

SPIRITUAL AND AESTHETIC ASPECTS IN THE LITERARY WORKS OF HRACHYA TAMRAZYAN

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Abstract

The article examines the spiritual and aesthetic aspects in the literary works of a contemporary Armenian poet, translator, literary scholar, and scientist of the 21st century Hrachya Tamrazyan.

Tamrazyan's poetic individuality, subtle and deep perception of reality, his worldview are vividly reflected in such poetry collections of the poet as "If Boredom is a Sign of Life" (1983),

"Glass City" (1985), "Island of Voices" (1989), "Rainbow" (1993), "Vow of Silence" (1996), "Paraphrases" (2003) and others, testifying to the poetic talent of the Armenian poet.

Tamrazyan's poems are distinguished by their original and expressive poetic language, which combines intellectuality, philosophically, metaphor, alliteration, assonance, musicality, and the poet's emotionality. In his poems, the poet appears as a master of constructing rhyme and verse form, which are also distinguished by their lyrical and expressive sound. Tamrazyan compared a poem to a prayer, believing that every writer has his own spiritual mission, which must sow new seeds for the future.

The study of Tamrazyan's poetry has shown that it shows the influence of the poetry of symbolist poets, in particular V. Teryan, Y. Charents. Tamrazyan's poetic language, like that of his predecessors, is also distinguished by the richness and diversity of symbolic images, through which the poet's individuality, his worldview, psychology, and mood are highlighted.

Tamrazyan's poetic talent can also be evidenced by his translations from Russian poetry, in particular from the lyrics of S. Yesenin, V. Mayakovsky, B. Pasternak, and others, which are equivalent to the originals.

H. Tamrazyan's monumental scientific work is the monograph "Grigor Narekatsi and Neoplatonism", where the author deeply researched and presented the creative individuality, the novelty of Grigor Narekatsi's poetry, his philosophical views, and progressiveness, formed in the Narek school.

Keywords

poet, poetry, image, translation, research, scientific monograph

1. Introduction

In the history of world literature, Armenian poetry is known as one of the most ancient in the world, which for centuries stood out for its patriotism, civic pathos, deep philosophical content, progressiveness, moral and aesthetic values.

The creative heritage of such famous masters of Armenian poetry as H. Tumanyan, A. Isahakyan, V. Teryan, Y. Charents, G. Emin, S. Kaputikyan and others, is generally recognized as the golden fund of Armenian literature, which with its nationality, ideological and artistic concept, has won great recognition not only in its homeland, but also abroad.

A bright and original representative of modern Armenian poetry of the 21st century is the poet Hrachya Tamrazyan, also known as a talented translator, literary scholar, scientist, member reporter of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, and a public figure.

Tamrazyan's poetry has absorbed the best traditions of Armenian poetry: the versatility of themes, philosophical content, imagery, form, aesthetic values.

H. Tamrazyan's poetic individuality, subtle and deep perception of reality, his worldview are vividly reflected in such poetry collections of the poet as "If Boredom is a Sign of Life" (1983), "Glass City" (1985), "Island of Voices" (1989), "Rainbow" (1993), "Vow of Silence" (1996), "Paraphrases" (2003) and others, testifying to the poetic talent of the Armenian poet.

Methods and Results:

The theme of the Motherland, civic lyrics are the dominant themes in Tamrazyan's literary work, reflecting his boundless love for his country, to the glorification and service of which he dedicated his entire life.

In Tamrazyan's poetic perception, a poem was compared by him to a prayer, believing that every writer has his own spiritual mission, who must sow new seeds for the future [\[8\]](#).

Tamrazyan's poetry testifies that the poet subtly and sensitively perceived sounds, the music of the universe, who managed to weave words from them, breathe life into them and generate poems.

