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***Venire* ('come') as a passive auxiliary in Italian¹**

1 Introduction:

***venire* + past participle in present-day Italian**

In present-day Italian there are two periphrastic passive constructions. One is formed with the auxiliary *essere*, 'be', + the past participle (ex. (1)). In the other construction, the auxiliary that combines with the past participle is *venire*, 'come' (ex. (2)).²

- (1) *Il barista fu colpito per errore.*
ART.M.SG barman be:PST.3SG hit:PPT.M.SG for mistake
'The barman was erroneously hit.'
- (2) *I due vennero trascinati via.*
ART.M.PL two come:PST.3PL drag:PPT.M.PL away
'The two were dragged off.'

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² *Venire* in Italian is a deictic motion verb whose basic meaning is "to move towards the speaker". It is opposed to *andare*, 'go', which means "to move away from the speaker's site". *Venire* has a number of other non-motion (mainly metaphorical) uses in which the idea of 'coming' to the speaker (from outside or from a different place) can be still perceived: e.g. *prende la vita come viene*, 'he takes life as it comes', *mi è venuto il mal di testa*, 'I've got a headache' (lit. 'headache has come to me'), *l'anno che verrà*, 'the coming year/next year'. It also means 'to come out'/'to turn out' when followed by adjectives and adverbs, as in *è venuto bene/male* 'it came out well/badly', *è venuto alto* 'it turned out tall'. Also *andare*, 'go', can be used in combination with the past participle in passive constructions. Its use as a passive auxiliary, however, has a number of semantic idiosyncrasies that cannot be mentioned here (the reader is referred to Giacalone Ramat 2000 and Mocciaro, this volume). As the glosses in examples (1) and (2) clarify, the past participle in the passive construction *venire* + past participle always agrees with the patient subject. However, for the sake of simplicity, we will only make use of the gloss PPT in the remainder of this article.

The two construction types are interchangeable in a number of contexts: in both (1) and (2) replacing *venire* with *essere*, and vice versa, yields perfectly grammatical sentences, which are also appropriate in the contexts from which (1) and (2) are drawn. There are, however, some significant syntactic and semantic differences between the two constructions. A prominent syntactic difference, for instance, concerns the compatibility with compound tenses (i.e., tenses that require an auxiliary – either *essere* ‘be’ or *avere*, ‘have’ – plus a past participle; Squartini 1999; Giacalone Ramat 2000): both *essere* and *venire* can be combined with simple tenses (present, future, imperfect, simple past), whereas only *essere* is allowed with compound tenses (perfect, pluperfect, future perfect; cf. (3a) vs. (3b)):

- (3) a. *Il portone era stato chiuso.*
 ART main.door be:IPFV.3SG be:PPT close:PPT
 ‘The main door had been closed.’
- b. **Il portone era venuto chiuso.*
 ART main.door be:IPFV.3SG come:PPT close:PPT
 ‘The main door had been closed.’

From a semantic point of view, the periphrastic passive with *venire* is highly favoured with telic predicates in imperfective contexts, “for the stative meaning of *essere* impinges on the possibility of being interpreted as denoting a dynamic event” (Squartini 1999: 346; cf. (4a) and (4b)); in progressive contexts too, *venire* is the most natural choice, for it triggers a dynamic interpretation while *essere* only admits the stative interpretation (cf. (4c) and (4d)):

- (4) a. ??*Il giovedì il portone era/è chiuso*
 ART Thursday ART main.door be:IPFV.3SG/be:PRS.3SG close:PPT
al-le 21.
 at-ART 21
 ‘On Thursdays the main door was/is closed at 9 p.m.’
- b. *Il giovedì il portone veniva/viene chiuso al-le 21.*
 ART Thursday ART main.door come:IPFV.3SG/come:PRS.3SG
 close:PPT at-ART 21
 ‘On Thursdays the main door was/is closed at 9 p.m.’
- c. *In quel momento veniva chiuso il portone.*
 in that moment come:IPFV.3SG close:PPT ART main.door
 ‘At that moment the main door was being closed.’ [passive interpretation]

- d. *In quel momento era chiuso il portone.*
 in that moment be:IPFV.3SG close:PPT ART main.door
 'At that moment the main door was closed.' [stative interpretation]

The grammaticalization of the periphrasis 'come + past participle' into a passive construction is quite unusual across languages; in the vast majority of cases, periphrastic passives (a construction type particularly widespread in Indo-European languages) are formed with a form of the verb 'be' (English, Spanish, Lithuanian etc.) or 'become' (German, Polish, etc.) plus the past participle. In this paper we sketch the historical scenario through which "come + past participle" has emerged and established as a passive construction in Italian. We aim to fill the gap in the comprehension of this historical process by providing an in-depth diachronic corpus analysis and by discussing which among the various constructions of Old Italian in which the verb *venire* is followed by a past participle is the most plausible candidate as the forerunner of the present-day Italian construction. Moreover, we aim to assess to what extent this path is determined by the original "ventive" meaning of *venire*, and whether there are any cross-linguistic similarities in the handful of languages in which a passive construction formed with the verb *come* + the passive participle is attested.

