TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

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ARABIC LITERATURE: POETICS AND STYLISTICS. V: A ROMANTIC EPOS ABOUT MAJNUN AND ITS ARABIC ROOTS

More than fifty years ago two luminaries of the Russian oriental studies — E. E. Berthelot's and I. Iu. Khravskovskii made a weighty contribution to the study of the romantic epos about Majnun, and for a long time determined the direction of the research in this sphere and formed a base for comparative-typological studies [4]. However, it has become necessary to complete, specify, deepen, and, probably, revise some conclusions of the two outstanding scholars concerning the Arabic legend about Majnun and Layl which is examined at a specialist in Arabic studies and a specialist in Iran, turn out to be very similar. Let us briefly formulate these we are concerned about.

(i) The connection between romantic poems of Azerbaycan, Iran and Central Asia with the Arabic legend is confirmed.

(ii) This Arabic legend was reflected in written literary sources, folklore is present hypothetically but it has been impossible to establish any visible proof of it.

(iii) Among literary sources the three most important ones can be distinguished: Zikhl al-qir wa-l-ghafi‘ urdu (The Book of Poetry and Poets) by Ibn Qataya (d. 889), Zikhl al-qur‘ (The Book of Songs) by Ibn-l-Isfahani (d. 967), Wadiw Majnun Layl in Zikhl al-Isfahani by Abu Bakr al-Wahib (111th—12th century, according to I. Iu. Khravskovskii's attribution).

The earliest literary monument is the first one, but the second is more complete and informative. The third source deserves attention due to the fact that it had been created just before the first, and, as many believe, the most outstanding work of romantic epics on this theme — "Layl and Majnun" by Nizami (1188).

The concerned literary monuments are connected with each other, some messages are passed from one author to another. The differences between the monuments are insufficient [2].

(iv) The Arabs did not create a complete literary work about Majnun and Layl, however the analysis of the three sources mentioned above shows that it is them that the main elements of this romantic story originate from. Apart from these general inferences, scholars have come to some conclusions in connection with the specific aims of their research. However, we shall turn to them later [3].

The works by E. E. Berthelot's and I. Iu. Khravskovskii made a weighty contribution to the study of the romantic epos about Majnun, and for a long time determined the direction of the research in this sphere and formed a base for comparative-typological studies [4]. However, it has become necessary to complete, specify, deepen, and, probably, revise some conclusions of the two outstanding scholars concerning the Arabic legend about Majnun which is determined by the appearance of a sufficient number of theoretical as well as concrete historical-literary works which touch upon the issues under concern [5].

Since the publications by E. E. Berthelot's and I. Iu. Khravskovskii, the number of important sources of the Arabic legend about Majnun has not increased. We still deal with the works by Ibn Qataya, al-Isfahani and al-Wahib. However, let us take a fresh look at them.

E. E. Berthelot's and I. Iu. Khravskovskii more than once mentioned that the legend about Majnun underwent some changes during the period of its Arabic circulation (here we speak mostly about various additions). However, due to the purpose of their researches, they did not engage themselves specially in the study of the transformations of this legend among the Arabs. This would have involved the detection not only of the latest additions to the legend told by Ibn Qataya, al-Isfahani or al-Wahib, but also of the selective approach of al-Wahib to the version by Ibn Qataya and the additions by al-Isfahani. Running a few steps forward and anticipating the results of our analysis, we must say that the additions to the legend as well as the exclusions from it in al-Wahib's work were deliberate. Our aim is to find out what exactly was added to the legend, and what was excluded from it and with what purpose.

To achieve our purpose we shall conditionally divide all messages fixed in the three analysed sources into three groups which contain:

(i) information about the genealogy and full names of Majnun and Layl;

(ii) information about the story of love between Majnun and Layl;

(iii) elements of literary-critical assessment included in the analysed monuments as well as genealogical, historical,
I. Information about the genealogy of Majnun and Laylá

A. In the beginning of the section about Majnun Ibn Qutayba, there are some variations and it tells about the origin of the nickname Majnun ("insane"). His full name is Qays b. Mu‘ādh b. al-Ja‘d b. al-Aqrā‘ b. ‘Amru b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Amr b. ‘Uyayn b. Ka‘b b. Ra‘īs. Qays received his nickname "insane" as he went crazy because of his passionate love (Ashur). Ibn Qutayba does not mention Laylá's genealogy, however, he could have belonged to the same tribe with Majnun. The author of the "Book of Poetry and Poets" also mentions (without any reference to the source of this information which is not found in the other two works) that Majnun had "descendants in Najd" [7].

