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## THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND AESTHETIC BASES OF THE POETRY OF HAKOB MOVSES

### Abstract

The author of the article analyzes Hakob Movses's poetical heritage starting from the 80s of the previous century: from "The Sky of Flights" (1982), until the latest book "Sharakan" (2016), also comments on the completeness of Moses' poetical system and the development of the historical process. The article values the literal and historical merits of Moses' poetry, evaluates its meaning in the contemporary literal process.

*Keywords:* Hakob Movses, speech, culture, preface, convergence, system, poetry, language, existence, philosophy

### Introduction

The problem of Hakob Movses's poetry interpretation is the question about the nature and history of poetry. Moreover, according to Hakob Movses's point of view, poetry and its history are not separate from a cultural perspective, 'what is poetry?' question can be perceived and explained as 'how is poetry?' that it is a hypostasis originating from the unity of time (also from timelessness, if you want) and interpreted through it. This does not mean that Movses's poetry does not have an explanation or historical basis of the historical process of formation even if the poet perceives his poetry as a starting point, the metaphysical source of which lies in the field of speech, derives from the essence of speech, strives to assimilate it, to come forth with it and to express the speech. Furthermore, the poet says, 'We are not only the shepherds of people, but also the shepherds of things,' and, as Herder says, 'The language of the human race is the po-

em'<sup>1</sup>, and from Movses's perspective is interpreted as a 'language-place', a topos, where 'space becomes a place and the place becomes a sanctuary'. Furthermore, "the speech becomes a poem in its linguistic space"<sup>2</sup>.

Hence, poetry, as Movses says in the introduction of George Trakl's 'Banasteghsutyunner' (2007), "is not the mirror of reality or a Swift Lilliput under his arm" or "an extra reality created by reality" (p. 8). A poet, as Nietzsche says, is the magician and master of existence that 'drives the life to spaces where it has only one excuse - aesthetic justification' – but poetry is the language-topos, a poet is a songwriter looking for his hunting ground in the field of speech which is the speech of poetry – the mirror of spirit.

### The Poetry of Hakob Movses

Poetry is the belief of Movses's poetical

<sup>1</sup> *Garun*, Yerevan, 8, 2006, p. 22, 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Garun*, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 27.

perception. The poem is the basis of speech that has a metaphysical origin, which can be explained by the analysis of the process of the formation and completion of Movses's poetry, his perception, which is also a matter of interpretation of the bases and directions of the past three decades of modern poetry. Nevertheless, to be complete, first, it is necessary to analyze the perception of *spirit*, which defines the direction of Movses's poetry. Why? Because the poet explains the idea of spirit as a sacred statement of the beginning, and, as Heidegger says, 'The essence of the preliminary language of every historic people,' i.e. 'the essence of poetry' is expressed through it. No wonder Movses in the 'Ovsanna, ovsanna' interview says that 'languages are demiurges' when interpreting the question of using language, being opposed to the function of language as a means of communication, puritanism, incest, excretory fertilization, language stagnation, unnecessary overloads because languages are autonomous and self-governing, 'heavenly gift' which, according to the Gnostics, people inherited from heaven<sup>3</sup>.

Consequently, 'the genealogy of poetry' reaches the language (Movses says 'to deliver the language'), like Gnostics conveyed the genealogy of the Speech to the Language, 'conveyed the genealogy of God to the Holy Spirit'<sup>4</sup>. However, since 'spirit is pneumma', 'it does not allow the past to remain in the past and be covered', it drives to today and tomorrow ('forward to the past'). So, the spirit is the genealogical basis of the language; it forms the language and makes it alive. Hence, spirit, according to the aetiology of Movses, means 'origin', 'origination', 'tribe', because 'the word Spirit means genus (genius) in Latin', so the first sentence of 'the People' trans-

lates as follows: 'Acknowledge the Speech of the Spirit (Holy Spirit)', and if it means 'origin', 'origination', 'tribe' (from here Latin – gene, genetics, and Armenian – 'ծիւն-ծննդաբանութիւն'), then he defines it as 'an interesting trinity' and says, 'The genius is the genesis of spirit'<sup>5</sup>.

Of course, the elements of the trinity, as the phenomenological attribute of a spirit, transform and express each other. That is, they form one another and function in a historical environment, or form the history together, which is the history of poetry/speech expressed through language. Thus, the intermediary between poetry/language/speech forms such a *hierarchy* which exists in a historical environment, or it is the phenomenon of history in itself, which is also the history of poetry and is expressed in the form of movement.

