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Transferring the Greek Verb Forms
Containing the Semantics of the Iterative
Category to Old Georgian Translations**

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On the Georgian-Greek Language Relations: Transferring the Greek Verb Forms Containing the Semantics of the Iterative Category to Old Georgian Translations¹

ABSTRACT

Translation activity played an important role in the formation and rapprochement of Georgian-Greek language relations. In the paper, we discuss the issue of how the verb forms containing the semantics of the Iterative category were translated from old Greek in the Georgian Gospels. In Greek, the Iterative category is a semantic category expressed by lexical units. Together with the lexical units, different verb forms create the idea of recurrence. In old Georgian, the category was expressed morphologically through the iterative screeves.

In terms of Georgian-Greek linguistic relations, the findings of our study are quite interesting as they give information how canonical texts were translated into Georgian. It is clear that the translators and scribes followed the tradition: they used the iterative screeves but they could not avoid the influence of the original works. Since in Greek the Iterative category is a semantic category, as a result of the influence of the Greek language, together with the iterative screeves, they actively used the lexical means in Georgian translations, the equivalents of which were attested in the original. Accordingly, in the Georgian Four Gospel editions, there are a number of calques (double expression of the category), which is not natural for the Georgian language. Translators sometimes used the principle of free translation, however, based on the principle of translation of canonical texts, they mainly tried to express the Iterative category through accurate translation.

Keywords: *Georgian-Greek language relations, principle of free translation, Iterative category*

Introduction

The Georgian-Greek language relations have a long history. Translation activity played an important role in the formation and rapprochement of these relations. We focus on the

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translation of the Georgian Four Gospels. They were translated at different times and, therefore, translators and scribes tried to translate the canonical text in their own way: they transferred the grammatical forms characteristic of Greek through an accurate or free translation from Greek to Georgian and, at the same time, they tried to make the translations stylistically similar to the original.

It is mentioned in the scientific literature that the Georgian Four Gospels went through three main stages of translation and editing: Pre-Athonian (V-X cc.), Athonian (late X - middle XI cc.) and Hellenopinic (late XI - early XII cc.) (Kvirkvelia, 2019, 7).

Our goal is to analyze the linguistic variants of the Greek verb forms translated into Georgian that contain the semantics of the Iterative category in the "Pre-Athonian" "Adishi", "Jruch-Parkhli" and "Athonian" (translated by Ekvtime and Ioane the Athonites) editions of the Georgian Four Gospels.

The Iterative category refers to a repetitive (usual) action. In Greek, it is a semantic category. Together with lexical units, verb forms of different tenses create the idea of recurrence. In Georgian, the mentioned category is expressed morphologically by special screeves: the Continuous Iterative (the Iterative I), the Iterative II and the Iterative III. The Iterative screeves had the marker -i (As for the Present Iterative, we agree with the opinion that this screeve expresses a permanent action, the general present).

In Old Georgian, the organic expression of the Iterative category gradually disappeared. Z. Sardjveladze identified cases where other screeves are used instead of the screeves of the Iterative: "The form of the discontinuous screeve is used where the screeves of the Iterative II is expected" (Sarjveladze, 1984, 451). From his point of view, the existence of such cases indicates the breaking of the Iterative. G. Gogolashvili thinks that the issue needs to be specified, e.g., "in some cases, the replacement of the Iterative II with the discontinuous screeve does not mean the breakdown of the Iterative II" (Gogolashvili, 2010, 429). An interesting phenomenon occurs in Old Georgian when we find additional lexical units together with the Iterative screeves to express the Iterative category, e.g. **mravalgzis**, **maradis**, **maradjam**, etc. In English they translate as – **many times**, **forever**, **always**. We have noticed a tendency - in the language, the organic formation of the Iterative was gradually replaced by the descriptive formation. In the old Georgian language, the Iterative screeves were slowly losing their power. The screeve forms no longer had the ability to express the function of the Iterative and therefore it became necessary to resort to additional specific means. In the scientific literature it is noted that "the existence of the possibility of contextual (or lexical, descriptive) expression of the

Iterative could be a contributing factor (and not a cause) to the disruption of the organic formation and the establishment of the descriptive formation" (Gogolashvili, 2010, 430).

Such cases are more common in translated monuments. As we mentioned above, we will analyze the issue based on the editions of "the Georgian Four Gospels": "**Two old editions of the Four Gospels**" (1945) and "**Two last editions of the Gospels**" (1979). For comparison, we have used the Greek original of the "Gospels" (1904). An interesting fact should be emphasized: Ioane (John) and Eqvtime (Euthymius) the Athonites lived in X-XI cc. and in that period, it was decided to retranslate "The Gospels" with maximal precision to the original. Of course, Ioane (John) and Eqvtime (Euthymius) the Athonites used already existed edition of "The Gospel" translated into Georgian, compared it to the Greek original and changed the text if needed.

