

## THE LIFE OF THE TEXT AND THE FATE OF TRADITION. IV: ON THE CHARACTER OF LOVE SYMBOLISM IN THE POETIC WORKS OF ‘ABD ALLĀH ANṢĀRĪ

The making of Ṣūfī love symbolism in the lyric poetry of ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī, one of the first representatives of mystic literature in the Persian language is analyzed in this article. The problem is raised in the poetological aspect, i. e. not the system of symbolic meanings of traditional images is studied here, but the character of their transformation on the way to poetic symbols. A stable set of love motives and images inherited by this Ṣūfī poet from the preceding refined court poetry and subjected by him to various changes, is in the centre of the research. Special attention is paid to the cases of incomplete symbolism of the text, when there is a possibility to examine the process of symbolism in dynamics.

The process of formation of the Ṣūfī symbols system in Persian classical poetry, with its most active phase within the period of the 11th—12th c., constituted one of sufficient factors of the poetic tradition development not only during the abovementioned period, but also afterwards. An allegoric interpretation of a text became an inseparable part of poetic canon and made a large impact on the figurative sounding of lyrical and epic poetry and the character of its perception.

A consecutive involvement of whole figurative layers of secular lyrics in the sphere of Ṣūfī symbolic system was performed due to efforts of authors of several generations. The appearance of the first original samples of mystical lyrics, which were closely connected with the requirements of ritual and sermon, was followed by constant attempts of the representatives of the new trend to review in poetry the experience of their predecessors who had worked at the courts of sovereigns, patrons of art. The tendency towards demarcation from court poetry and the aversion of its aesthetic grounds did not exclude, but determined the comprehension by the Ṣūfī poets of their work as another link in the chain of perfection of literary art.

Among the works by Russian and foreign specialists in Persian literature dedicated to mystical poetry the ones dominate in which the figurative Ṣūfī system is viewed as a stable layer of poetic terminology with stable semantics. The researchers have been primarily engaged with the task of revealing symbolic meanings from the main massive of poetic images and the study of structural ties between them (twoness of images — “face–lock”, “candle–moth”, etc., the presence of the so-called images-mediators — “wind”,

“dance”, “cup”, etc.) as well as the problems of interpretation of separate basic motives by different Ṣūfī authors [1].

What concerns the genesis of the system of Ṣūfī symbols in the purely poetological sense (the sources of motives, poetic means of their realization, etc.), its study has mostly had subsidiary character, serving as a peculiar tooling when considering the contents aspect of a Ṣūfī text.

Little interest in the artistic aspect of analysis of the early Ṣūfī lyrics must be connected with its relative, compared with the court poetry of that time, stylistic simplicity. However, this simplicity was not a complete absence of means of poetic expressiveness or lack of the form development; it is the consequence of a certain aesthetic principle. Ṣūfī poets inherited from the court poetic tradition, which they based upon, not only a rich repertoire of stereotypical images, motives and situations, but also a developed theory, i. e. a complex of concepts about poetic art. The changes introduced by the Ṣūfī authors into poetic practice and theory were, on one hand, of principal character; on the other hand they were regulated by them as they were realized within the limits of a canonical type of art. The analysis of the early stage of Ṣūfī symbolism formation can sufficiently broaden modern scientific ideas about the functioning of poetic canon as a dynamic system.

The present publication aims at studying the ways of realization of love motives in lyrical poems of ‘Abd Allāh Anṣārī (1006—1088) by revealing their genetic ties with the corresponding motives of the traditional repertoire of secular *ghazal*. The material for research was selected basing on the following considerations: firstly, the analyzed texts have not caused doubts concerning their authenticity since the time of their appearance [2]; secondly, the small volume of the poetic heritage of the “Harāt elder” (about twenty poems which are insets into the rhythmical prose of the same author) makes it possible to review it within the limits of one small article; thirdly, Anṣārī’s works are the closest to the origins of Ṣūfī lyrics in the Persian language and, thus, represents an almost ideal factual base for the study of the early stage of the process of symbolization of traditional poetic motives.

As is well known, the figurativeness of love lyrics, i. e. *ghazal*, lies at the basis of the Ṣūfī symbols system. Mystical-love poems dominate over works dedicated to other themes in most *dīwāns* of Ṣūfī poets. In Anṣārī’s poems