That is why Movses denies the problem of form perception which had a tradition in the past decade, meaning the separation of the movement and tradition from the organic basis, calling it 'form to form wandering', 'chimaera of the form', and 'form-Jugend' if it is not a part of immature architectural structure like the literary movements of the twentieth century, such as symbolism, futurism, modernism, postmodernism, and other 'isms' (Movses also quotes J. G. Jung, 'all the devils are born of isms' (Trakl, 2007, p. 23). The form, according to the poet, is charming when it is externalized 'in its extreme manifestations, it acquires a terrifying function and fascinates like a woman', so if it is not an internal, physiological element, the poet calls the form a 'feminine principle' which is fertilized with the content and gives birth to the poem. Hence, according to Charles Baudelaire's description that Movses added to his speech,

<sup>3</sup> Garun, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, pp. 18-19.

<sup>4</sup> Garun, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Garun, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 12.

“Modernism is a hospital where every patient is pursuing the idea of changing the bed’, and describing contemporary postmodernists, he says that postmodernism is also a hospital where ‘beds are always empty’<sup>6</sup>. So, what can we conclude?

The point is that Movses is studying the issue of poetry and its history in the context of cultural history, which has a perception of hierarchy purely typical of Movses. The debate lasting for decades that Movses sparked in our poetry is in the stage of completion, and its historical background is clear.

The nature of the debate is deep both in its roots and foliage, and the question with its involvement includes all aspects of the history of poetry and culture, perception, present and future, movement and evolution. But the starting point that Movses proposes as a historical discretion is *‘the cultural-morphological order’* of poetry and culture, the basis of which is the pan-Christian culture, which must be perceived not from the religious point of view but as an expression of pan-European culture, to which Moses contrasted ‘the non-culture’ with its modern manifestations: realism with hypertrophy and its nourishment, futurism with pathological styling, Surrealism with subconsciousness, Expressionism, Imaginism and why not rabiz (urban folk music) and estrada (pop/variety music), and movements labelled with other logos, which stand out with ‘aggressive performance’, objectize the world and reject pan-Christian tradition and language. These theories, especially the overgrowth of realism, forming a ‘cultural community’, beginning from the 60 and the 70s of the last century, ‘all the parasites and flieson that mainly have Judic-pragmatic origin, also have their monographs - batays, deridas, delyozes, le-

vinanses (as Mosves cites contemporary European philosophers)... ‘The lice of Nietzsche’s and Heidegger’s psychological body folds’ as Nietzsche says, ‘Strive to mould avant-gardes from homosexuals and unwanted women to mould a professor from a labourer’s son, to interpret the past according to Freud’s psychoanalytic theories from John the Baptist to Michelangelo, to ‘howl’ in their hot and luxurious halls and say how he got into sexual relations with his own mother, then ... became homosexual and had relations with his friend Jack Kerouac’ (this is about Gizberg).

In a nutshell, Movses’s perception, as we can see, has its starting point, the explanation of which the poet presents in his poetry perception theory through records, that unitedly forms a system of philosophical and aesthetic perceptions. The origin, the anchor on which Movses relies on, is the perception of Poetry-Messiah, which, as he says, is a new method of poetry perception, that is not a matter of choice, but a perception orientation. The poem, therefore, does not exist in the world of things and time, on the contrary, it creates and gives breath to the time (breath that is the interpretation of spirit in its spiritual sense). Hence, poetry is ‘Ithaca of green eternity’, which is said with Borges’s observation, and poets are ‘invisible bees’ (that is Rilke’s description of doctor seraph, and Hakob Movses says, ‘We are the shepherds of the invisible’). A poet’s goal, however, according to Doctorre Serafico, ‘Is to accept this transient corrupt country so deeply inside us that its essence once again resurrects ‘invisibly’ inside us’<sup>7</sup>. Why? Because the equivalent and identical relation between things and word kill the word, it produces ‘the monster of the poem’ such as dada and futurism, anti-poetry, which are innovative as much as ‘belote’ from

<sup>6</sup> Garun, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, pp. 10-12.

<sup>7</sup> Garun, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 11.

which ‘the ecological disaster of the poem’ begins<sup>8</sup>. Thus, denial or the denial of denial that accompanies the history of the past century poetry (in particular the French poetry), ‘spreads its influence on our literature’ and is explicable not as a poetic novelty, but decadent. The true poetic novelty in Movses’s interpretation is not fashion, but invention as what is being done ‘for innovation, gets old immediately’.