Tamrazyan figuratively described the birth of poetry in the poem "Melody" ('Մեղեդի'), where the poet from the sounds of the universe, generated the music of poetry, dreaming of voicing it to everyone:

Բառերն ինձ համար ձայնանիշներ են, Ելևէջներ են ու անհայտ խազեր, Երաժշտություն – որը չեմ հիշում, Ու մի անգամ է միայն երազվել: Ես որ զուրկ եմ միշտ լսողությունից, Ես, որ կույր եմ միշտ իրերի առջև, Ինչու՝ են բառերն հանկարծ տրվում ինձ, Լսողությունս սկսում տանջել, Մինչ ինձ այդ երգի կարոտը խեղդի, Մինչ լսողություն ես դառնում համակ, Եվ երազում՝ իմ լսած մեղեդին Լսելի դարձնեմ բոլորի համար... 28.01.2010 [1, p. 12].	For me, the words are musical notations, Undulations, unknown, cryptic scores, A melody – which I cannot recall, And only once was dreamt, behind dream's doors. I, who am always bereft of all hearing, I, who am always blind to things around, Why are the words suddenly given to me, My awakening hearing they torment and pound, Until the longing for that song has choked me, Until I become all hearing, complete, And I dream - the melody I heard in dreams To make audible for all, a shared, sweet feat... 28.01.2010 (interlinear translation)
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In his poems, Tamrazyan appears as a reflective poet, subtly feeling the rhythms and movements of the universe, where nature is perceived by him as a divine gift, having an inseparable unity with man. As an example, let us dwell on a fragment of the poem "Consonance", in which the author, inspired by the beauty of nature, described it as alive, endowed with human character and qualities:

Անտառի հառաչանքն առթնացնում է ինձ Ու համակում է խոր շնչառությամբ, Ու պարուրում է գոյաշխարհը իմ, Ու ես նրանց եմ սրտով հերիյուսված, Ինչ համաչափ են ծառերը շարժվում, Ու պտտվում է աշխարհը համակ, Ու ինձ գերել է արթնացման մի շունչ – Եվ պարուրել է ներշնչանքն ամրան... [1, p.127].	The forest's sigh awakens me from dreams, And fills me with a deep, pervading breath, Enveloping my world of being's gleams, And to their essence, my heart interweaves. How uniformly the trees all sway and move, And spins the world entire, in concord found, A breath of waking has enthralled my love – And firmly inspiration wraps me 'round... (interlinear translation)
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Another fragment of the poem:

Ու խենթ քամիներ, քամիներ, անսանձ, Իմ միջով հարբած հողմեր են անցնում՝ Այնքան խելահեղ, այնքան հերարձակ, Ու լոկ ծառերն են նրանց հարասում... [1, p. 127].	And oh, mad winds, you winds, so unrestrained, Through me, inebriate tempests are streaming – So utterly reckless, so widely unchained, And only the trees endure their harsh screaming...[1, p. 127].
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As can be seen from the given fragments, the image of the poet is in tune with nature, sensitively feeling its breath, rustle, rhythms of movement, which, despite its quirks and changes, are accepted by him with love and gratitude.

The originality, linguistic and stylistic features of Tamrazyan's poetry were pointed out by his contemporary poet Hakob Movses, who wrote: "I consider him one of those poets who are part of the organism of the Armenian language, let's say, its heart... so inextricably linked was he with his language. Hrachya Tamrazyan had an exceptional feeling for the Armenian language, and at the same time he was a master of the Armenian language, its carrier, one of those who forge it, one of its blacksmiths" [8].

A study of Tamrazyan's poetry showed that it can be traced to the influence of the poetry of symbolist poets, in particular V. Teryan, Y. Charents. Tamrazyan's poetic language, like that of his predecessors, is also distinguished by the richness and diversity of symbolic images, through which the poet's individuality, his worldview, psychology, state of mind, and mood are highlighted. For example, the symbols of "city", "sun", "sleep", etc., which are often found in Tamrazyan's poems, carry an important semantic load in the text, revealing the depth of the poet's inner and spiritual world.

