

Research Article

Meaning Examination of Grigor Tatevatsi's Newly Words

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Abstract

Grigor Tatevatsi is one of the most prominent Armenian medieval theologians and philosophers. Of the works of Grigor Tatevatsi, “The Book of questions” is perhaps the most important work of the scholar, the most significant, complete and comprehensive interpretation of the Holy Scripture in Armenian hermeneutics. Grigor Tatevatsi, summarizing the seven-century tradition of patristic theological literature, synthesized medieval exegetical literature in his works in general and in “The Book of questions” in particular. However, until our research, his more than three dozen works were mainly studied from the theological and philosophical aspects. There is also another circumstance, that his works are mostly handwritten and have not been translated into modern Armenian, these are written in old Armenian (Grabar), which has caused the incomplete study of this author, in particular, the grammatical problems encountered in his literary heritage were studied by us for the first time (see: Grigoryan S., 2002). With this research, we have also embarked on the study of new words and we aim to supplement the Armenian vocabulary dictionaries with newly coined words by Grigor Tatevatsi, showing the subtle meanings of these words, as well as highlighting this author as a lexicographer. In order to demonstrate the newness of the presented words and their belonging to Grigor Tatevatsi as the author, they were thoroughly compared with all dictionaries covering the vocabulary of the Armenian language, in particular: Armenian Provincial Dictionary [APD] Armenian Radical Dictionary [ARD] New Dictionary of the Armenian Language [NDAL], Dictionary of Middle Armenian [DMA] Grabar's Dictionary of Synonyms [GDS] Armenian Explanatory Dictionary [AED], Ritual Dictionary [RD]. The study of new words from Grigor Tatevatsi's literary heritage is interesting in itself, but the new words used by the author are extremely interesting from the point of view of the modern perception and interpretation of the nuances of these concepts. Sometimes they contain historical information, such as newly coined words related to the order of blessing, and for the most part these words are not attested in Grabar's dictionaries. The study shows that in the person of Grigor Tatevatsi, in addition to being a theologian and philosopher, we also have a language builder, whose analyses become more interesting thanks to his neologisms. The research will help not only those studying the middle period of the history of the Armenian language, but also a wide range of specialists to whose fields the neologisms referred to relate.

Keywords

New Words, Collaborative Words, Ritualistic Concepts, Musical Concepts, Medical Concepts, Semantic Examination

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1. Introduction

After the translation of the Bible into Armenian, a wave arose in Armenian reality that continued for several centuries. We are talking about exegetical literature, without which the Holy Scriptures would have remained inaccessible to the people, and for several centuries the translation of the Bible and exegetical literature walked in parallel. Therefore, it was expected that a significant part of the thousands of Armenian manuscripts that have come down to us in the "Institute of Armenian Manuscripts Matenadaran" is exegetical literature, with an analysis of the Holy Scriptures and notable patristic works.

Grigor Tatevatsi (14th-15th centuries) is one of the most famous theologians of his time, a teacher and a churchman, as well as one of the most famous medieval Armenian commentators of the Bible. He has 32 works, in which he addressed numerous issues, including grammatical, ritual, jurisprudential, medical, and many other areas that were of interest in terms of medieval thinking. Only five of these works have been published so far, that is, this author is still waiting for his researchers. The difficulty is that the author's works have not been translated into modern Armenian, and the old Armenian or Grabar, in which Tatevatsi's works are written, is understandable to a very limited number of researchers.

Grigor Tatevatsi gained fame especially for his commentary on the Holy Bible *Book of Questions*, *Book of sermons in the Winter and Summer volumes*, and commentaries on other books of the Holy Bible. In almost all of his works, Grigor Tatevatsi, on the one hand, summarized the interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, and on the other, brought the author's own words enriched with new shades. His commentaries are a manifestation of the flexible linguistic thinking of the Armenian language, a circumstance that is one of the valuable aspects of Grigor Tatevatsi's literary heritage.

According to the author, on the one hand, he used previous authors, and on the other hand, he supplemented the biblical commentaries with original analyses. His commentaries are written in a fairly accessible script, with unique linguistic and stylistic features, but are close to the vocabulary and spirit of classical Armenian.

Quite often, this or that detailed interpretation of facts in terms of inclusion in his works acquires historical, natural, philosophical, theological value at the same time, sometimes ending with the etymology and interpretation of the words representing the actual phenomenon.

In addition to these features, the language of Grigor Tatevatsi's biblical commentaries is notable for its imagery: abundant use of idioms, synonyms, antonyms and word combinations, more than several hundred neologisms, some of which the author uses to further emphasize this or that feature explained in the commentaries.

