

## TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

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### ARABIC LITERATURE: POETICS AND STYLISTICS. IV: MEDIEVAL ARABIC PANEGYRIC: TRADITION AND CREATIVE PERSONALITY

Classical Arabic poetry refers to the traditionalistic type of art and, as a specific form of artistic creation, possesses its own peculiar features. Starting from the beginning of the 20th c., scientists have done a lot to explain what exactly makes it peculiar. However, most of their works have a sufficient drawback. The specifics of creative principles of medieval Arabic authors was assessed in them according to the norms of the European literature poetics of the 19th—20th c., which led to misunderstanding of medieval poetics and undervaluation of aesthetic importance of classical Arabic poetry.

In the interpretation of scholars of the first half of the 20th c., medieval canons were a burden for Arabic poets and limited their art: only the most outstanding authors could resist them. However, even their art looks like a “la danse aux chaînes” (the leitmotif of R. Blachère's book about a great Arabic poet al-Mutanabbī [1]). What concerns poets of average talent, they did not have a chance to create artistically valuable works and either imitated “old” authors, or created versifications which were technically perfect but of no aesthetic value.

According to this interpretation, all of the best examples of classical Arabic poetry were results of overcoming canons — works which were created against the principle of canons which lay at the core of creative activity of medieval Arabic authors. The weak point of the abovementioned interpretation is that it considers a whole creative system to be a defective one.

To define the specifics of a certain unfamiliar phenomenon it must be compared with a known phenomenon. This is what the researchers of the first half of the 20th c. did. However, their ideas about the peculiarities of classical Arabic poetry and its poetics were one-sided. They managed to show (and they were very convincing in that) that factors which make up aesthetic value of literary works of 19th—20th c. Europe do not work or are limited in classical Arabic literature. However, these scholars failed to make an opposed comparison necessary for a typologically correct description of a phenomenon. They did not ask themselves a question whether there were specific factors which were

different to the contemporary ones and which were capable of creating an artistic value in a literature based on canons.

It is necessary to make another preliminary remark. The incomprehension of classical Arabic poetry by scholars of the second half of the 19th—first half of the 20th c. is least of all incomprehension of an “exotic” culture by the Europeans, as sometimes specialists in Arabic studies of the older generation declare. It lies in incomprehension by the 19th—20th c. people of medieval culture on the whole (and Arabic-Muslim poetry as part of this culture). One can make certain of that if we look at what the Europeans said about their own medieval culture. More than a hundred years ago a coryphaeus of Provençal studies Friedrich Diez wrote a phrase which for a long time determined the attitude of researchers towards works of traditionalistic type: all old Provençal literature “can be taken for works by one poet” [2]. Such ideas were expressed by many first-rate researchers of the art of troubadours of the end of the 19th—beginning of the 20th c., as well as by specialists on other literatures of antiquity and the Middle Ages. As early as in the beginning of the 1920s—1930s it was fashionable among researchers to express regrets about little individual expressiveness and “naturalness” of many works created in the period of domination of traditionalistic creative consciousness.

The actuality of the question of one-sided approach to Arabic classical literature has become especially evident in the last four or five decades under the influence of the process of reconsideration of many historical, cultural and literary problems of the Middle Ages. As we do not have the possibility to discuss this subject in detail, we will only look at books on the medieval literature, and in them — at numerous works on medieval literatures' poetics and will distinguish in them two ideas which, in our opinion, are especially important for the understanding of the nature of medieval Arabic poetry.

According to the first one, canons in literature are results of a certain type of social consciousness, the existence of which was determined by many objective factors, and, as such, can not act as a limiting factor in the development of literature. They appear and act in the conditions of domina-

tion of a certain type of ideology. They disappear with the decay of this type of ideology.

According to the second one, the system of canons in literature can undergo sufficient transformations and evolve following changes in ideology, as well as under the influence of immanent laws of canonical art itself, which explains the reasons of its long (up to several centuries) preservation of its creative activity.

The above-mentioned one-sidedness led to characteristic mistakes in the assessment of the whole of Arabic poetry as well as of its separate genres, in particular *madhī*. As many authoritative researchers state, it is a stark, invariable (or slightly variable) during many centuries genre which does not give freedom for an artist. More than 90 years ago I. Iu. Krachkovskii wrote about the panegyrics of the 10th c. Syrian poet al-Wa'wa' as about something self-evident:

“We can not count on peculiar originality here — the hero has long become a banal type and it would be a waste of time to try to find in him any portrait features in al-Wa'wa'’s poems as well as it would in the works of a representative of the earlier or later epoch” [3].

Ca. seventy years ago another authoritative specialist in Arabic literature R. Blachère described *madhī* in 10th c. Syria in the following words:

“Le fond en est malheureusement d'une pauvreté et d'une monotonie exaspérantes. Pour les panégyristes s'est créé une sorte ‘d'homme en soi’, noble et magnifique, assez vague pour que chacun s'y reconnaisse, qui se prête aux éloges ‘les plus asiatiquement hyperboliques’” [4].

