

## STYLISTIC PECULIARITIES OF H. TOUMANIAN'S POEMS AND THEIR ENGLISH RENDERING

*Hovhannes Toumanian is one of the spiritual biographers of the Armenian people. His works depict the social and psychological conflicts of the Armenian reality in general. The present article deals with the stylistic peculiarities of Toumanian's poetry and the difficulties in translating them into English. "The Armenian Grief" translated by Mischa Kudian is the factual material of the article. Through stylistic means (metaphor, simile, hyperbole, etc.) the author depicts the nature of Armenia and the struggle of his nation. Due to the study of the English translation of Toumanian's poetry some generalizations can be made about the challenges of rendering Toumanian's style and language into English.*

**Key Words:** *H. Toumanian, poetry, stylistic peculiarity, literary translation, equivalent rendering, creative approach.*

Hovhannes Toumanian's genius permanently shaped the Armenian literature, and his knowledge of the human mind and heart speaks to us across the years. Toumanian is one of the spiritual biographers of the Armenian people. His works

depict the social and psychological conflicts of the Armenian reality in general, drawing themes from national traditions, long-standing customs, and even superstitions. All the pains, joys, virtues and moral values found expression in his poems. These essential elements are expressed with utter sincerity and transparency, qualities that characterize the man himself. He reveals such qualities as indestructible strength of thought, beauty and richness of feelings, wisdom and depth. He discovers and exposes true poetry, purity of feelings, integrity, and inextinguishable determination towards justice among his heroes. The images created by Toumanian move the reader even today with their truthful reality, but especially move the reader delicately to profound compassion for truth and beauty in the human experience. Each of his lyrical poems is a biography of a soul that enshrines a thought that makes the reader ponder the meaning of life.

Toumanian is a great artist whose legacy for Armenian people is invaluable. His art is so comprehensive that one could study it for many years. There is always something new to learn.

The wealth of Toumanian's language is not in the great number of words used, but in the multi - layerness of their meanings and nuances. Toumanian's poems are a harmony of wise thoughts, sensitiveness and imaginative poetry, where you can see the real picture of life, especially the most sorrowful songs of humanity.

Toumanian's poems reflect many of the contours of Armenia's physical and social landscapes. Simple in style, yet rich in implication, these works present finely ordered details of the local color the significance of which – thanks to his artistry – transcends local limitations. Universal, classic, melodious – these words describe Toumanian's poems that speak to all ages and to all people of all nationalities and all generations. Toumanian's favorite poetic devices are metaphor, simile, hyperbole. Through these and other stylistic means he depicts the nature of Armenia and the struggle of his nation.

Poetry translators are concerned to interpret the source poem's layers of meaning, to relay this interpretation reliably and create a poem in the target language which is readable and enjoyable as an independent literary text. The analysis of the translation shows how it creates the beauty of the poems and a vivid picture in the readers' minds. Toumanian's poetry presents special challenges to translators. These challenges are culture, language, invented words, etc. All nuances should be preserved in the translation in order to preserve the spirit of the original and not to destroy the overall impact.

A translator of poetry who lacks any poetic gifts is not likely to produce great poetry translations even if the translator may be a great philologist. Poetry is neither just words, nor just meter. Translators and theoreticians characterize it as music of words, as a way of seeing and interpreting the world. When

speaking about the sound the first thing to mention is rhyme, which can be defined as the matching of final vowel or consonant sounds in two or more words. In fact, sound is anything connected with sound cultivation including rhyme, rhythm, which refers the regular recurrence of the accent or stress in a poem, assonance or the repetition of vowel sounds, onomatopoeia, which implies that the word is made up to describe the sound, alliteration or the repetition of the same sounding letters, etc. A translator must try to maintain them in the translation.

Toumanian's poems have been translated into many languages. The analyzed English version of Toumanian's *The Armenian Grief* was translated by Mischa Kudian and published in London in 1970. Mischa Kudian was an English citizen born of Armenian parents. He translated a number of works from Armenian. In particular, his translations of Hovhannes Toumanian's poems were an outstanding literary success.