The paper is organized as follows: in Section 2 we deal with the situation of Old Italian and Italo-Romance varieties. In 13th and 14th century Tuscan, two constructions are attested in which the verb *venire* combines with the past participle. Although none of these constructions has a clear passive meaning, both share various properties with passive constructions: one construction type, for instance, can be labeled "uncontrolled eventive/resultative" and encodes situations in which a final state is reached without the control of the main volitional participant; in the other construction type *venire* in combination with participles and adjectives has developed a 'change-of-state' meaning roughly paraphraseable as 'become'. The aim of Section 2 is to single out which of these constructions is the most plausible forerunner of the present-day Italian passive with *venire* and clarify the mechanisms through which this source construction has been reinterpreted as a passive construction. Providing an answer to this question also requires us to deal with two related questions, namely (i) whether the original lexical semantics of *venire* is involved or not in this development and (ii) which is the role of language contact, given the fact that in other Italo-Romance vernaculars (e.g. in Venetan and Venetian) we do find instances of the passive construction with *venire* as early as the 13th century. In Section 3 we extend our analysis to a handful of other languages in which passive constructions with the same building blocks (a verb meaning 'come' + a past participle) are attested. Data from these languages show that in many cases in which the verb meaning

‘come’ is used as a passive auxiliary it has also developed a change-of-state meaning. This fact leads us to posit a “change-of-state” meaning of the verb *come* as a necessary intermediate step on the grammaticalization path of the construction *come* + past participle as a passive construction. Section 4 concludes.

2 The origins of *come* as a passive auxiliary in Italian

In this section, we sketch the historical development of the Italian passive construction formed by *venire* + the past participle. As will be documented below, the earliest clear examples of this construction in the Tuscan vernacular (and in the Tuscan-based literary variety) can be dated back to the 15th century. In 13th and 14th century Tuscan documents there are, however, two non-passive constructions in which the verb *venire* is accompanied by the past participle, whereas in other vernacular varieties of the same centuries there is a construction *venire* + past participle that can be considered a passive construction in its full right. The geographic distribution of these constructions allows us to sketch a plausible diachronic scenario through which the present-day Italian passive construction has developed out of its source and has established itself in the standard, Tuscan-based literary language.

2.1 The situation in Old Italian vernaculars

In Old Italo-Romance vernaculars of the 13th/14th century there are various construction types in which the verb *venire* is followed by the past participle. In this section, we will analyze the semantic and syntactic properties and the geographical distribution of each construction type. In Section 2.2, we will put forward our hypothesis, based on a large diachronic corpus of Italian, on how one of these construction types might have evolved into a passive construction.

The first construction type (henceforth, Construction type #1) encodes an event in which a human entity is involved. This entity (encoded as an indirect object, the case typically reserved for experiencers in Italian) is agent-like in nature but non-volitional: he/she happens to perform a given action / obtain a given result in an involuntary fashion (Squartini 2003: 25; Ambrosini 2000: 560); the entity encoded as subject of this construction is the entity, if any, involved in the action as patient/undergoer, and therefore the construction has a passive flavor, though differing from other passive constructions of Old Italian because

it does not allow to encode the agent as an oblique argument introduced by the prepositions *da* and *per*, 'by/through'. The abstract structure of the construction is given in (5):

(5) **CONSTRUCTION TYPE #1:**

HUMAN ENTITY X_[indirect object] + VENIRE + PAST PARTICIPLE + [SUBJECT]

The subject slot in (5) may also be filled by a complement clause with verbs of saying/thinking and other similar predicates (cf. (9)) and the construction is possible with intransitive as well as intransitively used transitive predicates (cf. (8a)–(8b)); lack of volitionality is often reinforced by adverbs such as *per ventura* 'by chance', but they are by no means necessary for an involuntary interpretation to hold.

- (6) **venne-gli** **lasciata** aperta la sua camera per
 come:PST.3SG-to.him leave:PPT open ART his room for
dimenticanza.
 oversight
 'He unadvertently happened to leave his room open.'
 (*Tavola ritonda*, Florentine, 1st half of the 14th century, ch. 23, p. 83, r. 25)
- (7) *mi* **vengono** **toccate** le membra di Pirro.
 to.me come:PRS.3PL touch:PPT ART limbs of Pyrrhus
 'I unadvertently touch Pyrrhus' limbs.'
 (Ceffi, *Epistole eroiche*, Florentine, 1320/30 – ep. Ermione, p. 78, r. 27)
- (8) a. *e* *avvegnadiochè* mortalmente gli **venisse** **peccato**
 and although mortally to.him come:SBJV.IPFV.3SG sin:PPT
 'and although he happened to commit mortal sin' (lit.: 'to mortally sin')
 (*Teologia Mistica*, Sienese, 1356/67; 84, col. 1.18)
- b. *a* *Sagramorre* **venne** **mirato** in quella parte.
 to S. come:PST.3SG look:PPT in that part
 'Sagramorre happened to look in that direction.'
 (*Tavola ritonda*, Florentine, 1st half of the 14th century – 166.13)
- (9) **venne-li** **pensato** d' andare in Grecia
 come:PST.3SG-to.him think:PPT of go:INF to Greece
 'he happened to think of going to Greece'
 (Legg. G. di Procida, Tuscan, 1282–99, p. 43, r. 22)

Giacalone Ramat (2000: 139) calls this construction “dative construction”. Squartini (2003: 25) adopts the label “anticausative”. According to Ambrosini (2000: 560), the semantics of this construction involves “un incrocio tra le modalità eventiva e risultativa dell’azione” (*a blend between eventive and resultative modality*). A more transparent label accounting for both these semantic components could be UNCONTROLLED EVENTIVE/RESULTATIVE. Construction type #1 is only attested in Tuscan vernaculars.

