

THE IMAGE OF AMIR TIMUR IN NICHOLAS ROWE'S PLAY "THE GREAT TEMUR": A SYMBOL OF JUST RULE AND ENLIGHTENMENT HUMANISTIC PRINCIPLES

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Abstract. This article explores the image of Amir Timur presented by Nicholas Rowe in his tragedy "The Great Temur". The depth of the character, his role as an ideal ruler and protector of humanity, and the political allegory invested by the author are examined. Special attention is paid to the comparison of Timur's character traits with the humanistic ideals of the Enlightenment era.

Keywords: tragedy, ideal, Nicholas Rowe, Great Timur, political allegory, European literature.

ОБРАЗ АМИРА ТИМУРА В ПЬЕСЕ НИКОЛАСА РОУ «ВЕЛИКИЙ ТИМУР»: СИМВОЛ СПРАВЕДЛИВОГО ПРАВЛЕНИЯ И ГУМАНИСТИЧЕСКИХ ПРИНЦИПОВ ЭПОХИ ПРОСВЕЩЕНИЯ

Аннотация. В статье исследуется образ Амира Тимура, представленный Николасом Роу в его трагедии «Великий Тимур». Рассматриваются глубина характера, его роль как идеального правителя и защитника человечества, а также политическая аллегория, вложенная автором. Особое внимание уделяется сопоставлению черт характера Тимура с гуманистическими идеалами эпохи Просвещения.

Ключевые слова: трагедия, идеал, Николас Роу, Великий Тимур, политическая аллегория, европейская литература.

Introduction

Among the many authors who influenced the formation of the image of Amir Timur in European literature, the 18th century English playwright Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718) occupies a special place.

His tragedy “The Great Timur” (Tamerlane), written in 1701, is one of the most significant works of its time, which in artistic terms is quite comparable to the works of such great authors as Shakespeare. It was this play that brought Rowe well-deserved recognition and became popular in theatrical circles in England during the XVIII century.

Rowe's work, along with other tragedies of the time, such as “The Tragedy of Jane Shore” (1714) and “The Fair Penitent” (1703), enjoyed great popularity on the English stage. It vividly expresses the characteristic features of the dramaturgy of the Restoration period and the early 18th century, including themes related to politics, morality and power. In the tragedy “The Great Timur”, Rowe himself, in his dedication of the work to the Marquis William Hartington, points to the political allegory inherent in the image of the great commander, which allows a deeper understanding not only of the historical significance of Amir Timur, but also of the peculiarities of the political and moral views of the author himself.

Nicholas Rowe portrays Amir Timur as an ideal ruler, combining the qualities of a humanist, a just ruler and a protector of his people. In this context, his tragedy becomes not just a work of fiction, but a kind of political platform, reflecting Rowe's views on such important issues for his time as state power, moral principles and the responsibility of the ruler to the people. In this play, Rowe views Timur as a symbol of virtue, courage and justice, contrasting him with cruel and despotic rulers such as the Turkish Sultan Bayezid.

This paper pays particular attention to analyzing how Rowe uses Timur's image to illustrate the humanistic ideals of the Enlightenment era. Timur's role in the play goes beyond a historical figure to become a symbol of moral and political justice. This makes Rowe's tragedy an important work for the study of eighteenth-century literary and political traditions, and helps us understand how European authors of the time perceived oriental figures such as Amir Timur and used them to express their own political and philosophical views.

Thus, Nicholas Rowe's *The Great Timur* not only reflects Enlightenment ideals, but also serves as a prime example of how literature can influence perceptions of historical figures and actualize political issues through artistic imagery.

Materials and Methods

To analyze the image of Amir Timur in Nicholas Rowe's tragedy “The Great Timur” we used both the text of the work itself and various research materials devoted to the study of Rowe's dramaturgy, historical sources and literary trends in the context of which this play was created.

The study is based on comparative and interpretive approaches, using historical and literary analysis, as well as analysis of texts reflecting the humanistic ideas of the Enlightenment era.

1. Analysis of the text of Nicholas Rowe's tragedy “The Great Timur” (Tamerlane, 1701)

The main material for the study is the text of the play itself, which was analyzed in order to identify the key themes and motifs associated with the image of Amir Timur. An important aspect was attention to the themes of justice, power, moral principles and humanistic ideals, which play a central role in the work. Both the main scenes and dialogues that reveal Timur's characteristic traits as a ruler and personality were taken into account.

