









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Indo-European Origins of Syunik-Artsakh Agricultural Terms

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the etymologies of several key Syunik-Artsakh (Nagorno Karabagh) dialectal terms related to agriculture and vegetation, arguing for their Indo-European roots or native Armenian development, particularly for those previously considered non-etymological or of uncertain origin. This dialect area's rich vocabulary offers valuable insights for dialectology, Armenian language history, historical-comparative linguistics, and ethnography. The dialectal Armenian word *tsütsün* (ծնծնիւ) substantiates linking the base of Armenian *tsets* (ծեծ) 'beating' to the Indo-European root *g'eg'-.

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The Syunik-Artsakh term *hashan* (հաշան) is proposed to derive from the verb *ash* || *hash* (աշ || հաշ) ‘to dry,’ showing etymological similarities with IE *khers- ‘to burn, heat.’ The pattern *pě(u)* (պը(ն)) < *b(e)u-* is identified as basic to *pěřōk* (պըռոկ) ‘bud/sprout,’ with elements -*r-* (ն) and -*t-* (ա) likely functioning as frequentative/intensive suffixes. The Turkic origin of *jalagh* (ջալաղ) ‘grafting’ is contested; while potential Indo-European connections (*g’hel-* or *gel-*) exist, phonetic issues with the latter and strong parallels with regional Turkic (*calaq*) suggest borrowing is more probable. Crucially, the etymology of *dögyün* || *děēgün* (դօյնիւն || դըլգնիւն) ‘branch collar of a tree’ is established as deriving from the native Armenian adjective *tokun* (տոկնիւն) ‘resilient, firm’ (from the root *tok* (տոկ) < PIE **dewā-/dowā-*), having undergone regular dialectal sound changes. The word *K’lpel* || *kělpēl* (քլպել || կըլպել) ‘to strip, pare, peel’ is linked to the PIE root *(s)kel- ‘tear, pick up, scratch, take out.’ Overall, the study highlights the significance of Syunik-Artsakh dialectal data for reconstructing Armenian lexical history and resolving complex etymologies.

Keywords: Syunik-Artsakh (Karabakh) Dialect Area; Agriculture Thematic Group; Etymology; Indo-European Origin

1. Introduction

The dialects of Syunik and Artsakh belong to a common inter-dialect group, known in linguistic literature as the North-Eastern or Karabakh-Shamakhi inter-dialect group, or more recently, the Syunik-Artsakh dialects. The historical territory of these dialects includes the modern Republic of Armenia’s marzes of Syunik, Vayots Dzor, Gegharkunik, the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh, and the historical provinces of Utik, Artsakh, and Paytakaran. This dialect area, rich in archaic features, presents fertile ground for investigating unresolved issues in Armenian historical linguistics and etymology. One significant challenge lies in identifying the origins of dialectal words, particularly those related to traditional domains like agriculture, which may preserve ancient Indo-European lexicon or reflect complex histories of language contact and internal development. Many such terms lack clear etymologies or have been erroneously attributed to loan sources.

The primary goal of this paper is to examine the etymology of several such problematic agricultural and vegetation terms specific to or prominent in the Syunik-Artsakh dialects: *tsants* (ծանծ), *hashan* (հաշան), *pěřōk* (պըռոկ), *jalagh* (ջալաղ), *dögyün* (դօյնիւն), and *k’lpēl* (քլպել). By applying the historical-comparative method and analyzing dialect-specific phonological and semantic developments, this study aims to: 1) propose Indo-European origins or native Armenian etymologies for these terms, challenging previous assumptions where applicable, and 2) demonstrate the value of Syunik-Artsakh dialectal data in uncovering linguistic archaisms and refining Armenian etymological

research.

2. Materials and Methods

The material of this study is the words included in the lexical group “Agriculture, vegetation” of Syunik-Artsakh dialectal area, which have never been subjected to linguistic study or have been mentioned among the non-etymological words. With the help of the historical-comparative method, we have tried to examine and determine the etymology of those words which, according to our assumptions, have an Indo-European origin, but over time, due to external influences, they have undergone semantic changes. A significant proportion of these words have not been the subject of extensive linguistic examination, and thus, their potential Indo-European origin remains uncharted. A portion of these terms have until now been deemed non-etymological or of indeterminate derivation.

To analyze these terms, we employed the historical-comparative method, a widely used approach in etymological studies. This method involves the comparison of linguistic forms across different Indo-European languages to trace their development and transformation over time. A comprehensive collection of dialectal words related to agriculture was assembled from diverse sources, including field research, historical linguistic texts, and existing dialect dictionaries. Particular attention was given to words that exhibited phonetic and morphological structures suggesting Indo-European roots. The phonetic evolution of the selected words was then examined in comparison with reconstructed Proto-Indo-European roots. This included the identification

of sound changes, vowel shifts, and consonantal transformations characteristic of Armenian dialectal developments. Words with potential Indo-European origins were analyzed for semantic shifts over time. This step involved comparing the meanings of the selected words with their cognates in other Indo-European languages, as well as assessing their functional roles in agricultural terminology. The geographic distribution and utilization of the selected vocabulary were mapped across various Syunik-Artsakh dialects to ascertain patterns of retention, innovation, or borrowing. The findings were cross-referenced with previous etymological studies, including those of Hrachia Acharyan^[1–4], Gevorg Jahukyan, Carl Buck and other linguists specializing in Armenian dialectology and Indo-European linguistics^[5, 6].

Utilizing this methodological framework, the present study aims to provide a comprehensive linguistic analysis of agricultural terminology.

3. Results

Although the dialect area has shrunk a lot today, the dialects of Syunik-Artsakh are considered active and developing. The dialect group has a rich vocabulary. With the help of synchronic and diachronic comparison, it is found that:

A. The dialects of Syunik and Artsakh have existed since the time when the Indo-European element was established in the historical area^[7, 8].

B. Dialects have had a harmonious development despite various external and internal influences.

C. From the qualitative and quantitative study of words of Indo-European origin (88 words) used in the field of agriculture, it turns out that the main occupation of people in Syunik-Artsakh territory from the prehistoric period was farming. In addition, unique terms have been preserved, which are evidence that the locals have long tried to recognize nature and ensure a high economic level.