A sub-type of Construction type #1, with the same building blocks but attested with only a restricted class of verbs (*fare*, ‘make/do’, *fallire*, ‘fail’, *fornire*, *compiere*, ‘accomplish’), has a meaning roughly paraphraseable as “x (eventually) manages [or doesn’t manage/fails] to do/perform a given action”: the semantic component “lack of volitionality” is somewhat off the stage with respect to the resultative component, and this subtype has a high degree of idiomacity/substantivity. This sub-type too is only attested in Tuscan vernaculars:

- (10) *e questo certo gli venía fatto, s’ io non*
 and this surely to.him come:IPFV.3SG do:PPT if I NEG
fossi fuggito de-lle loro mani
 be:SBJV.IPFV.1SG flee:PPT from-ART their hands
 ‘and he would have surely managed to reach his goal, if I hadn’t fled away
 from them’
 (Guido da Pisa, *Fatti di Enea*, Pisan, 1st half of the 14th century, ch. 13, p. 25, r. 16)

The second construction type (henceforth Construction Type #2) in which *venire* is followed by a past participle has the abstract structure in (11):

(11) **CONSTRUCTION TYPE #2:**

SUBJECT + *VENIRE* + PAST PARTICIPLE/ADJECTIVE

This construction type encodes an event in which an entity undergoes a change of state. The entity involved in the change of state (encoded as subject) is generally non-volitional and is characterized by low control. The past participle/adjective refers to the resulting state, and the verb *venire* has evolved into a change-of-state predicate. The agent cannot be overtly encoded in this construction, and there is no entity that can be construed as an experiencer as in Construction type #1.

Michaelis (1998: 76) adopts the label “fientive/anticausative” for this construction type. The construction can be better characterized as a change-of-state construction, which focuses on the attainment of the new state but maintains the possibility, when *venire* is in the appropriate tense (e.g. the present, the imper-

fect or the simple past), of referring to the process leading to it (it is therefore different from a pure resultative construction, intended, in Nedjalkov & Jaxontov's terms, as a construction referring to "a state implying a previous event" [Nedjalkov & Jaxontov 1988: 6]). Construction Type #2 occurs with both simple and compound tenses of *venire* and is robustly attested in both Tuscan and northern vernaculars. In the OVI corpus (see the Appendix) compound tenses are attested only when *venire* is followed by an adjective (as in (16)):

- (12) *E bene sia egli molto fiero, non per tanto
and although be:SBJV.3SG he very ferocious NEG for this
viene privato molto tosto come egli è
come:PRS.3SG domesticate:PPT very soon as he be:PRS.3SG
preso.
capture:PPT
'And although it (=the elephant) is very ferocious, nonetheless it becomes domesticated soon after it is captured.'
(*Tesoro di Brunetto Latini volgarizzato*, Florentine, end of 13th century – Book 5, ch. 54 – p. 171, r. 16)³*
- (13) *Chatone fu paghano e uccise se medesimo con sua
Cato be:PST.3SG pagan and kill:PST.3SG himself with his
propia mano per non **venire sottoposto** al-la signoria di
own hand for NEG come:INF submit:PPT to-ART lordship of
Julio Ciesare.
Julius Caesar
'Cato was pagan and killed himself in order not to become subject to Julius Caesar's lordship.'
(*Chiose falso Boccaccio, Purgatorio*, Florentine, 1375 – Ch. 1, p. 288, r.19)*

3 The construction *venire* + past participle in (12) could be misinterpreted as a passive construction (*viene privato* = is domesticated). However, the example in (12) is drawn from the Tuscan adaptation of the Old French version of the same text, and its non-passive nature emerges clearly once it is compared with the original version of the text, given in (i):

- (i) *Et jà soit olifans si fiers, neporquant il
and although be:SBJV.3SG elephant so ferocious nonetheless he
devient privez tantost comme il est pris.*
become:PRS.3SG domesticate:PPT soon as he be:PRS.3SG capture:PPT
'And although the elephant is very ferocious, nonetheless it becomes domesticated soon after it is captured.'
(Brunetto Latini, *Le livre dou tresor*, Old French, 13th century – Book 1, part 5, ch. 189)

- (14) *E allora gli cavalieri tutti vennero smarriti*
 and then ART knights all come:PST.3PL loose:PPT
 ‘And then all the knights lost their ways.’
 (*Tavola ritonda*, Florentine, 1st half of the 14th – 352, 23)
- (15) *per queste doe cose elli vengnirave pigri et enviadi*
 for these two things they come:COND.3PL lazy and spoil:PPT
 ‘because of these two things they (i.e. the servants) would become lazy and spoiled’
 (Paolino Minorita, Venetian, 1313/15, ch. 64, p. 92, r. 23)
- (16) *Illi erano vegnudi tutti molto magrissimi.*
 they be[AUX]:IPFV.3PL come:PPT all much thin:SUPERL
 ‘They all had become very thin.’
 (Jacopo della Lana, *Purgatorio*, Bolognese, 1324–28, canto 23, 28–36, p. 474, col. 1, r. 3)

In Tuscan vernaculars of the 13th and 14th century, and especially in the Florentine vernacular, out of which standard Italian has evolved, Construction types #1 and #2 are the only attested construction types in which the verb *venire* is followed by the past participle. However, once we broaden our horizons to other vernaculars, we easily find instances of *bona fide* passive constructions with *venire* + the past participle outside the Tuscan area.⁴ This is the case, for

⁴ We have counted only a few examples of *bona fide* passive constructions with *venire* in Tuscan documents of the 14th century. Two of them come from the same text (exx. (ii)–(iii)). Example (iv) is drawn from a letter sent by a Sienese merchant, Andrea de’ Tolomei, living in Bar-sur-Aube, to his relatives in Siena: such documents are particularly interesting from a linguistic point of view, because in many cases they contain the earliest attestations of words and constructions that are attested in the “official” literary language decades later, and often vividly testify the complex dynamics of language contact among different Italo-Romance varieties and between Italo-Romance varieties and other (Romance and non-Romance) varieties. The passive construction with *venire* is also occasionally found in the speech of authors heavily influenced by Venetian and Venetan vernaculars (as in example (v), which exemplifies the use of the Tuscan vernacular by a Paduan writer, Antonio da Tempo). All in all, however, the scantiness of *bona fide* passive constructions with *venire* casts serious doubts on the actual currency of this construction in 14th century Tuscan.