Seeing the real circumstances his country faced during the national struggle moved Toumanian to envelope his impressions in *The Armenian Grief*. This poem is a vivid example of his enduring bond with his nation.

*Հայոց վիշտը*

*The Armenian Grief*

*Հայոց վիշտը անհուն վի ծով,  
Խափար վի ծով ահագին,  
Էն սև ծովում տառապելով*

*Armenian grief is a sea,  
A fathomless, boundless main.  
In that dark expanse drifts my*

<i>Լռոյ է տալիս իմ հոգին:</i>	<i>soul,</i>
<i>Մերթ զայրացկոտ ծառս է լի-</i>	<i>Mournful, in mortal pain.</i>
<i>նում</i>	<i>Now furiously it rears</i>
<i>Մինչև երկինք կապուտակ,</i>	<i>And the azure coastline seeks,</i>
<i>Ու մերթ հոգնած սուզվում, իջ-</i>	<i>Now weary it disappears,</i>
<i>նում</i>	
<i>Դեպի խորքերն անհատակ:</i>	<i>Seeking peace in the deeps.</i>
<i>Ոչ հատակն է գտնում անվերջ</i>	<i>But neither can it find the</i>
	<i>bottom,</i>
<i>Ու ոչ հասնում երկնքին...</i>	<i>Nor can it reach the shore...</i>
<i>Հայոց վշտի սեծ ծովի սեջ</i>	<i>In the sea of Armenian sorrows</i>
<i>Տառապում է իմ հոգին:</i>	<i>My soul languishes evermore.</i>

There are two images passing through this poem – the image of an endless, bottomless sea, which embodies the immeasurability of the nation’s suffering, and the image of the poet, who grieves for his nation and feels the weight of the sorrow with his entire heart. The poet is an inseparable part of this sea of grief, the center of national suffering, expectations and hopes. Toumanian demonstrates the importance of setting in *The Armenian Grief* through the use of colorful metaphors referring to various elements of nature. Writing metaphorically he emphasizes his nation's suffering in the poem: *Էն սև ծովում տառապելով լռոյ է տալիս իմ հոգին* - *In that dark expanse drifts my soul, mournful, in mortal pain*. While rendering this metaphor in English the translator also applies inversion (*drifts my soul*), thus fortifying the intended stylistic effect.

There is also another expressive metaphor used by the author: *հայոց վշտի սեժ ծով* - *the sea of Armenian sorrows*. This line is written with a touch of suffer. To accomplish the same effect, the translator searches for literal equivalents (though omitting the attribute *սեժ* for the sake of keeping the rhythm of the poem) to ensure that the translation is true to the original making the effect of the original most adequate to the target readers' eye and ear. His effective equivalents, that keep the sorrowful and miserable overtones of the source text, ensure that the poem is self-sustaining and does not sound like a translation.

Another impressive stylistic device applied in the poem is a figure of speech called *antithesis*, a variant of syntactic parallelism based on parallel constructions with contrasted words: *նչ հասակն է գտնուլ անվերջ, ու ոչ հասնուլ երկն-քին* - *neither can it find the bottom, nor can it reach the shore*. In the English version this stylistic means is even more expressive as the translator introduces an antonymic pair for the concept of the sea *bottom – shore*.

In this poem the author also uses another antithesis based on a different pair of antonyms for the sea concept as compared with that of the original: *Մերթ զայրացկոտ ծառս է լինուլ սինչև երկինք կապուտակ ... Ու մերթ հոգնած սուգ-վուլ իջնուլ դեպի խորքերն անհատակ* - *Now furiously it rears and the azure coastline seeks ... Now weary it disappears*