Almost in the same words R. Blachère spoke about the panegyrics of a great Arabic poet al-Mutanabbī (915—965). According to the scholar, al-Mutanabbī represents the type of a “poète courtisan qui n'appartient à aucun temps et à aucun lieu, de même pour une bonne partie son oeuvre est impersonnelle, apparaît plutôt comme l'émanation artistique d'un milieu que comme la production d'un homme”, many of this works “aurait pu être écrit par n'importe quel poète habile”, as they “ne se revèlent la marque d'aucun temps ni le cachet d'aucun artiste original”. “C'est de la bonne poésie de court souvent délicate, toujours précieuse, maniérée, travaillée et par surcroît, très monotone”, — continues R. Blachère [5].

In the view of absence of any artistic values, medieval Arabic panegyric poetry is only of applied importance for a contemporary researcher. Thus, in 1937 one of the best researchers of Andalusia poetry A. Pérès noted that Andalusia poets of the 11th c. left in their “poèmes de circonstance” — and even in panegyrics — “des données fragmentaires mais intéressantes sur le milieu dans lequel ils ont vécu et la société à laquelle ils ont été mêlés”. After being studied, this information may “apporter une aide précieuse au sociologue comme à l'historien” [6]. The researcher continues about Andalusia panegyrics:

“Avec la bravoure et la générosité, les poètes de cour s'attachent à vanter la noblesse des origines. L'hyperbole, ici, quand on sait le peu de sang arabe qui coulait dans les veines des Hispano-Musulmans, devient une imposture” [7].

R. Blachère is even more direct when speaking about the medieval scholars assessment of a panegyric by an Andalusia poet Ibn Darrāj which describes an imaginary travel in the desert:

“Ibn Ḥazm et ses disciples n'étaient pas choqués par ces déserts et ces lions introduits d'une façon si insolite par le poète, sur le sol andalou. Ils ne retrouvaient là qu'un pastiche excellent de la vieille poésie bédouine et, bien loin d'être fâchés de ces invraisemblances, ils admiraient fort l'homme qui, en dehors de toute observation, avait conçu de tels traits descriptifs” [8].

The result of such observations is unfavourable. In the Andalusia panegyric a small number of documentarily precise details is surrounded with indefinite (and often deceitful) characteristics in relation to a subject praised, false descriptions, etc. It is anti-documentary.

At present obsolete ideas about *madhī* are disappearing from works on oriental studies and signs of a more objective approach emerge. Thus, in the article about *madhī* in the new edition of the “Encyclopaedia of Islam”, there can be found critical notes about old prejudices. In the section dedicated to panegyric in Iranian literature, J. V. Clinton deeply criticizes the old approach. It would be wrong to assume, the scholar writes, that court poets wrote panegyrics merely under economical or political compulsion, and not under their own sincere convictions, and that the lack of sincerity (when it was really so) inevitably and always did harm to the merits of panegyric works. J. V. Clinton suggests viewing *madhīs* as a kind of ritual texts. The praise of a sovereign in such interpretation becomes praise of monarchical power itself; it lets the court circle demonstrate their devotion to the myth about an ideal monarch, who is competent in everything and is the guarantor of safety and prosperity of a Muslim state, etc. [9].

Continuing this line, we would like to raise in the present article the problem of correlation of *madhī* with reality, of tradition and creative individuality, basing on the idea that these correlations will have a special, compared with modern literature, character. Let us try to get into the inside world of praises by one famous Andalusian poet Ibn Darrāj al-Qaṣṭālī (958—1030) written in the honour of the actual ruler of Muslim Spain al-Manṣūr (r. 976—1002).

In 922 Ibn Darrāj came to the court of Cordova, the capital of the Umayyad caliphate in Arabic Spain, where at that time the all-powerful *ḥājib* (prime-minister) of the Umayyad caliph Hishām II was strongly in power and was coming to the peak of his fame. Here is a short characteristic that the greatest contemporary historian of Muslim Spain E. Lévi-Provançal gave to him: al-Manṣūr proved oneself an “champion de la gloire de l'Islam dans la Péninsule ibérique”, recorded “aux fastes de l'empire hispano-umayyade ses plus retentissantes victoires sur la Chrétienté”, for more than twenty years he seemed “comme le seul et véritable souverain d'al-Andalus, tandis que le calife en titre” was only “fantoche” and was “tout à l'arrière-plan de la scène politique” [10]. According to Arabian sources, during his reign al-Manṣūr organized not less than fifty-seven successful military campaigns against Christians [11].