New words from Grigor Tatevatsi's literary heritage, which are taken from his various works, are either not attested in any Armenian dictionary, or if they are attested, Grigor Tatevatsi

is indicated as the author (Avetik'ian G., Surmelian Kh., Avgerian M., "New Dictionary of the Armenian Language" [NDAL] [6], Acharyan Hr., "New Armenian Words in Ancient Bibliography" [NAWAB] [3], Acharyan Hr., "Armenian Radical Dictionary" [5], Acharyan Hr., "Armenian Provincial Dictionary" [APD] [4], Malkhasiants S., "Armenian Explanatory Dictionary" [AED] [9], Ghazaryan R., Avetisyan H., "Dictionary of Middle Armenian" [7], Ghazaryan R., Avetisyan H., "Grabar's Dictionary of Synonyms" [8].

Previously, we examined neologisms found in the author's *Book of Questions* (Grigoryan S., [11]. In this work, we have supplemented the neologisms under examination.

2. On Scientific News

Grigor Tatevatsi, until our research, was mainly studied as a theologian and philosopher. The fact that several dozen of his works, which are mostly handwritten and have not been translated into modern Armenian, as they are written in Old Armenian (Grabar), has been the reason for the incomplete study of this author. The grammatical issues encountered in his literary heritage have also been studied by us for the first time (see: Grigoryan S., "Questions of Historical Grammar" [11] and Grigoryan S., "Grammar issues in the works of Grigor Tatevatsi" [13]).

We have also begun to study new words, which have partially become the subject of examination in our articles "Semantic examination of a number of neologisms by Grigor Tatevatsi" (Grigoryan S., [12]), "Legal concepts in Grigor Tatevatsi's "Book of questions", (Grigoryan S., [15], "Mening movements of legal concepts (narrowing, expansion or individual application) in the works of Grigor Tatevatsi" (Grigoryan S., [16]), " Semantic and operational examination of a number of term words of Grigor Tatevatsi" (Grigoryan S., [17]), and with the present article we have attempted to supplement the series of those words and conduct a semantic examination.

In the article, we aimed to present new words from the literary heritage of Grigor Tatevatsi, the most famous author of a certain period in the history of the Armenian language (14th-15th centuries), which represent the peculiarities of that author's linguistic thinking of a certain period in the history of the Armenian language. In this regard, we believe that our article can be considered as a study of the medieval layer of the vocabulary of the Armenian language, which is closely related to linguistics in general, as well as to the history of the Armenian language and historical lexicography in particular, and can be interesting not only for the Armenian society, but also the issues discussed in it can become a subject of study for those studying the Middle Ages of humanity, linguists and other specialists, in particular, for cognitive linguistics, as an explanation of how new words are born among synonyms. The novelty and modernity brought to our work are due to the

presentation and analysis of new words used for the first time by that author, which will supplement the dictionaries of the Armenian language.

3. Material and Methods

The main focus of the study was on Grigor Tatevatsi's works written in ancient Armenian (Grabar), which have not been translated into modern Armenian, which is the sacred language of Armenian. The material was primarily gathered from the unpublished and untranslated manuscripts and works of Grigor Tatevatsi housed in the Mashtots Matenadaran of the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts of Yerevan, Armenia.

Based on the characteristics of the material, we have used both asynchronous and synchronous research methods. In particular, since the material refers to the examination of newly coined words in the literary heritage of the author Grigor Tatevatsi of a certain historical period (14th-15th centuries), we have used the asynchronous method to analyze it. In some cases, the synchronous method was used to compare the use of certain concepts with modern reality.

4. Analysis

The new words used by Grigor Tatevatsi are mainly from the fields of ritual, music, anthropology and medicine.

4.1. Ritual Words

For Grigor Tatevatsi, newly coined words have become a means of explaining the material being interpreted in a new way. Thus, Tatevatsi has put into circulation, for example, more than a dozen ritual words: *անկրտեալ* - anmkrteal (unbaptized), *բազմաքրիստոս* - bazmaqristos (polychristian), *որթասպաշտ* - hort'apasht (calf worshiper), *նախաճաշակումն* - naxachashakumn (predestination), a whole group of words related to the order of blessing (*օրհնութիւն* - orhnut'yum): *գերեզմանօրհնէք* - gerezmanorhneq' (grave blessing), *մայրօրհնէք* - mayrorhneq' (mother blessing), *սերմօրհնէք* - sermorhneq' (seed blessing), *քահանայօրհնէք* - qahanayorhneq' (priest's blessing) etc.

