A MASTERPIECE OF WORLD LITERATURE

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by Hovhanness I. Pilikian, London UK, 14 September 2013

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Unlike Vahram, who died in a car-crash at the same age as Jesus Christ on the Cross, the latter knew he would die soon. And in classical Greek Drama (on the look-out for more parallels), protagonists often speak of their children in very physical terms, almost incestuously, interpreted (or rather misinterpreted) by the post-Freudian standards of the European criticism.

Vahé-Vahian's poetry indeed shares with the classical Greek dramatists that same disturbing element, which, however, untangled from diseased Freudian notions, could represent one of the most profound Jungian Archetypes of the human predicament. Put in a question form, it begs the whole history of human civilization: can the male love the child at all as the female does? Improvement of mankind's lot hinges upon the answer to this very question.

While a woman loves the child, and not only her own but all children, most men hate children – witness the organization of Labor in our patriarchal societies, where the Father's work keeps him away from his children most of the time; hence, the coinage of the term, "week-end fathers". Most men, the best of them, seem to need a lifetime to learn how to love their own children, never mind children in general.

Until mankind (the male) learns from the female to love all children and not only his own, we shall never achieve the society of peace, and happiness, which can only be based on the loving care of the children everywhere in the world. For war is the most terrifying expression of the male's inability

to love even his own child. No warmonger can pretend he loves his children if he plans the killing of thousands of others. A warmonger may even consider himself a good Christian (as most Generals in the world do) by attending mass on Sundays. No amount of prayer can cover-up the disturbing truth that most men do not know the meaning of Christian love, for, as Jesus Christ stipulated, one must enter God's Kingdom of Heaven like a child.

The untimely death of his son leads the poet Vahé-Vahian, to achieve this overwhelming emotional understanding, that he loves and cherishes as his own all the children of this world suffering at the hands of foolish men, who rule our societies as if we were their toy-soldiers, ready to fight their silly wars.

A poet like Vahé-Vahian is not a mere poet! He is a Saint. He belongs to the future and even more, to the very ancient past when Paradise was on this earth. His mournful monument is a gospel for the improvement of the human lot.

And yet a man of Vahé-Vahian's life-story could be forgiven for making a pact with the Devil; he has lived through more suffering than Job, though unlike him, Vahé-Vahian never shows any bitterness, being no less than all love all the time for the oppressed and the suffering. His passionate love of life, symbolized by the love for dead son, often pours scorn upon the heads of all evil-doers, the warmongers. And yet Vahé-Vahian never soils the purity of his own soul. Never rude in his tragic grief, he is a civilized poet, and a poet of high civilization, if that implies a utopian Society of humanism, compassion, and respect for human life – the Child itself.

As if the terrifying experiences of surviving, as a child, one of the most brutal massacres of history (the genocide of the Armenian race perpetrated by the Young Turks) were not enough, and having survived the horrors of the two world wars, Vahé-Vahian was yet destined to lose his charming wife Ashkhen whom he dearly loved, and experience at first hand the most terrifying civil war since Vietnam, which is still raging in Beirut, where the most advanced technological warfare is being fought by a thousand and one guerrilla groups.

Finally, the unbelievable blow of evil fortune; while on an entirely humanitarian mission of a fund raising trip to U.S.A. for the Armenian victims of the Lebanese Arab civil war, Vahé-Vahian, this poet of total suffering, receives the news of this time his own son's accidental death, a young man of such gentle and kind disposition, that all those who knew him, held him in deep affection.

Only a saint could withstand so much diabolic misfortune, and could love this world enough to pray for it. Vahé-Vahian's poetry is that prayer. Through his unswerving humanism and compassion, as if the divine spirit of the good, God himself signals through Vahé-Vahian's spirit His presence to this world in turmoil, in the grip of barbarous systems of ruthless exploitation and military destruction.