In the period between 992 and 1002 Ibn Darrāj dedicated more than 30 works to al-Manṣūr. A sufficient part of the panegyrics is connected with military actions against the

enemies of the Cordova caliph's power (starting a campaign, returning back from a successful campaign, capturing commanders of Christian kingdoms, capturing and destroying the enemies' fortresses, etc.) Four *qaṣīdas* are written on the occasion of arrival of Christian embassies (usually Christians came to Cordova to ask for peace), only three *qaṣīdas* were written on the occasion of religious celebrations. Some panegyrics are included into Ibn Darrāj's *Dīwān* without any comments of the medieval compiler, and the text itself does not often allow clarifying the circumstances of its creation.

Approximately two-thirds of praises of al-Manṣūr are connected with particular events in the life of Cordova's caliph state. Let us try to look at these works from the point of view of their documental and historical accuracy. It is known that in the sources on the history of Andalusia that we possess there is too little information about military campaigns of Muslims against Christians in the epoch of al-Manṣūr [12]. But Ibn Darrāj's works do not fill this gap. On the contrary, only using the data from historians' works makes it possible to "decipher" the information in Ibn Darrāj's panegyrics. From the *Dīwān* itself we can sometimes infer the date when a poem was written (from the medieval comment to a poetic text), almost always — the recipient (from the comments and the text of the praise), rarely the occasion (usually from comments and in exceptional cases from the text), sometimes the names of enemies of the person praised (from comments and the text), sometimes geographical names of places on the Iberian Peninsula where the events took place (usually from the text).

Thus, if the comments do not contain the date and references to the occasion on which a poem was written, it is exceptionally difficult to determine them basing on the text only. We do not speak here about the absence of important concrete details of military campaigns themselves in these panegyrics. Additional historical information does not often help. The "valeur documentaire" of panegyrics is very limited and in some cases is insignificant. This leads us to the conclusion that "works on some occasion" which, as it seems, should have been connected with reality, have little "valeur documentaire".

However, this is not all. Insignificant documentarily correct details in the panegyrics by Ibn Darrāj become surrounded with elements of opposite meaning. Thus, for example, when creating a portrait of the praised and describing his "deeds" the poet uses stable elements. In the appearance of the praised only one feature is noted which is common for all Arabic panegyric poetry — a lucid face. Here widespread comparisons and metaphors are used: "Moon which rose on the sky of glory" [13]; "face-sun" [14]; "And as if his face is the sun at sun-rise which joins the moon surrounded with stars" [15]; "face-lightning" [16]; "face-luminary" [17]; "The darkness of war disappears with the rise of his face" [18], etc.

Among the merits of the praised usually the following ones are mentioned: generosity ("sea of generosity", "cloud of generosity", "fruitful rain", etc.) [19], courage and decisiveness in a battle (comparisons with lion, sword, etc.) [20], strength and power (examples can be found in any panegyric), inexorability and ruthlessness in a battle [21] and mercy to the defeated enemies [22].

A special place is given to the praise of the hero's godliness, and his eagerness to scarify everything in his struggle for "true faith": "he blesses true faith" [23]; "he pro-

tected Islam in the East and in the West" [24]; "his troops fortified the right way and eliminated the remains of godlessness's homes" [25]; "he is fruitful rain for Islam, and for paganism — a cold shower" [26]; "the sword of the right way and its unfolded banner" [27], etc. This topic is based on oppositions: true faith — atheism; the right way — mistake (Ibn Darrāj means Islam and Christianity). In Ibn Darrāj's panegyrics these antonymic pairs evoke reminiscences from the Qur'ān and long chains of associations.

The actions of the praised are approved by Allah and are directed by him: "And ordered you the Gracious to be the winner, and the mistake party to be defeated" [28], etc.

The praise of the hero's noble roots, his high origin is connected with this subject. Ibn Darrāj uses the theme of praise of ancestors in most of his works. Sometimes the poet describes in detail the "great deeds" of the preceding generations [29], but usually he limits himself to one or two *bayts* and returns to this theme again and again in his *qaṣīda* [30].

The portrait of the praised is deprived of any specific individual features. Comparisons are aimed not at portraying his appearance, but concern the essence of the compared objects. That is why in the description objects which do not seem alike may be compared: he is an "arrow — when smashing swords cross — neat; a sword — when warriors fight — destructive; rain — when streams dry out — abundant; full moon — when troubles spread darkness — light" [31]. The nature of such comparisons was well explained by D. S. Likhachëv on the material of old Russian literature: "outward similarity of compared objects is not only ignored, but in some cases is also deliberately destroyed", because the "old Russian author attaches greater importance to depicting the function of an object rather than its appearance" [32].

The poet turns to the tradition and created a roughly determined portrait of the praised. Comparisons point at moral merits of the praised. Traditional rather than individual advantages are praised and must be presented. Panegyrics were dedicated to a certain person, however this did not mean that the poet had to represent in his work specific features of that person. Panegyric is not a 19th—20th c. portrait painting and one should not look for similarities with the "model". Although certain details in the image of an ideal praised may bring it closer to the "portrayed", this happens, so-to-say, unintentionally. Let us look, for example, at such traditional feature in the image of a praised as his noble origin.

