

52

Presentation date: September, 2019
Date of acceptance: November 2019
Publication date: January, 2020

AZERBAIJANI MOTIVES

IN THE CREATION OF THE FUTURIST VELEMIR KHLEBNIKOV

MOTIVOS AZERBAIJANOS EN LA CREACIÓN DEL FUTURISTA VELEMIR KHLEBNIKOV

Bagirov Ramiz Husein¹

E-mail: bagirov_ramiz@mail.ru

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6432-9361>

¹ Associate Professor History of Russian literature of Baku State University. Baku. Azerbaijan.

Suggested citation (APA, seventh edition)

Husein, B. R. (2020). Azerbaijani Motives in the Creation of the Futurist Velemir Khlebnikov. *Universidad y Sociedad*, 12(1), 413-416.

ABSTRACT

The beginning of the 20th century is a difficult time in development of Russia, the epoch of great changes, three revolutions, civil war, serious cataclysms. During this period of Russian history, we observed the reevaluation of values. Certainly, contradictory events in Russia influenced as a whole on development of culture and, in particular, the further development of literature. With the emergence of new names, the new themes and images enter Russian literature of the beginning of the 20th century. So one of the main themes of Russian poetry becomes an urban theme, the image of a modern city. During this difficult transitional period Russian poets pay a special close attention to Baku, the eastern city, that embarked on a European way of life. Developing an urban theme, comprehending Baku deeper, Russian poets make attempts to understand the attractive power of this city. These questions are clearly visible in poems of a number of Russian poets who lived, worked and studied in the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku.

Keywords:

Nizami Ganjavi, russian literature, urban theme, Velemir Khlebnikov.

RESUMEN

El comienzo del siglo 20 es un momento difícil en el desarrollo de Rusia, la época de grandes cambios, tres revoluciones, guerra civil, graves cataclismos. Durante este período de la historia rusa observamos la reevaluación de los valores. Ciertamente, los eventos contradictorios en Rusia influyeron en su conjunto en el desarrollo de la cultura y, en particular, en el desarrollo posterior de la literatura. Con la aparición de nuevos nombres, los nuevos temas e imágenes entran en la literatura rusa de principios del siglo XX. Entonces, uno de los temas principales de la poesía rusa se convierte en un tema urbano, la imagen de una ciudad moderna. Durante este difícil período de transición, los poetas rusos prestan especial atención a Bakú, la ciudad oriental, que se embarcó en un estilo de vida europeo. Al desarrollar un tema urbano, comprender a Bakú más profundamente, los poetas rusos intentan comprender el poder atractivo de esta ciudad. Estas preguntas son claramente visibles en los poemas de varios poetas rusos que vivieron, trabajaron y estudiaron en la capital de Azerbaiyán, Bakú.

Palabras clave:

Nizami Ganjavi, literatura rusa, tema urbano, Velemir Khlebnikov.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of the equality of Western man and Eastern man, the senselessness of their confrontation, the differentiation of all the people of the Earth not on a racial, but on a social basis, bearing in itself a grain of genuine justice has always been at the center of the oriental work of Russian poets.

Russian poets of the early 20th century are concerned, on the one hand, with the death of the old spiritual and philosophical values of the East, and on the other, with the high rates of development of civilization processes, which are most noticeably appeared in large eastern cities. The capital of Azerbaijan, Baku, with its booming oil industry and an important trading port, is of great interest in the Russian writing environment at the beginning of the 20th century. By the number of poetic consecrations in Russian poetry, Baku in the first two decades of the 20th century got over not only all other cities in other countries, but also Moscow and Petrograd-Leningrad in Russia. Baku attracts Russian poets with its exotic, original mixture of East and West. That is why Baku occupies a special place in the poetic world of Russian writers of the early 20th century. Among them, symbolist poet who moved to Baku for teaching and research activities at Baku University, S. Yesenin and, of course, futurist poet Khlebnikov (1936). Each of them had their own reasons to dedicate verses of Baku. Russian poets, whose creative path directly crossed with Baku, could not help but notice that the city spread out on the open sea on the high metal "islands" of the famous Bibi-Heybat craft. Under the houses, public buildings and streets the sea was making noise. This excited their poetic imagination. On dark southern nights, this city, illuminated at that time by the first gas lanterns, seemed to float along the waves.