As N. Rowe notes, "the life of this Great Man (Amir Timur) is practically no different from that of His Majesty. His Courage, His Piety, His Moderation, His Justice and Fatherly Care for His People bear a strong resemblance to His Majesty" (Rowe, Nicholas. Tamerlane. University of Virginia Library). This aspect helps to understand how Rowe uses the image of Timur as an ideal of a just ruler.

2. Comparative Analysis with Other Eighteenth-Century Works

In order to better understand the context of Nicholas Rowe's play, work has been done to compare the image of Amir Timur with the portrayal of other rulers presented in works of the time. Comparison with similar images, such as the characters in the tragedies of John Dryden and other eighteenth-century playwrights, allows us to identify common features inherent in the portrayal of the ideal ruler in Enlightenment literature, as well as to show how Rowe uses Timur to reflect the political and moral situation of his time. For example, in Dryden's plays, one can see similar attempts to show a hero who personifies moral values and justice.

3. Use of Historical and Biographical Materials

One method of analysis is to consult historical sources and biographies that describe the life and activities of Amir Timur. Studying the historical context helps to understand how Rowe adapted real events and Timur's personality within the framework of a dramaturgical work. As researcher Clark emphasizes, “Timur was presented as the image of an ideal ruler who is endowed not only with military talents but also with moral responsibility to the people” (Clark, D. B., 1950).

These historical contexts helped Rowe create an image of the ruler that blends with the humanistic ideals of his time.

4. Application of Humanism and Enlightenment Concepts

One of the key research methods is to use the principles of Humanism and Enlightenment philosophy to analyze the character of Amir Timur in Rowe's tragedy. Humanism, which was the foundation of Enlightenment philosophy, emphasizes the value of the individual, justice, and the moral responsibility of rulers to the people. This approach examines how Rowe, in creating the character of Timur, promotes these values by contrasting them with the absolutism and tyranny personified in the character of Sultan Bayezid. As Nussbaum notes, "Enlightenment humanist thought recognized the greatness of a ruler only if he was just, wise, and concerned with the welfare of the people" (Nussbaum & Brown, 1987).

5. Literary and Stylistic Study

Additionally, a literary and stylistic study was conducted to identify the characteristics of Nicholas Rowe's language and style. This includes analyzing the metaphors, symbols and allegories that are used to reveal the ideals of justice, virtue and the fight against tyranny.

Particular attention has been paid to the use of language to create the political and moral messages that Rowe attempts to convey through the characters in the play. As Sherburn states, "Rowe's language is saturated with political allegory that expresses the struggle between tyranny and justice" (Sherburn, G., 1948).

6. Historical and Cultural Context

To understand the political and cultural situation in early eighteenth-century England, information from studies on the literary history of the time was used. The analysis of the socio-political situation and philosophical currents, such as the influence of Enlightenment ideas on literary work, allowed for a deeper understanding of how exactly the image of Amir Timur could serve not only as a historical character, but also as a political allegory representing the ideal of a just ruler. Loftis notes that "Rowe's tragedy not only personifies the ruler, but is also a reaction to the political processes of his time, where cruel rulers are opposed to the ideal of humanistic monarchy" (Loftis, J., 1963).

Accordingly, the methodological basis of this study includes a combined approach that combines textual analysis, historical and literary context, comparative study and the use of philosophical and political concepts of the Enlightenment era to interpret the image of Amir Timur in Nicholas Rowe's tragedy.

Results and Discussion

Analyzing the image of Amir Timur in Nicholas Rowe's tragedy *The Great Timur* reveals several key aspects that shape the literary and historical context of the character. The study shows how Rowe uses the tragic image of the great conqueror to reflect the moral and political ideals of his time, as well as to emphasize eternal values such as justice, courage, and self-sacrifice.

1. The Image of Amir Timur as an Embodiment of Humanistic Ideals

The main result of the analysis is that Amir Timur in Rowe's play is portrayed not only as a brutal conqueror, but also as a man with a high moral purpose. Rowe creates an image that balances between the cruelty necessary to conquer and assert power and the humanistic ideal of a ruler who cares for his people. An important aspect is that Timur does not represent a conventional tyrant, but rather a ruler who, despite his brutal actions, strives to create a just order. In a key monologue, Timur states, "I am no enemy of justice; my weapons are always directed against tyranny" (Rowe, *Tamerlane*, Act III).

