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**THE PHENOMENON *ÉCRITURE FÉMININE* AND THE
STRUCTURING OF POETIC LANGUAGE IN THE POETRY
OF WESTERN ARMENIAN WOMEN AUTHORS¹**

Abstract

There has been a great interest in the issue of *women's writing* since the 1960s. The *aim* of the study is to examine the characteristics of the phenomenon of *women's writing* on the example of the features of the poetics of Western Armenian women authors' works and to reevaluate not only the interactions and attitudes of Western Armenian women authors of the second half of the 19th century regarding the issue of women's emancipation, but also the idea of *écriture féminine* proposed by the French philosopher Hélène Cixous. The *aim* of the study is to examine not only the four-level semantic and ideo-logical concepts of *woman–subject* and *presence–state of mind–mood–language*, but also the domains of the analysis of the eventfulness of

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the poem. The *actuality* of the study is conditioned by the interdisciplinary nature of the studied material, according to which it was analyzed in the context of mutual connections and relationships between literary studies, linguistics, and philosophy, using literary, linguistic, historical-comparative and phenomenological methods. This multiaspect approach to the study of the problem under investigation is justified by the effectiveness of its interdisciplinary examination.

Keywords: *Hélène Cixous, écriture féminine, woman-subject, language-system, language – house of being, presence – state of mind – mood, gynocritics.*

Introduction

The myth of Tereus, king of ancient Greek Thrace, his wife Procne, and Procne's sister Philomela can be considered the first *feminine text*, or more precisely, the archetype of women's written text (women's writing). According to the myth, Tereus falls in love with Philomela and, on the way of bringing her to his home as a guest, hides her in a shepherd's hut, forcibly holds her captive, and takes possession of her. Desperate, Philomela threatens Tereus, saying: "Know that the mighty gods have seen your crime, and as long as they have power, you will be justly punished. I will tell them everything that has happened."² In rage, Tereus cuts out Philomela's tongue so that she cannot tell anyone what happened. However, the girl turns out to be wittier. Philomela embroiders what occurred on a tapestry and secretly sends it to her sister, Procne, informing her everything. Later, the sisters take revenge on Tereus by killing his son Itys.

Tereus chases after them and tries to kill them, but the gods of Olympus turn the two sisters into birds. Procne is turned into a swallow, whose song mourns the loss of her child, while Philomela is turned into a nightingale.³

The act of cutting out the tongue (elinguation) in the myth is perceived as the ***alienation of the natural right to human speech***, which is then replaced by ***text-message*** (writing). It is a fact that in the myth the language ***l̥q̥n̥ú*** (here, ***the woman's text***) experiences its ***second birth (conveyed through tapestry)***. This circumstance always resides in the realm of the subconscious, since thinking,

² **Myths of the Nations of the World**, 1988.

³ In the nightingale family, the female nightingale does not sing; only the male sings. **Hyginus**, *Fabulae*, 45: "The *Fabulae* (more precisely *Genealogia*) of Hyginus", according to **Rose**, 42–48) 42.

speech, any creative process or activity are *sexual energy* and are determined by *sexual primacy*.⁴

One of the constantly circulating cultural stereotypes is rooted in the belief that women, compared to men, possess significantly fewer creative abilities and that their activities are realized more through certain skills (such as, handicrafts), i.e. in the realm of poetry, rather than intellectual abilities. According to another widespread viewpoint, women are perceived as the inspirational objects for the creative activity of *the Other* (man), as muses, without whom genuine works of art could rarely, if ever, be created.⁵

Renowned British female author Virginia Woolf⁶, in her essay "A Room of One's Own" (1929)⁷, discusses *the library paradox* or *the systematic exclusion of women from the domain of symbolic language*, in other words, *their alienation from the world of writing (text) and written history*.

The French philosopher and theorist Hélène Cixous, for the first time in her essay "The Laugh of the Medusa" (1972), introduced the term *écriture féminine*⁸ (*women's writing*), defining *women's text*⁹ (here, *literature*) as a means that frees women from the fear of participating in the literary process and helps them establish themselves outside the masculine worldview. "After all, women come from distant times, where everything always was *as it should be*; they come from grass-covered fields where witches are allowed to survive, from the dungeons of *culture*, from their childhood, which men desperately force them to forget by condemning them to eternal sleep. Young girls and their yet unformed maiden

⁴ Cahill 2000, 43–63.

⁵ Bakhtin 1986, 261.

⁶ Virginia Woolf (January 25, 1882 – March 28, 1941) is an English novelist and essayist, recognized as one of the most prominent modernist writers of the 20th century. Some of her most famous works include the novels "*Mrs. Dalloway*" (1925), "*To the Lighthouse*" (1927), and "*Orlando*" (1928), as well as the essay collection "*A Room of One's Own*" (1929), which is renowned for its message "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction."

⁷ Woolf 1929.

⁸ Literally meaning *women's writing*. Numerous theories referring to feminine texts emerged at the end of the 20th century, but a precise definition of this concept has not been given yet.

⁹ Cixous 1976.