- (i) *e la fraternita de’ portatori di Firenze, la quale*
 and ART brotherhood of.ART porters of Florence REL
viene **chiamata** *compagnia e fraternita de la casa*
 come:PRS.3SG call:PPT company and brotherhood of ART house
di misericordia di messer sancto Giovanni Baptista
 of mercy of sir saint John Baptist

instance, of Venetian and Venetan vernaculars, where passive constructions with the auxiliary *venire* are attested as early as the late 13th century (see exx. (17)–(18)). In Old Emilian too the passive with *venire* is attested, though somewhat later (ex. (19)).

- (17) *in lo logo o' che ven dito lo Casal de Roberti*
 in ART place where REL come:PRS.3SG call:PPT ART Casal de Roberti
 'in the place that is called *Casal de Roberti*'
 (*Designazione di terre nel ferrarese*, Venetian, 1253)
- (18) *un çovene fazando mal no vegniva corecto da-l pare*
 a young do:GER bad NEG come:IPFV.3SG correct:PPT by-ART father
 'a young man who behaved badly was not reproached by his father'
 (Paolino Minorita, Venetian, 1313/15, ch. 55, p. 79, r. 8)
- (19) *La soa lengua ge ven roxegà.*
 ART POSS:3SG tongue to.him come:PRS.3SG crunch:PPT
 'His tongue gets crunched.'
 (*Atrovare del vivo e del morto*, Emilian, 1375, I, st. 35, v. 4, p. 154, r. 12)

The linguistic picture of 15th century Italy is slightly more complex: while local vernaculars continue to be used in both literary and non-literary documents,

'and the Confraternity of Porters of Florence, which is (hereby) called Company and Fraternity of the House of Mercy of Saint John the Baptist...'
 (*Statuti fiorentini*, Florentine, 1317, 118.18)

- (ii) *le buone cose che a-l decto luogo di misericordia vengono*
 ART good things REL to-ART aforementioned place of mercy come:PRS.3PL
date, salubrevolamente e devotamente siano date
 give:PPT with.wholesomeness and devoutly be:SBJV.3PL give:PPT
 'the good things that are donated to the aforementioned charitable institution should be donated with wholesome heart and devoutly.'
 (*Statuti fiorentini*, Florentine, 1317, 118.24)
- (iii) *(e) vene venduta la soma intorno di quaranta (e) quatro l. (e)*
 and come:PST.3SG sell:PPT ART load around 44 liras and
cing(ue) s.
 5 scutes
 'and a load (of pepper) is sold at 44 liras and 5 scutes'
 (*Lettera di Andrea de' Tolomei*, Sieneese, 1269)
- (iv) *vien depinto in nominanza falsa*
 come:PRS.3SG depict:PPT in reputation false
 '(the loser) gets false reputation (lit.: is depicted with false reputation).'
- (Antonio da Tempo, *Rime* (ed. Grion), Tuscan-Paduan, 1332, 57, v. 2, p. 168)

a new standard literary language based on the two most influential Tuscan writers of the 14th century (Petrarca and Boccaccio) begins to develop and is increasingly adopted by Northern Italian writers operating within northern Italian courts. These writers also maintain various non-Tuscan linguistic and orthographic peculiarities that can be mostly attributed to contact with the local vernaculars of their courts (Tavoni 1992: 91; Marazzini 1994: 224). If we look at the geographical distribution of the passive construction with *venire* in the 15th century, a fact emerges rather clearly: the construction in question is attested almost exclusively in the Tuscan-based literary language of Northern Italian writers (see examples (20)–(21)), while it is still only sporadically used by Tuscan writers (a rare example from an autochthonous Tuscan text of the second half of the 15th century is given in (22)). Based on this geographical distribution, the construction cannot be said to be an autochthonous Tuscan construction, and can be hypothesized to have penetrated into literary Tuscan only as a consequence of its massive use by writers operating within northern Italian courts. Indeed, Tuscan writers begin to adopt it massively as late as the first half of the 16th century (see exx. (23)–(24)).

- (20) *E, quel che è peggio, ogni om vien caleffato.*
 and that REL be:PRS.3SG worse each man come:PRS.3SG mock:PPT
 ‘And, what is worse, each man is mocked.’
 (Boiardo, *Orlando Innamorato*, Ferrarese, 1495-1, 12, 35)
- (21) *Quando ... poter-mi dir tuo mi vien concesso*
 when can:INF-me say:INF yours to.me come:PRS.3SG accord:PPT
 ‘When I’m allowed to call myself yours...’
 (Niccolò da Correggio, *Rime*, Emilian, 2nd half of the 15th century)
- (22) *il suo popolo ... veniva conculcato da-gli uomini*
 ART POSS.3SG people come:IPFV.3SG trample:PPT by-ART men
 ‘his people was trampled by other people’
 (*Bibbia Toscana*, Tuscan 1471-8.596.8)
- (23) *che non venga oppresso / Da-gli armenti, da gregge,*
 COMP NEG come:SBJV.3SG tread:PPT by-ART herds by flock
o d’ uman piede.
 or by human foot
 ‘(make sure that the meadow) is not trodden by herds, flocks or by human foot.’ (Luigi Alamanni, *Della coltivazione*, Florentine, 1546)

- (24) *Il che nientedimeno pare a me che venga*
 REL nonetheless seem:PRS.3SG to me COMP come:SBJV.3SG
compreso in quella spezie che pone lo inventore
 comprise:PPT in that species REL posit:PRS.3SG the inventor
per la cosa trovata
 for ART thing found
 '[talking about metonymy] which in my view should be classified similarly
 to those cases in which the inventor stands for the thing invented.'
 (Giambullari, *Regole della lingua fiorentina*, Florentine, 1551)

