

## ARTICLE

# Religious Terms in Classical Armenian Based on the Book “Refutation of the Sects” by Yeznik Koghbatsi

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## ABSTRACT

The Refutation of the Sects by Yeznik Koghbatsi, a famous creation of Armenian literature from the 5th century, is distinguished not only by its original content but also by its linguistic qualities. In this study, we analyzed the words and phrases related to the semantic group ‘religion and beliefs’ from four book chapters, identifying their word-building, etymological, and semantic features. The semantic field of religious words is closely interconnected with units from lexical, thematic groups such as ‘rights,’ ‘people and social relations,’ and ‘nature and natural phenomena.’ The examination of the semantic field of religion and beliefs in Yeznik’s Refutation of the Sects reveals a fascinating phenomenon: semantic transfers. These shifts, driven by evolving mentalities, involve both broadening and narrowing of meaning. For instance, words initially rooted in religious concepts might gradually lose their specific theological weight, becoming more general in usage. Conversely, terms originally associated with everyday life can acquire profound religious significance within the context of faith and belief. This dynamic interplay underscores the fluid and evolving nature of language and its close relationship to the evolving worldview of its speakers. It is noteworthy that Classical Armenian boasted a rich vocabulary of religion and belief. These terms constituted a core part of everyday language, reflecting the profound influence of religious thought on all aspects of life in those centuries, where the earthly and the heavenly were inextricably intertwined.

**Keywords:** Religious Terms; Classical Armenian; Vocabulary; Semantics; Semantic Field of Religion and Beliefs; Transitivity; Substantivization

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### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 10 January 2025 | Revised: 24 February 2025 | Accepted: 3 March 2025 | Published Online: 19 March 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i3.8367>

### CITATION

Dilbaryan, N., Mkhitarian, G., 2025. Religious Terms in Classical Armenian Based on the Book “Refutation of the Sects” by Yeznik Koghbatsi. Forum for Linguistic Studies. 7(3): 1038–1046. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i3.8367>

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# 1. Introduction

Yeznik Koghbatsi creativity holds significant historical value for the study of Armenian classical literature, particularly the philosophy and theoretical thought of ancient Armenia. The Refutation of the Sects is part of the ongoing struggle initiated by Mesrop Mashtots against the ideological threats posed by certain religious-philosophical teachings to Christianity. Yeznik's work focuses on critiquing and disputing ancient pagan philosophical teachings. As the Persian Mazdaic religious philosophy and paganism also challenged Christianity, the primary purpose of Yeznik's work becomes evident: to justify Christian monotheism and refute Mazdaic dualism through a critical examination of paganism.

While analyzing key legal and political ideas from prominent thinkers, modern political scientists increasingly reflect on the contributions of Armenian legal and political thought. Yeznik Koghbatsi's work addresses critical issues such as the right to freedom of conscience and the legitimacy of popular rebellion<sup>[1]</sup>. The great thinker explores these themes through his rejection of Mazdakism and various sects that he viewed as threats to societal stability. Koghbatsi contrasts such ideologies with the concept of human free will, asserting that individuals are not bound by the dictates of fate but are endowed with the ability to choose freely. This concept of free will remains highly relevant in contemporary Armenian society, serving as a symbolic shield in strengthening internal resistance and affirming the right to live freely. By highlighting the detrimental effects of fatalism, Koghbatsi underscores the necessity of resistance for the sake of the homeland. If a foreign power oppresses one's country, it should not be accepted as an unavoidable fate; rather, it calls for a determined struggle against such oppression.

Yeznik Koghbatsi's book reflects the prevailing ideologies of the Middle East. This is evident from his consideration and rejection of ideas that were popular but deemed dangerous to Christianity at the time, such as Manichaeism, Mithraism, and Gnosticism. The author argues that the teachings of ancient Greek philosophical schools, including the Stoics, Pythagoreans, Epicureans, and Aristotelians, are fundamentally flawed.