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bodies are chained inside themselves and are hidden under the forbidding eye of the all-seeing mirror."¹⁰

The term *écriture féminine* is used in contrast to neutral masculine writing. The relationships between woman authors and readers, women writers, and their writing are studied through the lens of gynocriticism¹¹.

One of the main goals of *écriture féminine* is to break through the male-dominated world, deconstruct the traditional system of norms and rules imposed by men, and search for a new, expressive female language. Hélène Cixous calls for changing the conventional way of understanding the text by saying, "I am a woman, and I am going to break their Law - here and now, through language."¹² According to the theorist, the *male* text is characterized by completeness, logic, and rationality, while the *female* text lacks a clear beginning or end and only the latter can overcome the accepted norms, concepts, and boundaries that hinder the true perception of the surrounding world, as a woman interacts with the world through her body, focusing on the senses of color, smell, sound, and taste. Researchers suggest that the female text is also shaped by the *ontology* of the woman's body. The fundamental issue of the body (physical presence) is closely connected to a *woman's language and thinking* (text), and Cixous repeatedly focuses on this issue: "Write for yourselves. Your body should become heard. Only then will the inexhaustible resources of the unconscious be unleashed."¹³

In her book "A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing"¹⁴, the founder of American gynocriticism Elaine Showalter presents the idea of *women's writing* as a subculture that has undergone the same stages of development as other cultures, such as Jewish and Indian, finding parallels between race, oppressed racial groups, and development of cultures. Showalter identifies three phases in the development of women's literary subculture: a. the phase of imitation of dominant models of the tradition, *feminine* phase; b. the phase of protest against the dominant values and standards of the

¹⁰ Cixous 1976.

¹¹ Gynocriticism creates new types of women's discourse that are independent of men and rejects the mere adaptation of male or patriarchal literary theories and models. In this type of discourse, the author of the text and the producer of textual meanings is the woman, who creates new models of literary discourse based on her own concerns, emotions, and experiences.

¹² Cixous 1976, 802.

¹³ Cixous 1976, 802.

¹⁴ Showalter 1977.

tradition, *feminist* phase; and c. the phase of independence, defining one's own values, defending them, or searching for woman's identity, *female* phase.

In his works "The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences"¹⁵ and "Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison"¹⁶, Michel Foucault argues that the social is a continuation of the body, as it is through the body that we perceive the surrounding world. Foucault explains this by stating that "the body is perceived as a surface upon which social norms and rules are based."¹⁷

Poetry and Language

In the second half of the 19th century in Western Armenian, as well as in the early 20th century and later in the diasporan and Soviet Armenian realities, women writers began to engage in literary and cultural activities, focusing on issues such as women's education, upbringing, advancement, and rights.

Attention to poetic language and its systematization in the intellectual domain clearly characterize the general trend of social sciences studies. In this context, by studying and systematizing the real time periods¹⁸ of literary-cultural activities of female authors in the Western Armenian literary-cultural domain, we have identified three generations, all of whom wrote poetry:

- a. Elpis Kesaratsian (Toghramajian) (1830), Srбуhi Tyusab (1841),
- b. Sipil (Zapel Khanjian, 1863),
- c. Zapel Yesayan (1878), Haykanush Mark (1885).

In general, the idea of human existence lies in the semantic continuity of language and culture. The theorization and ontologization of language themselves reveal the existence of the individual, the world, and culture, which are *mediated* by language and *occurs* within the internal domain of language.

This helps a human discover the multidimensionality of the world. In linguistic-philosophical and semiotic texts, the study of the fundamental problems of artistic expression has always taken place through the analysis of the processes of world *perception*, which, in the ontological domain, bring together Philosophy, Linguistics, Literary Studies, Psychology, Culture, and more. In this regard,

¹⁵ **Foucault** 2003.

¹⁶ **Foucault** 2003.

¹⁷ **Foucault** 2003.

¹⁸ The concept of *women's writing* was first introduced at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century in the periodical "Masis" (and in the Western Armenian press in general).

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noteworthy are the 20th-century and contemporary interdisciplinary studies on language issues, where priority is given to the ontological orders of **language-system** and **language-house of being**.¹⁹

The Novelty of the Poetic Language of Western Armenian Women Writers

Taking into account academic perspectives, it is essential to emphasize that language unites people within an ontological environment filled with continuous processes, outside of which a person has no existence at all. Martin Heidegger compares the knowledge of language to the experience of mastering the world.²⁰ The issue is not simple, as from the very first steps we encounter the equation with *unknown variables* of man-woman, which in all times implies the following fundamental questions: ***What is the world without specific knowledge? How does it develop, and how does it ensure its own existence?*** Consequently, the *real* presence of the human-world relationship is realized within the eventfulness of the world, which can be viewed within the framework of the existential-phenomenological method. The world, which manifests itself in its entirety, opens up in the context of Heidegger's concept of *Da-Sein* (presence), as the preliminary existence of all unities realized by a human. The world is the phenomenal space of *presence*, the ontological domain and horizon.