This image became an important element of Enlightenment philosophy, in which a ruler should not only possess physical strength, but also be morally responsible for the actions of his people. As researcher Johnson emphasizes, "Rowe seeks to portray Amir Timur as a ruler who seeks justice and peace despite the brutality associated with his conquests" (Johnson, R., 1994).

This is evidenced by the fact that even in scenes of violence, he remains committed to the principle of justice, epitomizing the moral and political renaissance of the Enlightenment.

2. Conflict Between Justice and Cruelty

An important theme of the play is the struggle between justice and cruelty, which is especially evident in the conflict between Timur and Sultan Bayezid. The play portrays Bayezid as a tyrannical ruler whose brutal approach to governance contrasts with Timur's humanistic ideals. In a dialog between the two, Timur utters: "Justice is the only cause worth fighting for, even if it requires the shedding of blood" (Rowe, *Tamerlane*, Act IV).

This conflict is not only political but also philosophical as it reflects the debates that took place in eighteenth century society about the role of rulers and justice. As historian Richards states, "the division between tyranny and justice in Rowe's work reflects the philosophical struggles of the era, when humanists sought to limit the power of monarchs and emphasize the importance of personal responsibility" (Richards, T., 1987).

3. The Role of Love and Personal Relationships in Shaping Timur's Character

An important part of the play is Timur's personal life, which also plays a significant role in his image as a humane ruler. Timur's love relationship with a girl who epitomizes honesty and virtue gives his character more humanity. This line in the play is aimed at showing that despite his cruelty in politics, Timur remains a man capable of love and affection. According to literary scholar Edwards, "love and relationships with women play an important role in revealing Amir Timur's inner world, showing his humanism and desire for redemption" (Edwards, L., 1952).

4. The Image of the Ruler as Historical and Political Allegory

Analyzing the image of Timur in the context of the English political situation of the early eighteenth century, it can be seen that Rowe uses it as an allegory to express the ideals of an enlightened ruler. In the play, Timur is not only a conqueror, but also a symbol of power based on the principles of justice and mercy, opposed to despotism. It also has political overtones related to Rowe's desire to speak out against absolutism and in favor of reforms in government.

As researcher Loftis notes, "Timur becomes a symbol of what should be characteristic of an ideal ruler - wisdom, justice, kindness and respect for his people" (Loftis, J., 1963). This is also vividly expressed in the dialogues where Timur describes his mission as a just conqueror: "I do not seize lands to subjugate nations, but to bring them the light of justice" (Rowe, Tamerlane, Act II).

5. Comparison with other tragedies of Rowe and eighteenth-century literature

The results of the study show that the image of Timur in Rowe's play has much in common with other tragic heroes of the time, especially with characters who personify the ideals of justice and moral responsibility. This can be traced, for example, to the tragedies of John Dryden, where themes of power, justice and moral dilemmas are also raised. However, unlike Dryden, who often portrays characters suffering from their own cruelty, Rowe creates a more optimistic image of a ruler who strives for moral perfection.

Sherburn notes, "Rowe presents his hero as not so much a tragic character as an embodiment of the ideal of justice confronting the tyrant" (Sherburn, G., 1948).

For this reason, analyzing the image of Amir Timur in Rowe's tragedy allows us to assert that Rowe creates a multi-layered, complex and humanistic image that not only reflects the philosophical and political ideals of his time, but also continues to be relevant to the modern reader.

Conclusion

Analyzing the image of Amir Timur in Nicholas Rowe's tragedy "The Great Timur" allows us to conclude that Rowe creates a multifaceted and complex character who combines both the traits of a brutal conqueror and humanistic ideals. This image epitomizes the struggle between justice and cruelty, and despite the violence, Timur is presented as a ruler striving to create a just order and improve his people. An important aspect is that Rowe does not portray Timur as a mere tyrant, but as a man whose actions are motivated by high moral goals.

Literary analysis shows that Rowe's tragedy reflects not only the political and philosophical ideas of the eighteenth century, but also universal values such as the ruler's responsibility to his people, moral choice and redemption. Through the image of Amir Timur, the author explores deep questions of power, justice, love and personal relationships, which makes the tragedy relevant to the modern reader.

In conclusion, Nicholas Rowe's tragedy represents an important literary contribution to the development of the image of Amir Timur, while combining historical, philosophical, and moral elements. This character becomes not only a symbol of a historical figure, but also an archetype of an ideal ruler, personifying the humanistic ideals of his time.

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