The Refutation of the Sects is divided into four parts, as designated by publishers:

1. Refutation of Pagan Beliefs;
2. Refutation of the Teachings of the Persian Magi (Maz-

daism);

3. Refutation of the Teachings of Greek Philosophers;
4. Refutation of the Markon Sect.

Interestingly, Yeznik Koghbatsi does not shy away from addressing a diverse range of ideological opponents, including pagans, Christians, monists, dualists, materialists, and idealists.

Notably, Koghbatsi does not merely deny opposing teachings; he also sets forth their core principles while emphasizing his own worldview and approaches. For the first time in Armenian literature, philosophical thoughts are presented from a Christian perspective, and the doctrines deemed unacceptable are systematically rejected through various logical arguments. Additionally, an effort is made to develop philosophical terminology. Eznik's ultimate goal was to provide his compatriots with philosophical tools to combat paganism and sectarianism, substantiate the core tenets of Christianity, and philosophically interpret its main ideas. Researchers rightly point out that "This work, imbued with the fundamental idea of philosophically justifying Christian monotheism, was created during the mid-5th century. This period witnessed the growth of social and intellectual liberation struggles among the Armenian people. Consequently, the treatise aimed to protect not only Christianity but also the nation's spiritual identity and ideological autonomy"<sup>[1]</sup>.

Yeznik Koghbatsi, a multilingual and perceptive thinker, paid close attention to terms and words related to the concepts he explored. His work extensively drew upon numerous foreign sources, so he was well-acquainted with the terminology and expressions conveying fundamental concepts and ideas he encountered in these sources. This article aims to reconstruct linguistic conditions of the 5th century based on written testimonies from Eznik Koghbatsi's Refutation of the Sects.

In crafting his work, Koghbatsi employed words and expressions with precise terminological meanings to articulate not only the concepts he endorsed or proposed but also the ideas adopted by his opponents, which he criticized or rejected. The distinctiveness of his work stems from its nature and approach. At that time, the Armenian language served as the medium for Koghbatsi's writings. It is notable, however, that in the 5th century, a fully developed terminology for scientific concepts did not yet exist. Despite advancements such as the invention of the Armenian alphabet and the initi-

ation of bibliographic efforts, significant progress was still needed to overcome the challenges of creating a scientific lexicon.

What approaches were available in the 5th century for developing and using terminology? Broadly speaking, the following can be noted:

- (a) Selecting and adapting common words from everyday language, taking their semantic range into account.
- (b) Developing new words from existing linguistic resources.
- (c) Borrowing terms from other languages.

The semantic field of religion and beliefs is comprised of nuclear words that date back to ancient times. They, as a rule, are native in their origin and, as a matter of fact, are root words, which later, by means of affixation and compounding, develop into new concepts and words. The description of these words is of great significance not only from the perspective of linguistics but also from that of linguistic disciplines such as psycholinguistics and general linguistics.

The analysis of the noun words belonging to Classical Armenian's field of beliefs makes it possible to restore the equivalent lexical layers of the proto-language. These layers, along with their linguistic value, are of great cultural significance since they reveal the specificities of the Indo-European worldview and the relationship between spiritual and material cultures.

To conduct our research on the religious terms in Classical Armenian, we have selected *Refutation of the Sects* - the work by Yeznik Koghbatsi, a chronicler of the 5th century, a pupil of the founder of the Armenian alphabet Mesrop Mashtots and a renowned theologian of his time.

The theological work *Refutation of the Sects* is an exceptional piece of 5th-century classical Armenian literature. Its content and the quality of its language rank it among the samples of pure Classical Armenian (Grabar).

All Armenologists who have studied the linguo-stylistic peculiarities of all the works of the 5th century Armenian Classical Literature have emphasized the perfection of the language used by Yeznik Koghbatsi. It is no accident that the first class of Armenian Classical Literature comprising the real pearls of Armenian translated literature - the Bible, a part of the critical interpretations and speeches of John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, and many other religious works are named after Yeznik Koghbatsi. Here, *Refutation of*

the Sects is the only independent, non-translated work. The language of the first-class works is commonly acknowledged as "the most orderly, accurate, distinct, artistic and beautiful of all"<sup>[2]</sup>.