Existential studies of poetic language stand out as special forms of perception of reality, as revelations of encrypted ontological domains and preliminary expressions of existential will. Internal philosophical perceptions of things, objects, people, and phenomena often predetermine the movement towards the poetic word (as an *ontological* and *linguistic turn*), as well as the movement towards the art of *poetic writing* (here, women's literature).

Poetry and Presence

Elpis Kesaratsian's²¹ (1830–1913)²² poems are small in number. They do not differ markedly from traditional ones. The author's poetic language is

¹⁹ **Humboldt von W.**, On Language: On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species, Edited by Michael Losonsky, CUP 1999, 25–64. Տե՛ս նաև՝ **Mulder J. & Hervey S.**, La Language, Language as a System of Systems, Vol. 11(2), Published by Presses Universitaires de France: 1975, 3–22.

²⁰ **Heidegger** 2007.

²¹ **Hambardzumyan** 2021, 172–182.

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characterized by its use of Western Armenian mixed with Old Armenian. Elpis Kesaratsian's poems are included in her "Collection of Letters to the Reading Armenian Woman".²³

Kesaratsian preconsiders the *femininity* of her poetry, which is a significant step for a woman making an attempt at writing in the second half of the 19th century in the Ottoman Empire. The reader feels the sensitivity, restraint, and prudence that rarely leave her. Her voice is pure, precise, strong, and rational, resembling that of a masculine baritone. Kesaratsian is self-confident, which is equal to rationality, while rationality is the truth of writing, which is distinguished in the literary world by its purely linguistic characteristics. In this case, sensitivity and truth are directly related, as language is not only an existential environment where understanding between the woman and the world takes place, but is also perceived as a clear and genuine writing (text) of a woman subject. Furthermore, the considerations of femininity and meaning, which are directed at the full right of writing, become evident when the individual elements of the text, which complete the text as a whole, also define their own integrity. In other words, every beginning is its own result, and every result is a beginning.

Here, the new sweet-voiced Muses of Armenia,
With golden lyres, cry to the sons of Haik:
"Wake up, you, maidens, and encouraged,
See the new light of your freedom!
Praise our glorious Homeland's freedom,
It is free – and so are its maidens.
So hasten, daughters of Haik, with love

²² Elpis Kesaratsian (E.K.T. Haykuhi) was born in 1830 in Constantinople. She was educated at the Armenian schools in Ortagyugh and Peshiktash. She was the first female journalist and editor in the Armenian reality. Elpis Kesaratsian founded the Armenian-language magazine "The Guitar" with the motto "An Invitation to Armenian (Haykazn) Maidens" (*about women and for women*). As an editor, she signed her articles as "E.K.T. Haykuhi" and, throughout the seven issues of "The Guitar", published essays such as "The Spirit of Patriotism" (Imagination), "The Benefits of Friendship", "Exercising the Right is not Audacity" and "Upbringing of Maidens". Her essays, letters to Armenian women, philosophical reflections, and articles published in "The Guitar" and elsewhere were addressed not only to women of her time but also to those living and working in any era. In 1879, she published a collection titled "Collection of Letters to a Reading Armenian Woman". In 1872, she worked as a teacher at Makruhyats College and contributed to the Armenian press in Constantinople. She died in 1913.

²³ **Kesaratsyan** 1879.

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Adorn yourselves with all the noble ornaments of glory,
Ah, hasten to fulfill the longing of my heart,
I shall weave immortality wreath on your head."²⁴

Meaning is subjective-unconditional, and assignable, thus ensuring the inner psychological depth, completeness, and validity of writing. Meaning is the composite of impressions, as it is unconditional and relates to the text, irrespective of the subject. Such an expression has a certain basis not only in the psychological nature of the subject but also in the specific characteristics of the material being researched. As a woman subject, Kesaratsian irreversibly changes the accessibility of meaning. It returns to the female author, which is an important prerequisite for the spiritual development of writing.

The poems of another author, Srбуhi Tyusab (1841–1901)²⁵, are also few in number and have not been published as a separate book. Her first poem in old Armenian, titled "Spring", was published in 1864 in the journal the "Bazmavep"²⁶ by Arsen Bagratuni at the written request²⁷ of Mkrtich Peshiktashlyan. Tyusab is also the author of the elegy "In Memory of M. Peshiktashlyan."²⁸ This work is a *farewell* to her deceased beloved teacher. In this poem, the transcendence of memory relies on the past, taking into account the present, pre-existence, and subconsciousness. The past and the present are different aspects of the same continuum. The past is realized through language in the realms of psychological past and existential present, where the psychological aspect is present, and the past represents the existential past. In this context, an independent or existential

²⁴ Kesaratsyan 1879.

²⁵ Srбуhi Tyusab (Vahanian) was born in 1841. She was the first Armenian novelist. The core of her work was the issues of women's emancipation: socio-economic, legal, educational, political and national consciousness, their manifestations and protection. Throughout her literary and cultural activity Tyusab tried to substantiate one of the most important prerequisites for emancipation, the idea of occupation, which the author considered the first prerequisite for a woman's independence. Srбуhi Tyusab is the author of the novels "Mayta" (1883), "Siranush" (1884) and "Araksia or the Governess" (1887), publicistic articles and poems. Tyusab died in 1901. **Hambardzumyan, Parsadanyan 2022:**

²⁶ "Bazmavep", 1864 N 8, 244–245.