Al-Manṣūr was really of noble origin and Ibn Darrāj in his works mentions real ancestors of the *hājib*. However, in his panegyrics dedicated to other rulers of Andalusia Ibn Darrāj often lacks "accuracy". In the famous "Lāmiyya" dedicated to 'Alī b. Ḥammūd [33], the poet keeps speaking about noble old Arabic roots of the Berber (!) ruler (*b.* 7—8, 44—5, 55—6, 67). And there are many such examples in Ibn Darrāj's *Dīwān*.

In the works of modern researches such "inaccuracies" are usually viewed as deceit, the tendency to ascribe to the praised of low origin noble roots and, thus, to support his claims for power. Such explanation seems to be incorrect. Such "inaccuracies" must not have been a secret for the court circles the praises were aimed for. Therefore, the poet either told lies which were doomed beforehand, or flattered. It seems that either case would not have brought him fame.

When praising the noble origin of a hero, Ibn Darrāj followed the patterns of Arabic panegyric poetry. In the glorification of the praised he as much as possible took into account "documental" data, but if facts did not fit the acknowledged standard of a theme's realization, he found roundabout ways and created fake genealogy which usually corresponded to the claims of the praised. We must also keep in mind that fake genealogies cannot have surprised people in Andalusia. Thus, libertines of caliphs when released usually received the genealogy of their former master [34]. In Ibn Darrāj's *Dīwān* several *qaṣīdas* are dedicated to al-Manṣūr's *mawlās* (Khayrān, al-Mubārak, etc.) who, the poet as well as the medieval compiler, refer to as 'Amirids as representatives of al-Manṣūr's family (naturally, with the mention of their genealogy). Thus, poets had well-founded rights for "creation" in the sphere of genealogy in many cases.

In his praise the author aspired to put a single concrete event in the line of stable, imperishable values. Thoughts about "today" were transferred into timeless and extra-space sphere. That is why the "noble deeds" of the praised evoked memories of no less noble acts of the past. Ibn Darrāj resorts to parallels from early Arabic and "world" history, looks for precedents in the "past days" of the Sabaeen and Ḥimyarit kingdoms and the Ghassānids' dynasty. Quite often Biblical-Qur'ānic reminiscences appear: "And if the spirit of oppression [inherited] from Jālūt, their ancestor, still lives in them, then you will find Dā'ūd's stones" [35], etc.

Small factual inaccuracies refer to "low" reality, and so do not influence in any way the high importance of subjects in question. Moreover, sometimes a poetic work even benefited from such "inaccuracies". Let us give examples of several such characteristic inaccuracies.

For example, in the panegyric dedicated to al-Manṣūr on the occasion of preparations for the campaign against a Berber (i. e. Muslim) rebel Zīrī ibn 'Aṭīyya [36] the struggle against the latter is "inaccurately" depicted as struggle against "impiety", "paganism", "mistake" — just like struggle against Christians. But Zīrī — in the mind of the medieval Arabic author of panegyrics — is also an enemy of Islam, since he fights against one of its most faithful supporters.

A Christian king — again in a medieval mind — must be of noble origin, because he is a king. It does not matter who he originates from in a poem dedicated to the high theme of the glory and fame of Islam which do not fade with time: he is from "kings of atheists", "the Rūm kingdom heir" and is "noble by Caesar's genealogy" [37]. Let us note that in this case the author can't have failed to know the genealogy of the Christian king as the *qaṣīda* tells about al-Manṣūr's father-in-law (!), Sancho II Garsès, king of Navarre (970—994) who stayed in close touch with Spanish Muslims [38].

A Christian king — we again speak on behalf of a medieval mind — even an "atheist", must be brave and courageous: "He is the leader of infantry and cavalry; help and care for the flock. He competes with his sword in valour and courage, and combines experience with sharp mind" [39]. In the same work Ibn Darrāj speaks about the death of the Christian king according to the genre of classical Arabic lamentation [40]. The Christian king is "good in a Muslim way" (depicted according to the laws of depicting a Muslim tsar), but this is not due to the lack of knowledge of the

"couleur locale"; an exact detail would in this case bring down, "earthen" the high pathos of the panegyric. Free from objectivism, the Arabic poet elevates the Muslim king over the Christian king, but in accordance with the spirit of the poem: a brave Christian yields to the noble Muslim warrior who demonstrated more courage and valour.

The description of the face of the praised is inseparable from his "deeds". When describing them Ibn Darrāj uses traditional subjects of *wayf*. In his panegyrics we find descriptions of desert, the sky and the stars, the dawn, the lightning, thunder, clouds, rain, a wild cow, a wolf, a gazelle, a lion, a camel, the signs of abandoned camps and "decaying dwellings". However, in praises to al-Manṣūr, descriptions prevail which are connected with the glorification of the valour of the monarch-warrior. Spears and swords are described and thick dust lifted up by horses' hooves. Enemies' blood is shed and items of armour are mentioned: armour and shield.