Our research aims to conduct a semantic examination of the words and terms related to religion and beliefs in the language of the work by Yeznik, to identify the active word-formation patterns and to reveal the etymology, as well as the possible semantic transfers and viability of the religion-related words. We have singled out the nuclear words and expressions belonging to the basic semantic field of religion and beliefs from *Refutation of the Sects* and have studied them from the perspectives of diachronic linguo-stylistics and semantics.

## 2. Materials and Methods

Diachronic analysis of linguistic facts is primarily conducted through comparison. Without comparison, it is impossible to fully characterize and classify the religious concepts of Classical Old Armenian. Linguistic data are compared across different chronological and spatial states, with the comparison being bilateral—that is, the units compared must align in both form and content.

Another essential research method is reconstruction, which seeks to restore missing links in the developmental chain of linguistic forms through comparative analysis. The reconstruction of the linguistic conditions of the 5th century based on written evidence from Eznik Koghbatsi's *Refutation of the Sects* applies to three levels:

- (a) By reconstructing Indo-European roots of native Armenian words and forms;
- (b) By restoring the original form of borrowed words in Armenian;
- (c) By internal reconstruction, which hypothesizes a Grabar-like form for any given Armenian word.

This method is of exceptional importance because Armenian written monuments date back only to the fifth century AD, while the Armenian language separated from the Indo-European proto-language as early as the 4th–3rd millennia BC.

## 3. Results

## Proto-Armenian Pagan and Christian Terms

G. Jahukyan, the first restorer and researcher of Proto-Armenian, notes that Proto-Armenian, breaking away from the Indo-European unity, inherited a distinct system typical of the world where worship was customary – with religious rituals that used to form the semantic field of the noun-words with religious meanings. "On the one hand, the divine was related to the shining sky and a sun-lit day; on the other hand, with the worship of the ancestors ("of the father" - \*pəte'r – "a representative of an older generation, an ancestor, father." comp. from \*dei (meaning to shine) we have the notions of "worshipped sky," "day," "God," and the formation dīēus-pəte'r meaning Heavenly Father. The Armenian words տիւն and perhaps also երկին (\*dji- ?) and տըրկ , meaning today (\*k'e-dji- ?), developed from here<sup>[3]</sup>.

The etymological explanation of the word նախագիտութիւն Reputations of the Sects is of similar significance. V. Hambardzumyan suggests restoring the Nostratic base – \*jarA with the equivalent meaning "to shine", "to shed light"<sup>[4]</sup>. It follows that certain words belonging to the semantic field under discussion are not simply old. Instead, they date back to the proto-language, the time of the Nostratic commonalities of languages.

In its preliminary perception, the divine is, first and foremost, what is endowed with the divine power and might of God, i.e., it is sacred, and then, it is everything beyond the reach of mortals. Otherwise stated, the field of beliefs comprises totems on the one side, and taboos on the other. All the other religion-related notions and concepts are distributed between these two with their lexical roles – as nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs, e.g., աստուած (God), աստուածային (divine), աստուածանալ (to become a God) and աստվածօրէն (divinely), սրբութիւն (sanctity), սուրբ (sacred), սրբանալ (to become a saint), սրբօրէն (sacredly), etc.

People expect certain actions or rituals from divine powers either to protect of themselves or their personal interests, or to prevent from any actions against themselves. These goals can be accomplished in two ways – by means of words, i.e., a prayer, and by means of some material things, for instance, sacrifice, "նստալ" (animal sacrifice), lighting a candle, incensing, bowing before totem statues or icons, crossing oneself. These actions are, as a rule, ingredients of dramatized performance of the ritual where the spiritual

song and music also play an important role.

Several words belonging to the semantic field of religion were closely connected with the semantic field of law and rights in ancient times. The evidence of the idea stated can be traced back to the work of Yeznik. Since the primary law was the divine principle, the word of God was indisputable. The word "կրօն" itself derives from the root of the verb "կրնւլ." The most reputable dictionary of Grabar – "The New Dictionary of the Haykazian Language" explains it as law and order<sup>[5]</sup>.