²⁷ **Peshiktashlyan 1987, 464.** This letter by Peshiktashlyan was first published in the July-August 1935 issue of "Bazmavep".

²⁸ Vahan Srбуhi, "In Memory of P. M. Peshiktashlian", "Masis", December 7, 1868, Constantinople, 4.

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language-memory is formed, which connects the present with the past through various ties.

He is gone and his fervent melodies no longer
Ignite the spark of love in my frostbitten heart,
At the sound of song, hatred and resentment would fade away,
The sparkling eyes would give a tender smile,
And the parted lovers would embrace each other,
“We are brothers,” echoed the jubilant voices all around.
Rest, may your name be one of unity,
Rest, may you be remembered as long as virtue and
goodness persist,
As long as genius is worshipped, rest, O Spirit!²⁹

In the text, memory is a measure of existential significance through language, rather than that of the past or the experience itself, and the forgotten experience is shaped in its internal realm, although the experience is always remembered. In all times the justification of reality is perceived as memory and anticipation, thanks to which, it goes back to the beginning, always remaining open towards it, like at the very first moment. In other words, the transcendence of memory becomes identical with the existential difference between existence and being, where memory is seen as being, as even in its passivity, the language of writing is inherent and is perceived as a potential prerequisite of existence.

A representative of the next generation is Sipil³⁰ (1863–1934), whose poetry is distinguished by its unique poetic language. Sipil’s collection of poems entitled “Tsolker” (Glitters)³¹ was published in 1902. The author’s poems bore clearly humanitarian messages, directed towards the world and people. However, their internal melody guides to expression, symbolizing relationships between woman and god, woman and world, until objectification, i.e. self-identification of the

²⁹ “Masis”, №4, 07.12.1868.

³⁰ Sipil (Zapel Khanjian) was a socially active figure, an educator, and a publicist. She authored textbooks and numerous pedagogical-methodological articles and was the first female grammarian. Her pioneering grammar textbook was published in Constantinople in 1897. Later, in collaboration with her husband Hrant Asatur, she compiled the “Modern Armenian Grammar” and “Museum” volumes, which were repeatedly revised and reprinted, serving as textbooks in Western Armenian schools for more than a quarter of a century.

³¹ **Sipil** 1902.

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woman subject, is achieved. In this case, poetry represents the woman author's worldview, which is expressed through poetic means and adheres to aesthetic principles. For the poetry to become the language of the woman author's feelings, it must first be justified within the context of writing, as her psychological persuasiveness may not always align with literary conventions and justify the essence of writing. In this case, the reader no longer merely represents the person trusted by the author. Instead, it is sufficient for the author to open her heart and mind to this person for her words to transform into poetry. Thus, the author's genuine, profound expression does not necessarily compel the reader to like the poetic intent³², as it does not create a poetic relationship between the author and the reader. In other words, poetry itself is not self-serving; therefore, it does not create itself.

In addition to creating poetry, Sipil addressed the problems of ancient and modern languages, poetic words and their meanings. She guides the reader towards understanding *the aesthetic inner realm* of poetic language and the unique role of poetics.

In her collection "Tsolker" Sipil creates the woman-being's universe of worldview, realizing the woman's *subjectivity* in her writing and revealing woman's inner world. In this collection, the author also creates existential concepts that affirm specific relationships between the world and a human. These concepts are predominantly aimed at confronting societal challenges and reflect on the reconciliation of earthly and divine realms, as well as the human pursuit of understanding the divine.

Newly risen from mourning, she wore blue.
Her head adorned with a lovely blue veil,
Whose delicate folds softly swirled,
Circling around her golden hair.

Her lips always held a smile of light,
Resonant, sweet, like a cherished song,
And in the depth of her enchanting gaze,
The sea cast its hue, and the sky its glow.³³

³² Hambardzumyan 2013, 56–67.

³³ Sipil 1978, 30–31. The quotes are taken from the 1978 Yerevan reprint of the collection of poems "Tsolker" (Glitters) by Sipili.

Poetry is the most centralized expression of *artistic principle*. It represents the unique and distinct possibility of creating within the realm of symbolic language, which realizes the inherent artistic potential bestowed upon people – *poetry creation*. Within the framework of representations of poetic language Sipil's poems are perceived as unique means for understanding people.

But the love of life suddenly won over evil,
"I want to live," she said, "I am the flower of spring,
I am not scared of the blows of fate,
In vain does the lightning strike me.

My blue eyes still have much light,
My passionate lips are filled with honey,
My heart aches under the great burden of feelings,
And still, my cheeks turn pink like roses."³⁴

The realms of dream and reality, within which the poet lives, intersect through invisible, weightless, intangible and unreal connections, which signify the transitions from reality to transcendence and serving as a means of *communication*. In Sipil's poetry, the initial orientation of the lyrical subject changes, from contradiction with language, to uniting with it in the process of creation.