DEVELOPMENT

Among the Russian poets who glorified Baku in poetry, a prominent place is held by Viktor Vladimirovich Khlebnikov, better known as Velimir Khlebnikov (1885-1922). It is difficult to find a writer in Russian literature who would evoke such diverse and mixed valuations and opinions as Velimir Khlebnikov.

Khlebnikov's interest in the East was comprehensive, and consequently, the socio-aesthetic experience of the peoples of the East became from the very beginning, one of the components of the poet's spiritual potential.

Khlebnikov's artistic orientalism is not just a topic of his temporary hobby or "continuation" of the "Kalmyk" period of the poet's biography. For Khlebnikov, the East is one of the oldest centers of world culture itself, which, in his

opinion, is the only one capable of saving the world from destruction.

Connected with the East by his biography, Khlebnikov (1936), consistently deepened his knowledge of the East, its civilization, mythology, folklore, classical epos and lyrics, drawing inspiration and deep conviction that the being and the spiritual world of the West and the East, with all these differences, are one in their main, human essence.

This west-east concept of Velimir Khlebnikov formed the basis of his early work, especially the strong embodiment in the poet's epic experiments - the poems "Medlum and Leili", "Otter Day" and "Haji Tarhan", which made up a kind of triptych.

In 1910, Khlebnikov, in accordance with the literary tradition of the West and the East and based on the plot of the poem of the great Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi "Leili and Majnun", created a complex philosophical poem "Medlum and Leili". "Medlum and Leili" was a kind of philosophical and aesthetic beginning of a whole epic about the past, present and future of mankind.

The works of Nizami Ganjavi in general and his poem "Leili and Majnun", in particular, have been known in Russia since olden times. Yet in the Pushkin era, with the efforts of V. Erdman and D.P. Oznobishina - Delibuhraeder the works of Nizami sounded in Russian. In this regard, Khlebnikov's appeal to the poem by Nizami Ganjavi "Leili and Majnun" is not accidental. Among the researchers of Velimir Khlebnikov's creation and others - there were those who tried to substantiate the Nizami principle in his work, and those who tried to refute this.

The free movement of the Khlebnikov's plot affects not only the name of the main character of the poem - Medlum, but also more significant changes touching on the already internal "characterological" properties of the main characters. Leyli is the namesake of the heroine Nizami, and Medlum is certainly a distorted version of Majnun. In the original version, the initiative to turn to heaven belongs to Majnun, praying first to the stars, and then to God for help. Khlebnikov is more active Leyli. Here she asks Allah to turn her and Medlum after death into stars. At Nizami, the epic of unfortunate lovers ends with their death. In Khlebnikov's work death of Leyli and Medlum is only the beginning of their eternal path to each other, a symbol of separation and merger. Medlum turns into an eastern star, and Leyli turns into a western star. The whole philosophical concept of Khlebnikov is connected with this. As for the name of the Khlebnikov's poem itself, the rearrangement of the places of names in the name of the poem is motivated, in our opinion, by the great attention of the Russian

poet to the male hero, and, on the other, by the traditions of Russian and Western European literature, where the hero is a man, as a rule, he is promoted to the first position (the epic "Tristan and Isolde", "Romeo and Juliet" and "Anthony and Cleopatra" by William Shakespeare, "Ruslan and Lyudmila" by A. Pushkin).

It is known that part of Velimir Khlebnikov's poem "Children of the Otter" (its third chapter, or third sail) is written based on another Nizami Ganjavi's poem "Iskender-name", which was also translated into Russian by that time, which once again is talking of Khlebnikov's a special respect and interest in the literary heritage of this great Azerbaijani poet.