B. In the first half of the section dedicated to Majnun al-‘Isfahání [8] several times turns to his full genealogy told by several authorities, gives its variants as well as those of the name Qays and more than once speaks about the origin of his nickname. The name he gives is Qays b. al-Mulawwab b. Muzaffar b. ‘Uzair b. Ra‘īs b. ‘Aqrā‘ b. ‘Amr b. Sa‘īd; the variations are:

Let us give a tense (to save space) annotated index of messages on the three sources in the three groups mentioned above.

Qays b. Mu‘ādh, Bujhr b. al-Ja‘d b. al-Aqrā‘ b. ‘Amru b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Amr b. ‘Uyayn b. Ka‘b b. Ra‘īs. Qays received his nickname "insane" as he went crazy because of his passionate love (Ashur). Ibn Qutayba does not mention Laylá's genealogy, however, he could have belonged to the same tribe with Majnun. The author of the "Book of Poetry and Poets" also mentions (without any reference to the source of this information which is not found in the other two works) that Majnun had "descendants in Najd" [7].

II. Information about the Majnun and Laylá love story

A. Ibn Qutayba gives the elements of the famous legend about Majnun and Laylá in the following order:

1. Majnun fell in love with Laylá when they were children and shepherded lambs together.
2. When Majnun grew older he became handsome, became famous as a pleasant interlocutor, connoisseur of poetry, he often talked to Laylá and her relatives. Once Laylá started a conversation with a young man in the presence of other young men and girls, and, according to Majnun's reaction, she realised that he loved her. In her poem, written on that occasion, she declared that she also loved him.
3. This lasted for some time until Majnun became insane. Crazed with wild animals, tore the clothes he wearing. He only came to consciousness when somebody mentioned Laylá's name.
4. Unfortunate mediation of Nawfál Ibn Mas‘údaj in the matchmaking of Laylá for Majnun (Laylá's relatives, making reference to the ruler's permission to shed Laylá's blood. Majnun, cut off with his arms in their hands, and he withdrew his offer).
5. Laylá learns the latest news about Majnun from a man who had visited his relatives' lands.
6. Majnun's father unsuccessfully asks Laylá's father for his daughter's hand in marriage for his son (no reasons are given for his decision).
7. Majnun's father set off to Ka‘ba to heal his son; in Miná valley Majnun, having heard a voice calling Laylá, fell unconscious.
8. In a place called Birr ‘Amir Majnun Majnun waited for a puff of wind from the land of Najd where Laylá lived.

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9. A man from bani Murra met Majnun's father and then Majnun himself, together with his relatives he soon found Majnun dead in a stony valley.
10. Al-‘Isfahání included into his work all available data and variations of messages which often contradicted each other. Laylá and her friends told her different versions of Majnun's death on that day, he quitted with his relatives in the order corresponding to that of the "Book of Songs".

1. Majnun's insanity was the result of his unfortunate love to Laylá.
2. Majnun's father had died before his son went crazy.
3. Majnun fell in love with Laylá when they were children (they shepherded cattle together); when they grew up her parents forbade him to date her.
4. Majnun first met Laylá when he was an adult: Laylá, wishing to find out what it felt like, went to see him as well as another young man from her camp. However, having seen how the expression of his face changed, she declared her love for him as if she was very confused.
5. At the same time someone called Wādī Muhammad al-Uqaylī asks Laylá's parents for their daughter's hand in marriage: her parents forced her to marry Wādī and asks her servant to tell him she wishes to quicken recovery when he comes to consciousness. Laylá replies that Laylá is his illness and his life.
6. Nawfál ibn Munābīj meets Majnun surrounded by gazelles when hunting.
7. The repetition of the information about Majnun's father's decision (compare with the analogue of IRI).
8. Laylá's father and her husband go to Makka. Laylá calls for Majnun who spends all nights with her until their return.