In her blossoming beauty, so blissful,
She crushed death under her feet.
Now, like a gentle plaything of sweet dreams,
In her sleep she gains strength and vitality day by day.³⁵

The striving for harmony, as the central *spiritus movens*,³⁶ restores the lost heaven, and the subjective world of the individual becomes the sole path for achieving universal and personal equilibrium and harmony, bridging the realms of speech and writing, micro- and macrocosms.

Why write, or speak, or muse in vain,
And cast question to four winds, the universe,
When your questions, and your cries

³⁴ Sipil 1978, 44–45.

³⁵ Sipil 1978, 45–45.

³⁶ Moving spirit.

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Will fade, will melt, will dissipate
In the waves of vast abyss?³⁷

German philosopher Cassirer wrote: "In its development, language needs constant refreshment, and there is no better source for this than poetry."³⁸ Sipil's collection "Tsolker" comes to prove this statement of Cassirer's. The collection particularly emphasizes the poem "Yerking" (Sky) where the secrets of the sky and universe constitute the central theme.

Oh! what are you, bottomless and unattainable sea?
Where lies the beginning, where the end of your depths?
Are you a true essence or just a fleeting illusion,
A mirage, like all other transient joys?

Isn't it deception what they call a lie?
Are not all fragrances and loves mere illusions?³⁹

At first the poet contemplates and then revolts, as many of her critics observe. This emotional state is a result of *existential introspection* and relates to the phenomenon of *femininity*.

Yet, if you do not reign over our world
And not descend from your thunderous clouds,
If you do not see the wild waves of our passions,
If our desires seem mere playthings to you,
Then break the wild wings of our aspirations,
Cast shadows and veils upon your face,
And let my illusions, desires, and soul
Be buried among the trivialities of this world.
But you, O sky, insensible among the elements,
Reign forever, where neither lyre nor heart may dwell.⁴⁰

Sipil revolts against death, musing over afterlife and immortality of the soul, ideas that penetrated into her poetry from French poets', such as Lamartine, Verlaine, and Prudhomme. Sipil's poem "Yerking" was written under the

³⁷ Sipil 1978, 150.

³⁸ Cassirer 1980.

³⁹ Sipil 1978, 22.

⁴⁰ Sipil 1978, 24.

influence of Petros Duryan's "Trtunj" ⁴¹ (Moans) and was first published in the journal "Yerkragunt" ⁴² in 1886. However, "Yerking" lacks the revolt and the vigor of inspiration present in Duryan's poem.

Poetry and State of Mind

Haykanush Mark's ⁴³ (1885–1966) collection "Moments of Laziness" ⁴⁴ (1921) is notable for the *emotionality* of her poems. The key features of her poetry are *contemplation* and *restraint*. In Mark's prose poems, existence is represented as a *speaking silence* or peace of the ancient world, as ontology of things and objects, where the spatial and temporal chronotope is the chain-like hypertext. In the poems the feminine self-representation of this kind is perceived as an *awakening between being and meaning*, highlighting the subjectivity of the woman. The reality of things, which is conveyed through language and the presence of *the Other* in the poems, at the same time reveals an intensely intimate existential source: *the experience of the world can be encapsulated in the structure of language*. Moreover, any attempt to systematize existence compels the author to turn to language, and in this sense, poetic language is perceived as the matrix generating *existence and knowledge*.

This morning, my soul embraces an entire world,
My soul is proud, my soul is feasting,

⁴¹ Duryan 1981, 52–53.

⁴² See "Yerkragunt", 1886, N 8, 366–369.

⁴³ Haykanush Mark (Topuzian) was born in the Ayazpasha district of Constantinople, in the family of Margar and Yepraksia Topuzians. In 1898, she graduated from Yesayan Secondary School. For many years, she taught in Armenian schools in Constantinople, in the boarding orphanage of the National College, and at the Nikoghosyan Girls' Higher School in Nshantagh. In 1903, she was awarded the second prize by the literary newspaper "Masis". That same year she published the novella "A Girl's Heart". From 1905 to 1906, together with her husband Vahan Toshikian, the editor of the newspaper "Manzoume-i Efkiar", she published the magazine "Tsaghik" (Flower). She was also the secretary of the Patriotic Armenian Women's Association. Mark published prose and poetry in periodicals such as "Byurakn", "Hayastani Kochnak" (Bell of Armenia), "Zhamanak" (Time), "Yeritasard Hayuhi" (Young Armenian Woman), and others. From 1919 to 1932, she published the bi-weekly magazine "Hay Kin" (Armenian Woman). In 1921, her collection of prose poems, "At Times of Laziness" was published. In 1936, she contributed to the newspaper "Nor Lur" (News), edited by her husband, and managed the women's section. Haykanush Mark died in the Armenian National Hospital in Constantinople on March 7, 1966. See **Hambardzumyan, Parsadanyan 2022**.

⁴⁴ Mark 1921, 44.