4. Discussion

The Syunik-Artsakh dialectal vocabulary contains numerous words of Indo-European descent related to agriculture and vegetation, attesting to the significant role of this field in the lives of the native population.

Several of these words require detailed lexical and et-

ymological analysis. This study aims to address this gap by examining specific dialectal units such as *tsants* (ծաւնծ) ‘wheat husk/chaff,’ the term *hashan* (հաշան) (related to threshing/drying straw), *pěřōk* (պըռոկ) ‘bud/sprout,’ *jalagh* (ջալաղ) ‘graft(ing),’ and *dōgyün* (դօգյւն) ‘branch collar,’ utilizing the historical-comparative method (See Table A1 for transcriptions).

4.1. Etymology of Several Words of Indo-European Origin

4.1.1. The Etymology of *tsants* (ծաւնծ) and Previous Approaches to *hashan* (հաշան)

The *tsants* (ծաւնծ) word meaning ‘grain husk and crushed straw’ is derived by H. Acharyan from the root of the word *tsets* > *tsetsel* (ծէծ>ծէծել) ‘beating > beat’ by bringing evidence from the borrowed form in Georgian^[2]. G. Jahukyan accepts *tsets* > *tsntsots*’ (ծէծ > ծնծոց) ‘crush > beating’ possible transition, but he questions Indo-European correlation and does not consider a reliable parallel version of Georgian *jenfa* «ծնծել» ‘beat, crush’, *enfi*, «խծնոծ» ‘remnants of hemp threads’^[5]. We compare all this with the dialectic word of *tsütsün* (ծնւծնւն) ‘blackberry bush, also rosehip, which is used as a side material to make fire by crushing (beating) it, or as a candle by prekeeping it in oil’^[9], and which is not mentioned in the dialect testimonies of the Armenian Scientific Dialectology. The Indo-European base of the word *tsets* (ծէծ) ‘beating’ *g’eg’- and the dialectal evidence (‘burn the stem by beating’, alternatively *tsutsun anel* ծնւծնւն աւել ‘to beat, to crush’), to our mind, reinforce the opinion that the word *tsants* (ծաւնծ) (the husks of wheat and oaks) is related to Indo-European origin.

The concept of ‘beating or crushing wheat grains with a crushing tool’ is related to the expression *hashan anel* (հաշան աւել) ‘lay the grain wheat,’ the examination of which is still ongoing despite ongoing debates and discussions about its origin. The word *hashel* (հաշել) ‘lay the grain wheat’ is quite old within the dialectal group and is attested in 19th-century Utik dialect wordstock as *ashan-hashan* (աշահ–հաշահ)^[10].

The etymological issue was first explored by G. Jahukyan and A. Margaryan and was later expanded upon by V. Hambardzumyan^[11–14]. A. Margaryan, based on the core meaning of the concept, rejects the derivation of the word *ashan* (աշահ) ‘lay the grain wheat’ from ‘autumn’.

However, the authors ultimately leave the origin of *ashan* (աշան) unresolved.

In recent years, V. Hambardzumyan has been deeply engaged in the etymological study of this term. Synthesizing previous viewpoints and possible interpretations, he emphasizes the temporal aspect of the word's origin. He proposes the Indo-European root **(e)s-en* 'harvest time, summer' and establishes relevant parallels in Indo-European languages^[14].

4.1.2. The Proposed Etymology of *ashan* || *hashan* (աշան || հաշան): Connection to 'Drying' and the PIE *khers-* Root

We tentatively include the words *ashan* || *hashan* (աշան || հաշան) in the list of words with Indo-European origin, combining certain observations with existing studies. In our view, these insights will be useful in addressing the etymological issues surrounding this word.

We acknowledge that *ashan* (աշան) 'dried straw' may be derived from *(h)ashan* ((h)աշան). However, its meaning does not stem from the commonly accepted definitions of 'to wear out, to be exhausted, to be weakened, to become sick,' as recorded in most dictionaries reflecting Old Armenian vocabulary. This interpretation is based on recent linguistic studies^[15]. Nor do we accept A. Margaryan's claim that it originates from the 'physical' meaning of the root *hash(-an)* (հաշ(-ան))-'exhaustion, weight loss, wearing out'^[13].

Instead, we propose that the meaning of the root *ash-* || *hash-* (աշ- || հաշ-) derives from the practice of spreading grain husks on the threshing floor-i.e., their intended purpose of being scattered, spread, and shattered. Naturally, the goal of this process is drying and burning, from which the notions of 'exhaustion' and related semantic developments could have emerged. These nuances are best expressed in original Armenian texts^[16].

Our hypothesis is based on the following factors:

a) Voice distinctions in the verb *hashel* ('to dry straw, grass'):

Active: *hashel* ('to dry straw')

Neutral: 'to exhaust, to wear out'

Passive: 'to be exhausted, to be worn out' (*tsiwrēl* (ծիրբել))^[17].

b) Multiplicity of meanings.

c) Synonymic relationships, including:

mashel (մաշել) 'wear out'

tsiwrēl (ծիրբել) 'weaken'

tsiwrēts'uts'anel, halel (ծիրբեցուցանել, հալել) 'melt'

vatnel (վատնել) 'waste'

tkarats'uts'anel (տկարացուցանել) 'sicken'

korusanel (կորուսանել) 'lose'^[17, 18].

d) Causal links between action and purpose-the concept of *ashan* || *hashan* (*hashēl*) (աշան || հաշան (հաշել)) and its entire set of related actions is ultimately aimed at drying and processing the material.

It can be argued that the most common meanings in Old Armenian followed those present in dialects, suggesting that semantic formation and expansion occurred through verb gender, metaphor, and other features characteristic of linguistic thought. Taking these factors into account, along with the structural analyses of our predecessors, we propose the following hypotheses:

The Old Armenian verb *hashel* (հաշել) 'to dry' and the dialectal form *(h)ashel* ((h)աշել) may have originated from a single base meaning-'to sprinkle, scatter, spread' (շաղ տալ, ցրել, այսուայնկողմ սփռել).