The semantic field of religion is closely associated with the nuclear words of the semantic field of time since time is a divine order itself with periods of birth and death that parallel with the notions of morning, daytime, evening, and night beginning with a bright day, then gradually changing into sunset and finally reaching resurrection. This divine cycle repeats itself periodically. The events mentioned – birth and burial have a spiritual meaning and create many other ceremonies and rituals, i.e., they possess a considerable number of meanings in the form of a tree of concepts.

In a broader sense, the semantic fields of religion and law are in a sub-categorical relationship with the large thematic group of words, meaning a human and social life denoting concepts that describe the spiritual life of man. In his "Semantics and Word Formation of the Modern Armenian Language," G. Jahukyan notes, "And after all, the spiritual life of man contains a part which emerged due to the inability of humans to explain various natural phenomena and therefore tried to explain them with some invisible creatures. This is the part of religion which played an immense role in the life of man and has left a specific terminology in our language"<sup>[6]</sup>.

## 4. Discussion

Most of the religious terms of Classical Grabar are present in the Reputations of the Sects by Yeznik Koghbatsi, which, in fact, is the logical glorification of monotheism and the rejection of the pagan polytheism ... "...God is one, and so is belief and baptism. And, hence, there is one God over everyone and everything"<sup>[7]</sup>.

Now, let us pass on to the semantic and lexical analysis of certain Grabar words in the four books of the Reputations of the Sects that are typical of the semantic field of religion

and beliefs. Book One refers to the refutation of the pagan sects and starts with the clarification of the *աներևոյթ* (the invisible) and its *յաւիտեանական զօրութեան* (eternal power). The term “*Աներևոյթ*” is a formation made up of two affixes – a prefix and a suffix, which, in Grabar, also act as an adjective and an adverb with most diverse connotations. The latter is already in the field of words describing the perception of the senses. From the perspective of our research, in the “New Dictionary of Haykazian Language,” the word “*աներևոյթ*” is explained as not perceptible to the eye<sup>[8]</sup>.

More specifically, it points to some supernatural power since the supernatural is not accessible and perceptible to human vision. “Especially finite and visible are the sun and the moon and fire, water and earth that Pagans worship”<sup>[9]</sup>. In pagan belief, which, according to Yeznik, is a combination of different sects, the worship of the sky is paralleled with the glorification of the four sacred terrestrial elements. Therefore, in the Reputations of the Sects, the names of the notions of “water,” “earth,” “air” and “fire,” which helped complete the initial creation of the world, are quite frequent. It is against these that Yeznik rebels claiming that the above-mentioned four elements are the result of God’s creation, they are visible and material, i.e. unworthy of worship.

Here, not only religious words denoting subjects but also those specifying a quality are marked. Qualitative adjectives in Grabar, as a rule, smoothly turned into nouns through derivation and, thus, could be conjugated and used with the article, like the abovementioned *աներևոյթ* (invisible) or *անստեղծ* (non-made), *անգոյ* (non-existent), *անսկիզբն* (with no beginning), *մշտնջենական* (eternal), *անքնին* (irrefutable), *անհաս* (unachievable), *անաբար* (non-created), *աննախանձ* (non-jealous) and similar other adjectives. All these attributes are used to replace their noun forms without additional word-forming means.

The morphological analysis of the words of the semantic field of beliefs in the Reputations of the Sects by Yeznik Koghbatsi reveals that the native negative suffix *ան*- helped create unique pairs of words in Grabar – concepts denoting divine and supernatural qualities and their earthly antipodes which were verbal incorporations of the divine and human, sacred and evil - *սաուն* and *անասուն* (man and animal), *խօսուն* and *անխօսուն* (speaking and non-speaking), *մտաւոր* and *անմտաւոր* (smart and stupid), *բանաւոր* and

*անբանաւոր* (oral and non-oral), *ընտրեալ* and *անընտրեալ* (selected, unique – non selected, ordinary).