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I come from paths where moss sings,
Where the breeze has love, and where fern can smile.
This morning, my soul embraces a universe,
My soul is kind, my soul is joyful.
I come from paths adorned with dew's veils.
This morning, my soul is in flames, my soul is drunk,
Oh, this morning, my soul was blessed with happiness.⁴⁵

The essence of poetic language is not limited to the set of tools because Mark's language is not a tool for copying or displaying objective reality. Poetic language relates to existence and ontology; this technique is not something external but the essence of the *potential of being* or the ontological tension of a woman to be *autonomous*, which manifests itself through the absence of the present as a message or symbolic form.

Close the shutters! With my lashes I catch the light that the noon sends me through the window bars. Quiet home... Here, the warmth buzzes like a maddened bee. Silence... the wide and bright distances where laziness settles.

Suddenly, from the village gate, the metallic piercing crow of the rooster breaks the drowsiness. From within my dream, which gleams in my mind, life spins dizzily and circles around. And from the lazy sighs of ancient furniture, the nine-year-old gentle girl from my childhood comes to embrace the woman worn out from dreams, who is me.⁴⁶

Moreover, during the process of reading, the algorithm of aesthetic communication, conveyed through the experience of the *woman subject*, becomes evident in the poetic work, which is presented in the formula of *eidós-object, form-matter*. Taking into account its original, eidetic purity, the universe of poetry, as an experience, is involved in the space of the woman's present and manifests itself as a possible realm of aesthetic communication, allowing for the potential independence of thought to *materialize and radiate* meanings. Yet, poetry is not merely a means of transmitting messages but a certain clear way of seeing things and the world, which includes self-elevation.

I exiled, I exiled my sick loves! And now,

⁴⁵ Mark 1921, 16.

⁴⁶ Mark 1921, 24.

On the path of ashes, owl's mother mourns.
The evening enters, laced with hashish, sweetly fragrant,
Descending the marble stairs,
In the darkness, the abandoned throne sighs,
Where once the golden prince of my dreams reigned.
I exiled all my loves! Yet behold,
I weep like an orphaned girl,
How deep is the emptiness of one who passes away.⁴⁷

Russian-Estonian literary scholar, semiotician Yuri Lotman points out that in culture, the planes of expression and content are inseparable⁴⁸; therefore, the universe of poetry is material, factual. In this factuality of the work, the reader sees what was previously encoded, invisible⁴⁹. Haykanush Mark is closest to the ontology of language. She transfers language into the realm of dialogue between *woman* and *world*, which meantime serves as an exit from the boundaries of poetry into reality, where the **ontologization of language** takes place.

German philosopher Martin Heidegger wrote: "Language cannot be associated with vocabulary and grammar; language is what is said in it."⁵⁰ True language resonates only in poetry. Mark's poetry is perceived with immediacy by the reader, as a phenomenon of presence, as long as the author, as a woman, has a chance to identify with her own self.

I loved to bury my pain in the darkness of a flower's bosom.

When the evening melted on the field and the wheat spikes extinguished their burnt grains, I plunged into the grey shadow of the valley. I plunged into the grey shadow of the valley, where the divine fragrance of hyssop filled the air.

Just as lichen, which should never see tears, I dug the earth with my fingers, deeper and deeper, and there, in the darkness of a flower's bosom, I buried my pain.⁵¹

Poetry reconciles a person with the world, opening to them the depth of the silence of the ancient world, and like a first intimacy, it reveals the *silence of the*

⁴⁷ Mark 1921, 21.

⁴⁸ Lotman 2010, 325.

⁴⁹ Lotman 2010, 325.

⁵⁰ Heidegger 2007, 620.

⁵¹ Mark 1921, 8.

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same world's expression as the **eventfulness of poetry**. This is because the silence of the world is always hidden under the veil of some idea.

The Eventfulness of Poetry

Emphasizing the historical relationship between the world and existence (views that are in constant tension with one another), Hans-Georg Gadamer also clarifies his philosophical perspectives on poetry: "Unlike ordinary speech, poetic speech, as well as philosophical speech... has the chance to close in by itself and to materialize as an autonomous text in abstractness, expressing itself through *its own power*."⁵² This **autocracy** of poetic speech in Gadamer's studies also recalls Heidegger's idea: "The word spoken poetically is what appears as a word."⁵³

In a poem, **the word** and **the language** are the ultimate bearers of meaning, as the stresses in a verse create a stabilizing rhythm and hold back the retreating word ensuring the internal realm of **word-being-presence**, the author's *inner world*. The energy of writing, which constructs this architecture, presumes the ontology of *things* in the unbreakable unity of the work, which in the poem becomes *present* – here and now (*hic et nunc*). This presence is realized in the unreserved wholeness of the work and becomes part of the whole.

It is here that the encounter between *the reader and the universe of poetry* may not occur and fail to become an event. It is here that poetry recognizes no guarantees. Therefore, by presenting the ontological difference between poetic speech and language beyond everyday ones, Gadamer points to the semantic *infinity* of the poetic declaration, which becomes an *autocratic universe*. The study of the ontology of poetry throughout all times indicates its eventful nature, where the *eide* of *Word* and *thing* are manifested in their factuality, simultaneously merging and resonating in the mood of the poem, living through art.