The Old Armenian *hashel* (հաշել) 'to dry' and the dialectal *(h)ashel* ((h)աշել) may be synonymous but of different origins, while the presence of *h-* (-h-) suggests a common root.

There are lexical and semantic similarities between *hashel* (հաշել) 'to dry' and *kha(r)shel* (խա(ր)շել) 'to boil.' The phonetic changes involving *kh* (խ) and *h* (հ) remain controversial. For example, if we accept that the dialectal *hashēl* (հաշել) 'to dry' originates from the Indo-European root *khers-* 'to burn, to warm,' with the loss of *r* (ր) and the transformation of *kh* > *h* (խ > հ), then *hashel* (հաշել) 'to dry' may have entered the Syunik-Artsakh (Karabakh) dialect through an alternative linguistic pathway. It must be acknowledged that this proposed phonetic development (*khers-* > *hash-*) presents challenges, as the *kh* > *h* shift is not universally applied across the Syunik-Artsakh lexicon, and the loss of intervocalic *r* in this specific context would require further explanation or analogy within Armenian historical phonology. In this dialectal group, the change of *kh* > *h* (խ > հ) is primarily seen in words such as *khaghōgh* > *havōgh* (խաղող > հավող), *khagh* > *hagh* (խաղ > հաղ), *khaghagh* > *haghagh* (խաղաղ > հաղաղ), and *khaghēs* > *haghs* (խաղըս > հաղըս); however, this pattern does not extend to all words. The sporadic nature of this sound change suggests it might be conditioned by specific phonetic envi-

ronments or represent lexical diffusion rather than a regular rule, making the direct derivation from *khrs-* tentative.

Determining which *khrs-* derivative is primary in Armenian is difficult, as dialectal forms such as *khasham* || *khashemnē* || *khashēvnē* || *khishēmnē* || *khashenmn* (խաշամ || խաշեմնը || խաշեվնը || խիշեմնը || խաշենմն) exist. These can be compared to *khazal* (խազալ): “large drops of dew from yellow leaves falling on the ground” (“Դեղին տերևներից ցողի խոշոր կաթիլները մետաղի ծանրությամբ ընկան խազալի վրա”)^[19], which appears in Old Armenian texts with the meaning ‘to suffer’ in both nominal and verbal forms. In the works of Syunik and Artsakh writers, *khasham* (խաշամ) is used nominally to mean ‘dry leaf, withered autumn foliage.’ While the literary examples vividly illustrate the meaning of *khasham* as brittle, dry, often fallen plant matter, establishing a direct etymological link to *hashan* solely based on this requires caution. However, the shared semantic field—referring specifically to dried-out, perhaps sun-baked or heat-affected vegetation (straw in the case of *hashan*, leaves in the case of *khasham*)—strengthens the possibility of a common conceptual, if not directly derivable phonetic, origin related to drying or withering.

Several examples from literary sources illustrate this usage:

“The bear attacks, the man and the bear wrestle, and a struggle for life and death begins on the fallen autumn *khasham*... The enraged bear throws the man off a cliff. Fortunately, Simon lands on a soft pile of *khasham* accumulated beneath the rock.” («Արջը վրա է հասնում, մարդ ու արջ գրկում են իրար և կանքի ու մահվան կռիվ է սկսվում նոր թափված խաշամի մեջ: ...Գազազած արջը նրան շարտում է քարափից ցած: Բարեբախտաբար Սիմոնն ընկնում է ժայռի տակ կուտակված փափուկ խաշամի վրա»)^[20].

“From the hem of my shirt / And the sleeve / Worn, colorful, / *Khashamanman* like fallen leaves / Patches / The wind tears / Mixing them with the falling *khasham* from the trees... *Khasham*, what *khasham*, / Hot lavash / The cattle eat / And are never satisfied.” («Ծապիկիս փեշքից / Ու թևքից կախված / Մաշված, զույնգզույն, / Խաշամանման / Կարկատանները / Պոկում է քամին, / Խառնում ծառերից / Թափվող խաշամին... Խաշամ, ինչ խաշամ, Թեժաթուխ լավաշ. / Տավարն ուտում է / Ու չի կշտանում»)^[21].

“...the autumn *khasham* rustles and crumbles under my feet...” («...Խշխշում է ու փշվում / Խաշամն աշնան՝ նոսրեփս տակ...»)^[22].

Could these variations have evolved and acquired semantic nuances due to the *kh* (խ) to *h* (հ) transformation?

The semantic connotations of these words are most evident in etymological studies of *kharshēl* (խարշել) ‘to boil’^[23]. This perspective is further supported by the related meanings of *hash(an)ēl* (հաշ(ան)ել) ‘to dry’ and *yēēshnēl* (յըշնել) ‘to dry leaves, to mold and dry.’ Furthermore, the semantic link between the proposed core meaning of ‘drying/burning’ (potentially from *khrs-*) and the attested Old Armenian meanings like ‘to wear out, to be exhausted’ (*hashil*) can be understood through metaphorical extension. Intense drying, especially under the sun or heat (inherent in the *khrs-* root), leads to physical brittleness, fragility, and loss of substance in materials (like straw or leaves becoming *khasham*). This physical ‘wearing out’ or becoming weakened through drying/heating could plausibly be extended metaphorically to represent the weakening or exhaustion of living beings or resources, aligning with synonyms like *mashel* (‘wear out’) and *tsiwrēl* (‘weaken’). The very process associated with *hashan anel* (threshing and laying out grain/straw to dry) was laborious agricultural work performed under the sun, directly linking the action of ‘drying’ with physical ‘exhaustion’.

4.1.3. *Pěřōk* (պըռոկ) and Its Linguistic Connections in the Context of the PIE Root **b(e)u-*

In the Syunik-Artsakh dialects, the word *pěřōk* (պըռոկ) carries multiple meanings, including ‘sprout, bud, shoot,’ ‘fresh leaf of the mulberry tree used to feed silkworms,’ ‘measles,’ and ‘a bump with a red top.’ Expressions derived from this base include *pěřōk k’ē/its’il* (պըռոկ քը/իցիլ), *pěřkēl* (պըռկել), *pěřōk-pěřōk* (պըռոկ-պըռոկ), meaning ‘to bud, to blossom, blossomed/swollen.’