Meanwhile ‘modernism is anthology’, ‘grace of language and survival’, and is written ‘not with thoughts but with words’. Here is the ‘method’ that Rilke called ‘thing-poetry’ when the thing is formed through the word, it forms the thing in the name, where the time is not historical or the time and space may not coincide with it because the origin of the word has one source - the idea of its name. Furthermore, since Movses’s perception of poetry considers the source of word interpretation as the field of metaphysical relation, it is too individual as the self of the creator, as it is the self that can perceive the time as anti or pre-historical, hence, as he says, ‘The history is only when the essence of the truth is determined principally’, so, ‘that historical is not the history’ (Heidegger), but ‘a poet writes, the time erases’ or, in other words, ‘the time writes, a poet erases’<sup>9</sup>. So, the sphere of history is the subsistence, and the poem is the existence. Consequently, ‘the poem makes its own history, which, according to Movses, is the universal history, it can be called the history of the Holy Spirit where perhaps the march of snowdrops down the slope is not less important than the Suvorov army march across the Alps, because ‘the very essence of existence is Poetry’<sup>10</sup>. A poet is not an annalist, and when ‘Poetry and Reality coincide’, as the map created by the Bor-

ges Empire Cartography Board, the poem dies like, as Movses describes, the names and numbers of poetical prairie, rivers, cities, objects, things, in a word, like the catalogue names and numbers of Whitman, the father of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century poetry.

Consequently, ‘Poetry is the Messiah’, but Messiah-poetry ‘abandons the existence, enters the sphere of existence. Hence, as he adds, ‘Life no longer belongs to history, it is not historical, but poetical’<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, since the basis is the idea of the speech, the poem turns into the expression of Logos.

As F. Hölderlin says, ‘A man lives on this earth poetically’. Therefore, the poem is not only the preliminary language that a poet testifies in the testified, in the language but also, as Heidegger interprets, ‘The existence given to the language in itself is obvious and preserved in the poem’ (Hölderlin, 2002, p. 305) because the given in the whole (testified through language) perceives the existence as history. Therefore, the common - the language, is the field of the unrecognizable, that a poet testifies to make it recognizable. However, “if there are no things, there cannot be words” (Sh. George). Consequently, according to Movses, “Poetry derives from material reality”. However ‘Paul the Apostle means the ‘material reality’ when he says, “Now and Here”, which, in addition to Movses, are not spatial and temporal additions, they do not belong to the time and space, but they involve the time and space in themselves’ (Movses, 2015, p. 223). So, they (time and space) at any moment, now and here, form the infinity and eternity and have a vertical nature of perception.

Thus, as we can see, Hakob Movses’s perception aspires to the whole, it has a philosophical unity, and with its identity and negatory basis

<sup>8</sup> *Garun*, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> *Garun*, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 15.

<sup>10</sup> *Garun*, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup> *Garun*, Yerevan, 7-8, 2006, p. 22.

forms its difference in the literary modernity that is often accepted with swords, passion, and contrast. The question is primarily about literary contemporaneity and the problems of the future that Movses still from the first stage of literary activity, from the 80s of the last century, from the first collection, “The Sky of Flights” (1981) to “Sharakan” (2016), has a perception unity, the basis of which is culture, as well as his identity of artistic perception, the inner nature (process) of which can be interpreted by the stages of hierarchy and inner evolution. Therefore, the question that distinguishes the poetry of Movses is significant not only for this, but also for the formation of the time, poetic quests, and the modernist period, which begins in the modern historical post-Sevak period of our poetry when the 60s generation comes to the literary square. In the 80s of the last century, however, in the quests and aesthetic perception of this literary generation a new period of the division was formed, which was expressed in the subsequent decades, being also complete in the poetry of Movses.

Hakob Movses, in the 80s of the last century (the period of literary debate with the cultural period ending in our poetry, and the new stage – being formed), came up with his poetic *diversity*, with his aesthetics of reality, and the representation of life, the basis of which is different from the 60<sup>th</sup> metaphysical and polemic principle or the preceding historical periods. It is different from the point of view of the concept of cultural heritage and the perception of poetry, the philosophical basis of which stretches from the ancient Greek and therefore the pre-Christian period of pan-European art to the renaissance era. The primordial cognition of Movses’s poetry is based on the extension of the word, its inner meaning, on the connection and assimilation with the essence of the language, and the expres-