Parallely, instead of the prefix *ան*-, Yeznik often also turns to the negative prefix *չ*- making pairs of words with the same root, just like in the following sentence where the author writes about the expression of evil in the bodily and spiritual nature of man. Here, man is considered the primary and leading actor, person, while evil is viewed as the result of the distorted actions of the person rather than the main character. “...because man is an animate being while actions are inanimate like murder and immorality”, «...զի մարդն *անձնաւոր է, եւ բարքն չանձնաւորք, որպէս սպանութիւն կամ շնութիւն՝ որ ի բարուցն գործիցեն*»<sup>[10]</sup>.

The use of the nouns that have become compounds with the help of the negative suffix *չ*- so typical of Yeznik’s writing style, together with their affirmative forms help convey a certain style to work and make the eternal contrast between the heavenly and earthly more expressive like *էականք* և *չէականք* (essential ones and non-essential ones), *մշտնջենաւորք* և *չմշտնջենաւորք* (eternal and non-eternal, transient), *արարածք* և *չարարածք* (creatures and non-creatures), *աստուած* և *չաստուած* (god and non-god)<sup>[11]</sup>.

The efficiency of the native suffix *-իչ* in the process of the creation of concepts belonging to the semantic field of religion cannot be overestimated. In Classical Grabar *-իչ*-performed the function of the derivational morpheme of a subject, though it was evident that the verb meaning was becoming dominant. Thus, for instance, the words *արարիչ*, *ստեղծիչ* (creator), *տուիչ* (giver), *շարժիչ* (someone that moves), *փոխիչ* (someone that changes things), *կարգիչ* (someone who appoints), *յօրինիչ* (builder), *գոյիչ* (inventor), *խախտանիչ* (disturber) provide a multi-faceted description of the divine. Words ending in *-իչ* also denote people serving the divine - *թովիչ* (a magician), *ձօնիչ* (a priest), *պաշտիչ* (a worshipper), *գրիչ* (a scribe), etc<sup>[12]</sup>.

The suffix *-ելէն* also participated in the creation of the words belonging to the semantic field of religion. It was predominantly applied to the roots denoting concepts related to religion – demonstrating their origin, derivation, and belonging - *աստուածելէն*, *մարդելէն*, *ոգելէն*, *հոգմելէն*, *բոցելէն*.

The Reputations of the Sects also contains beautiful phrases made up of different elements. For instance, “*ամենագէտ գիտութիւն* (all-knowing sci-

ence), անապակաս իմաստնություն (endless wisdom), ամենարուեստ իմաստնություն (richest wisdom), աղբիւր բարութեան (a source of kindness - synonyms for the word God), խոպանացեալ որթ (a sinful man), կենդանաբար կենդանի (a life-giving creature), պաշտօն տանել (to serve the God), պաշտօն մատուցանել (to conduct service), երկրպագութիւն առնուլ (to worship), երկրպագութիւն մատուցանել (to conduct a worship service), լինել ի տան աստուծոյ (to be in God's home), յաղօթս առնել (to pray), հաղորդութիւնս առնել (to receive communion), յաշտ առնել (to make a sacrifice), յաղօթս համբառնալ (to resurrect), ժառանգել զկեանս յաւիտենից (to receive eternal life), ելանել ի խաչ (to be crossed), դարձուցանել զարեգակն ի խաւար (to bring one back to the right way), դարձուցանել զուսիսն յարիւն (to convert)", etc<sup>[13]</sup>.

It is worth mentioning the third person singular of the verb to be (եմ) in the present tense (է), which acts as a noun and is one of the most common meanings of Christian God. Spelt is a capital letter, it bends forward, is used with an article է-ն, է-ին and has its antipode չէ. The latter is a word symbol of pagan dying and dead deities. It is worth quoting the famous sentence from Book Three that has become a catchphrase. «... մեծի ծաղու արժանի է, զի չէրն չէին վասն չէին յաշտ առնէր» (It is ridiculous that the non-existent offers a sacrifice to the other non-existent for something that does not exist)<sup>[14]</sup>.

To generalize, it should be stated that the majority of the religion-related words in Book One are native in their origin, i.e., they are either root words or derivatives. Compound words are rarer occurrences. There are Iranian borrowings, though not many. Greek or Assyrian borrowings are even fewer.