Parallels in structure and meaning can be observed with the Classical Armenian word *busht* (բուշտ) ‘bump,’ which H. Acharyan examined in detail^[1]. Dialectal data may support G. Jahukyan’s view that *busht* (բուշտ) corresponds to the Proto-Indo-European root **b(e)u-* (or **b(h)(e)u-*) ‘to swell, inflate,’ although the origin of the element *-sht* (-շտ) remains unidentified^[1, 5].

The concepts expressed by the PIE root **b(e)u-* are primarily reflected in various Armenian derivatives, such

as the dialectal words *pěřōsh* (պըռօշ), *pěřunk* (պըռնունկ), *pěřōk* (պըռոկ), *pětōk* (պըտոկ), which convey meanings like ‘brim, lip, edge, verge, top,’ preserving the notion of ‘swelling, rising’ (cf. also meanings like ‘to swell, grow, boast’). Both in *bu(-sht)* (բու(-շտ)) and in these related words, the basic component appears as the Armenian reflex of the root **b(e)u-*, considering the regular Armenian sound change *b > p* (*p > u*)^[24]. For comparison, similar native Armenian formations include *ptuk*, *ptkunk*, *ptkants* (պտոկ, պտկոկ, պտկանց) ‘tip, head’^[4].

The elements *-r-* (*-n-*) and *-t-* (*-un-*) present in these words (*pěřōsh*, *pěřunk*, *pěřōk*, *pětōk*) likely correspond to known Armenian suffixes or suffix-like elements expressing *frequentative/iterative* (*-t-*) and *intensive/frequentative* (*-r-*) meanings (cf. *kotrtel* (կոտրտել) ‘to break into pieces’, *t’rvrtal* (թըրվտալ) ‘to flutter’; *doğral* (դոդրալ) ‘to shiver intensely’, *t’avalrel* (թաւալրել) ‘to roll repeatedly’). In this context, they might emphasize the intensity or multiplicity of swelling or the state of being an edge/tip (e.g., multiple buds represented by *pěřōk*).

The word *pāsh* (պաշ) ‘slope, steep mound’^[25], attested in the dialects of Goris, Gandzak, and Kazakh, also likely derives from the **b(e)u-* root. A similar semantic development (‘swell’ > ‘hill, mound’) is observed in other IE languages, for example, Latin *bucca* (‘swollen, stuffed cheek,’ then ‘mouth’)^[26], Greek *βουνός* (*bounós*, ‘hill, mound’)^[27], Swedish *puk* (‘tumor, abscess’). The Armenian dialectal word *pāsh* (պաշ) is sometimes groundlessly compared to the Turkic loanword *bash* (բաշ) ‘head,’ but *pāsh* never carries this meaning in Armenian dialects. Instead, the semantic developments of **b(e)u-* are richly preserved precisely in the Syunik-Artsakh dialects. Compare also *puz/sti* (պուզ/ստի) ‘sharp edge’ and *pāsh* (պաշ) ‘steep mound,’ both of which exhibit sound changes characteristic of Armenian: *b > p* (*p > u*) and *s/z > sh* (*u/q > շ*). Similar phonological changes are evident in Proto-Celtic **bek(k)o-* (‘beak, snout’)^[28].

This analysis suggests that Armenian dialects, particularly the Syunik-Artsakh vernaculars, preserve a rich and layered evolution of the Proto-Indo-European root **b(e)u-*, demonstrating how phonological transformations and morphological patterns have shaped a diverse set of meanings related to growth, swelling, and prominence.

4.2. Dialect Words of Indo-European Origin or Dialect Words Related to the Ancestral Old Armenian Vocabulary

4.2.1. The Etymology of the Word *Jalagh* (Ջալաղ)

1. Introduction: Meaning, Forms, and Distribution of the Word

In the agricultural terminology of the Syunik-Artsakh dialects, the word *jalagh* (ջալաղ) is encountered, meaning ‘grafting’ (referring to the action and/or the material used for grafting, i.e., a scion or branch)^[29]. It also has phonetic variants such as *jēlagh* (ջէլաղ), *jēlagh* (ջըլաղ), *jālāgh* (ջալաղ), and corresponding verbal forms *jēlēghēl* (ջըլղել), *jēlaghēl* (ջըլաղել). Notably, a word similar in form and meaning (*calaq* ‘grafting, plant grafting’) is also attested in neighboring Atrpatakan Turkic^[30], as well as *calak* (*aşı*) ‘grafting material’^[31]. The origin of the word remains uncertain and subject to discussion. The word with this meaning is absent from Middle Armenian data, although Avetikyan et al. mention the uncertain *jalhank*’ (ջալհաւկ) (‘pagan holiday’) and *jalot* (ջալոտ) (‘beating wand, knobstick, whip’)^[16], whose connection to the word under discussion is doubtful.

2. Loan Hypothesis (Turkic/Persian Sources)

a) *The Most Plausible Parallel:* As noted, the existence of the word *calaq* (‘grafting’) in Atrpatakan Turkic provides very strong evidence in favor of borrowing^[30]. The semantic and phonetic proximity, as well as the geographical adjacency (Syunik-Artsakh and Atrpatakan), make this hypothesis highly probable. It is possible that Armenian borrowed from Turkic, or (less likely) the reverse direction, or that it is a common regional (areal) word.

b) *Other Turkic/Persian Parallels:* Possible connections with other words have been discussed, but they are semantically or phonetically distant and less likely: Turkic *çatlak* (‘crack’)^[32], *çalak* || *calak* (‘branched tree’)^[33, 34], the Persian loanword *çalık* || *çalak* (‘agile, restless’), Turkic *çaluk* (‘hit, blow’, cf. Arm. *ch’alik* (չալիկ) ‘cane’). Similarly, a connection with Persian *čelik* (چلیک, ‘barrel’) or Turkic *çelik çomak* is not justified for the meaning ‘grafting’.

c) *H. Acharyan’s Viewpoint:* Acharyan classified the word *jal* (ջալ) (‘piece of wood for burning’) as a Middle Armenian word, considering it a possible loanword from Turkic or Persian, based on the entry *be’le - jal* (բէլէ - ջալ) (‘stick for a game’) in Byuzandatsi’s dictionary^[4, 35]. However, the

semantic connection between this word *jal* (ջալ) and *jalagh* (ջալաղ) ('grafting') is not clear.