An example of this can be the poem "Oh, the fading boundaries of dreams..." ("Օ՛, երազների ջնջվող սահմաններ..."), where the poet, through highlighting the symbol of "sleep", reflects on the lost and lifeless soul, which has become indifferent and deaf to the environment. The poem fragment sounds like this:

Օ՛, երազների ջնջվող սահմաններ, Օ՛, անանձնական, անաշխարհ հոգի, Որ անկարող էք արդեն բարբառել, Ու քաղաքների գետնաքարշ սողից Երես էք թեքել թաքուն խորշանքով, Թողնելով այստեղ անանուն մարդկանց, Որ լոկ դեմքերն են վախով շոշափում, Որ օտարվել են իրենցից հանկարծ... [1, p.15].	Oh, vanishing frontiers of all our dreams, Oh, spirit impersonal, beyond this sphere, Who are now powerless to even speak, And from the cities' ground-dragging, slow creep, You've turned your face with hidden, deep disgust, Leaving behind the nameless folk below, Who only touch their faces, filled with dread, Who've grown estranged from their own selves, so sudden... (interlinear translation)
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In the poem, the poet's mental anguish is intertwined with his sadness and pessimism, which are the consequences of a harsh and terrible reality.

Discussing the transience, meaning and purpose of life, Tamrazyan saw a riddle in it, which he explained as follows: "We have not yet solved the riddle of life, but it seems to me that everything is inside a person - both the riddle of life and its meaning" [8].

Hrachya Tamrazyan's poems are distinguished by a unique and expressive poetic language, which combines intellectuality, philosophical nature, metaphor, alliteration, assonance, musicality, and the poet's emotionality.

In his poems, the poet appears as a master of constructing rhyme and verse form, which also stand out for their lyrical and expressive sound.

Tamrazyan's poetic talent can also be witnessed by his translations of Russian poetry, which he translated in whole cycles of lyrics by S. Yesenin, V. Mayakovsky, B. Pasternak and others.

Tamrazyan's translations are equivalent to the originals, which are consonant with them in meaning and form, rhyme, intonation structure, and they also reflect the national flavor of the poems, as well as the poetic individuality of the poets being translated [4, p. 115], [6].

For his great contribution to the development of the art of translation, H. Tamrazyan was awarded the Aitmatov Prize (2012), which is the highest award in the field of studying and preserving cultural heritage, bringing cultures, nations and peoples closer together and enriching each other, strengthening peace and friendship, and developing spiritual ties between countries.

It should be noted that Tamrazyan not only translated, but also, under the great influence of the poetry of the poets he translated, dedicated his articles and poems to them.

The monumental scientific work of H. Tamrazyan is the monograph "Grigor Narekatsi and Neoplatonism", where the author deeply explored and presented the creative individuality, as well as the novelty of Grigor Narekatsi's poetry, his philosophical views, and progressiveness, formed in the Narek school.

Presenting and analyzing the works of medieval scholars, Tamrazyan noted that the Narek School was once considered the prototype of Armenian medieval higher schools (vardapetarans). It was deeply influenced by Eastern Christian mystical theology and the philosophy of Neoplatonism. Among the most prominent representatives of the Narek School, the author singled out the names of Grigor Narekatsi's father, Khosrov Andzevatsi, the founder and vardapet (doctor of sciences, teacher) of the school, his relative, Anania Narekatsi, as well as his brothers, Sahak and Hovhannes [3, p. 4].

Characterizing the cultural life of Armenia and highlighting the role of the Narek School, Tamrazyan wrote: "The history of the formation and development of the Narek School coincides with the rapid rise of Armenian political, economic and cultural life in the 10th century. The restoration of Armenian statehood in the 9th century played an exceptionally important role in this. During this period, urban development also experienced active growth, and Armenia became one of the international hubs of transit trade. Urban culture, spiritual and secular sciences and arts entered a period of prosperity, Ani, Kars, Artanuj experienced rapid growth, and of the ancient cities, Vagharshapat, Van, Archesh, Khlat noticeably revived. The

population of Armenian cities was about 50-100 thousand people and in this sense surpassed the European cities of that time” [3, p. 6].