Among the new words used by the author, the names given to God and the Mother of God are very interesting in terms of the contemporary perception and interpretation of their subtle meanings: *Ողջոյնաւարն* - Voghjuynarak'n and *Ողջոյնընկալն* - Voghjuynenkaln: the first in the sense of "the one who sends, sends greetings", the second in the sense of "the one who receives, accepts greetings". The author uses these newly formed words as synonyms for the names "God" and "Mother of God" during the interpretation of the famous Annunciation episode of the Holy Bible, where the main event

is the sending of God's message on the one hand, and the receiving of that message by the Virgin on the other, therefore the words that are composed of the nouns "arakeł" and "voghjoyn" describing this action become synonymous.

Ողջոյնաւարն (Voghjuynarak'n) - The one who sends greetings, The Greeter. "First, because God was the one who sent greetings... " [1] (p.464). *Ողջոյնընկալն* - Voghjuynenkaln - The one who receives the greeting, the one who accepts it. If The Greeter was a God, then the the receiver is the Mother of God. "The Virgin was the one who received the greeting and was more excellent than all the virgins..." [1] (p. 464).

A comprehensive examination of ritual concepts in Armenian reality was carried out by Maghakhia Ormanyan in his "Ritual Dictionary" [10], but newly discovered words in this field are examined for the first time. Ritual concepts and their interpretations in the works of Grigor Tatevatsi not only constitute a respectable number, but the author also properly carried out a comprehensive examination of the material, including analyzing pagan and national rituals, the foundations of church holidays and their reinterpretations. Only in the author's "Book of Questions" entitled In the chapter "About Holidays", where ritual concepts are analyzed by combining the new with the old, with clarifications of reinterpretations, are sometimes also given historical explanations. Here the abundance of the author's newly coined words becomes explainable.

անկրտեալ - anmkrteal (unbaptized) - "And in the last hell are those who are neither evil nor good, as are the unchristened." [1] (p.505).

բազմաքրիստոս - bazmamayr (Mother of many) "Sarah became a mother of many patriarchs, and the Virgin Mary is also a mother of many believers" [1] (p.307).

The series of newly coined words related to the order of blessing is interesting both in terms of containing ritual and historical information, and in terms of the shift in word meaning.

գերեզմանօրհնէք - gerezmanorhneq' (blessing of the grave) - The rite of blessing the grave, which was performed on Friday of Holy Week, symbolizing the burial of Jesus Christ and the destruction of hell: "On which day should the grave be blessed?" Answer: On Good Friday, on Good Wednesday is the day of the dead and not the blessing of the grave" [1] (p.684).

մայրօրհնէք - Mayrorhneq' (Mother's blessing): "Who established this order? The order of the Mother's Blessing was established by Saint Cyprian of Charedon, who also designated the Holy virgin Justia as the Mother of faithful women" [1] (p.658).

սերմօրհնէք - sermorhneq (seedblessing) - The order of blessing threshing floor, and seed: "In the second year of the reign, Saint Isaac sent and brought back the order of blessing the threshing floor and the seed" [1] (p.658).

In another ritualistic passage, the author uses more than a

dozen ritual concepts. In one of them, he provides historical information about a circular piece of cloth with which the Ark of the "Ten Commandments" was covered, and was called a թերափ (t'erap'), with which (probably, on holidays) spells were performed ("And they took the spell of this ritual work"), and with which those who performed the spells were called տոնահմայք (tonahmayk'). Dictionaries refer only to Grigor Tatevatsi in the case of both words: "And թերափ (the t'erap') is the whole cloth covering the Ark. And the տոնահմայք (tonahmayk') was the circular piece of the Ark, with which they performed spells [1] (p.425).

4.2. Musical Words

Musical questions are numerous and diverse in the works of Grigor Tatevatsi. If musical concepts are conventionally presented according to semantic fields, we can say that they are general musical concepts, names of instruments and hymns and psalms.

In Tatevatsi's explanations of musical concepts, we also encounter new words. The word *սատանայագիւտ* (satanayagyut, invention by the devil) is interesting among them. The meaning dictates that it refers to an *invention by the devil*, but the description of the circumstance of the prophet David using this *սատանայագիւտ* ("satanayagyut") trick against him is also unexpected in the explanation. From the passage it becomes clear, first of all, that the very first musical instruments, the lyre and the harp, are *սատանայագիւտ* (satanayagyut) that were created to enslave people, that is, to weaken them spiritually, and then that King David made them serve the purpose of performing spiritual songs. The author writes: "The harp and the lyre were created by the devil (*սատանայագիւտ*) to tempt people, and King David mixed the word with the spirit so that he could pierce the devil with his own sword." [1] (p.641).

4.3. Words Related to Human Temperament, Habits, and Medicine

Among the newly coined words are also interesting the words related to a person and his temperament:

աղուեսարարոյ - (aghvesabaroy) fox like person,

անխելամուտ - (ankhelamut) stupid person,

բազմակուլ - (bazmakul) glutton,

արձակաքայլ - (ardzakaq'ayl) a person who walks with big strides,

թխակ ն - (t'uxakn) brown-eyed, etc.

