

THE LIFE OF THE TEXT AND THE FATE OF TRADITION. VI: BIRDS IN MYSTICAL-SYMBOLIC *QAŞĪDAS* BY SANĀ'Ī AND KHĀQĀNĪ (12TH CENTURY) (TO THE PROBLEM OF FORMATION OF THE SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSICAL PERSIAN *QAŞĪDA*)

Records of birds can be found even in the early examples of mono-rhythmic 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” (سرود خسروانی) [1]. The stable repertory of lyrical themes which was tightly connected with the ancient tradition of spring calendar rituals and the Sāsānid court etiquette of *nawrūz* celebration played an important part in the process of the *qaşīda*, which was inherited from the Arabic poetic system, taking root on the Iranian literary ground.

A fragment of Rūdakī's (860—941) spring *qaşīda* 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:

بلبل همی بخواند در شاخسار بید سار از درخت سرو مر او را شده مجیب
صلصل بسرو بن بر بانغمه کهن بلبل بشاخ گل بر بالحنک غریب

“A nightingale sings among willow branches, / a starling replies from a cypress. // A turtle-dove on a cypress sings old tunes, / a nightingale replies from the rose bush with amazing warbles” [2].

Following Rūdakī a court poet of the Ghaznavid circle Manūchihirī (1000—1040) interprets the same motives in his description of spring:

(۱) نوروز درآمد ای منوچهری بالاله لعل و با گل خمری
(۲) مرغان زبان را گرفته یکسر بگشاد زبان رومی و عبری
(۳) یک مرغ سرود پارسی گوید یک مرغ سرود ماورالنهری...
(۴) بر شاخ درخت ارغوان بلبل ماند به جمیل معمر غدیری
(۵) بی وزن عروض بحر ها گوید شاعر نبود بدین نکو شعری
(۶) طاووس مدیح عنصری خواند دراج مسمط منوچهری

“(1) *Nawrūz* came, oh, Manūchihirī, / [decorated] by ruby tulips and purple roses.

(2) All birds at the same time gained the gift of speech, / some started talking in the Rūmī dialect, others in the Hebrew language.

(3) One bird is singing a Pārsī song, / another — a Mā Warā' al-Nahr tune...

(14) On a Judas tree branch a nightingale / resembles Jamāl Mu'ammār from 'Udhra tribe.

(15) Without any knowledge of 'arūd he composes his rhymes, / he is no poet but his poems are good.

(16) A peacock recites praise to 'Unşurī / and a francolin — Manūchihirī's *musamma's*” [3].

The use of calendar beginnings for the creation of integral allegorical pictures is first found in the *qaşīdas* by Nāṣir-i Khusrāw, however the Ismā'īlī poet limited himself to separate mentions of birds in the traditional *bahārīyya* contexts. On the whole, his undertaking is followed by the 12th century court poets in whose *qaşīdas* 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 panegyrists wrote seasonal allegories in the spirit of sophisticated detailed elaboration. Thus, in the *dīwāns* by Sanā'ī (ca. 1048—after 1126) and Khāqānī (1120—1190) there are symbolic *qaşīdas*, in whose introductory parts the famous seasonal theme is exploited which consists of the names of birds, flowers and trees. In these *qaşīdas*, created basing on the tradition started by Rūdakī and Manūchihirī, 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 Persian classical literature the fact of the wide use of “birds” figurativeness in different literary genres is mentioned. Mostly these researches describe the use of “birds” motives in Šūfī literature where birds act as characters bearing various symbolic information [4]. However, in his works E. É. Berthel's also mentions the cases of interpretation of “birds” figurativeness in mono-rhythmical poetry in the Persian language. Apart from the mention of the corresponding *qaşīda* by Sanā'ī [5] there is also a small note dedicated to the publication of two *ghazals* of the early Šūfī poet Bābā Kūhī Shīrāzī one of which 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 Shukurov and E. É. Berthel's turned in their researches to the problem of functioning of “birds” symbol-