2.2 Venire + past participle: reconstructing a grammaticalization path

The presence of various constructions with a quasi-passive meaning (be it resultative or anticausative) in Italian vernaculars from the 13th to the 15th century raises the question as to which construction represents the most plausible source of the passive construction, and whether the original semantics of motion of the verb *venire* is involved in this diachronic pathway. As is well-known, both anticausative constructions and resultative constructions are attested as sources of passive constructions cross-linguistically (Givón 1981; Haspelmath 1990, among many others): as a result, in the literature on *venire* + past participle as a passive construction in Italian there have been various proposals on its source and on the mechanisms leading to its emergence. In what follows, we will reconstruct the diachronic scenario leading to the emergence and establishment of the passive construction on the basis of the analysis of a large corpus of Italian documents from the earliest written records to the 17th century, whose results have been summarized in Section 2.1.

In construction type #1 “the deictic orientation of *venire* expressing the idea of ‘coming’ in an unexpected and surprising way toward the recipient” (Giacalone Ramat 2000: 141) is still present, i.e. the original lexical semantics of *venire* is somewhat retained. This semantic component seems to be related to another use of *venire* in Old Tuscan, in which it functions as a happening verb followed by the complementizer *che* to encode sudden events, often seen from the perspective of the main character or the narrator, as in example (25).

- (25) *Qua(n)do vene che noe avate piue bisogno di lui*
 when come:PRS.3SG COMP NEG have:SBJV.2PL more need of him
 ‘Should you happen not to need him anymore’
 (*Lettere lucchesi*, 112.16; Tuscan, 1301)

The unexpected character of the action/event does not seem to characterize the target construction (i.e. the passive with *venire*). The lack of any semantic component of unexpectedness in the Italian passive with *venire* makes Construction type #1 an implausible candidate as a source of the passive construction. Moreover, the most agent-like entity in Construction type #1, i.e. the human entity which inadvertently happens to perform an action, is construed as an experiencer rather than as an oblique agent, as in the passive construction: this fact makes the reconstruction of a hypothetical pathway from Construction type #1 to the passive construction of present-day Italian highly improbable, forcing the advocates of such a pathway (e.g. Rohlf's §735; Ambrosini 2000: 560; see also Giacalone Ramat 2000: 140–141) to admit a sudden demise of the dative experiencer in concomitance with the passive reinterpretation of the source construction.

In construction type #2, on the other hand, the original semantics of motion is somewhat less prominent: the verb *venire* has developed into a change-of-state predicate (roughly paraphraseable as ‘become’/‘get’) which focuses on the transition into the new state encoded by the participle/adjective, while also embracing the event or process immediately preceding the attainment of that state when the verb is in the simple present, the imperfect, or the simple past. This is a common development, well attested in various languages (see below, Section 3).

The data discussed in Section 2.1 seems to suggest that Construction type #2, in which *venire* is used as a change-of-state predicate with an adjective or an adjectivally-used participle with inherently “passive orientation” (in the sense of Haspelmath 1994: 153), is the most plausible forerunner of the passive construction: the passive construction is already fully developed in 13th century Venetian, where only construction type #2 is attested (construction type #1 being limited to Tuscan vernaculars). In its 13th and 14th century attestations, Construction type #2 is much more widespread with adjectives than with participles. When used with participles, the passive orientation of the participle is responsible for the reinterpretation of construction type #2 as implying an external agent, as the participle maintains the argument structure of the verb from which it is derived (e.g. if the elephant *becomes domesticated* there must be someone who domesticates it). If this hypothesis is correct, in the emergence of the Italian passive with *venire* the same process of reinterpretation that characterizes the emergence of passive constructions with “become”-auxiliaries would be at play (e.g. Polish, Wiemer 2004: 301; German, Riehl 2001: 482–483; Vogel 2006: 119–132); moreover, in the auxiliatation process the meaning of the verb in the source construction persists in the target construction: *venire* as a change-of-state predicate maintains its dynamic character, resulting in a target construction which can be characterized as a (more) actional passive which differs from the (more) stative passive construction with *essere* ‘be’ in terms of dynamicity/stativity.

The characteristics of the source construction are also able to explain why in present-day Italian the passive construction with *venire* is only limited to non-compound tenses. Construction type #2 has a somewhat double nature: when the verb *venire* in the source construction is in a compound tense (as in example (16)), the construction only focuses on the resulting state (they had become very thin @ they were very thin), whereas when the verb is in the simple present, the simple past (*passato remoto*) or the imperfective past (*imperfetto*), it embraces both the final state and the process leading to it. It is only with tenses favouring a dynamic interpretation (process + final state) that the passive interpretation emerges, resulting in a dynamic passive contrasting with the (more) stative passive with *essere*, which in simple tenses is often ambiguous between a dynamic and a stative interpretation (cf. Section 1).⁵

Squartini (2003: 27–28) puts forward a different hypothesis on the emergence of the passive with *venire*: he proposes that the forerunner of the passive construction in Italian is the use of *venire* with a meaning roughly paraphraseable as “result”/“turn out to be”, as in example (26). This use of *venire*, which is widely attested in the 17th century, and which Squartini exemplifies by means of passages taken from 17th century treatises, “convive con le prime attestazioni di passivo e [...] rappresenta un plausibile candidato come stadio intermedio nel processo di grammaticalizzazione” (Squartini 2003: 28; “coexists with the earliest attestations of the passive and represents a plausible candidate as an intermediate stage in the grammaticalization process”).