3. Native Armenian / Indo-European Origin Hypotheses

a) *PIE Root *g'hel-*: G. Jahukyan rejected a Turkic or Persian origin and proposed connecting the word to the Proto-Indo-European root **g'hel-* ('to cut, chop')^[36]. The semantic connection could be justified as follows: the act of 'cutting/chopping' is essential in the grafting process (cutting the scion, making an incision on the stock). This hypothesis has no phonetic problems (as the development *g'h > j* (*q'h > ɟ*) is possible in Armenian), but direct parallels confirming the development of a term for 'grafting' specifically from this root in Armenian or other IE languages are lacking. The connection of the game name *Ch'ēlēngi* (չիլենգի) to this root is also hypothetical^[36].

b) *PIE Root *gel-*: A connection with the PIE root **gel-* ('to roll, condense, accumulate, connect') has also been suggested^[27].

- *Semantic justification*: Certain parallels related to round formations or joining could support this hypothesis: Gk. *ganglīon* (γάγγλιον, 'a ball that forms after grafting'), Lat. *galla* ('gall-apple'), Alb. *gogēlē* ('pellet, knob')^[27]. In Armenian, the terms *mayran* (մայրաւն) ('grafting spot, tree bend') or *mēran* (մէրաւն) might also be related to this concept. The semantic link could be that grafting involves joining, connecting, and often leads to a thickening at the base of the branch.
- *Phonetic problem*: The main and very serious obstacle for this hypothesis is the phonetic development. The sound change **g > ɟ* (*q > ɟ*) for this root is not established as a regular sound law in Armenian. Although isolated cases exist (dialectal *gil > jil* (*qɟɟ > ɟɟɟ*)), they do not provide sufficient basis to confirm the *gel- > jalagh* (ջալաղ) transition. The proposed reconstruction *gəl-(o)-lo-* also remains hypothetical.

c) *Connection with other Armenian words*: The semantic connection of the words *janal* (ջանալ) ('to make thinner, reduce' or 'to decrease, weaken') with the word *jalagh* (ջալաղ) ('grafting') is unclear^[37, 38].

The etymology of the word *jalagh* (ջալաղ) remains uncertain. The comparison with Atrpatakan Turkic *calaq* ('grafting') provides *strong evidence in favor of borrowing*,

considering the semantic, phonetic, and geographical proximity. On the other hand, hypotheses of native Indo-European origin, although possessing certain semantic justifications (especially Jahukyan's proposed connection with **g'hel-* 'to cut', which has no phonetic issues), face either the lack of direct parallels (in the case of *g'hel-*) or serious phonetic obstacles (the improbability of the **gel- > jalagh* (ջալաղ) transition). It is also possible that the word is originally Armenian (e.g., from *g'hel-*), but its external phonetic shape contributed to it being later perceived as a foreign loanword. Nevertheless, based on the currently available data, *the loan hypothesis (specifically from Atrpatakan Turkic or as a common regional word) appears more probable* than the hypotheses of Indo-European origin. Further comparative-historical and dialectological studies are needed for a definitive conclusion.

4.2.2. The Etymology of *dögyün* || *dēgün* (դօգյուն || դէգուն)

a) *Origin from the Armenian root tok (տոկ)*: The best-substantiated and linguistically supported hypothesis connects the word *dögyün* (դօգյուն) to the native Armenian root *tok* (տոկ) (originating from the PIE root **dewə-/dowə-*, meaning 'to endure, last long') and the adjective *tokun* (տոկուն) derived from it.

1. *Semantic justification*: This connection perfectly explains both meanings of the word. The core meaning of 'firm, durable, resilient', which is preserved in the adjectival usage ('a firm, resilient, steadfast person'; e.g., *tokun kamk* (տոկուն կամք) 'steadfast will', *tokun mard* (տոկուն մարդ) 'resilient person'), fully corresponds to the nominal meaning ('the firm, hard part of a tree; trunk/base'). The semantic development from an adjective (general: 'firm') to a noun (specific: 'name for the firm part') is a common phenomenon in language evolution, resulting in the nominal meaning becoming primary, while the adjectival meaning was retained secondarily.

2. *Morphological basis*: The assumption of the form *tokun* (տոկուն) is well-founded, as the suffix *-un* (-ւն) is a known adjective-forming suffix in Armenian (< PIE **-ono-*), creating words that denote a quality or state (cf. *imastun* (իմաստուն) 'wise', *zart'un* (զարթուն) 'awake').

3. Phonetic development:

a. *t > d voicing*: The key phonetic justification for this hypothesis is the *t > d* (*un > ɲ*) shift. Extensive examples

confirm that in the Goris dialect, the voicing of intervocalic *t* (*un*) (*t* > *d*) (*un* > *ŋ*) is a regular and widespread phenomenon (e.g., *tun* > *dön* (*un*ḡ > *ŋ*öḡ), *ōtar* > *ōdar* (*ou*ḡ > *oḡ*ḡ), *gitel* > *gidāl* (*qḡ*ḡḡḡ > *qḡ*ḡḡḡ), *katarel* > *kadarel* (*ku*ḡḡḡḡḡ > *ku*ḡḡḡḡḡ), etc.). Therefore, the transformation of the hypothetical form *tokun* (*un*ḡḡḡḡḡ) into the *d*-initial (*ŋ*) form *dögyün* (*ŋ*öḡḡḡḡḡ) fully aligns with the phonological rules of the Goris dialect, provided the word was used in the appropriate phonetic environment (e.g., within a phrase where the *t* (*un*) sound appears between vowels or next to a sonorant).