High formula-character is typical of military themes. Constant words and terms as well as phraseological expressions are used when describing armour, a horse, a battle. We can also point to the formulas of description of "destroyed dwellings" which are often used by the poet when glorifying al-Manṣūr's incursions into Christian towns and fortresses. High formula-character is also noticeable when analyzing the portrait of the praised (there are constant comparisons with the sun, the moon, a luminary, the sea, clouds, rain, a lion, a sword, etc.).

So what is the function of these stable elements? "Documental" details faded in the conditional-symbolic context of an etiquette situation description. But they did not play the main part. The poet described a stereotyped situation in accordance with the acknowledged norms of the subject. He did not care about the real course of events. Traditional description is related with the context of the genre and attaches to the praise an emotional charge of the given theme accumulated throughout the long history of *madḥ*. Each word in the description is a signal-word, its function is not nominative (denoting something) but referential (connotation). "Sword", "horse", "dust" and other signal-words attached elation and solemnity to the whole glorification, and the same time diminishing the subject of "documental" ("low") details in it. "Low", material reality was excluded from the "high", ideal world of poetry of the medieval Andalusia poet. Domination of traditional formulas and images, "documental" details, which penetrated into a poem from the outside, lost their nominative meaning and gained a conditional, allegorical meaning.

At the same time it would be wrong to limit the connection between a panegyric and reality to its "documental" features. This connection was quite tight and remained so not in spite of the presence in it of traditional stable elements, but due to these elements. However, this connection is a mediated one, it is determined by the specifics of medieval literature and the peculiarities of the traditionalist type of artistic mind.

Ibn Darrāj was a poet of a wide range. At a close look we can find in his works almost all of the most common *madḥ* motives and subjects (for comparison *Dīwān al-ma'ānī* by al-'Askarī (d. after 1005) can be used [41]). In each new work of Ibn Darrāj traditional elements enter into new relations and make new combinations within the limits of popular genre schemes of Arabic panegyric. The author did not find it difficult to create a new combination which

would be noticeably different from the preceding ones: a more intensive use of a certain motive or, on the contrary, the absence of a popular motive received within the limits of a universal genre scheme individual author's accent and sufficiently affected the poem on the whole.

To illustrate this let us look at two panegyrics by Ibn Darrāj [42] in the aspect of the relation between the praised (*mamdūh*) and the praiser (*madīh*).

*Qaṣīda* No. 100 was performed by Ibn Darrāj at al-Manṣūr's meeting on December 2nd, 992. It begins immediately from a panegyric theme. The poet states that his "heart and life" belong to the tsar, whose generosity indeed has no limits and who is always accompanied by luck (b. 1—4). Then he speaks about the generousities that were (and could be) addressed to the praiser (b. 5—9). In *bayts* 10—1 for the first time there appears a hint to envious enemies whose expectations were let down: the poet never lost the tsar's favour. The praiser does not know how to thank his patron who protected him from troubles and who is always fair in his opinions (b. 12—9). Intrigues of slanderers and envious people cause pain in the heart of the poet, a slight decline in his work is caused by their machinations, and not because "the fire steel of his poetry broke" or "the sword of his improvisation became blunt" (b. 20—2). "Will the truth shine?" — the poet dares to reproach his sovereign who too trustingly listens to slanderers (b. 23—31). The poet says: "And I am not the first, whose works are humiliated", "although the sea of my imagination is inexhaustible". The praiser is eager to show how high are his skills in poetry, prose, eloquence (b. 32—40). The poet sees his duty in serving the noble 'Āmirids, as, according to him, "the noble desire became my motherland, and the voice from above — my genealogy", and he does not dream of a different fate: "Among all my hopes I only set my hope upon you, I devote myself to you" (b. 41—5). The poet performs his duty in front of God, helping the true faith advocate and the legal heir "crowned to reign", who defeats "huge hordes" of Islam's enemies (b. 45—56). "The world handed the reins of government" to the sovereign not only generous, but also wise, who can hide his fury (b. 57—9). At the end of the poem the poet again thanks his generous patron who "dispelled sorrow and grief" in his soul, the sovereign who became the "limit of his hope" who speaks on behalf of the "righteous men who will certainly triumph" (b. 60—4).

The necessity to protect himself from enemies and envious people at the court of Cordova forced Ibn Darrāj to express himself on the issue of his relationships with the high patron. In the service to al-Manṣūr the poet sees the performance of his sacred duty before Allah and his country, and that is why he believes he has the right to require help from the sovereign in completing his noble mission.