- (26) *D' un modulo e mezo [...] (gli intercolumni) vengono
 of one unit and half ART intercolumns come:PRS.3SG
 troppo ristretti.
 too.much restrict:PPT
 'The intercolumns turn out to be too much restricted if they measure one
 unit and a half.'
 (17th century Italian, from Squartini 2003: 28)*

The meaning of *venire* in (26), however, is subtly different from the meaning of the verb in construction type #2: while in (26) the event is seen from the vantage point of the final state encoded in the participle (*ristretti*) and there is no reference to

5 An anonymous referee points out to us that the present-day syntactic restrictions of the passive with *venire*, which do not characterize the supposed source construction, seem to contradict the expansive nature of grammaticalization: in our view, they are fully motivated in a grammaticalization process in which the emerging construction has specialized as a more dynamic passive in contrast with the other passive construction with *essere*.

the process leading to that state (i.e. the construction is a pure resultative), when *venire* is used as a change-of-state predicate (as in examples (12)–(16)) both the process and the change of state are in focus. Squartini (2003: 30) also coherently states that a re-categorization of the source construction in terms of Aktionsart is necessary for a source construction denoting a state such as the one exemplified in (26) to become a passive; in our proposal, however, this is not necessary, as the source construction is not simply a resultative construction but a dynamic construction which already implies both the process and the resulting state.

The geographic distribution and chronology presented above (and schematized in Table 1) seems to suggest that the passive construction has developed in Tuscan (and in standard Italian) as a result of contact with northern vernaculars (especially the Venetian vernacular), and the adoption of the passive construction from the model language (Venetian) has been fostered by the existence of the source construction (i.e. Construction Type #2) in the replica language (in the sense of Heine & Kuteva 2005), i.e. Tuscan, as testified by examples (12)–(14). At any rate, if this areal pattern is correct, it is not entirely appropriate to look for the plausible forerunners of the passive construction in Tuscan documents of the 17th century, as Squartini does. Instead, the source construction of the passive must be looked for in 13th/14th century Venetian and Venetan vernaculars, from where the passive with *venire* seems to have spread to other Italo-Romance vernaculars: the data discussed above show that the only plausible candidate in Venetian/Venetan varieties is construction type #2, the meaning “result/turn out to be” of the verb *venire* being not attested in 13th and 14th century Venetian.

Table 1. The chronology of the three construction types with *venire* (‘come’) + past participle (/adjective) in different Italian vernaculars. #3 indicates the passive construction with *venire*. The broken line indicates sporadic occurrences.

	13th century	14th century	15th century	16th century
Venetian/Venetan vernaculars	#1: not attested			
	#2: _____→			
	#3: _____→			
Emilian vernaculars	#1: not attested			
	#2: _____→	_____→		
	#3: _____→		_____→	
Tuscan variety (Tuscan writers)	#1: _____→			
	#2: _____→			
	#3: _____→		-----→	

3 Come as a passive auxiliary: a cross-linguistic survey

The grammaticalization of the periphrasis 'come + past participle' into a passive construction is quite unusual across languages. The vast majority of periphrastic passives (a construction type particularly widespread in Indo-European languages) are formed with a form of the verb 'be' (English, Spanish, Lithuanian etc.) or 'become' (German, Polish, etc.) plus the past participle. Siewierska (1984: 126) lists Italian, Kurdish, Maithili and Kashmiri as languages in which there is a passive construction with a form of the verb 'come'. However:

- in Maithili the auxiliary of the passive *ja* means 'go' rather than 'come' (Yadav 1996: 210);
- the Kurdish and Kashmiri constructions are structurally different from the Italian passive with *venire*: in Kashmiri the passive is formed with the ablative form of the infinitive plus the auxiliary verb *yun* 'to come' (Wali & Koul 1997: 208); in Kurmanji Kurdish too the verb *hatin* 'come' is followed by the infinitive of the main verb (Thackston 2006: 67):⁶

- (27) NORTHERN KURDISH, Awroman dialect (MacKenzie 1961: 195, quoted by Bourdin 2008)

watuw dē hēt-a kušt-in

that.way FUT come-ALL kill-INF

'That way he will be killed.' (lit.: 'that way he will come to the kill(ing).')

Passive constructions formed with the same building blocks as the Italian construction ('come' + past participle) are however known from a handful of languages. For instance, they are quite widespread in various circum-Alpine Romance and German varieties: Surselvan and other Rhaeto-Romance varieties (Haiman & Benincà 1992; Ebnetter 1994); Cimbrian (Schweizer 2008: 844–845; Tyroller 2003: 122); Bavarian (Wiesinger 1989); Swiss German (Bucheli Berger 2005); Walser dialects in Switzerland and Italy (Gurinerdeutsch, cf. Russ 2002: 115; Pomattertsch, cf. Dal Negro 2004: 96; Gressoney Walser, cf. Zürrer 1982: 93). In many of these varieties the verb *come* has also evolved into a change-of-state predicate

⁶ Passive constructions in which a form of a motion verb is combined with the infinitive/verbal noun are by the way attested in various languages (Neo-Aramaic dialects, cf. Khan 2008: 754; Fassberg 2010: 120; Scottish Gaelic, Gillies 2009: 268; Tajiki, cf. Perry 2005: 249; see Bourdin 2008 for a survey)

(= *become*, German *werden*; Zinsli 1970: 151; cf. Schweizer 2008: 844–845 for Cimbrian; Russ 2002: 115 for Gurinerdeutsch; Dal Negro 2004: 96, and cf. (30b)).

(28) SURSELVAN (Ebnetter 1994: 418)

el ei vegnius cattaus
 he be:PRS.3SG come:PPT find:PPT
 ‘He has been found.’

(29) CIMBRIAN (Tyroller 2003: 122)

di tokkn khemmen getoalt
 ART pieces come:PRS.3PL divide:PPT
 ‘The pieces are divided.’