During his years in Baku, working in BakKav in the early 1920s, Velimir Khlebnikov got the opportunity to deeply comprehend the literary heritage of Nizami Ganjavi. Since he did not make any significant changes in the interpretation of the love of his Medlum (Majnun) and Leyli, it can be assumed that he found many coincidences between the poem of the Azerbaijani poet and its own interpretation (Mayakovsky, 1980).

The materials that have reached us also allow us to state that during his studies in Baku Velimir Khlebnikov actively participated in the scientific and cultural life of both the capital of Azerbaijan as a whole and local cultural and educational organizations, editorial staff of periodicals, since historically it happened that during this period they focused on Russian poetry.

Thus, it is known that Khlebnikov in Baku participated in the work of the first congress of the peoples of the East held from October 1 to 7, 1920, worked in the school and library of Political Enlightenment part of the Volga-Caspian flotilla stationed in the city (October 1920), and collaborated in the newspaper Caucasian Commune (October 1921).

The writers who visited Azerbaijan during these years actively caroled Baku in their poems. In such a poetic atmosphere, Velimir Khlebnikov also could not help caroling the capital of Azerbaijan. Of particular note is the poem, he wrote with the multi meaningful name "B". In the poem, toponymic and anthroponymic models are played out, starting with the letter "b", which is in the title of the work. Baku, Bombay, Byzant, Baghdad. Here are the names of the founder of Babism (1840-1849) Mirza-Bab-Ali-Mohammed, who declared himself the reformer of Islam, the Turkish Minister of War and dictator Enver Bey, the Russian revolutionary, the founder and theorist of anarchism and Narodism, Mikhail Bakunin, who published the journal "Ныне" (At present). It is attracting attention that the poem conceives and completes the name of the Azerbaijani capital Baku. In Khlebnikov's "Memoirs" on

the teachings of Mirza Baba, we read: "leaving Baku, I began to study Mirza Baba, the Persian prophet, and I will read about it for the persians and russians".

The tutological rhyme "Bakunin - Baku" was so fond of Velimir Khlebnikov that he beat it in another poem - "And in a series". In Khlebnikov's "Memoirs" about his stay in Baku at the end of 1920.

From a letter of Khlebnikov from Baku to V.D. Ermilov, dated January 3, 1921, you can specify the address of the aforementioned hostel "I am in Baku (Marine Political Education, Bail St., hostel). There is the sea and the Bibi Heybat valley, like the mouth where smoke many cigarettes. Emphasizing the importance of the days spent in the hostel, Khlebnikov wrote: "I found clean laws of time on 20th years, when I lived in Baku, in the country of fires, in the high building of the marine hostel together with the artist Dobrokovsky ... The artist who began to sculpt Columbus, unexpectedly fashioned me from a green piece of wax. It was a good sign, good hope floating on the mainland of time, to an unknown country. I wanted to find the key to the clock of humanity, to be its watchmaker and to outline the basics of predicting the future. It was in the homeland that people first met with fire and tamed it into a pet. In the country of fires - Azerbaijan - the fire is changing its original image.

Like a tree of the equations of time, simple as a trunk at the base and flexible and living with complex life of branches of their degrees, in which are concentrated the brain and the living soul of the equations, seemed inverted by the equations of space, where a huge number of Bases are crowned with either one, two or three, but no further. That these were two reverse movements in one pass of the arithmetic, I decided ... Where previously there were blind steppes of time, harmonious polynomials built on a troika, and dyad, and my mind looked like the consciousness of a traveler, in front of which suddenly grew up battlements and walls of an unknown city.

He does not fall savage from heaven by almighty, inspiring fear from the deity, but coming out of the ground with a meek flower, as if asking and imposing himself to tame and tear it. In this book, I was faithful assistance by the case, among the hunger of books slipping exactly the book that was needed. So, comrade Brovko (a poet's acquaintance in Baku - R.B.) himself told me a chronicle of the events of 1917-20. It let start to count the days, which was the next step. The doctrine of good and evil, Ahriman and Hormuzd, impending retribution, - there are were a desire to talk about time, without measure, like some kind of arshin. So, the face of time was written in words on the old canvases of the Koran, Veda, Good News and other

teachings. Here, in the absolute laws of time, the same great face strikes out by the brush of number, and therefore a different approach to the work of predecessors is applied. This is not the word that lies on the canvas, but the exact number, like an art brushstroke painting the face of time.