8. Majnun's parents ask Laylá's father for his daughter's hand in marriage on behalf of their son (the latter vows that he will not permit disgrace for his family and won't do something no drab ever has done, not explaining, however, what this disgraceful act is). Having learnt about this, Majnun goes completely crazy.
9. Following his relatives' advice, Majnun's father sets off to Makka to heal his son. In Miná valley Majnun hears a voice calling for Laylá and faints.
10. In Makka Majnun asks his son to touch Ka‘ba's veil and to pray Allah to heal him from his love to Laylá. Instead of this Majnun asks Allah to strengthen his love to Laylá never let him forget Laylá.
11. Wandering around the desert with gazelles he finds himself at the border with Syria.
12. The information about Birr ‘Amir (analogous to IIAS).
13. Majnun talks to Laylá's husband.
14. After his unfortunate woo Laylá keeps coming to the camp of Laylá's relatives. They complain and the ruler allows to shed Laylá's blood. The latter is eager to accept death for the sake of love. Laylá's relatives move away from them.
15. Before Majnun went crazy Laylá had several times promised to visit him at night if there was a favourable occasion. Having met and visited all her Majnun himself went to her camp when all men were away, sat aside with the women, talked to them for a long time and performed his poems to them. Ibn Dāhrij justifies Laylá with her reasons and asks her to give him her regards. Qays ibn Dāhrij does not find Majnun.
16. When Majnun was ill, Laylá visited him at night at the instance of Majnun's mother, and talked to him until morning. This was their last meeting.
17. When Majnun fell in love with Laylá he often visited her at night, as the Arabs did not view it as anything shameful that young man talked to girls, but, having found out about his undying passionate love to Laylá, her relatives prohibited him to come.
18. A variation of the information about the beginning of the love between Laylá and Majnun when they were adults.
19. Laylá is married to someone named Musir from the Thuluf tribe.
20. Majnun, wandering around the desert comes to the camp of the relatives of his beloved. Having met Laylá, he faints and asks for Laylá's hand was from her servant to tell him she wishes to quicken recovery when he comes to consciousness. Laylá replies that Laylá is his illness and his life.
22. The repetition of the information about Majnun's father's decision (compare with the analogue of IRI).
23. Laylá's father and her husband go to Makka. Laylá calls for Majnun who spends all nights with her until their return.
24. Majnun pronounces ridicule of Laylá's husband.
25. From a secluded well Laylá watches Laylá settling off to her husband.
26. Majnun redeems a gazelle from the hunters and frees it.
27. Women reproach Majnun for his love to Laylá; according to the story, he could have paid attendance to one of them, and could have regained his mind and health.
28. Before leaving to the camp of Laylá's relatives, a man from Majnun's tribe tells him that he would like to pass something to her. Majnun asks him to find a place in her camp from which she would hear and read his poem to her. Having heard it, Laylá is crying, and, in her turn, read a poem which was later passed to Majnun.
29. Majnun's father asks some men to tell his son that Laylá disapproves of his poems, while he describes their meetings in private which, in fact, never took place. Majnun replies that Laylá may reproach him.
30. Laylá learns the latest news about Majnun from a person who had been in his land (analogous to IIAS).
31. A man from bani Murra meets Majnun's father and then Majnun himself; the story about Majnun's death (analogous to IIAS).
32. Majnun's relatives mourn over his death; in the camp of Laylá's relatives it is her father whose mourning is the strongest.
33. Poet Qays ibn Dāhrij meets Laylá by the instance of Majnun; she reproaches Majnun for his poems in which he mourned her. Majnun's mother, however, justifies Laylá with her reasons and asks her to give him her regards. Qays ibn Dāhrij does not find Majnun.
34. Once, when Majnun has already gone crazy, he goes past Laylá, and, having seen her, he faints. Laylá goes away fearing that her relatives will see them together (possibly, the analogue of IRI).
35. C. Al-‘Isfahání gives the information in the following order:

1. When Majnun and Laylá were children they shepherded lambs together.
2. Laylá knew poems and adab works well and young men from the bani ‘Amir liked to spend time with her (compare with IA2). Among them Majnun was her closest one.
3. Having realised that Majnun and Laylá are in love with each other, ‘Amir youths informed her father. He hides Laylá from the Majnun and complains to the ruler to the ruler. The latter allows to shed Majnun's blood if he visits Laylá again.
4. Majnun's father asks Laylá's father for his daughter's hand in marriage on behalf of his son, pointing out to important circumstances favourable for their marriage, such as, possession and the great right (it is not clarified what is meant by it). Laylá's father replies that he will not allow his daughter to marry a man who is passionately, crazily in love.
5. Majnun goes to Makka with his father, at Ka‘ba, instead of asking to heal him, he asks to strengthen his love to Laylá.
6. In Miná valley Majnun hears a voice calling Laylá.
8. Majnun's father and his uncle tell him that there is nothing good about Layla and that he can find a better girl among the daughters of his paternal aunts.

9. Majnun's father takes him to Baytul to heal him.

10. Majnun undergoes treatment in Baytul (without additional context).

11. Majnun redawns a gazele from hunters and fires it.

12. Poet Qasim tells tallid Abul-Malik about a man more passionately in love than him. The poet met a man who looked strange and asked him whether he was a man or a genie. This was Majnun who snared gazelles, looked at them because they resembled Layla and then freed them.