b. *-un* > *-gyün/-ēgun* fronting/palatalization: The change in the ending is also likely explainable through the internal rules of the dialect. It is probable that regressive fronting (assimilation) occurred: first, the *u* (*n*ḡ) vowel in the final *-un* (*-n*ḡḡ) syllable was fronted, becoming *ü* (*n*ḡ). Subsequently, this fronted *ü* (*n*ḡ) vowel, following the rules of vowel harmony, influenced the preceding *o* (*o*) vowel, also causing it to front to *ö* (*ö*). Thus, the phonetic development could have been: *tokun* (*un*ḡḡḡḡḡ) > **tokün* (*un*ḡḡḡḡḡ) > **dokiün* (*ŋ*ḡḡḡḡḡḡ) > *dögyün* (*ŋ*öḡḡḡḡḡ) (where intervocalic *k* > *g* (*q* > *q*) voicing is also assumed). Similar vowel changes and harmony phenomena are observed in other words in the Goris dialect (cf. *šlor* > *šilör* > *šülör* (*ʒ*ḡḡḡ > *ʒ*ḡḡḡḡḡ > *ʒ*ḡḡḡḡḡ), *khndzor* > *khindzör* > *khündzör* (*ḡ*ḡḡḡḡḡ > *ḡ*ḡḡḡḡḡḡ > *ḡ*ḡḡḡḡḡḡ)).

b) Exclusion of other hypotheses:

1. *Loan hypotheses*: Proposed parallels with Turkic (*dügüm* ‘knot’) or Middle Persian (*tāg* ‘branch’) remain unsubstantiated^[39–42], either due to semantic mismatch or the lack of evidence for such borrowing into Armenian. The existence of a well-founded explanation based on internal Armenian data makes external loan hypotheses less likely.

2. *Other Indo-European roots*: A connection with the PIE root **dhegwh-* (‘to burn’), while perhaps superficially appealing, faces serious semantic problems. A connection with the PIE root **dou-* (‘to penetrate’, cf. Arm. *togor* (*un*ḡḡḡḡḡ)) encounters a phonetic obstacle (regarding the expected initial *t* (*un*))^[5], whereas the *tokun* > *dögyün* (*un*ḡḡḡḡḡ > *ŋ*öḡḡḡḡḡ) hypothesis fully explains the initial *d* (*ŋ*) based on the regular sound changes of the Goris dialect.

Synthesizing the dual semantics of the word *dögyün* || *dēgün* (*ŋ*öḡḡḡḡḡ || *ŋ*ḡḡḡḡḡḡ), the function of the Armenian adjective-forming suffix *-un* (*-n*ḡḡ), and the regular nature of both the *t* > *d* (*un* > *ŋ*) voicing and vowel harmony (fronting/palatalization) in the Goris dialect, it can be

concluded with a high degree of probability that *the word is a dialectal development of the Armenian adjective tokun (unḡḡḡḡḡ) (from the root tok (unḡḡ)).* It retained its original adjectival meaning (‘firm, resilient’) and developed a specialized nominal meaning (‘firm trunk/base of a branch’). Phonetically, the word underwent the regular voicing (*t* > *d*) (*un* > *ŋ*) and fronting (*o* > *ö* (*o* > *ö*), *u* > *ü* (*n*ḡ > *n*ḡḡ)) characteristic of this dialect. This explanation currently stands as the most substantiated and comprehensive account of the word’s origin, leaving other hypotheses in significantly weaker positions. The phonetic mechanism of the ending change (*-un* > *-gyün/-ēgun*) (*-n*ḡḡ > *-qḡḡḡḡ/-ḡḡḡḡḡḡ*) is also plausibly explained by the internal patterns of the dialect, although it might warrant further refinement in future studies.

4.2.3. The Etymology of *K’lpel* || *kēlpēl* (ḡḡḡḡḡ || ḡḡḡḡḡḡ) and its Connection to the PIE Root **(s)kel-*

K’lpel Kēlpēl (ḡḡḡḡḡ || ḡḡḡḡḡḡ) means ‘to strip, to pare, to peel’. In the Goris dialect, it also signifies ‘to rob, to cut, to deprive of property’^[43]. This word is derived from *k’ēlvhan anēl* (ḡḡḡḡḡḡḡ ḡḡḡḡḡ), meaning ‘to tear’, which is related to the Indo-European root **(s)kel-* meaning ‘to tear, pick up, scratch, take out’^[44]. Similarly, the words **shēghat* (ḡḡḡḡḡḡ), meaning ‘slice, piece of watermelon, melon’, and *ts’ilep* (ḡḡḡḡḡḡ), meaning ‘piece of wood’, can be compared to *k’aghēl* and *k’ēgh* (ḡḡḡḡḡḡ, ḡḡḡḡ) meaning ‘stick’^[45].

5. Comparative Analysis of the “Agriculture, Vegetation” Thematic Group

Table 1 below provides a comparative analysis of Armenian terms within the ‘Agriculture and Vegetation’ thematic group. The classification largely follows C. Buck’s established framework^[6], a significant resource in comparative linguistics further developed by projects such as that at the University of Texas at Austin (Liberal Arts), with a focus on identifying items of potential Indo-European origin relevant to Armenian. The table contrasts Standard Armenian or Classical Armenian (Grabar)^[46] forms with their corresponding Syunik-Artsakh dialectal variants. It also includes indications of dialectal status and notes on etymological uncertainties. For an explanation of specific symbols used within the table, please refer to the legend provided below it.

Table 1. Agricultural and Vegetation Terms: Standard Armenian vs. Syunik-Artsakh Dialects.