In this *qaṣīda* the figure of the praiser is brought to the forefront, the "slave... who dispels doubts with his praise" (b. 37) shows the praised back. The panegyric is aimed at depicting of the praiser, so *madh* motives, which are connected with the image of the praised, are absorbed and play a second part. However, these motives are present in the *qaṣīda*, and the image of the praised, which demonstrates some traditional features, is well-outlined on the whole. The emphasis placed on traditional motives of complaints of the praiser about his fate and the lack of the patron's favour and ignorance of the poets' good intentions and merits, turn the "praise" into a "complaint".

*Qaṣīda* No. 120 was written by Ibn Darrāj under the impression from al-Manṣūr's campaign in Santiago de Compostella in 997 — a town situated in the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula, which beginning from the 9th c. became the most famous place of the Christians' pilgrimage in Western Europe. Al-Manṣūr's troops which reached Santiago on the 10th of August not only plundered and burned the town and captured a lot of people, but also destroyed the town's church. Apart from usual military trophies al-Manṣūr brought to Cordova the bells of the church of Santiago and the folds of the town's gates; the latter were then used for the roof of the naves attached to the big mosque of the capital of Cordova [43].

In the panegyric Ibn Darrāj shows the atmosphere of the expedition. The fall of Santiago is depicted as the biggest victory over "paganism", "atheism" (i. e. Christianity):

"And the followers of atheism saw [that they had been wrong], when the news that paganism is false was received in the East and in the West. You came to Santiago, your swords shining as the moon in the lights of the falling stars. Belief and Islam are inseparably linked with you as the turning firmament is linked with its axis" (b. 2—4).

Then the poet tells about the role which Santiago had played for all European Christians and describes pilgrimage to the grave of the apostle, and the "brilliant victory" of the "army of the truth" led by al-Manṣūr: "And you put it (Santiago) to the fire in which all faithless — each and every one — turned into ashes. Oh, what a beautiful scene for the people of the righteous men, oh, what delight for the hearts of Muslims in the terrible view on this fire" (b. 15—6). And the end of the picture — the description of Bermudo II (982—999), a Christian king's escape who in this campaign fought against al-Manṣūr (b. 17—22): Bermudo II will not escape his fate! The poet addresses al-Manṣūr: "Can he defeat you, when you took out your sword of the right way and the victory when appearing in front of him?" (b. 22). In *bayts* 23—4 he speaks about the devastation of the town of Iria Flavia (24 km from Santiago). The end of the panegyric is dedicated to the assessment of al-Manṣūr's military campaign (b. 25—30), it also stresses the sufficient contribution of the Muslim leader in the victory:

"And the sword of the right way you took out only to make the blood of paganism flow down its blade. Let the day of glory be proud of you, oh, al-Manṣūr, you left nothing to the past glorious days but to be proud of it" (b. 29—30).

Thus, the figure of the praised in this *qaṣīda* does not come to the forefront. The praiser is only present in the poem to give a "fair" assessment of the deeds of the praised who answered "the call of Allah". There is no place left in this *qaṣīda* for personal relations between the praiser and the praised, the personality of the praiser is absorbed in the "subjectivity" — free narrative about the "brilliant victory" of Islam. In the panegyric traditional merits of a Muslim are glorified: godliness, military valour, fearlessness in the struggle for faith. However, the accent placed on these motives and the absence of one of the main elements in the traditional characteristic of a hero's virtues (his generosity), sufficiently influence the tone of the poem on the whole. The motive of generosity implies the presence of a beggar,

which would, as we have tried to show, be contrary to the author's position in this poem, and so the poet does not introduce one of the most popular motives into his panegyric.

Author's accents lead to sufficient semantic shifts and attach unique features to each poem. In Ibn Darrāj panegyrics several types of the praised sovereign can be distinguished, which are different in the way these or those traditional features are accentuated in their portraits. They, as we see it, can be limited to four main types: (i) a courageous fighter for the "true faith", the initiator of the "holy war"; (ii) a brave commander who defeats numerous enemies (often united in one); (iii) a wise and fair sovereign, who skilfully rules his lands; (iv) a delicate connoisseur of art and a generous patron of writers and scholars.

The choice of the type of the praised was always deliberate and depended on the "occasion" on which the panegyric was written. Such assumption is proved by the analysis of Ibn Darrāj's works. In his works of Cordova period which glorify al-Manṣūr's victories over the Christians, we constantly find the image of a brave fighter for the "true faith". Obviously, a connection between the "occasion" and the type of the praised exists. The interpretation of a type in isolation of the "occasion", i. e. the real grounds, would lead to the conclusion about "self-advancement" which cannot be logically explained. Here it seems appropriate to refer to the conclusions of the researchers of medieval painting who insisted on the necessity of iconological interpretation of the iconography of religious paintings:

"Replacement of one iconographical type [the iconography of George in Russian medieval painting — A. K.] with another can be explained by real historical circumstances which have nothing to do with the assumptions of the researchers who limited everything to the independent life of a 'type'" [44].