G. Jahukyan notes that a great number of proper and ordinary words related to the Pre-Christian religion are Iranian borrowings since the Armenian pagan mythology was greatly influenced by that Iranian mythology. The ancient Armenian deities were left out under the influence of the Iranian gods, e.g., the worship of the dying-and-rising God Ara the Handsome, who was replaced with the worship of Mher-Mitra. The Greek influence became more significant during the Hellenistic period. This found its reflection in the abundant borrowings of religion-related words from Greek. Christian ideology, in its turn, introduced a great number of Greek and Assyrian religious terms to our vocabulary<sup>[15]</sup>.

In Book Two, certain abstract words of sense perception, e.g., փառք (glory)- and its derivative փառաւոր (glorifying), take on a religious meaning since the renowned philosopher and theologian was convinced that eternal glory is specific to supreme creatures only, while that of mortals is a temporary thing, a consequence of certain incidents and is sometimes replaced with misery. Though the number of religious borrowings is considerable in Books Two to Four, most of them have Iranian origin. There are also words of Greek and Assyrian origin e.g. բարսմունք (diviner's wand), բազին (altar), զեհեն (Hell), դէմ (demon), դէն (beyond), դժոխք (hell), դրախտ (heaven), մոգ (magician), մոգպետ (high priest), մագդեզն (Zoroastrian), յուշկապարիկ (a kind of a demon), յաշտ (sacrifice), հրէշ (beast), պայ (a mythological creature), վարդապետ (a teacher), քէշ (Zoroastrianism), հեթանոս (pagan), քաւղեայ (diviner), քուրմ (a pagan priest), սատանայ (Satan), եկեղեցի (a church), հերետիկոս (heretic), հիւղէ (atom (spiritual)), etc<sup>[16]</sup>.

The qualitative noun արդար (just) and արդարութիւն (justice) and its root adjective or the pair երանութիւն (bliss) և երանելի (blissful) take on an evident religious meaning in the Refutation of the Heretic Marcion. The adjective արդար becomes synonymous with the word God. Though A. Abrahamyan keeps the word “արդար” in the Modern Armenian translation of the work, he adds the word God in brackets next to it since, in Eastern Armenian, the religious meaning of this word has somewhat lost its initial meaning. To make the statement clearer, we should compare the part of the sentence by Yeznik and its translated version by A. Abrahamyan.

Դարձեալ, եւ զոր արդարն ասեն՝ թէ արդար եւ արդար էր, յետ բաժանելոյ զիշխանութիւնսն, իւր զերկինսն երկոսին առնոյ, հիւղեայ եւ որդւոցն նորա զերկիրն միայն թողոյ, զիարդ էր, զի միւսանգամ նորա աշխարհին ցանկացեալ...» The Modern Armenian translation reads as follows: “Again, the one they called just (god), if he was indeed just, how come after dividing the dominions, taking both heavens for himself, leaving only the land to Hule (spiritual atom) and his sons, he wanted his (Hule's) peace again?”<sup>[17]</sup>.

The examination of the semantic field of religion and beliefs in Yeznik's Reputations of the Sects reveals the remarkable phenomenon of semantic transfers—extension and narrowing, which is conditioned by the changes in the mentality of the language bearers. The religious meaning apparent

in many concepts can become vague, and vice versa can be further enhanced. That is to say, the standard words of the semantic field typical of social life can easily take on religious meanings. The other way around is also possible. In the case of the words of the semantic field of nature, one can see a consistent decline and loss of the religious meaning. In the early days of humanity, names denoting various natural phenomena, animate and inanimate beings, initially had the meaning of worship<sup>[18]</sup>. However, it gradually disappeared and now is restored only at the level of etymology. Let us consider the etymology of the word աստուած (God) from this perspective. V. Hambarzumyan believes that the word is built upon the mythological name “Տուած,” which is connected with the name of a supreme power (“light” later “God”) of Indo-European origin.