13. An Asadat saw a naked man in the desert with overgrown hair and, being sure that this was an evil spirit, asked him whether he was a man or a genie. This was Majnun, who was wandering around the desert without any particular purpose, Majnun finds himself at the border with Syria.

14. Majnun's father and brothers follow him in the desert. His father tries to prove that Layla is not beautiful and that Majnun can find a better girl in his tribe (obviously, a variation of ICS).

15. Some man, going past Majnun who is sleeping, tells him with a reproach that Layla is sick and she is "in" yaw." The Asadat asks Majnun about what presented his father from settling his matter before his love to Layla became widely known.

16. Majnun goes to hunters who have caught a gazelle. He swaps the gazelle for four sheep and frees it (variation of IBS, ICS). The gazelle is a relative from the family of his paternal uncle, who, ridiculing him, asks him about his love to Layla. When hearing the name of his beloved being mocked, Majnun regains his mind and talks about his love reasonably.

17. Nawfal ibn Mushaq unsuccessfully tries to help Majnun.

18. After the unsuccessful interference of Nawfal ibn Mushaq Majnun followed his nose and boys cried behind him. Who wants to see a man passionately in love ("al-"ayha")?"

19. Majnun gets into the camp of Layla's relatives disguised as a beggar led by an old woman on a chain. They work for charity, and boys throw stones at Majnun and set dogs at him. Having come close to Layla's tent, he reads a poem and then walks away.

20. Majnun is in love with her. They reply that they have no remedy for somebody passionately in love.

21. Some man went past Layla. Having found out that he was herding for the lands of the 'Amirs, she read a poem. When Majnun learned about this, he sends a message to Layla with the same man.

22. Majnun fell ill and Layla sends a man to him to tell her that she will visit him if she can (possibly, a variation of IBS). The visit is not mentioned.

23. Nawfal ibn Mushaq hunting and meets Majnun surrounded by gazelles.

24. Explanation of Layla's father's refusal to let his daughter marry Majnun. If a woman loves a man, the Arabs never let him marry her.

25. Majnun, Layla, her paternal uncle, who was originally against the idea, after Layla's appeal, after hearing her poems and unsuccessfully tries to help Majnun. Soon after that his uncle dies.

26. Layla, who went to the prison with her father, is seen by a Thajhibi, proposes to her, and they get married.

27. Layla learns the latest news about Majnun from a man who has been in the land of his relatives.

28. During Majnun's serious illness Layla writes to him in her message delivered by a messenger that her lot is twice as bitter as his. Layla writes her a poem in reply and sends it with the same messenger.

29. Majnun's father learns from a doctor going past their camp that he heals the bewitched and the insane. He asks him to heal his son. The treatment brings no results. Majnun says that the remedy for someone passionately in love is being with the one he loves (variation of IBS).

30. Two horsemen find Majnun in the desert and inform him about Layla's death. He faints and then, having regained consciousness, reads a poem.

31. Majnun finds asylum at Layla's grave, he does not eat or drink, and is so thin that it seems his skin got stuck to his bones.

32. Some man meets Majnun and reads him poems by Qasim ibn Dharhi. In reply Majnun reads his poems. After hearing some of them, this man asks him not to ask Majnun to read him the qu'aida about pits for rain-water which they have unsuccessfully been trying for. The same man goes to Majnun for the second time and again reads to him the poems by Qasim ibn Dharhi. Majnun, however, listening to these poems and praising them, says four times after each one that he exeeds Qasim ibn Dharhi in poetic talent and praise this qu'aida to poems. After that the man asks him to perform the qu'aida he was sent for and says that he has taken a notebook and ink and paper to copy it. Majnun reads the qu'aida to him and runs away following a gazelle. When this man comes to Majnun the third time, now together with his relatives, he reads some qu'aida and Majnun jumps on top of a wall. They managed to read a distich written by a finger on the ground near his head. They took Majnun's body to the camp, washed him and buried it near Layla's grave.

33. Majnun found out about his father's death, he went to his grave, slaughtered a female camel and read poems.

34. Having heard the poems by Qasim ibn Dharhi read to him by a duqara, Abul-Malik Al-A'rabī says that Majnun appreciated them but says that he is more "poetic" than (i.e. he exeeds) Qasim ibn Dharhi. Majnun immediately reads his own poems which, in his opinion, must prove this statement.

35. The compiler of the "Book of Poetry and Poets" quotes a number of poetic motives (motif — ma'nî) in which Majnun excelled others and gives several brilliant examples of him, mentioning however, that their authorship is not doubtless.

