The development of the Middle Armenian present tense marker *kow*

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The Middle Armenian and Modern Western Armenian present tense marker *kow*/*gə* is usually traced back to a construction with the 3SG present tense form of Classical Armenian *kam* 'to stand', *kay* + *ew*/*ow* 'and' (cf. e.g. Vaux 1995). While this is likely to be the best explanation, the details regarding the historical phonology and syntax of this grammaticalization process are still unclear. If one wants to avoid using "grammaticalization" as a black box for irregular sound change, a precise account of the contexts in which, among other things, semantic bleaching and phonetic attrition can have taken place, is needed. Since in Medieval (Cilician) Armenian /y/ is neither lost in monosyllables in word-final position nor in intervocalic position before a vowel, a straightforward reconstruction like **kay=ew* ... with a proclitic predicate does not seem a viable option. The paper will discuss the possible contexts in which the supposed development can have taken place and which role analogy may have played in generalizing one of the phonological outcomes of the various constructions.

Vaux, Bert. „A Problem in Diachronic Armenian Verbal Morphology". In *New Approaches to Medieval Armenian Language and Literature*, ed. by Jos. J. S. Weitenberg. Leiden: Brill, 1995, 135–148.