The epoch which put Ibn Darrāj forward will become past. Andalusia will never again be as powerful military and economically as in the 10th c. Not a single poet, author of panegyrics, until the end of Muslim domination on the Pyrenean Peninsula will be able to claim, according to me-

dieval historians, for the role of the "tongue of his time" and to speak on behalf of al-Andalusia.

During the *fitna* period, *mulūk al-ṭawā'if* and the Almoravid reign the authors of panegyrics will base in their work on different ideas and concepts of the world compared with the poets of the 10th c. And their praises will sound in a different way.

The "holy war" subject will still appear in the works of this or that author of Muslim Spain, but it will sound in a different way — like an elegy. The advance of Christianity and the gradual retreat of Islam will be depicted as an inevitable catastrophe in the oppositions between the good and the evil and as a sign of the forthcoming end of the world. That is why along with the theme of the "holy war" in their works there will appear eschatological motives. The theme of the "holy war" will shift from praises to the lamentations about the lost "lands of Islam".

In panegyrics the poets will wish happiness and prosperity to their patrons, as well as long years and wealth. Of course, the military theme will not disappear completely from Arabian panegyric. The poets will glorify the successes of their suzerain on battlefields (for example, Ibn Zaydūn and Ibn 'Ammār will praise the conquests of the rulers of Seville) but this will not be the main theme in their works. It is possible, that in the changing conditions the type of the monarch-warrior could not be the main "iconographical" type of the praised in Andalusian *madh*.

The contents of panegyric poetry of Andalusia changed throughout the 10th—12th c. under the influence of economical, historical and other factors — in this respect it was Andalusian poetry inspired by Andalusian conditions. That is why the analysis of Andalusian praises as documents of the epoch which reflected the concepts and the spirits of certain layers of Andalusian society must give sufficient data about the epoch, which is far more important than the results of the obsolete "documental" analysis of these works. The analysis of Andalusian praises shows that tradition provided the authors with specific resources for demonstrating their creative individuality within the limits of canons of classical Arabic poetry.

## Notes

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2. F. Diez, *Die Poesie der Troubadours* (Leipzig, 1883), p. 107.
3. I. Iu. Krachkovskii, *Abu-l-Faraj al-Va'va' Damasskii: Materialy dlia kharakteristiki poeticheskogo tvorcestva* (Abu al-Faraj al-Wa'wa' of Dimashq: Materials for the Characteristic of Poetic Creation) (Petrograd, 1914), p. 183.
4. Blachère, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 343.
6. H. Pérès, *La poésie andalouse en arabe classique au XI siècle. Ses aspects généraux, ses principaux thèmes et sa valeur documentaire* (Paris, 1953), p. 110.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
8. Blachère, "La vie et l'oeuvre du poète-épistolier andalou Ibn Darrāj al-Qastallī", *Hespéris*, XVI (1933), p. 119.
9. G. M. Wickens, J. W. Clinton, "Madh", *EF*<sup>2</sup>, v, pp. 960—1.
10. E. Lévi-Provançal, *Histoire de l'Espagne Musulmane* (Paris, Leyde, 1950, 1953), ii, pp. 197—8.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 223.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
13. *Dīwān Ibn Darrāj al-Qastallī*, publ. by M. 'A. Makkī (Dimashq, 1961), No. 101, b. 28.
14. *Ibid.*, No. 101, b. 43.
15. *Ibid.*, No. 113, b. 43.
16. *Ibid.*, No. 102, b. 32.

17. *Ibid.*, No. 102, b. 1.  
 18. *Ibid.*, No. 1, b. 37  
 19. *Ibid.*, No. 4, b. 19; No. 100, b. 64; No. 106, b. 23, etc.  
 20. *Ibid.*, No. 1, b. 44; No. 78, b. 56; No. 99, b. 34, etc.  
 21. *Ibid.*, No. 1, b. 6; No. 105, b. 8, etc.  
 22. *Ibid.*, No. 105, b. 39.  
 23. *Ibid.*, No. 1, b. 36.  
 24. *Ibid.*, No. 1, b. 34.  
 25. *Ibid.*, No. 4, b. 22.  
 26. *Ibid.*, No. 101, b. 30.  
 27. *Ibid.*, No. 106, b. 20.  
 28. *Ibid.*, No. 105, b. 16.  
 29. *Ibid.*, No. 78, b. 33—40; No. 99, b. 9—22.  
 30. *Ibid.*, No. 100, b. 44, 54—5; No. 102, b. 2—3, 18, 21.  
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 32. D. S. Likhachëv, *Poëtika drevnerusskoï literatury* (Old Russian Literature Poetics) (Moscow, 1979), pp. 194, 196.  
 33. *Dīwān*, No. 31.  
 34. Lévi-Provançal, *op. cit.*, p. 124.  
 35. *Dīwān*, No. 1, b. 7.  
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 37. *Ibid.*, No. 107, b. 10—1.  
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 41. For more details see: A. B. Kudelin, *Srednevekovaia arabskaia poëtika (vtoraia polovina VIII—XI vek)* (Medieval Arabic Poetics (Second Half of 8th—11th c.)) (Moscow, 1983), p. 73 and dict.  
 42. *Dīwān*, Nos. 100, 120.  
 43. Lévi-Provançal, *op. cit.*, pp. 249—50.  
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M. Reisner