36. Al-Iṣfahānī makes the following statements. 1. The transmitters of information (irwâs) do not have a unanimous opinion on the fact of the existence of Majnun, the hero of Layla and Majnun. But it is known, that this name was born by several poets from different tribes.

37. The story about Majnun and his poems were created by Layla and according to Al-Iṣfahānī's authority, Layla was the daughter of her paternal uncle and did not want this to leak out.

38. Many people apart from Qasim ibn Layla received the nickname Majnun, and therefore Layla was the first to coin the nickname.

39. Analogues to IBS with a specification: a young man from Hamid Marwan, and the mention of the fact that people have made additions to this story.

40. Majnun is an invented name.

41. Al-Iṣfahānī's opinion that all anonymous poems about Layla are ascribed to Majnun.

42. Some 'Amir says that there was no Majnun who died because of his passionate love in his tribe; this could have happened only to a Yemeni man as they have weak hearts.

43. Family after family the 'Amirs were asked about Majnun. The nobles knew about Layla, but not about the poems ascribed to Majnun as he doubts that he existed at all.

44. The author of the "Book of Songs" states that he gives all available information about Layla, but is not responsible for its authenticity. Most of the poems ascribed to Majnun are sometimes ascribed by irwâs to other poets. And in this respect Al-Iṣfahānī takes upon himself no responsibility.

45. Al-Iṣfahānī received information about Majnun's passionate love to Layla from several râwûs, he states that the sources of information are responsible for the discrepancy.

46. The list of names of the râwûs from the story about Majnun.

47. Only one Majnun is known Qasim ibn Al-Malawasah.

48. A reply of a man from the hamid 'Udhrîn to the question — whose hearts are more gentle: the 'Udhrîs or the 'Amirs? The 'Udhrîs have the most gentle heart among all peoples, but the 'Amirs excelled them with the help of their Majnun.

49. Information about two poets by Majnun due to which the compiler of Layla praised him as 'Arabī. Al-A'rabī comments on the stories of Majnun and Layla.

50. One of Majnun's poems is accompanied with a note by Ibn al-'Arabî: "This, I swear on Allah, is beautiful speech and refined poetry!"
Raising on this we can make a preliminary conclusion that al-Wālībī tells the story of Majnūn as a complete and logical sequence of events creating a story about the famous couple.

Let us now try to substantiate our preliminary conclusion.

The "Book of Poetry and Poets" is a literary monument whose author aimed at selecting the best examples (in accordance with his views) of Arabic poetry. In his work he based himself on the principles of contemporary philological concepts and his work can be rightfully called a philologi cal one [11]. Correspondingly, each section about Majnūn is presented in his book as a chapter of a philological work. Ibn Qutayba provides it, as far as he can, with precise data about Majnūn's name and origin, giving reference to the sources mentioned earlier in his work. He pays a lot of attention to the literary-critical aspect of his work. Ibn Qutayba discusses the question of Majnūn's historicity, the question of authenticity of the works ascribed to him, and gives his best works as examples, providing them with corresponding comments.

The "Book of Songs" is a voluminousaccumulation of everything referring to the Arabic poetry before and including the 10th century (examples of poetry, various historical, cultural and biographical data connected with the poets themselves as well as with the works and the forms in which they were performed). Al-Walībī aims at accumulating in his work all available information concerning all poets and their works, and he is not interested in the literary-critical aspects of his work (this would have required annotating the whole monument). So let us limit ourselves to some representative examples.

The latter idea leads us to the necessity to say a few words about fictionalising the romantic legend about Majnūn in Arabic tradition. Its elements are visible in all the three analysed monuments. Let us point to some examples to prove this tendency.

A. The "Book of Poetry and Poets" follows the same statement which can be considered as elements of fictionalising:

1. The continuation of the literary-critical statement about Majnūn as an expert in poetry: once Laylā started talking to a young man in the presence of other young men and girls, and, according to Majnūn's reaction, she realised that he was in love with her. In her poem, written on that occasion, she confessed that she also loved him.

2. The story about Majnūn's death proves to undoubted literary treatment.

B. In the "Book of Songs" the following statements can be viewed as such elements [13].

1. The continuation of the statement that Majnūn and Laylā fell in love with each other when they were adults. Laylā, wishing to find out Majnūn's feelings, starts flirting with him, while he is a beggar in the camp. However, having seen how Majnūn's face changed, she tells him about her love in a poem. Majnūn faints (variation of FAYA).