In medical concepts, newly coined words include the topics of diseases, medicine, treatment, mental states, physique, and anatomy, which we have discussed in detail in the book "Grigor Tatevatsi, (medical, grammatical and legal questions). Sayings." [14]. Among them, the word *արտաքնոյն* (artak'nots'), which the Old Armenian sources attest to in the

meaning of «նսաց ճամբայ» (votats' jambh'ai - toilet), Tatevatsi uses in the series called դրոնք "drunk" (doors, entrance) in the meaning of "back passage" (anus) [1] (p.241).

There is an interesting ethnographic piece of information in the Tatevatsi name for the day of a child's birth celebrated by the villagers. That day he calls *տղարուք* - (tgharuq', children's day). "Նա իսկ նրախ հասարակ շինականք ի ծննդեան զուսկաց զմին օրն պատուեն տղարուք կոչելով": "See how ordinary villagers honor the day of the birth of their children by calling them children's Day (*տղարուք*, tgharuq') [1] (p.321). This was perhaps a forgotten ethnographic ritual, when once a year the day of all the children of the house was celebrated. The fact that it was done with pomp is suggested by the word "celebrate", (պատուեն - patuel, to glorify).

In Armenian, synonyms usually serve to emphasize a certain nuance of a given concept. When forming new words, Tatevatsi has mainly maintained this principle. Let us give an example that characterizes what is being said. Tatevatsi uses the expression "a dog that catches from behind" in the sense *գաղտաւ շուն* (gakhtar shun, a dog that secretly bites from behind), where the word *գաղտաւ* (gakhtar) is a new word and literally means one that *catches secretly*. Tatevatsi cites the word as a synonym for *envy* in the following way: "And the envious is like a dog that secretly bites from behind" [2] (p.250).

In forming new words Tatevatsi resorted to the traditional word-formation methods of Armenian - word compounding and derivation, and he remained close to linguistic thinking to the extent that in later centuries, many new words he coined entered the vocabulary of colloquial words, such as: *անմորուք* - (anmoruq', beardless), *անստոյգ* - (anstuyg, not accurate), *երկխօսութիւն* - (yerkkhosut'yun, dialogue) *սևամորթ* - (sevamort', black-skinned), *վատահամբաւ* - (vatahambav, bad reputation), *փութանցիկ* - (p'ut'ancik, fast-disappearing), etc.

In modern Armenian, the following new words are used, coined by Tatevatsi: *անստոյգ* - (anstuyg, not accurate), *երկխօսութիւն* - (yerkkhosut'yun, dialogue), *թխակ ն* - (t'uxakn, brown-eyed), *վատահամբաւ* - (vatahambav, bad reputation), *փութանցիկ* - (p'ut'ancik, fast-disappearing), *սևամորթ* (sevamort', black-skinned), *սրտային* (srtayin, brave-hearted), *սրտոտ* (srtot, hearty), *ուղղաձև* (ughadzev, upright), *քահանայօրհնէք* (q'ahanaorhneq', blessed by priests and other words).

And there are neologisms that are quite successful in terms of Armenian thinking, but have not received further use and have remained in the author's unique usage, such as the neologisms *աղուեսարարոյ* - (aghvesabaroy, fox like person), *սատանայագիւտ* (satanayagyut, invention by the devil).

5. Conclusion

Thus, the examination of Grigor Tatevatsi's newly coined words shows that they come from a wide variety of fields. The author created them by resorting to the main word-forming methods: compounding and derivation.

Of course, the words newly created by the author have their equivalents in Armenian, but the author's greatest service is that by coining new words, he, on the one hand, showed the flexibility of the Armenian language, and on the other hand, created synonyms of existing words that promoted some nuance of the given concept, as we have *Ողջոյնսարքն* - (Voghjuynarak'n, God), *Ողջոյնընկալն* - (Voghjuynenkaln, Mother of God), *սղնեսարարոյ* - (aghvesabaroy) fox like person), *գաղտաւ շուն* (gaghtar shun, a dog that secretly bites from behind) and in the case of other words.

A significant part of the newly coined words created by Grigor Tatevatsi entered the vocabulary of colloquial words of the Armenian language, while some have remained in the author's unique use.

Abbreviations

APD	Armenian Provincial Dictionary
ARD	Armenian Radical Dictionary
NDAL	New Dictionary of the Armenian Language
DMA	Dictionary of Middle Armenian
GDS	Grabar's Dictionary of Synonyms
AED	Armenian Explanatory Dictionary
RD	Ritual Dictionary
NAWAB	New Armenian Words in Ancient Bibliography

Author Contributions

Susanna Grigoryan Makar: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Resources, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Biography

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