Poetry and Mood

Zabel Yesayan's⁵⁴ prose poem "Song to the Night"⁵⁵ was published in 1895 in Arshak Chobanian's magazine "Tsaghik". The poem highlights a spatial and

⁵² Gadamer 1991, 116–125.

⁵³ Heidegger 2007, 620.

⁵⁴ Zabel Yesayan (1878–1943) graduated from Sorbonne University, gaining a degree in literature and philosophy, which partly explains the harmonious interplay of these disciplines in her works and her interest in them. In this context, her notable works include the novellas "Twilights of Skyutar" (1905), "False Geniuses" (1905), "The Obedients and the Rebels"

temporal chronotope. The analysis stems from the intention to measure the rhythm of time within the poem, which in the internal realm of the same time captures the event-like nature of the poem and creates an additional participatory effect in the domains of eventfulness and communication.

Come, O night, come and cloak the world with your black wings, extinguish the final breath of twilight in your coolness, cover the earth in your funereal darkness. The day slips into your somber bosom, into its grave, drawing with it all the blossoming emotions and worries.⁵⁶

The poem's eventfulness is revealed. The reserved reader manages to access the world of moods to which the author directs them. In Yesayan's "Song to the Night", truth unfolds as an internal experience of presence (Da-sein), as the world realizing in it captivates. In this engagement on the part of the world, by seeking the essence of individual existence, the reader reveals the world's (and consequently their own) wholeness as an endlessly extending experience, where the *self* is inherently present. This is the endless expression of *presence* and *being*:

Loving hearts await you with longing, yearning to drown their dreams in your darkness. Come and gently close their weary eyes with your invisible fingers. Take them into the depths of sleep for just a few hours.

Carry them far away on your black wings, those who are weary of life. Let them sleep in your coolness, lulled by your sweet melodies. Let their worries diasppear for a few hours into the darkness of your world.⁵⁷

The intrinsic existential-phenomenological realm present in this type of mental state is accessible to the reader as a philisophical *classification* of perception. Consequently, the phenomenon of *mood* is observable from the perspective of the existential subject, beyond the scope of prerequisites. In this context, the actual bearer of mood is the woman. The presence is the mood itself, so the mood is present.

(1906), "People with Grace" (1907), and "The Curse" (1911), the short stories "Safieh" (1911) and "The New Bride" (1911), as well as the novels "Retreating Forces" (1923), "Shirt of Flame" (1934), "The Gardens of Silihtar" (1935), and "Uncle Khachik" (1966), etc.. In 2019, one of the streets in Paris was named after Yesayan.

⁵⁵ Yesayan 1995, 17.

⁵⁶ Yesayan 1995, 17.

⁵⁷ Yesayan 1995, 17.

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Your arrival brings lovely memories with it. You are the companion of the lonely; it is you who sees the most hidden tears. The wretched, who pass by your open windows, sleepless, suck in your cool darkness.⁵⁸

Poetry is a unique process of generating an ontological experience, through which the author is *present* in the world (*culture serves as a form of aesthetic presence*). In this context, communication, as an expression of *eventfulness*, is perceived through introspection. Presence lies between *the silence of mood* and *the mood of silence*. It fully belongs to the reader.

Their thoughts and emotions wander within your heart. And you take them all and bury them in your soothing twilight.⁵⁹

The attempt to systematize the metaphors of *silence* and *mood* in contemporary methodological dialogues emerges as an ontological inner space, *a state or a system of transitions*, preserved within the spatial and temporal chronotope of *the artistic image*. In this case, the metaphor serves as an ontological tool for creating a symbol, manifesting within its own absence while retaining its intentionality. Mood is the experience of silence, thus when meaning is revealed, space retreats, and the philosophy of being is uncovered. As the language of mood is silence, then speech is silence, silence is speech, and speech is the ontological possibility of silence. So, in silence lies the world. Whoever is in the world hears the silence and uncovers the world within the realm of the silence of things.

The mood of the poem is preserved in all internal domains - structure, poetics, and style. This circumstance implies themes that cannot be revealed within the scope of a single article. Thus, the mood and symbolic structure of the poetic text, the ethical-stylistic issues, the existential experience of the author and reader as a phenomenon of existential transformation, reveal the ontological and aesthetic perceptions of the poetics of myth in the fictional text, in this case, poetry.

Conclusion

The interest towards existential and ontological issues within poetic language have consistently drawn scholars' attention as it is a unique experience. In this

⁵⁸ Yesayan 1995, 17.

⁵⁹ Yesayan 1995, 17.

context, the poetic language and poetics of Western Armenian female authors, philosophical and linguistic experiences are noteworthy. These emphasize the possibilities of women to think about the world, revealing the philosophy of language through language. This is an attempt to return poetry to its origins, as long as thought is stable as an expression of soul.