We also used the English "Gospels" to make the issue clearer (<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/nt/luke/8?lang=eng>).

To study the issue, we used the **descriptive, comparative-contrastive** methods.

This category is expressed semantically. **It is interesting what made the translators use the Iterative screeves along with lexical units expressing iterative actions.** We will try to answer this question. It should be noted that the double expression of the mentioned category – multiplicity can be considered to be tautology since Georgian is not characterized of double formation of grammatical categories. We will give some extracts from the editions of the "Georgian Gospels" and then we will compare them with the Greek "Four Gospels":

DE

რამეთუ უბრძანა სულსა მას არაწმიდასა განსვლად კაცისა მისგან; რამეთუ **მრავალ ჟამ წარიტაცის იგი**, და **შებორკილიან** იგი ჯაჰჰუთა და საკრველითა და ჰცვედ, და **განხეთქნის** საკრველნი და იდევენებიან ეშმაკისა მისგან უდაბნოთა (DE, ლკ. 8, 29)

rametu ubrdZana sulsa mas arawmindasa gansvlad kacisa misgan; rametu **mraval jam waritatsis igi**, da **Seborkilian** igi Jay,ta da sakrvelita da hcved, da **ganxetknis** sakrvelni da **idevnebian** eSmakisa misgan udabnota (LK. 8, 29).

In this example, we can find the Iterative screeves along with the lexical unit: „**მრავალ ჟამ წარიტაცის... შებორკილიან... განხეთქნის**“.

mravaljam waritatsis... sheborkilian... ganxetknis.

Its parallel edition C:

რამეთუ უბრძანა სულსა მას არაწმიდასა განსვლად კაცისა მისგან; რამეთუ **მრავალ**

ვალგზის წარიტაცის იგი, და შებორკილიან იგი ჯაჭვთა და საკრველითა და ჰცვედ, და განხეთქის საკრველნი და იდევენებინ ეშმაკისა მისგან უდაბნოთა (C, ლკ. 8, 29).

rametu ubrdZana sulsa mas arawmindasa gansvlad kacisa misgan; rametu **mravalgzis waritatsis** igi, da **Seborkilian** igi Jay,ta da sakvirvelita da hcved, da **ganxetknis** sakrvelni da idevnebin eSmakisa misgan udabnota (LK. 8, 29).

The English translation is as follows:

"For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. **For oftentimes it had caught him**: and he was **kept bound with chains** and fetters; and **he brake the bands**, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness" (LK. 8, 29).

We pay attention to these parts: "For oftentimes it had caught him", "he was kept bound", "he brake the bands".

There is no essential difference between the editions, except the fact that instead of the lexical unit მრავალ ჟამ **mravaljam**, we find მრავალგზის **mravlgzis** in the edition and instead of the verb იდევენებოან **idevnebian**, the verb იდევენებინ **idevnebin** is used.

The Greek original:

παρήγγελλεν γὰρ τὸ πνεύματι τὸ ἀκαθάρτω ἐξελθεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄνθιρου. **πολλοῖς γὰρ χρόνοις συνηπάκει** αὐτόν, καὶ **ἐδεσμεύετο**, ἄλυσεσιν καὶ πέδαις **φυλασσόμενος**, καὶ **διαρρήσων** τὰ δεσμὰ **ἤλαύνετο** ἀπὸ τοῦ δαιμονίου εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους (LK, 8, 29).

In Greek, **πολλοῖς γὰρ χρόνοις** means for a long time, **waritatsis... Seborkilian...** is the perfect tense while **ganxetknis** accords with the participle of the active voice **διαρρήσων**, and the verb **idevnebian** accords with the imperfect action of the passive voice **ἤλαύνετο** expressing the continuous action.

The **FG** and **HIK** editions:

რამეთუ უბრძანა სულსა მას არაწმიდასა განსლვად კაცისა მისგან; რამეთუ **მრავალ-გზის წარიტაცის იგი, და შებორკილიან იგი ჯაჭვთა და საკრველითა და ჰცვედ, და განხეთქის საკრველნი და იდევენებინ ეშმაკისა უდაბნოდ** (FG, ლკ. 8, 29).

rametu ubrdZana sulsa mas arawmindasa gansvlad kacisa misgan; rametu **mraval-gzis waritatsis** igi, da **Seborkilian** igi Jay,ta da sakrvelita da hcved, da **ganxetknis** sakrvelni da idevnebin eSmakisa udabnod (FG, LK. 8, 29).