2. Majnūn wakes by Na'ilah cliffs for a puff of wind from the lands where Laylā lived.

3. Laylā talks to her maid about a tooth-stick given to her by Majnūn. Majnūn's poems are given when he found out about their conversation.

4. It is pouring rain for three days. After it is over some man tries to console Majnūn. In reply the latter performs his poems.

5. In spring Majnūn writes a poem about dove's cooing.

6. Majnūn remembers seeing a gazelle once, and then a wolf which he found the wolf which he was already gobbling up the gazelle. Majnūn kills the wolf, takes the eaten pieces out of his stomach, adds them to the current gazelle and burns the wolf. After that he writes a poem.

7. At night Majnūn hears a dove cooing and writes a poem.

8. A man goes past Laylā. Having found out that he is going to the lands of the 'Amīrāt, she writes a poem to him. When Majnūn finds out about Laylā's poem, he goes back to Laylā and sends his message with the same man.

9. Poet Qays ibn Mur' az writes a poem which of Allah's creation resembles his poem. However, it is Qays ibn Mulawānā who proves this by her poem.

10. Laylā is told that if she does not stop mentioning Majnūn in her poems, they both will be killed. She replies with a poem.

11. Majnūn is seriously sick. Laylā sends him a message with a poem. Majnūn replies with a poem which he sends back with the same messenger.

12. Two horsemen find Majnūn in the desert and inform him about Laylā's death. Majnūn faints, and, having regained consciousness, reads a poem. Then he goes to Laylā's grave and, again, reads a poem.

13. A man meets Majnūn and reads to him some poems by Qays ibn Dharīt. In reply Majnūn reads his own poems. After that the man goes to Majnūn's relatives and they reproach him for not having asked Majnūn to read him his own poems. Majnūn answers them (this would have required annotating the whole monument).

14. Majnūn reads the meeting of Majnūn and Laylā to Qays ibn Dharīt. The poet meets a man in the desert who looked strange and asked him whether he was a man or a genie. This was Majnūn who soared gazelles, looked at them with such love that they resembled Laylā and then freed them. In this connection Majnūn reads poems transmitted by Qaysyār.

15. An asadīt saw a naked man in the desert with overgrown hair and, being sure that this was an evil spirit, asked whether he was a man or a genie. This was Majnūn who soared gazelles. Majnūn answers them (this would have required annotating the whole monument).

16. Majnūn, disguised as a beggar, walks with an old woman around the camp of Laylā's relatives. At her tent he reads his poem.

17. Majnūn addresses a raven with his poem.

18. Majnūn sees birds on trees and reads his poem.

19. Majnūn sees a flock of qāṭi birds and reads his poem.

20. A man goes past Laylā. Having found out that he is going to the lands of the 'Amīrāt, she writes a poem to him. When Majnūn finds out about Laylā's poem, he goes back to Laylā and sends his message with the same man.

21. Poet Qays ibn Mur'a az writes a poem which of Allah's creation resembles his poem. However, it is Qays ibn Mūlawānā who proves this by her poem.

22. Laylā is told that if she does not stop mentioning Majnūn in her poems, they both will be killed. She replies with a poem.

23. On his father's grave Majnūn stabs a female camel and reads a poem.

This list shows that the elements of fictionalising are heterogeneous in their origin. In most cases they are separate poems described to Majnūn with a short comment which must have been included in the growing legend during its verbal circulation and possible cyclisation. They determine the vivid lyrical character of the legend which has been preserved in poems. In other cases, they are small fragments containing a plot kernel and characterised by distinct artistic fiction (for example, the information about the circumstances of Majnūn's death, the information about the two amusing events which happened with Majnūn and Laylā when they first fell in love with each other). These stories are not characterised as fictionalising. As a result, the description of Majnūn's fictitious world is visible with the use of the motives of magic (for example, comparing naked Majnūn with a genie).
V. About the correlation between the Arabic legend and "Laylî and Majnûn" by Nizâmî

As it has already been said above, the classic example of the romantic epics about Majnûn is a poem of the genius Persian poet Nizâmî called "Laylî and Majnûn". Researchers have long been interested in the problem of correlation of this poem with the Arabic legend. Most fully this issue is discussed in the mentioned works by E. E. Berthelot. Let us cite the most important of his observations and sum up his conclusions in the aspects of such comparison that we are going to make.

According to Berthelot’s, Nizâmî “very accurately reproduced the general structure of the legend and did not leave out any of its important elements”. The poet treated the material carefully, “often using even small details”. E. E. Berthelot’s not only points to some similar features, but also speaks in detail about the differences. However, his appearance is sometimes easy to explain. Let us first of all turn to the central theme of the Arabic legend and Nizâmî's poem — the Majnûn and Laylî love story.