*seeking peace in the deeps.* In the source text the contrasted pair of words is *ερληήυρ – ηυηρητρ*, while in the target text the translator gives *coastline – deeps*. Here is an apparent emotional tension which is adequately preserved in the English version. The stylistic device of antithesis helps to achieve rhythm, and rendering this stylistic device the translator keeps the whole pictorial effect in the target text. This rhetoric technique captivates interest and helps in holding the passage together as one, hence keeping the reader threaded to the idea. In the discussed passage of the source text there is also *hyperbole*, a trope which consists in deliberate exaggeration of some feature: *quyruyghnun δuunu ε ηήνυυ ηεuyη ερληήυρ*, which is naturally not transferred due to the translator's choice of a different pair of contrasted words: *furiously it rears and the azure coastline seeks*. This is clearly an inevitable loss, as the hyperbole used in the original adds a great dramatic effect to the imagery of the poem expressing the strong emotions of the suffering people.

There is also another stylistic device, repetition of the word *δny* in the first two lines of the poem which the translator does not preserve, substituting it by the word *main* in the second line as he obviously considers it to sound more poetic.

In some lines of the poem the translator intensifies the stylistic impact introducing more expressive and stronger equivalents: *uyunuyε[ny] – mournful, in mortal pain*. In this case there is also a grammatical substitution of the parts of speech.

Thus, studying the English translation of Toumanian's *The Armenian Grief* one may come to some generalizations about the challenges of rendering Toumanian's style and language in English. The translator, bearing in mind the fact that translation is after all a recreation of a certain poem, analyzes all the structures and patterns that are to be found in the original and tries to transfer them into the product of his work, the translated poem. In this hard process nothing is supposed to be added and nothing is supposed to be lost in order to keep the spirit and intention of the author.

The translator of poetry is the one who becomes the voice of the original poet and thus he is able to produce a poem that sounds as if it were written by that particular author directly in the target language. And he should have the same inspiration as the author had performing his creative work.

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**ԱՆՆԱ ԽԱՉՍՏՏՅԱՆ - Հ. Թումանյանի բանաստեղծական խոսքի ոճական առանձնահատկությունները և անգլերեն վերարտադրությունը - Հ. Թումանյանը հայ ազգի մեծագույն հոգևոր կենսագիրներից մեկն է: Նրա արվեստն այնքան բազմակողմանի է, որ մշտապես մեծ հետաքրքրության է արժանանում և բազմատեսակ ուսումնասիրությունների հիմք հանդիսանում: Սույն հոդվածը նվիրված է Հ. Թումանյանի բանաստեղծական խոսքի հետազոտմանը, մասնավորապես «Հայոց վիշտը» բանաստեղծության ոճական առանձնահատկությունների ուսումնասիրությանը և դրանց անգլերեն համարժեք փոխանցման խնդիրներին: Բանաստեղծական խոսքի թարգմանությունը, հատկապես դրա ոճական առանձնահատկությունների փոխանցումը, գեղարվեստական թարգմանության ամենաբարդ և խնդրահարույց բնագավառներից մեկն է, քանի որ այն պահանջում է ստեղծագործական մոտեցում և անհատական լուծումների որոնում՝ որոշակի սկզբունքներին հետևելու հետ մեկտեղ:**

*Հիմնարարներ. Հովհաննէս Թումանյան, քանաստեղծական խոսք, ռճական արանձնահատկություն, գեղարվեստական թարգմանություն, համարժեք վերարտադրություն, ստեղծագործական մոտեցում:*

**АННА ХАЧАТРЯН - Стилистические особенности поэзии О. Туманяна и их воспроизведение на английском языке** - О. Туманян является одним из величайших духовных биографов армянского народа. Его искусство настолько многогранно, что всегда представляет интерес для многосторонних исследований. Данная статья посвящена исследованию поэзии О. Туманяна, а именно изучению стилистических особенностей стихотворения «Армянское горе» и проблемам их эквивалентного воспроизведения на английском языке. Эквивалентная передача стилистических особенностей оригинала – одна из сложнейших и проблемных сфер художественного перевода, так как перевод поэзии требует творческого подхода и поиска индивидуальных решений одновременно со следованием определенным принципам.

**Ключевые слова:** О. Туманян, поэзия, стилистические особенности, художественный перевод, эквивалентное воспроизведение, творческий подход.