The **HIK** edition, in terms of expressing the Iterative, is the same as the **FG** edition. It seems that the people of Mtatsminda used the old editions of the Georgian Four Gospels. They tried to choose the correct forms and fit them in a certain place. The text follows the **DE** edition,

but it was also compared with the **C** edition, because in one case the form *idevnebin* is used instead of the verb *idevnebian*. In Greek, since the Iterative category is not expressed organically, the impression of the repetitive action is created by a lexical unit, while in Georgian the translator translates it with the double formation: through a lexical unit and the organic formation, thus, we get a calcified form.

The next example:

DE:

და ღაღად-ყო ერმან მან გამოთხოვად მისა, ვითარცა-იგი მიჰმადლის მათ მარადის (DE, მრკ. 15, 8).

da GaGad-Ko erman man gamotxovad misa, vitarca-igi **mihmadlis** mat **maradis** (DE, Mrk. 15, 8).

In the given example, it is obvious that with the lexical unit **მარადის** **maradis** the verb is used in the form of the screeve of the Iterative II – **მიჰმადლის** **mihmadlis**. This part is not available in the relevant **C** edition. In the Greek original there is no corresponding form of the lexical unit **მარადის** **maradis** while the screeve of the Iterative II accords with the verb **ἐποίει** that means **ქმნა** **kmna** (to create) and it is presented with the past imperfect tense (an incomplete action).

The English translation:

"And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as **he had ever done unto them**" (Mrk. 15, 8).

In this example, the important phrase is: **he had ever done unto them**, but an equivalent of the word **maradis** (**forever**) cannot be found there.

As for the Greek original, we can find it:

καὶ ἀναβὰς ὁ ὄχλος ἤρξατο αἰτεῖσθαι **καθώς** ἐποίει αὐτοῖς (Mrk. 15, 8).

In this verse, we read the word „**ვითარცა**“ **vitarca** that in Greek translates as **καθώς**. Together with the personal form of the verb, it conveys the meaning that the action took place constantly in the past, but as mentioned above, in this case, in the Greek original there is no equivalent of the word **მარადის**[**maradis** and in the Georgian translation the translator used it at his own decision. The **FG** and **HIK** editions exactly follow the **DE** edition. They are identical.

The following example is also interesting:

DE:

რამეთუ მრავალ გზის ჯაჰჰთა და ზორკილთა შეკრულ იყო იგი და განხეთქის

და შემუსრის იგი, და არავის ეძლო დაყენებად მისა (DE, მრკ. 5; 4).

rametu **mraval gzis** Jay,ta da borkilta Sekrul iKo igi da **ganxetkis** da **Cemusris** igi, da aravis eZlo daKenebad misa (DE, Mrk. 5, 4).

The corresponding C edition differs from the DE edition:

რამეთუ მრავალი ბორკილი და ჯაჭვ, რომლითა შეკრიან იგი, განხეთქა და დაემუსრა, და არავინ უძლო დამორჩილებად მისდა (C; მრკ. 5, 4).

rametu mravali borkili da Jay,, romlita Sekrian igi, **ganxetka** da da Cemusra, da aravin uZlo damorCilebad misda (DE, Mrk. 5, 4).

In the DE edition, the verb **მრავალ გზის mravalgzis** is given with the discontinuous screeve **შეკრულ იყო** Sekrul iKo and the phrase is stylistically correct. In the C edition, the translator changed the construction in this way: **მრავალი ბორკილი და ჯაჭვ mravali borkili da Jay,**. They tried to change the content and express the same meaning. In this case, the form of the Iterative II **შეკრიან Sekrian** is used.

In English this verse is presented as follows:

"Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him" (DE, Mrk. 5, 4).

In the English verse, there is no lexical unit meaning **many times**, which in the Georgian language is the equivalent of the word **მრავალ გზის mravalgis**.

In the original, this verse is presented as follows:

διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν πολλακίς πέδαις καὶ ἄλυσεσιν **δεδέσθαι**, καὶ **διεσπασθαι** ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τὰς ἄλυσεις καὶ τὰς πέδας **συντετριῖσθαι** καὶ οὐδεὶς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι (Mrk. 5, 4).

πολλάκις– **მრავალ გზის mraval gzis**, **δεδέσθαι** – the perfect tense, the passive voice, **διεσπασθαι**– the infinitive. There are two verbs in Greek **ἀλυσεις** – the future tense and **συντετριῖσθαι** – the perfect tense, the passive voice while in Georgian, just one verb is presented **შემუსრის Cemusris**.