For a short period of his life in Baku, Velimir Khlebnikov left an undeniable mark in the history of then Baku. Let the local intelligentsia not understand it ("If people don't want to study my art in order to predict the future (and this has already happened in Baku, according to local residents of thoughts), I will teach it to horses"), but he worked here a lot and published his works. His works were published in such Baku publications as the magazine "Art" ("Ochana-Mochana"), the collection "World and rest" ("Russia, diseases, drops of Don drank", "Fortune howling hooting", "Powerful, fresh to the naga", "Sea", "Three Sisters"), "Voemmor" magazine, "Communist" newspaper ("From dawn to night"), "Poems around Twisted", "Destructive order", "Frozen Osiris", "Self-shooting, of love".

Inspired by Baku's memoirs are Velimir Khlebnikov's poem "Labor of Navruz" dedicated to "Novruz Bayram". It is not difficult to notice the Azerbaijani realities and motives used by the poet in this poem. These are the words Bayram (holiday), ay (month), adam after adam (literally, man followed man), Zarathushtra (as you know, the temple of his fans is located near Baku). Further in the text, are included such local realities as Bayram, Islam (Muslim religion), Chadra (female face), Gardash (brother), joke-play riding on horse (galloping).

Most recently, was published on one of the websites another previously unknown Baku poetic impromptu by Velimir Khlebnikov, which was very noteworthy in content. This poetic impromptu of the poet is quoted in memoirs by his acquaintance Olga Samorodova from Baku, about meetings with him in Baku, under the name "Poet in the Caucasus" and dated March 20, 1928. It is noteworthy that in this poetic impromptu Khlebnikov.

Mentioned in the poem Tagiyev is Haji Zeynalabdin Tagiyev (1821-1924) - a real state adviser, a well-known Baku oil industrialist and philanthropist. G.Z. Tagiyev today, at the beginning of the XXI century, is widely known as a man who enjoyed the respect and love of his contemporaries - the Baku people, because he spent in Baku Shollar water line at his own expense, built a mill, opened a number of educational institutions, he paid for the training of representatives of talented youth abroad, provided financial aid to residents of Shamakhi, destroyed by a powerful earthquake.

He is called the father of the Azerbaijani economy, since shipyards in Baku, oil plants, the first horse railway, fire station, water supply, the first syndicate banks, the first cotton factory, schools, madrassas, mosques, hospitals, theaters was opened and developed at cash and money of Tagiyev. According to contemporaries, this man was loved and appreciated in Azerbaijan.

CONCLUSIONS

As we have already noted, Velimir Khlebnikov settled in Baku from the second half of 1920, when the process of Sovietization of Azerbaijan was actively underway. The existing at that time leadership of Azerbaijan considered the oilman and philanthropist an alien element, although some of them were educated at that time thanks to subsidies of G.Z. Tagiev. All personal property was confiscated from the philanthropist, with the exception of the house in the suburbs of Baku in Mardakan, which, as you know, remained with S. Yesenin during his stay in Baku. So, in a few lines of the comic impromptu, Velimir Khlebnikov captured the realities of Baku in the first years of Soviet power.

The above allows us to argue that the basis of the eastern interests of Velimir Khlebnikov was, on the one hand, Azerbaijani literature, in particular, the work of Nizami Ganjavi, on the other hand, the capital of Azerbaijan - Baku.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

- Khlebnikov, V. (1936). Selected poems. Sovetskii Pisatel'.
 Mayakovsky, V.V. (1980). Complete works. Ambrogio.
 Terekhina, V. (2011). Velimir Khlebnikov in the new millennium: a collection of articles of the International Scientific. Conference dedicated to the 125th anniversary of Velimir Khlebnikov. Moscow, Russian Academy of Sciences.