sion of poetry/speech that he calls “The Sky of Flights”. The inner cultural extension and hierarchy that in Movses’s poetry suggests transition through the addition of word meaning, through the process of the discovery of the secret of poetry and its inner sense, the poet as a songwriter, finds it in the collection of “The Book of Flowering” (1992) where songwriting is the name of the ‘ornamentation’. The book is the name of the culture. That is why the idea of the book, which expresses the meaning of the writing/speech, is a fundamental idea in Movses’s poetry, which, as Hölderlin says, ‘Poets set what is left’, and Movses in “Light in Happiness” simply adds, “The book is written, the debt is covered”. That means “to live poetically” because the basis of any culture is the book (the writing/the speech), which is conditioned by the poet, now and here. Therefore, it is necessary first to understand the idea of the completeness of Movses’s poetry and not to expose to incomplete editing through the perception of separate parts, periods and segments, which was often done and interpreted in our criticism. Whereas the starting point that can be perceived and be historically justified is the matter of the nature and direction of Movses’s poetry that has a debating, negating, supplementing and self-establishing trajectory directed towards the aesthetics of the post-renaissance period and the previous century. However, as Nietzsche says in favour of criticism, “It is not an arbitrary and impersonal thing, but a proof that ‘there are living and driven powers that peel any skin’ - and ‘why we deny that?’, ‘Why should we deny that?’, we can answer Nietzsche in the words of Heidegger - ‘to re-establish values’. That is why, witnessing the basis of denial in the nature of the denied, Nietzsche’s (2005) words are summed up in this way, ‘We must deny that because something in ourselves wants to live and

sustain, something that we probably do not know yet (pp. 222-223). With the basis of denial, therefore, Movses's perception that sets the problem of cognition of the metaphysical world, the idea of the cognition of spirit connects with the beginning of the mathematical basis through language that is complicated but is philosophically analyzable. Thus, first of all, the metaphysical perception of Movses can be interpreted by the perception of the late metaphysics that Heidegger represents saying, "To represent the existing as the existing" (Heidegger, 2005, p. 369). However, the hierarchy of the existing has a historical basis that Hegel represents in 'The Phenomenology of Spirit' as an absolute perception of spirit that is expressed in art, religion and philosophy. Besides, according to Hegel, art, religion, and philosophy are forms of consciousness. From the point of view of hierarchy, the perception of the world through art, as the philosopher says, is a 'sensual image' (character), (the low level of spirit), and religion and philosophy are the perfect forms of spiritual development. The expression of Movses's poetry through the hierarchy of spirit is possible in the manifestation of the phenomenological nature of the transition of the word and poetry (speech). The word covers the sphere of sensuality when it acts as a thing-name, and the poet, as Hegel says, "Is the master of God" (Heidegger, 2005, p. 560). Moreover, when a transformation is made to the field of thing-world cognition (creation) where the language is recognizable by the pronunciation of its nature and accent that is possible in the field of poetry/speech, "God appears in a dual form - as nature and spirit, these two pillars are his sanctuary, with which he completes himself and comes forth". However, as a means of cognition, as a metaphysical feature, poetry/speech expresses the world through theophany that is associated

with pan-European (Christian) basis in Movses's poetry, and philosophy is associated with the cognition that is reflected in the perception of Hakob Movses's poetry. Therefore, the criticisms that Movses's poetry is merely a 'religious act', has a poetic pathos and acknowledges life as joy and delight<sup>12</sup> (T. Khachatryan), are not accurate as an orthodox viewpoint, so let us say that there is no need to represent Movses's poetry in a more Christian way than it is and more mystically than the poet himself is... Moreover, the imagery of Movses's poetry is also not well-grounded from the monistic point of view when the mythical basis of Movses's poetry is confused with evangelical symbols<sup>13</sup> (Z. Avetisyan) or, when the sayings of the predecessors are paraphrased and interpreted as 'a dating in the paradises of language'<sup>14</sup> like naive smugglers do (is not the hell also creative and does not have a linguistic expression?). These are merely single linear descriptions that do not have analytical integrity.

### Conclusion

Let us conclude that the 'religious background' of Movses' poetry is the cultural and philosophical pillar, the level of hierarchy (transition) from which the problem of penetrating the field of poetry/speech emerges. Alternatively, Hakob Movses can be perceived as a medieval lyric poet that remained under the burden of assets. Meanwhile, Movses is innovative, and he also reassesses his time, which is associated with the eternal time that is "the Future, the only time created by God", hence, "Will the human (the poet) preserve that future or destroy it with his history, with the past and present created by him

<sup>12</sup> *Garun*, Yerevan, 7-8, 2007, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> *Nork*, Yerevan, 1, 2007, p. 144.

<sup>14</sup> *Grakan Tert*, Yerevan, March 3, 2017.

- here is the starting point of the justification of all the history and culture” as points out Hakob Movses. Preservation and expansion are philosophical concepts in this case that seek ‘the aesthetic justification’ of Movses’s poetry and define its ‘antique topicality’...

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