<i>Semantic Concept</i>	<i>Entry No. (Arm.)</i>	<i>Dialectal Status</i>	<i>Etymological Note</i>	<i>Standard/Classical Arm.</i>	<i>Syunik-Artsakh Form</i>
8.11. Farmer	-	-	-	8.11. Farmer	-
8.12. Field	1.	-	-	8.12. art	art
	2.	-	-	and	hand
	3.	-	-	harawunk'	-
8.13. Garden	-	-	-	8.13. Garden	-
	4.	-	-	aygi	-
	5.	-	-	8.131. khēch'	khēch'ak
8.14. Barn	-	-	-	8.14. Barn	-
8.15. Cultivate, Till	-	-	-	8.15. Cultivate	-
	6.	-	-	8.151. kori	kōri
	7.	-	?	aṛoganem	-
	8.	-	?	holosem	-
8.21. Plow (vb.; sb.)	9.	-	-	8.21. arawr	arōr
	10.	-	?	herk-em	hērēl
8.212. Furrow	-	-	-	8.212. Furrow	-
	11.	-	?	dzlem	ts'lel
8.22. Dig	12.	-	-	8.22. peghem	-
	13.	-	?	p'orem	p'ōrēl
8.23. Spade	-	-	-	8.23. Spade	-
8.24. Shovel	14.	-	-	8.24. t'i	tē ti
8.25. Hoe	15.	-	-	8.25. bir	pihēr
8.26. Fork	16.	-	-	8.26. eghan	yēghan yēghōli
	17.	-	?	hetsanots'	-
8.27. Rake	-	-	-	8.27. Rake	-
8.28. Harrow	18.	D.	-	8.28. ts'ak'(an)	ts'āk'ān
8.31. Sow; Seed	19.	-	-	8.31. sermanem	sērmēl
	20.	-	-	serm(n)	sērm
8.32. Mow, Reap	21.	-	-	8.32. k'aghem	k'aghēl
	22.	D.	-	k'aghel	-
	23.	D.SA	-	k'lpel	k'ēlēpēl
	24.	-	-	8.321. at-ok'	-
	25.	D.SA	-	truz	tēřōz
8.33. Sickie; Scythe	-	-	-	8.33. Sickie; Scythe	-
	26.	-	?	gerandi	kērandu
	27.	-	-	yeghan	yēghōli
8.34. Thresh	28.	D.	-	8.34. mařel	-
8.35. Threshing-Foor	29.	-	?	8.35. kam(n)	kamnē
	30.	-	?SA	hashan	ashan hashan
	31.	-	-	mghegh	mēghēhg
8.41. Crop, Harvest	32.	-	-	8.41. ber-k'	pērēk'
	33.	-	-	ardiwn-k'	-
	34.	-	-	ptugh	ptōgh
	35.	-	-	era-(khayri)	-
	36.	-	-	8.411. bard	bard
	37.	-	-	berri	-
8.42. Grain	-	-	-	8.42. Grain	-
	38.	-	-	8.421. tsants	ts'ūtsūn
8.43. Wheat	-	-	-	8.43. Wheat	-
	39.	D.SA	-	dzavar	tsävār
	40.	D.SA	-	hachar	achār
	41.	D.SA	-	kut	kōt
	42.	D.SA	-	hatik	hatēg
	43.	D.SA	?	koriz	kōrindz
	44.	D.SA	-	koreak	kōrēk
	45.	-	-	8.431. korkot	kō/urkōt

Table 1. Cont.

<i>Semantic Concept</i>	<i>Entry No. (Arm.)</i>	<i>Dialectal Status</i>	<i>Etymological Note</i>	<i>Standard/Classical Arm.</i>	<i>Syunik-Artsakh Form</i>
8.44. Barley	46.	-	?	8.44. gari	kāri
8.45. Rye	-	-	-	8.45 Rye	-
8.46. Oats	-	-	-	8.46 Oats	-
8.47. Maize, Corn	-	-	-	8.47. Maize, Corn	-
8.48. Rice	-	-	-	8.48. Rice	-
8.51. Grass	47. 48.	- D.SA	- -	8.51. dalar gēj	tālār kēch
8.52. Hay	- 49. 50.	- - -	- - -	8.52. Hay 8.521. t'aram t'ořom	- t'aram t'ořōm
8.53. Plant	51.	-	-	8.53. boys	-
	52.	-	-	8.531. aluch	haluch/j
	53.	D.SA	?SA	zkeř	zēkēř
	54.	-	-	bogh	pēk'i
	55.	D.SA	?SA	poli	pōli
	56.	-	?SA	gaghdsn	gaylik
	57.	-	-	geghdz	-
	58.	-	-	gindz	kindz
	59.	-	-	daghds(n)	tāghkhtsē
	60.	D.	-	t'al	t'al
	61.	-	-	t'aght'	-
	62.	D.	-	t'eluk	t'ēluk
	63.	-	-	mamuř	mamuřnē
	64.	-	?	matategh	mētātēgh
	65.	-	?	matatuk	-
	66.	D.	-	moghk	-
8.54. Root	67.	-	-	awel	vülük
	68.	-	?	vosi	vēsi
	69.	-	?	tatask	-
	70.	-	-	ts'ak'i	ts'āk'i
	71.	-	-	k'agh	k'agh
	72.	-	-	k'egh	k'ēgh
	73.	-	-	8.54. arm(-at)	-
	74.	D.SA	?SA	takři	takři
	75.	D.	-	8.541. deghd	-
8.55. Branch	76.	-	?SA	8.55. ost	vōst-an
	77.	-	-	ogor	-
	78.	-	-	koghr	-
	79.	D.SA	?SA	dogun	dōgün dēēgün
	80.	-	-	8.551. argat	pēghpōj > pēghpēkhōtēl
	81.	-	-	boghboj	-
	82.	D.	-	dghbik	-
	83.	-	-	tsil	tsil
	84.	D.SA	?SA	bogh	pōkh
	85.	-	?SA	tsiwgh	tsōgh
	86.	-	-	ēndzuim	-
	87.	D.	?SA	mol	mō -ōsh-a-vart'
	88.	D.SA	?SA	tal	ta/āl
	89.	-	-	morj	-
	90.	D.	-	shiw	shēv
	91.	-	-	och	-
	92.	-	-	p(l)pluk	-
	93.	-	-	ptuk	put, ptkēl
	94.	-	-	jov	-
8.56. Leaf	95.	-	?SA	steghn	tsghan
	96.	D.	-	ts'ak'	ts'āk'
	97.	D.	-	ts'ruk	-
	98.	-	-	8.56. t'er	t'ēr
	99.	-	-	t'ert'	t'ērt'
	100.	D.	-	mogh	-
	101.	-	?	saghart'	-