(30) POMATTERITSCH (Dal Negro 2004: 96)

a. *der salam chun röwä gässä*
 ART salami come:PRS.3SG raw eat:PPT
 ‘Salami is eaten raw’

b. *wir sin älli grossi cho*
 we be:PRS.1PL all old come:PPT
 ‘We have all become/grown old’

In the Alpine German speaking communities, the area using *kommen* instead of *werden* (Bucheli Berger 2005; Iwar Werlen p.c.) includes the western region in the Canton of Fribourg (“Senslerdeutsch”), the whole German speaking part of Valais, the Walser settlements in Italy and Ticino and parts of the Grisons (not only Walser dialects). The availability of the change-of-state meaning of the motion verb *kommen* might have fostered the grammaticalization of *come* + past participle into a passive construction, but these varieties have also been in contact with Italian and Italo-Romance varieties for centuries, and the chances that passive constructions with *come* + past participle have developed in these languages as replicas of Italian (or Italo-Romance) models are high (Zinsli 1970: 144; Mayerthaler & Mayerthaler 1990: 390–391 and Wiesinger 1989: 262–264 for southern German varieties). Since passive constructions in European languages are commonly formed with *be* or *become* as auxiliaries, Heine and Kuteva (2005: 86) identify this Alpine area as a grammaticalization area (see also Ramat 1998: 227–28), whichever language provided the model construction.

Passive constructions based on the verb ‘come’ + the past participle are also attested outside the Circum-Alpine area. In Romanian (and particularly

in southern dialects), for instance, the construction *come* + past participle can be considered as a passive construction with special ingressive or imminent meaning (Alexandru Laurentiu Cohal, p.c.; see also GALR 2008: 137), as in example (31a). *Come* in Romanian is but one of a set of modal and aspectual semi-auxiliaries (*must, wait, go, etc.*, cf. (31b)) that can be combined with the past participle (which is responsible for the passive orientation of the construction) to yield a full range of modal and aspectual meanings.

(31) ROMANIAN (Alexandru Laurentiu Cohal, p.c.)

- a. *Masa vine pusă de ei în colț*
 table:DEF come:PRS.3SG put:PPT by them in corner
 'The table is going to be put by them in the corner.' (imminent/ingressive)
- b. *Masa trebuie pusă de ei acolo*
 table:DEF must:PRS.3SG put:PPT by them there
 'The table must be put by them over there.'
- c. *Apa vine mare*
 water:DEF come:PRS.3SG big
 'The water grows big/deep'

Normative Romanian grammars analyze this set of constructions as resulting from the suppression of the verb *be* (*must be done > must done; comes to be done > comes done* etc.); however, according to Dragomirescu & Nicolae (this volume), the development of *veni* into a passive auxiliary in Romanian presupposes the evolution of this verb into a change-of-state predicate, which is well-attested in the history of Romanian (cf. (31c)).⁷

Venir is a passive auxiliary also in Spanish (cf. Green 1982), although the passive construction with *venir* appears to be less grammaticalized than the Italian construction, and appears to be used under the following two conditions

⁷ Dragomirescu & Nicolae (this volume) do not provide any information on when the construction exemplified in (31a) came into existence, and characterize it as typical of the popular language. They present and discuss a few examples from Romanian texts from the late 17th century onwards in which the passive periphrasis *veni* + past participle is frequent, and consider the presence of the construction in these texts as due to the Italian influence (the author being Italians working in royal courts). However, they are rather skeptical as to the possibility that the present-day Romanian construction be explained as an effect of language contact with Italian, mainly because of aspectual and modal differences (the 17th and 18th century construction is not characterized by any modal flavor and unlike the construction exemplified in (31a) admits the overt expression of the agent as oblique).

(Francisco Ruiz de Mendoza, p.c.): (i) the past participle must have a clear resultative meaning; (ii) from the speaker's point of view, there is a participant that is (either positively or negatively) affected by the action (for this reason it tends to collocate with *le* 'to him/her', *les* 'to them', *nos* 'to us', *me* 'to me'); in (32a) it is almost impossible to omit *le*, while the *ser* counterpart (*le fue dada*) loses the resultative focus and the subjective impact of the result of the action on the affected participant. The same applies to (32b). Although a diachronic survey of the grammaticalization of *venir* as a passive auxiliary in Spanish is still missing, it is worth noting that in Old Spanish the verb *venir* had already developed a change-of-state meaning, as example (33) testifies (cf. Pountain 1984; Söhrman & Nilsson 2008: 169)

(32) SPANISH (Francisco Ruiz de Mendoza, p.c.)

a. *su popularidad le vino dada en gran parte*
 his popularity to.him come:PST.3SG give:PPT in great part
por sus sonados matrimonios
 for his renowned marriages
 'To a large extent his popularity was the result of his high-profile marriages.'

b. *la carta le vino devuelta sin más*
 ART letter to.him come:PST.3SG return:PPT without more
explicación
 explanation
 'The letter was returned to him without any explanation.'

(33) OLD SPANISH (Söhrman & Nilsson 2008: 169; Pountain 1984: 102)

Ricos son venidos todos los sos vasallos
 rich be:PRS.3PL come: PPT all ART his vassals
 'All his vassals have become rich' (El Cid, 1853; 12th century)

Moving further away from the Romance area, passive constructions with the same building blocks as the Italian construction are attested in Maltese, in Latvian and in Marathi. In Maltese the presence of the construction is most likely due to Italian influence, as suggested by Borg & Azzopardi Alexander (1997: 214):

(34) MALTESE (Borg & Azzopardi Alexander 1997: 214)

It-tabib ġie afdat bil-każ
 ART-doctor come:3SG.M trust:PPT.M.SG with.ART-case
 'The doctor was entrusted with the case.'