In the FG and HIK editions we read:

რამეთუ **მრავალ გზის** ჯაჭვთა და ბორკილთა შეკრულ იყო იგი და **განხეთქის** და **შემუსრის** იგი, და არავის ეძლო დაყენებად მისა (FG, მრკ. 5, 4); (HIK, მრკ. 5, 4).

rametu **mraval gzis** Jay,ta da borkilta Sekrul iKo] igi da **ganxetkis** da **Cemusris** igi, da aravis eZlo daKenebad misa (FG, Mrk. 5, 4);] (HIK, Mrk. 5, 4). As we can see, both editions follow the DE edition.

In Greek, the Iterative is not expressed organically, so, the impression of a repetitive action is created by a lexical unit. The Georgian translator presents it through the lexical unit and the organic formation. In fact, the frequency of the double expression of the Iterative in translated monuments should be explained by the influence of the original.

Quite a lot of cases of double expression of the Iterative category can be found in the translated monuments. As it is clear from the research material, the scribes could not avoid the influence of the original work in the translations and that is why we can find a lot of calques in the translated monuments. The double formation of the category contributed to the gradual disappearance of the Iterative screeves.

It is interesting whether there are cases of double expression of the Iterative in original Georgian works. We chose "Hagiographic Monuments of Old Georgian Literature" published under the editorship of Ilia Abuladze, Volume I, 1963 and "The Life of Kartli", Volume I, 1953, published by Simon Kaukhchishvili as the research materials.

In the original Georgian monuments, we have attested the cases of double expression of the Iterative, although it should be noted that such cases are not as frequent as they are found in the translated literary monuments. Mainly, the category is expressed by the Iterative screeves. However, the existence of rare cases of double expression of the Iterative category indicates that the screeves were no longer capable of expressing the mentioned category, and lexical units that strengthen the meaning of the iterative aspect have appeared in the language next to the Iterative screeves. Here are the examples from the original Georgian monuments:

ამისტვსცა ნათესავითა მით ურჩებისაძთა განუკაფნა ჩუენ, რამეთუ **მრავალგზის** ისრაჴლიცა **მისცის** უფალმან და ჳელთა უცხოთესლთასა, რაჟამს არა **ვიდოდან** იგინი გზათა მისთა (Abuladze, 1963, 367).

amistwisca natesavita mit urCebisa• ta ganukafna Cuen, rametu **mravalgzis** israelica **miscis** ufalman da qelta ucxotesltasa, rajams ara **vidodian** igini gzata mista (Abuladze, 1963, 367).

Along with the lexical unit **მრავალგზის** **mravalgzis**, (in English **many times**), the screeves of the Iterative II and the Iterative I are used: **მისცის** **miscis**, (in English **gave**), **ვიდოდან** **vidodian**, (in English **went**).

და **მრავალგზის** **მოვიდიან** წმიდანნი იგი მამანი, წინამძღუარნი მონასტერთანი, მრავალთათჳს მიზეზთა და სიბრძნითა მისთა **პოვიან** განსუენებად ყოველსა ზედა საქმესა (Abuladze, 1963, 325).

da **mravalgzis movidian** wmidani igi mamani, winamZGuarni monastertani, mravaltatwis mizezta da sibrZnita mista **povian** gansueneba• Kovelsa zeda saqmesa (Abuladze, 1963, 325).

In this example, the Iterative II is used along with the lexical means: **მრავალგზის მოვიდნან ... პოვიან mravalgzis movidian ... povian**, (in English **many times they came... found**)

და **მრავალგზის მოვიდს** უბანსა ურიათასა ენისათჳს ებრაელისა და გამოძიებისათჳს კუართისა უფლისა (Kaukhchishvili, 1953, 95).

da **mravalgzis movidis** ubansa uriatasa enisatwis ebraelisa da gamoZiebisatwis kuartisa uflisa (Kaukhchishvili, 1953, 95).

Conclusion

The verb forms containing the semantics of the Iterative category were transferred from old Greek into old Georgian through the double formation. The screeves of the Iterative category seems to be weakened even in Old Georgian. Of course, the Iterative is expressed through them, however, it seems that the Iterative screeves gradually lost the ability to express the mentioned category without auxiliary lexical means. The cases of double formation were attested in translated literary monuments more often. The influence of the original work is evident. The double formation of the Iterative became a contributing factor and not the reason for disappearing the Iterative screeves.

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