 as to this proposal.

46   This assumption is suggested off-hand by the material collected in Olsen 1999:
507 ff. Different from Olsen 1999: 831 and 837, I would assume a female stem
*-ni(i̯)a < *-nih₂ rather than **-ni(i̯)o-*, given the gen.pl. in *-neacᶜ*.

Fourth, we would have to assume that the second element of the OA diphthong -*aw*-[47] was still a fricative, $^*v$ or $^*\beta$, that was substitutable by *f*, if the word was borrowed from Proto-Armenian into Proto-Lezgic.

Fifth, the word-internal vowels in the Lezgic languages remain hard to explain, all of them showing high vowels (including a central vowel, $^*\partial$, which is also assumed for the reconstruction of the common preform) but no *a* as in Armenian. However, if we consider that the Armenian word might contain the sequence of a syllabic * l̥* plus a laryngeal, we may assume that this sequence did not lead to -(*a*)*ła*- immediately but via something like –(*ə*)*lə*- (with a central vowel not to be confused with the historical Armenian *shewa* vowel emerging by syncope and anaptyxis).[48] This vowel could have merged with "normal" *a* in Armenian still in prehistorical times.

If all this can be accepted, we arrive at a pre-form like $^*(ə)ləv$- for Proto-Armenian as the input for a Proto-Lezgic borrowing in the form $^*ləf$; a pre-form that would well match Birgit Olsen's reconstruction $^*h_2l̥h_3b^h(\text{-}ih_1\text{-}nii̯o)$-.

3   Outlook

The present proposal is a first attempt to contour linguistic contacts of Armenian and its closest neighbours in the Eastern Caucasus, the Lezgic languages, in prehistorical times. A thorough check of the lexical material of Proto-Lezgic will be necessary to corroborate this.

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47 The further inner-Armenian development to *ō* is late and not supported by written evidence in the first millennium. The use of spellings like *ałōni* in an etymological treatise (Olsen 1999: 507 etc.) is therefore misleading.

48 The assumption of a mere "svarabhakti-vocal" in Bugge 1893: 2 is obsolete.

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