In the Tamian dialect of Latvian spoken in Svētciems (Gäters 1977: 133) the verb *nākt*, 'come', is used in combination with a past participle in the passive construction (see ex. (35)). *Nākt* has also developed the meaning 'become' in this variety (Gäters 1977: 133; Wälchli 1996: 90 and p.c.), and thus the construction in question is not much different from similar constructions in other varieties of Latvian in which two different verbs (*tikt* and *tapt*), respectively meaning 'get (somewhere)' and 'become' (Holvoet 2001: 368–369), are used:

(35) LATVIAN (Tamian dialect spoken in Svētciems; Gäters 1977: 133)

Pêc tam nāk adic papêc
 after that come:PRS.3SG elevate:PPT heel
 'then the heel is elevated'

Finally, in Marathi, both *come* and *go* can combine with the past participle to form passive constructions with slight differences in meaning (Pardeshi 2000: 132). Interestingly, the verb meaning 'come' in Marathi (yēñēm) also means "to become; to have attained or reached any condition or character" (Molesworth 1857: 677, *sub vocem*):

(36) MARATHI (Pardeshi 2000: 133)

uttarpradeshA-til kalyANsing yanche sarkAr baDtarfa
 Uttar_Pradesh-in Kalyansing his government:N dismissal
kar-NyAt A-l-e
 do-PPT come-PFV-N
 'The Kalyansingh government in Uttar Pradesh was dismissed.'

4 Conclusion

The data presented in Section 3 unequivocally show that the verb 'come' has developed a change-of-state meaning in many (if not all) languages in which a passive construction with 'come' + the past participle is attested. The path leading from a verb meaning 'come' to a grammatical meaning involving "change of state" is indeed quite widespread across languages (Heine & Kuteva 2002: 74–75). In Toqabaqita, for instance, *mai*, 'come', signals "that a participant reaches, enters the state designated by the verb with which it occurs in a verb complex. The state is conceptualized metaphorically as a location and reaching the state as reaching a location" (Lichtenberk 2008: 224). Moreover, the path 'come' > change of state appears to be quite common in creoles (cf. ex. (38)).

- (37) TOQABAQITA (Austronesian, Lichtenberk 2008: 224)

Fanua neqe sui naqa, nia fungu na=mai qana kuburu.
 place this EXHST PFV 3SG be.full PFV=come GENP storm
 ‘All of this place, it had become full of the storm.’ (That is, ‘the cyclone
 had spread all over the area.’)

- (38) FRENCH GUYANA CREOLE (Corne 1971: 90, quoted from Heine & Kuteva 2002: 74)

i vini malad
 he come sick
 ‘He has become sick.’

An intermediate change-of-state stage is also postulated for the grammaticalization path *come* > *copula* attested in a few languages (e.g. Sri Lanka Malay; cf. Nordhoff 2011; Vlach Romani, cf. Boretzky 1997: 119–122). The grammaticalization path in (39) has been proposed by Nordhoff to account for the development of the copula in Sri Lanka Malay:

- (39) ‘come’ > resultative [
- he (be)came a teacher*
-] > stative
-
- [copula:
- he is a teacher*
-]

According to Nordhoff, in the first stage of the grammaticalization path in (39) the original motion meaning is lost and what remains is the change of state from A to B; the second stage in (39) appears to have been fostered by a number of predicates in which there is a “reciprocal entailment between the stative reading and a prior ingressive/resultative one” (Nordhoff 2011: 121) (e.g. predicates of profession/membership in a professional class)

- (40) SRI LANKA MALAY (Nordhoff 2011: 106)

- a. *oorang mlaayu siithu=dering dhaathang=apa cinggala*
 man malay there=ABL come=CP Sinhala
raaja=nang=le ana-banthu
 king=DAT=ADDIT PST-help
 ‘The Malay men came from there and helped the Sinhalese king.’
 (lit.: ‘The Malay men having come from there, (they) helped the Sinhalese king’)
- b. *Se=ppe baapa dhaathangapa Jinaan Samath*
 1SG=POSS father COPULA Jinaan Samath.
 ‘My father was Jinaan Samath.’

The in-depth diachronic analysis of the path of grammaticalization of *venire* + past participle in Italian has shown that the original meaning of *venire* (motion towards the speaker) plays no role in the development of the passive construction: it is the change-of-state meaning of *venire*, well-attested in 13th and 14th centuries Italian and Italo-Romance vernaculars, that is ultimately responsible for the development of the construction into a passive construction. The grammaticalization process discussed in this paper, therefore, does not significantly differ from the process leading to the emergence of *become*-passives in German and other languages (Wiemer 2004: 301; Riehl 2001: 482–483; Vogel 2006: 119–132): the inherently passive orientation of the past participle is responsible for the reinterpretation of a change-of-state construction, possible with both adjectives and adjectivally-used participles, as a passive construction.

The irrelevance of the original motion meaning of 'come' to the grammaticalization process in question is corroborated by the fact that in all the languages examined in which a passive construction formed with *come* + past participle is attested, the verb meaning *come* has significantly developed a change-of-state meaning. Although in some cases (Circum-Alpine languages, Maltese), a contact-based explanation for the emergence of the passive construction is to be preferred to an explanation postulating independent developments, the cross-linguistic data discussed in Section 3 conspire towards the conclusion that the availability of a change-of-state meaning of *come* is a propelling (if not a necessary) factor in the development of passive constructions formed with *come* + the past participle.

Abbreviations

ABL = ablative; ADDIT = additive; ALL = allative; ART = definite article; COMP = complementizer; COND = conditional mood; CP = conjunctive participle; EXHST = exhaustive; GENP = general preposition; GER = gerund; N = neuter; NMLZ = nominalization; PPT = past participle; PRS = present tense; SBJV = subjunctive; SUPERL = superlative.

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