Studying the Western Armenian literary and cultural landscape has led us to the conclusion that women authors also significantly contributed to the realization of poetic discourse and the development of core elements: the ontology of poetic language and language as home to existence.

In this context, poetry reflects the empathetic harmony between the author's *self* and the mood of poetic language, which is a path through the boundaries of *difference* as poetic ontology is perceived as a living essence of experience, and poetic processes are recognized when they emerge in the ecstatic time of the present. Therefore, these events are marked by an ecstasy of fullness that detaches from ordinary interaction with the world.

It's about a journey through experience and opening up before language, wherein the woman author reveals the secrets of existence. However, it should be emphasized that the woman (in general) is the first to experience the world's existential turns, to all possible revisions of existence. In essence, these turns are directed towards the straight experience of the existence of the world.

The paths of artistic search by Western Armenian women authors, apart from their genre-specific expressions, are also realized through poetic means with special aesthetic experiences.

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ÉCRITURE FÉMININE ՖԵՆՈՄԵՆԸ ԵՎ ՊՈԵՏԱԿԱՆ ԼԵՁՎԻ ՀԱՄԱԿԱՐԳՈՒՄԸ ԱՐԵՎՄՏԱՀԱՅ ԿԻՆ ՀԵՂԻՆԱԿՆԵՐԻ ՔԵՐԹՎԱԾՆԵՐՈՒՄ

ՆԱԻՐԱ ՀԱՄԲԱՐՁՈՒՄՅԱՆ

Ամփոփում

1960-ական թվականներից մեծ է հետաքրքրությունը կնոջական գրականություն ֆենոմենի նկատմամբ: Ուսումնասիրության նպատակն է՝ արևմտահայ կին հեղինակների երկերի պոետիկայի առանձնահատկությունների օրինակով ուսումնասիրել կնոջական գրականություն ֆենոմենի առանձնահատկությունները, վերաբերել ոչ միայն 19-րդ դարի երկրորդ կեսի արևմտահայ կին հեղինակների՝ կանանց ազատագրության հիմնախնդրի շուրջ ունեցած փոխառնչություններն ու վերաբերմունքը, այլև ֆրանսիացի փիլիսոփա Հելեն Սիքստի առաջադրած *écriture féminine* գաղափարը: Ուսումնասիրության խնդիրն է՝ արևմտահայ կին հեղինակների քերթվածները քննել ոչ միայն կին-սուբյեկտ և ներկայություն-հոգեվիճակ-տրամադրություն-լեզու քառաստիճան իմաստաբանական և գաղափարաբովանդակային հայեցակարգերը, այլև բանաստեղծության իրադարձականության վերլուծության տիրույթները: Ուսումնասիրության արդիականությունը պայմանավորված է ուսումնասիրվող նյութի միջգիտակարգայնությամբ, ըստ որի՝ այն վերլուծվել է գրականագիտության, լեզվաբանության և փիլիսոփայության միջև փոխադարձ կապերի և առնչությունների համատեքստում՝ գրականագիտական, լեզվաբանական, պատմահամեմատական համադրական և ֆենոմենոլոգիական մեթոդների կիրառմամբ: Այսօրինակ վերլուծություն կատարվում է առաջին անգամ: Այն կարևոր է և արդիական ոչ միայն միջգիտակարգայնության, այլև հայագիտության մեջ կանանց հիմնախնդրի վերլուծության տեսանկյունից:

Բանալի բաներ՝ Հելեն Սիքսու, écriture feminine, կին-սուբյեկտ, լեզու-համալարգ, լեզու-կեցության տուն, ներկայություն-հոգեվիճակ-տրամադրություն, գիտորննադատություն:

ФЕНОМЕН *ÉCRITURE FÉMININE* И СИСТЕМАТИЗАЦИЯ ПОЭТИЧЕСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯХ ЗАПАДНОАРМЯНСКИХ ПИСАТЕЛЬНИЦ

НАИРА АМБАРЦУМЯН

Резюме

С 1960-х годов наблюдается большой интерес к проблеме женского литературного творчества. *Целью* исследования является изучение феномена женского творчества на примере поэтических особенностей произведений западноармянских писательниц, а также отношения западноармянских писательниц второй половины XIX века к проблеме женской эмансипации и к *écriture féminine*, предложенной Элен Сиксу. *Задачей* исследования является рассмотрение не только четырехуровневых семантико-мировоззренческих концептов женщина-субъект и присутствие-состояние души-настроение-язык, но и анализ событийности стихотворения. *Актуальность* исследования обусловлена междисциплинарным характером изучаемого материала, проанализированного в контексте взаимосвязей литературоведения, языкознания и философии, с использованием литературоведческих, лингвистических, а также историко-сопоставительного и феноменологического методов. Следует отметить, что анализ проводится впервые. Он важен и актуален не только с позиции междисциплинарности, но и с точки зрения анализа «женского вопроса» в арменоведении.

Ключевые слова: *Элен Сиксу, écriture féminine, женщина-субъект, язык-система, язык-дом бытия, присутствие-состояние души-настроение, гинокритика.*