Pointing to the peculiarity of the Narek school, the author noted that it was primarily manifested in its ethical system, where in the works of spiritual fathers a special place was occupied by the principles of their spiritual way of life, based on spiritual self-improvement.

Characterizing the distinctive features of the representatives of the Narek school, Tamrazyan wrote: “Being mystical theologians, in addition to the general externally applied everyday norms of worship - church rituals, ceremonies, fasting, they paid great attention to the internal, spiritual purification of man, his internal ritual, that long process of self-improvement, during which there is a concentration of spiritual-mental, sensory-thinking, as well as creative abilities and opportunities” [3, p. 17].

Studying the principles and philosophical views of the spiritual fathers of the Middle Ages, Tamrazyan pointed out that the spiritual ideal of the representatives of the Narek school is the idea of the deification of man, a long path of his internal purification. For them, the most important link in the process of spiritual elevation was prayer, verse, spiritual song. This allowed the author to conclude that the representatives of the Narek school, especially Grigor Narekatsi, being mystical theologians and mystical artists, developed the fundamental ideas of Neoplatonic ethics and aesthetics. These views were manifested through the inclusion of Platonic definitions of philosophy, passing from Plato to David Anhaght and other representatives of the Narek school. [3, p.19].

Highlighting the phenomenon of Grigor Narekatsi’s poetry, Tamrazyan came to the following generalization: the poet recognized the divine origin of man internally and externally, about which he wrote: “Consequently, he must strive for godlikeness through virtuous, visible behavior and internal, invisible actions in accordance with how Anania Narekatsi classifies them. “What will be the punishment from God for my internal and external filth (chapter 33, verse 4)” [3, p. 54].

The great scientific value of the work lies in the fact that the author drew comparative parallels between the philosophy of Plato and David Anhaght, which had a great influence on the worldview of Narekatsi. Justifying his judgment, Tamrazyan wrote: “The ethical teaching about the inner man also has the philosophy of Neoplatonism as its foundation. This teaching also

owes its origin to Plato. The founder of Neoplatonism, Plotinus, comparing human nature with the rational cosmos and world order, quotes Plato, according to whom the world of intelligence, the foundation of the soul substantiate the sphere of the inner man" [3, 52].

From the analysis of the medieval manuscripts of the author, it follows that Anania Narekatsi was well acquainted with the classification system of sciences of David Anghaght, he also gave philosophy and theology an ethical focus, recognizing that all sciences should concentrate their efforts in one direction - the moral purification of man.

A similar judgment about the philosophical and aesthetic principles of Narekatsi's pantheism can be found in the works of academician V. Chaloyan, who wrote: "The pantheism of Grigor Narekatsi lies in the fact that, contrary to the philosophy of the Christian religion, God, creating nature and all that exists, did not become supreme or transcendental, but became identical with nature. The correctness of the analysis is confirmed not only by Grigor Narekatsi's thought about the unity of man with God, when (along with the assertion of God's presence in man) the presence of man in God is also asserted, but also by the thesis that God is in everything and, consequently, everything is in God" [7, p. 13].

Tamrazyan's research showed that, like David Anghaght and Anania Narekatsi, Grigor Narekatsi also noted three spiritual virtues - prudence, courage and common sense [3, p. 127]. This approach of Narekatsi, according to the author, is noticeable in the "Book of Mournful Chants", where the image of God is the inspiration for the poet, who accepts him with all his heart and love:

Տե՞ր իմ, Տե՞ր պարգևատու, ինքն բուն բարի, Բոլորին տիրող հավասարապես, միայն Արարիչ դու ամեն ինչի. Փառավորյալ անքնին, ահեղ ահարկու, սուկալի հզոր, Անպարագրելի, անմերձենալի, անըմբռնելի, Անիմանալի, Անճառելի, անտեսանելի, անզննելի, անշոշա- փելի, անորոնելի, Անսկիզբ և անժամանակ, անշամանդաղ զիտություն, Համարձակ տեսողություն, ճշմարիտ էական ություն..., [5 p. 28].	Lord, my Lord, bestower of grace, goodness itself, truly, Ruling over all equally, the sole Creator, you, of everything that be. Glorified, inscrutable, awe-inspiring, formidable, Mighty, Indescribable, unapproachable, incomprehensible, unknowable, entirely, Ineffable, invisible, unsearchable, impalpable, undiscoverable, truly, Without beginning and timeless, knowledge unhurriedly, Bold vision perceiving all, true Being, steadily... (interlinear translation)
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Analyzing the texts of the prayers, Tamrazyan came to the conclusion that Narekatsi “with the lips of the soul”, “with all his heart”, “kisses” the name of God, sounding in the form of a passionate prayer, exerting a great spiritual and emotional impact.

According to the scholar, in the “Book of Mournful Chants”, as well as in the “taghs” of Narekatsi, there are many fragments that speak of the divine essence of the word, the divine mystery of poetry [3, p. 413].

The study of the aesthetic principles of Narekatsi allowed Tamrazyan to conclude: “These approaches are consonant and inherent in all the literary works of Grigor Narekatsi - in his “taghs”, filled with divine love, enchanted by God's creation, he, in creative ecstasy, “travels in the bright divine limits”, in which man, nature, heaven and earth, the sun, luminaries, soil, water, living beings, trees and flowers reside. In a state of spiritual rapture, he praises divine

nature, while demonstrating elements of a pantheistic worldview, also inherent in Neoplatonism” [3, p. 251].

Conclusion:

Studying the creative individuality of Hrachya Tamrazyan, his moral and aesthetic principles, we can conclude that his poetry has absorbed the best achievements of Armenian literature, its traditions, nationality, deep philosophical nature, and intellectuality.

Tamrazyan's poems are characterized by a bright, figurative, metaphorical, poetic language. The lyrical hero of his poems is deeply reflective, abiding in the understanding of the laws of the universe and revealing the beauty of existence. As a poet, Tamrazyan perceived the poetic gift as the highest reward of the Universe, as a prayer sounding between the poet and the Almighty, embodied in his poetry.

The study of Tamrazyan's monograph "Grigor Narekatsi and Neoplatonism" showed that it is a monumental work of the author, who deeply studied and presented the philosophical views and creative principles of the medieval scholars-poets of the Narek school, in particular Grigor Narekatsi.

The value of this work also lies in the fact that Tamrazyan, unlike other scholars who studied medieval manuscripts, personally translated them from the ancient Armenian language of Grapar, which allowed him to delve deeper and appreciate the creative genius of medieval poets.

Through the analysis and comparison of the most ancient medieval manuscripts, the author presented the Neoplatonic aesthetics of the work of Grigor Narekatsi using specific examples, transforming it into an endless creative work of the highest poetry, which became an innovation of its time.

Tamrazyan recognized his work in Matenadaran on the most ancient manuscripts as magical and mysterious, dearly beloved, about which the poet wrote in the poem "Dream Book" ("Երազահան"):

Ես սիրում եմ իմ ավելի անհատ գրերը կարդալ Եվ ոչ թե կեղծ տողերը՝ միշտ ստող ու Խարդախող, Բառերի մի մոգություն, որ դառնում է Կախարդանք, Որ վերձանում ես թաքուն, որ ընթերցում ես վախով... [2, p. 88].	I love to read my letters, faded more and more, And not the false lines, ever lying, ever cheating, In a word-spun sorcery, turning into a casting, That you decode in secret, read with fearful beating... (interlinear translation)
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From the above it follows that Hrachya Tamrazyan was a multifaceted poet of his time, a translator, a bearer of the moral and aesthetic principles of Armenian literature, to the development and enrichment of which he devoted his entire creative life.

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