(i) “The lovers’ parents… turned to a kind of pritnelings, but even the Arabic legends mention their wealth and grandeur”.

(ii) "Nizâmî introduces a kind of a preliminary of Qays by making the childless father obtain his son by prayer. This is a feature reminiscent of all the fairy stories of the Near East, whose appearance requires no justification”.

(iii) “The picture of the appearance of love between Laylî and Majnûn is changed. Instead of the touching young couple from the Arabic legend, this is shown to be a mature, older couple who lived in the environment very different from the puritiicial lifestyle of the Bedouins. As he turned Majnûn’s father into a pritneling, it would have been difficult to have Majnûn a shepherd… School, in the atmosphere of the 12th century, was the best substitution”.

(iv) “The description of Nawâf’s interference is sufficiently changed and grew into an independent, integral epic. No military conflict is mentioned in the Arabic legend, but it is obvious that from the point of view of a 12th century poet, description of a battle was one of the advantageous themes for a 12th century poet”.

(v) In the available Arabic legends there is no scene describing Majnûn talking to the stars. And this detail also becomes explainable by the environment of the 12th century literary life… Nizâmî had to pay tribute to this sphere of knowledge of his epoch”.

(vi) “The picture of Laylî’s death was developed which was not developed in the Arabic sources… For Nizâmî her death was a necessary link required by the composition of the poem”.

(vii) And, finally, the main difference is that “none of the available versions of Laylî present the legend as an organic whole, while the connection of separate fragments of the legend into a whole must be viewed as Nizâmî’s own work” [15].

the-cousin marriage, i.e. from their birth they were meant to marry each other (with the right of priority for the male side, however) [17]. That is why Majnûn’s father declares to his brother his cousin’s great right to marry Laylî (al-Walîb’s work). It may sound strange for a modern man, but Nizâmî’s love to Laylî turns out to be an obstacle for their friendship. Al-Walîb also speaks about Laylî’s love as an obstacle for marriage: “if the Arabs found out about a man’s love to a woman, they did not let him marry her”.

Here we can not speak in detail about this, but let us point to the fact that such attitude to love and marriage, which was shown in the stanzas by the specifics of matrimonial relations in the clan-triangular society on the Arab Peninsula. Let us stress this idea: the obstacle for happiness of Majnûn and Laylî in the Arabic legend is ordinary, no sensational, love, and not "crazy" love like in Nizâmî’s work. This leads to other differences.

In the Arabic legend Majnûn becomes really "insane" after his father unsuccessfully asks for Laylî’s hand in marriage on behalf of his son, while in Nizâmî’s work Majnûn’s father proposes his "crazily" in love son for a gift from a different tribe. The Arabic legend contains no explanation of the fact that love was an obstacle for marriage, as it was clear for everyone that it broke the traditional mediatic human-rediligious-legals correlations and could lead to the degradation of the clan-triangular society. That is why a man who wanted to marry the woman he loved in that society could be viewed as someone acting unreasonable, different from the norms of behaviour. In other words, loving an unmarried woman was breaking the laws of life of the clan-triangular society and could lead to trouble. Moreover, let us point to the fact that the ruler allowed Laylî’s relatives to shed Majnûn’s blood despite the fact that the offender was their close relative; and could be seen as grounds to condemn him.

The Arabic legend’s world is full of explanations. Undoubtedly, the society in which he lived (here we agree with E. E. Berthelot) was very different from the Bedouin clan-triangular society. However, he was familiar with or tho-cousin marriage and the proof can be found in the poem itself where in one of the digressions he speaks about the love of Laylî to her cousin [18]. Although Corre spondingly, the correlation of the classic works of the romantic epics about Majnûn with the Arabic legend will look more convincing, in some cases the distance between them and the version by al-Walîb will appear to be not as big as it used to seem.

In the Arabic legend, in other aspects the differences between the Arabic legend and classic works of the romantic epics about Majnûn may turn out to be more important than the researchers used to think. In our opinion, the main difference lies in the nature of the conflict at the basis of the legend about Majnûn and the classic works of the romantic epics about Majnûn.