THE LIFE OF THE TEXT AND THE FATE OF TRADITION. V:  
 METHOD OF ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE QUR'ĀN  
 (TA'WĪL) AND THE SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE OF PERSIAN POETRY  
 OF THE 11TH—12TH CENTURIES

The use of the symbolic-allegorical method of the Qur'ān interpreting called *ta'wīl* [1] as the basis for formation of the norms of esoteric expression in the sphere of mystical practice of Islam is well-known. However, the stages of formation of this specific language and its fixation in the canon of classical Persian poetry, as well as the real contribution of certain authors into this process, which began in the 11th c., has not been studied enough, if we mean the literary, or, to put it more precisely, the poetological aspect of the matter rather than the ideological-religious or predicant aspect.

The opposition of the allegorical comments on the Qur'ān and the *sunna* suggested by the Bāṭinites (*ahl al-bāṭin*, *al-bāṭiniyya*) [2] and the literal, historical-philological and jurisprudential interpretation called *tafsīr* ("comment", "interpretation") based on the tradition, did not appear suddenly and was not absolute. The method of allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ān arose in the 8th c. in the circle of the extreme Shī'ites in Iraq, and was later developed by the followers of Ismā'ilism of all trends, who were the first to be referred to as the Bāṭinites. As a result of the dispute between the supporters of the literal interpretation of the Holy Book, the Zāhirites (*al-zāhiriyya*, *ahl al-zāhir*) and those who strived to comprehend its "hidden" meaning, the Muslim community split up. With time the medieval Muslim theologians began to rank among the Bāṭinites, along with the followers of Ismā'ilism, the supporters of Šūfism, as well as the Mu'tazilites [3] and other adherents of rationalistic ideas in Islam. The Mu'tazilites, following other commentators of the Qur'ān, divided *āyāt* into the "clear" (*muḥkamāt*) and "vague" (*mutashābihāt*) ones. The latter, which, according to them, disagreed with common sense, had to be viewed as circumlocutions (*majāz*).

It was the Ismā'īli and Šūfī preachers who introduced the corresponding principles of words' treatment into the literature in the Persian language, including the poetry. Especially intensively Persian poetry developed in the 11th c. in the direction of formation of the "innermost" language. If we speak about the explicitly expressed justifications of the "bāṭinist" principle of words' treatment, the most valuable material is contained in the *qaṣīdas* by a zealous preacher of Ismā'ilism and didactic poet Nāṣir-i Khusraw (1004—1088). He was a figure typical of the early stage in the de-

velopment of the mystical-allegorical trend in the Persian poetry: being at the same time a religious philosopher and poet, he acted not only as an outstanding reformer of the Persian *qaṣīda*, but also as a theorist of poetry, eagerly talking about its nature and purpose in his works themselves.

In Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *qaṣīdas* we can find quite a few statements about the religious aspects of the notion of *ta'wīl*, which in this or that way are projected on the sphere of poetic constructions:

The body of faith — is the outer [knowledge], while its soul — *ta'wīl* [is inner knowledge — *M. R.*], // can a body live without a soul in this world?

If you are alive, why have you died for faith, // unless you heart has been caught in the snare of passions! [4].

In another text the author talks about the nature of faith even more directly, associating its body with the word of the Prophet (i. e. the Qur'ān), and its soul — with the word of his only rightful, according to the Shī'ites and the Ismā'ilites, successor, the fourth pious caliph 'Alī:

The faith is a palace (*sarā*) erected by the Prophet, // so that each mortal enters it calmly...

'Alī and his family are gates to that [palace], // blessed are those who enter this house [5].

Apart from the Prophet Muḥammad (*al-nāṭiq*, lit. "the speaking") [6] and his successor (*al-asās*, *al-waṣī*) [7] caliph 'Alī, other prophets worshiped by the Ismā'ilites are also united into such constant pairs. Shīṣ (Sif), Sām, Ismā'il, Hārūn, Sham'un (Simon — obviously, Simon Peter, one of the apostles) were considered the successors of the prophets Ādam, Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and 'Isā correspondingly. Characterizing *ta'wīl* as the innermost knowledge (*'ilm*), Nāṣir-i Khusraw mentions the successors, who perform the same function of the "gates of faith" as 'Alī in the pair with the Prophet Muḥammad:

Search for [science] of *ta'wīl*, as for the Jews // it is the word of instruction of Yūsha' ben Nūn [8].

*Ta'wīl* in the dark night is for Christians // the candle and icon-lamp of 'Isā and Sham'un [9].