The parallels of the component \*tun- in related languages as names of the gods of “the sky or the sun” turn into proper names (comp. Old Indian Dyaus, Latin Diouis, etc.). They all derive from the Indo-European root word \*t’ieu (God), which initially meant “a day” (comp. Armenian “տիւ” meaning “daytime”). V. Hambarzumyan restores the above-mentioned meanings of \*Տուած (light, a source of light) in the semantic structure of the word Աստուած/ Աստուած as “a creator – the source of light and the one that spreads light”<sup>[19]</sup>.

For the scientific description of religious terms in the Ancient Armenian language, we propose the following universal classification of church-religious terms, which is easily applicable to this study of the book by Yeznik Koghbatsi The Refutation of the Sects.

**(a) Basic universal religious concepts:**

Pagan god/goddess — դի/դիցուհի, idol — կուռք, totem — տոտեմ, taboo — տաբու, sacrificial offering — զոհաբերություն, commandment — պատուիրան, Kingdom of heaven — Երկնային արքայություն, Eden — եդեմ, Tartar — տարտարոս, sacrifice — զոհ, martyr — նահատակ, crucifixion — խաչելություն, Bible — Աստուածաշունչ, Հայր Աստուած – God the Father, Աստուծոյ Որդի – Son of God, Old Testament — Հին կտակարան, New Testament — Նոր կտակարան, salvation of the soul — Հոգու փրկություն, apostle — առաքեալ, Holy Spirit — Սուրբ Հոգի ևն, Last Supper — Խորհրդաւոր ընթերիք, Coming of Christ — Քրիստոսի գալուստ ևն:

**(b) Religious beliefs and doctrines:**

Zarathustrianism — զրադաշտականություն, fire-worship — կրակապաշտություն, polytheism — բազմաստուածություն, pantheism — բնապաշտություն, paganism — հեթանոսություն, heresy — հերձուած, martyrology — վարք նահատակաց, monotheism — միաստուածություն, monophysite — միաբնակ, duophysite — երկբնակ, Nestorianism — նեստորականություն, Orthodoxy — Ուղղափառություն, Apostolicity — առաքելականություն ևն:

**(c) Forces of Light and Darkness:**

Angel — զուարթուն/հրեշտակ, cherub — քերովբե, seraphim — սերովբե, archangel — հրեշտակապետ, ghouls — յուշկապարիկ, forest spirit — անտառային ոգի, evil spirit — չար ոգի, devil/satan — սատանայ, demon — դեւ ևն:

**(d) Characters of Sacred stories:**

Zarathustra — Զրուան/Զրադաշտ, Ahuramazda — Ահրիման/ Ահուրամազդա, Ռոմիզդ — Dios, Անահիտ — Anaita, Moses — Մովսէս, Նոյ — Noah, Cain — Կայէն, Abel — Աբել, Job — Յովբ, Abraham — Աբրահամ, Isaac — Իսահակ, Samson — Սամսոն, David — Դաւիթ, Judah — Յուդա ևն:

**(e) Religious and ritual buildings:**

temple — տաճար, pagan temple — մեհեան, fireplace — բազին, altar — խորան, monastery — մենաստան/անապատ, willow branches — բարսմունք ևն:

**(f) God's names and His qualities:**

Lord — Տէր, Creator — Արարիչ/Ստեղծիչ, Righteous — Արդար, Messiah — Փրկիչ, The Most High Lord — Բարձրեալ Տէր, Creator — Արարիչ, Almighty — Ամենակարող, Omnipresent — Ամենակայ, All-Seeing — Ամենատես, All-Hearing — Ամենալուր, Father — Հայր, Only Begotten — Միածին ևն, Փառաւոր ևն:

**(g) Definition of people depending on their religious status:**

Believer — հաւատացեալ, pagan — հեթանոս, Christian — քրիստոնէայ, Zarathustrian — զրադաշտական, fire-worshipper — կրակապաշտ, idolater — կռապաշտ, Nestorian — նեստորական ևն:

**(h) Church vocabulary:**

spiritual ministry — հոգեւոր ծառայություն, canonical — կանոնական, non-canonical — պարականոն,

catalycos — կաթողիկոս, bishop — եպիսկոպոս, archbishop — արքեպիսկոպոս, deacon — քահանայ, theology — աստուածաբանություն, Prophecy — մարգարեություն, prophet — մարգարե, forerunner — նախավկայ/նախակարապետ ևն:

## 5. Conclusions

Alongside the development of humanity, the semantic structure of the classical words related to religion and beliefs underwent distinct changes. As a consequence, the supernaturalness gradually changes into naturalness. Thus, for instance, many words which initially possessed a religious meaning slowly turned into units of general vocabulary, and the feelings they express, when deprived of their religious meaning, turn into words denoting moral, legal values and qualities, e.g., բախտաւորութիւն (luck), բարեբարութիւն (benevolence), բարկութիւն (anger), իմաստնութիւն (wisdom), յարութիւն (resurrection), ողորմութիւն (mercy), չուտութիւն (misery), պատուիրան (commandment), պատիժ (punishment), կենդանի (living), անմահ (immortal), չար (evil), բարի (kind), կենարար (life-giving), etc.

A study of the vocabulary in Refutation of the Sects reveals that Yeznik Koghbatsi predominantly used common words in a terminological sense. Neologisms and borrowings played a relatively minor role in his work. When expressing scientific abstractions, subtle concepts, and complex ideas, he sought to preserve the naturalness of the Armenian language while avoiding unnecessary artificiality.

Koghbatsi also enriched the language with new words, terms, styles, and idioms, which quickly gained widespread use<sup>[20]</sup>. The terminology in Koghbatsi's work reflects the intellectual rigor and linguistic exploration characteristic of his time. His terms are generally marked by consistent usage and a unified meaning. However, Refutation of the Sects also exhibits instances of polysemy and synonymy. Some terms are used in varying ways to convey different ideas, while the same concept may be expressed using different words. For readers, this variability can pose challenges. When encountering familiar words in a terminological context, they may not immediately realize these words are being used with a specific, nuanced meaning. In Classical Armenian, a significant number of words belonged to the semantic field of religion and belief. These terms were part of the core vocab-

ulary, reflecting the profound influence of both earthly and heavenly matters on human life during those centuries.

It should be noted that T. Shahverdyan, referring to the language of the Refutation of the Sects, notes that it is the most elaborate and regular and differs from other works of the classical period in its philosophical content<sup>[21]</sup>. It is also notable from a linguistic and stylistic point of view. As to L.Hovhannisyan, Yeznik expressed many scientific concepts in ordinary words, giving them new meanings and introducing new scientific terms<sup>[22]</sup>. And it is no coincidence that scholars examining the linguistic and stylistic features of the works of fifth-century chroniclers single out Yeznik's language and consider him the founder of a new style. This style stands out for its simplicity, clarity, regularity, and uniformity. That is why almost all scholars dealing with theoretical and practical issues of classical Grabar base their conclusions on the linguistic material of the Refutation of the Sects. It should be mentioned that the book of Yeznik also contains the admonitions of the author, which have a religious and philosophical orientation and became the basis of independent Armenian admonition prose<sup>[23]</sup>. From this perspective, Yeznik's work is invaluable for studying ancient religion-related vocabulary. Many of the concepts in this work have been inherited from Middle and Modern Armenian literary languages—Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian—as well as various dialects. While these words have undergone minor phonetic changes, they often exhibit substantial semantic shifts, further enriching the language's lexicon.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, N.D. and G.M.; methodology, N.D. and G.M.; software, N.D. and G.M.; validation, N.D. and G.M.; formal analysis, N.D. and G.M.; investigation, N.D. and G.M.; resources, N.D. and G.M.; data curation, N.D. and G.M.; writing—original draft preparation, N.D.; writing—review and editing, G.M.; visualization, N.D. and G.M.; supervision, N.D.; project administration, G.M.; funding acquisition, N.D. and G.M. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## Funding

This study was carried out without external funding.



## Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

## Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

## Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this work are provided in the referenced literature. These findings are original and result from inductive and deductive generalizations. They can serve as a basis for similar studies, offering further validation of their reliability.

## Acknowledgments

The research was not done within the framework of the grant program or other support.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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