In this connection we would like to point to one important difference between the Arabic legend and the romantic epic, when E. E. Berthelot suggested the role of the genealogy, as it determines the development of the story. In two Arabic sources (ibn Qutilâw’s work is an exception) Majnûn and Laylî are close relatives — paternal cousins, and, as such, are object of the so-called or

Notes
1. E. E. Berthelot’s published in 1940 two articles about the history of the plot of the Arabic legend in connection with the study of Nizâmî’s works (E. E. Berthelot, “Istoricul Lelli e Mejun ‘N‘izami” (The sources of Nizâmî’s ‘Laylî and Majnûn’), Novea I (Baku, 1940), idem, “Lelli e Mejun” (istoria sìzøeteta arabo-persian, versiìa ‘Nizami i poiema Nawàf’)) ("Laylî and Majnûn" (the history of the plot of the Arabic legend, Nizâmî’s poem and Nawàf’’)i literatura i ii ekkonomia Uzbekistan (1940), I), which were later included in a monograph about the poet completed by the end of 1940 but was first published much later (idem, ‘Nizami’, librienne
THE LIFE OF THE TEXT AND THE FATE OF TRADITION. VI:
BIRDS IN MYSTICAL-SYMBOLIC QASIDA AS SANĀĪ AND KHĀNĪ (12TH CENTURY) (TO THE PROBLEM OF FORMATION OF THE SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSICAL PERSIAN QASIDA)

Records of birds can be found even in the early examples of mono-rhymic poetry in the Persian language of the 10th—11th centuries. "Birds" motives were an integral part of the calendar theme inherited by the classical Persian poetry from the pre-Islamic court singers, performers of "king's motets" (šurūtī) [1]. The stable repertory of lyrical themes which was tightly connected with the ancient tradition of spring calendar rituals and the šāhīdī court etiquette of nawīceh celebration played an important part in the process of the qasīda, which was inherited from the Arabic poetic system, taking root on the Iranian literary ground.

A fragment of Rādīkā's (860—941) spring qasīda is an example of one of the first records of birds in Persian poetry. It begins with the following words: "Blessed spring came, full of colours and scents..." and contains the following lines:

"A nightingale sings among willow branches, a始ring replays from a cypress. // A turtle-dove on a cypress sings old tunes, // a nightingale replays from the rose bush with amazing warbles" [2].

Following Rādīkā a court poet of the Ghaznavid circle Manūšī (1000—1110) interprets the same motives in his description of spring:


(1) "Nawīceh came, oh, Manūšīhîrfî, // decorated by ruby tufts and purple roses. // All birds at the same time gained the gift of speech, // some started talking in the Rūmī dialect, others in the Hebrew Language. // One bird is singing a Pārsī song, // the other — a Manūshīhîrfî al-Nahr tune..."

(14) On a Judas tree branch a nightingale / resembles Jamshid Mu'mann from Ilm el-din tribe. (15) Without any knowledge of 'arba' he composes his rhymes, // he is no poet but his poems are good. (16) A peacock receives praise from "Unsā'it and a francolin — Mandāghīshī's misvakūmūmū [3].

The use of calendar beginnings for the creation of integral allegorical pictures is first found in the qasīdas by Nīk-ir-i Khurash, however the Isma'īlī poet limited himself to separate mentions of birds in the traditional bahārīya contexts. On the whole, his undertaking is followed by the 12th century court poets in whose qasīdas we can trace the turn to the didactic and religious-mystical theme. Acknowledged masters of the decorated style who took professional training at the court and gained fame of panegyrist wrote seasonal allegories in the spirit of sophisticated detailed elaboration. Thus, in the divvās by Sanā'ī (ca. 1048—after 1126) and Khūnābī (1120—1190) there are symbolic qasīdas, in whose introductory parts the famous seasonal theme is exploited which consists of the names of birds, flowers and trees. In these qasīdas, created basing on the tradition started by Rādīkā and Mandāghīshī, ways of re-actualisation on normative thematic constructions in the sphere of mystical poetry can be traced.

In the works dedicated to the history of classical Persian literature the fact of the wide use of "birds" figurativeness in different literary genres is mentioned. Mostly these researchers describe the use of "birds" motives in Sīfī literature where birds act as characters bearing various symbolic information [4]. However, in his works E. E. Berthelot also mentions the cases of interpretation of "birds" figurativeness in monorhymical poetry in the Persian language. Apart from the mention of the corresponding qasīdas by Sanā'ī [5] there is also a small note dedicated to the publication of two ghazals of the early Sīfī poet Bābī Khūlī Shīrāzī of which one interprets four birds (the duck, the peacock, the raven and the rooster) as the personification of four temperaments connected with the predominance in nature of people of one of four liquids (black bile, yellow bile, phlegm and blood) [6].

Sharif Shalvur and E. E. Berthelot's turn in their researches to the problem of functioning of "birds" symbol-
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