Table 1. *Cont.*

<i>Semantic Concept</i>	<i>Entry No. (Arm.)</i>	<i>Dialectal Status</i>	<i>Etymological Note</i>	<i>Standard/Classical Arm.</i>	<i>Syunik-Artsakh Form</i>
8.57. Flower	102.	-	?	8.57. tsaghik	tsaghēg
8.58. Rose	-	-	-	8.58. Rose	-
8.60. Tree = 1.42	103.	-	-	8.60. tsar	tsar
	104.	-	?SA	8.601. mayran	-
	105.	D.SA	-	plkan	pēlkan
	106.	D.SA	-	prkel	pērkel
	107.	D.SA	-	prok	pērōk (tinil)
	108.	D.SA	?SA	jalagh	jalagh
	109.	D.SA	-	arnēl	arnēl
8.61. Oak	-	-	-	8.61. kaghin	kaghin
8.62. Beech	-	-	-	8.62. Beech	-
8.63. Birch	110.	-	-	8.63. Birch	-
8.64. Pine	111.	-	?SA	8.64. mayri	mayri
	112.	-	-	kueni	kēni
8.65. Fir	113.	-	-	8.65. eghewni	yēghēvni
	114.	-	?	8.651. barti	-
	115.	-	-	hats'i	hats'i
	116.	-	-	t'eghawsh	-
	117.	-	-	t'eghi	t'ēghi t'ēghē
	118.	-	-	noch(i)	-
	119.	-	-	ts'akh	ts'akh chakh
	120.	D.SA	?SA	buk'i	pūk'i
8.66. Acorn	121.	-	-	8.66 kaghin	kaghi/ēn
	122.	D.SA	-	t-koghin	tēkōghin
8.67. Vine	123.	-	-	8.67. ort'	-
	124.	-	-	t'in	t'ānāg
	125.	D.SA	?SA	chit'	chit'
	126.	D.SA	?SA	k'nt'ern(ē)	k'ēnt'ērn(ē)
8.68. Tobacco	-	-	-	8.68 Tobacco	-
8.69. Smoke (Tobacco)	-	-	-	8.69. Smoke (Tobacco)	-

Legend:

- D.: Dialectal (general Armenian)
- D.SA: Dialectal (Syunik-Artsakh specific)
- ?: Uncertain origin/interpretation (general Armenian)
- ?SA: Uncertain origin/interpretation (Syunik-Artsakh specific)
- -: Absent / Unattested/Not relevant for comparison.
- **Bold lines:** Demarcate thematic sub-areas within the table.

Light color text: Indicates units completely absent in Armenian.

6. Conclusions

Instead of the 45 Indo-European words identified by Carl Buck, our research indicates the existence of 126 such words within the thematic group “Agriculture, vegetation” in Armenian (**Table 2**). Furthermore, our analysis of the Syunik-Artsakh dialects reveals 88 words of Indo-European origin related to agriculture, constituting approximately 69% of the agricultural vocabulary in these dialects. We propose that terms like *tsants* (grain husk and crushed straw), *hashan* (to lay the grain wheat), *prok* (sprout, bud, shoot), *pāsh* (slope, steep mound), *jalagh* (vaccine, grafting), and *dēgūn* (branch collar of a tree), in addition to *k'lpēl*, are also of Indo-European origin. While these words may have undergone

semantic and phonetic changes over time due to linguistic contact, they retain identifiable Indo-European features.

Author Contributions

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

Table 2. Comparative Count of Indo-European Agricultural Terms: Buck, Jahukyan, and Present Study.

<i>A Numbered Unit</i>	<i>According to</i>	<i>Dialectical</i>		<i>Controversial</i>		<i>According to</i>	
	<i>C. Buck</i>	<i>in Armenian</i>	<i>S.-A (Syunik and Artsakh)</i>	<i>in Armenian</i>	<i>S.-A.</i>	<i>G. Jahukyan</i>	<i>Syunik and Artsakh</i>
8.1.	5	0	0	1	0	8	4
8.2.	9	1	0	4	0	10	8
8.3.	5	2	2	2	1	13	10
8.4.	8	0	6	2	0	15	12
8.5.	8	10	7	6	11	56	36
8.6.	10	9	0	1	6	24	18
Total	45	22	15	16	18	126	88

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Data Availability Statement

The research was mainly conducted in Syunik. The data for the research were collected in the Syunik region of the Republic of Armenia and in Nagorno-Karabakh (Forced migration of the Armenian population from Nagorno-Karabakh until 2023). The research materials can also be found in dictionaries and in the list of literature mentioned in this article.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors stated that there are no conflicts of interest.

Appendix A

Table A1. Armenian Distribution Table.

Armenian Upper	Latin Upper	Armenian Lower	Latin Lower
Ա	A	ա	a
Բ	B	բ	b
Գ	G	գ	g
Դ	D	դ	d
Ե	E	ե	e
Զ	Z	զ	z
Է	Ē	է	ē
Ը	Ē	ը	ē
Թ	T'	թ	t'
Ճ	Zh	ճ	zh
Ի	I	ի	i
Լ	L	լ	l
Խ	Kh	խ	kh
Տ	Ts	տ	ts
Կ	K	կ	k
Հ	H	հ	h
Ջ	Dz	ձ	dz
Ղ	Gh	ղ	gh
Ճ	Ch	ճ	ch
Մ	M	մ	m
ԅ	Y	յ	y
Ն	N	ն	n
Շ	Sh	շ	sh
Ո	O	ո	o
Չ	Ch'	չ	ch'
Պ	P	պ	p
Ջ	J	ջ	j
Ռ	R	ր	r
Ս	S	ս	s
Վ	V	վ	v
Տ	T	տ	t
Ր	R	ր	r
Յ	Ts'	յ	ts'
Բ	W	ւ	w
Ու	U	ու	u
Փ	P'	փ	p'
Զ	K'	ք	k'
Եւ	Ew	եւ	ew
Եվ	Ev	եվ	ev
Օ	O	ո	o
Ֆ	F	ֆ	f
Ու	Ü	ու	ü
Ա	Ä	ա	ä
Օ	Ö	օ	ö

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