

Essays

Jahiliyyah Poetry

Collection & Compilation of the Quran

Collection & Compilation of the Hadith

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Jahiliyyah Poetry

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Introduction

In the period before the coming of Islam being defined as the time of "Jahiliyyah", "Pre-Islamic" or "Days of Ignorance" before the revelation of the Quran to Muhammad. The Pre Islamic poetry is commonly referred to in Arabic as "الشعر الجاهلي" "Jahiliyya poetry" - literally "the ignorant poetry".

Historical concept

Pre-Islamic Arab poetry had a very big role in Arab Culture. It can be used in reference to the Arabic culture before the realization of the Islam Revelation. Before the Islamic conversion the Arabe tribes were with a strong community concept and some specific society rules and their own religious beliefs, mostly their religious beliefs were based on idols and social congregations.

Pre-Islamic poetry

The first major poet in the pre-Islamic era is "Imru' al-Qais", the last king of the kingdom of "Kindah". Although most of the poetry of that era was not preserved, what remains is well regarded as the finest of Arabic poetry to till date. Pre-Islamic poetry constitutes as a major source for classical Arabic language both in grammar and vocabulary, and as a reliable historical record of the political and cultural life of the time. Arabic poetry is the earliest form of Arabic literature. Present knowledge of poetry in Arabic dates from the 6th century, but oral poetry is believed to predate that.

Arabic poetry is categorized into two main types rhymed, or measured and prose. The rhymed poetry falls within fifteen different meters collected and explained by al-Farahidi, a student of al-Farahidi later added one more meter to make them sixteen. The meters of the rhythmical poetry are known in Arabic as "seas" (بحور). The measuring unit of the "seas" is known as "Taf'ila" (تفعيلة) with every sea containing a certain number of taf'ilas that the poet has to observe in every verse (bayt بيت) of the poem, sometimes adding or removing a consonant or a vowel can

shift the verse from one meter to another. Also, in rhymed poetry, every verse has to end with the same rhyme (qafiya) throughout the poem.

Poetry held an important position in pre-Islamic society with the poet filling the role of historian, soothsayer and propagandist. The poet represented an individual prestige of tribes and importance in the Arabian peninsula, and mock battles in poetry. And 'Ukaz, a market town not far from Mecca, would play host to a regular poetry festival where the craft of the poets.

The Poet often has his poetic apprentice, known as Rawi or Reciter. The job of the Reciter was to learn the poems by heart and to recite them with explanations. This tradition allowed the transmission of these poetic works, at some periods there have been unbroken chains of illustrious poets, each one training a Reciter as a bard to promote his verse, and then to take over from them and continue the poetic tradition.

Most of the poetical works consisted of attacks on the rigidity of tribal life and praise of solitude. Some of these attacks on the values of the clan and of the tribe were meant to be ironic, teasing the listeners only in order finally to endorse all that the members of the audience held most dear about their communal values and way of life. Such poets were identified closely with their own tribes, and others were known for their wanderings in search of work from whoever needed poetry.

The Seven Odes - Al Mu'allaqat

The very best of these early poems were collected in the 8th century as the Mu'allaqat meaning "the hung poems" (because they were hung on or in the Kaaba). The seven Mu-Allaqat consist of 60 verses for the short ones, and up to 100 for the longest each of which belong to a different poet.

There are several characteristics that distinguish pre-Islamic poetry from the poetry of later times. One of these characteristics is that in pre-Islamic poetry more attention was given to the eloquence and the wording of the verse than to the whole poem. This resulted in poems characterized by strong vocabulary and short ideas but with loosely connected verses.

Collection & Compilation of the Qur'an

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Hadith About Reading From a Transcript

Compilation in the Khilafah of Abu Bakr (Ral)

Compilation in the Khilafah of Uthman (Ral)

Introduction

The Qur'an is the Holy Book of Islam. It is the word of Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, over a period of 23 years (from 610 to 633 CE) through the angel Jibreel (Gabriel). The Qur'an is still in its original form as it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. During the time of Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, the Qur'an was mainly preserved through memorization. Hundreds of Companions of the Prophet, were huffaz, or memorizers of the whole Qur'an and had memorized the Qur'an without any mistakes. But the Qur'an was also preserved through writing.

Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, made special arrangements to have it written down. When Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, used to receive a revelation, he dictated it to a Companion, who wrote it down on anything that was available: bark, stone, bones, leaves, etc. The companion then read, what he had written, to the Prophet. If there were any mistakes, Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, would correct it and then let it be brought before everyone. Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, also told the order of the verses, etc, and they were written accordingly.

So, in the days of the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, one copy of the Qur'an existed of what he had gotten written under his personal supervision. It was not in book form but in different parchments. Other Companions also had collections of the Qur'an for their personal record but no standard copy of the Qur'an in book form existed.

Hadith About Reading From a Transcript

Some people argue that the Qur'an was not written at all during the time of Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. This is not true as there are many Hadith, or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, that indicate that the Qur'an did exist in written form during the time of Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. For example, the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, has said:

“If anyone recites the Qur’an without seeing the transcription, the reward is one thousand times, and if he reads it from the transcription, the reward is two thousand times.”

This Hadith shows that Companions did possess written copies of the Quran during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam.

Compilation in the Khilafah of Abu Bakr (Ral)

After Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, died in 633 CE, Sayyidna Abu Bakr, Radi-Allahu anhu, became the Khalifah (caliph). The need of the compilation of the whole Qur’an in the form of a Book was seen. In the battle of Yamamah and other battles, many huffaz were martyred. Sayyidna Umar, Radi-Allahu anhu, noticed this and went to the Khalifah, and told him about this matter. At first Sayyidna Abu Bakr, Radi-Allahu anhu, hesitated in doing something that the Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, hadn’t done but then, seeing the importance of this, he agreed.

Then Sayyidna Zayd bin Thabit, Radi-Allahu anhu, was called. Hazrat Zayd bin Thabit, Radi-Allahu anhu, used to write the Qur’an for the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, during his time. At first, Sayyidna Zayd, Radi-Allahu anhu, refused to do so but then, he, too, agreed.

The compilation of the Qur’an started, with Sayyidna Zayd bin Thabit, Radi-Allahu anhu, in charge. Lots of companions, including himself had memorized the whole Qur’an and so the Qur’an could have easily been written down from memory. There were also complete collections of the verses of the Holy Qur’an available with many companions. But Sayyidna Zayd bin Thabit, Radi-Allahu anhu, knew he had to be careful. He used both methods by collecting verses that were written during the time of Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam and also using memory. He followed four steps.

1. First he verified the verse with his own memory.
2. Sayyidna Umar, Radi-Allahu anhu, who was a Hafiz, was also in charge of the project and he verified it, too.
3. Then, before the verse could be accepted, the two reliable witnesses had to testify that it was written in the presence of Prophet Muhammad Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam.
4. After that, written verses were collated with the collections of different Companions.

The purpose of this method was so that the utmost care be taken in the transcription of the Qur'an, and rather than rely on memory, it should be transcribed from verses that were written in the presence of the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam.

It was this way that the Qur'an was compiled. In this copy, all Surahs were written separately. The purpose of this transcription was to prepare an organized document with the endorsement of the whole Ummah so that reference could be made to it when required. The transcripts stayed with Sayyidna Abu Bakr, Radi-Allahu anhu. After his death in 634 CE they were passed on to the second Khalifah Sayyidna Umar, Radi-Allahu anhu. And after Sayyidna Umar, Radi-Allahu anhu, they were given to his daughter, Hazrat Hafsa, Radi-Allahu anha.

Compilation in the Khilafah of Uthman (Ra)

When Sayyidna Uthman, Radi-Allahu anhu, became Khalifah in 644 CE, Islam had spread to far areas such as Iran and Byzantine. People who accepted Islam learned how to read the Qur'an from Muslim soldiers, traders and other Muslims. There are seven different ways to recite the Qur'an and different Companions had learned it from the Holy Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, in different recitals. People thought that only their way of reciting was correct and started disputing with other people. Sayyidna Uthman, Radi-Allahu anhu, accomplished the feat of making the Qur'an's recitation standard.

First, Sayyidna Uthman, Radi-Allahu anhu, borrowed the first copy of the Holy Qur'an from Hafsa, Radi-Allahu anha. He then formed a group of four companions, Sayyidna Zayd bin Thabit, Abdullah bin Zubayr, Saeed ibn al Aas, and Abdur Rahman bin Harith Radi-Allahu anhum. The group had the task of making transcripts of the original copy and also to put the Surahs in sequence. Other companions were also called upon to help them.

After having these standard transcripts prepared, all other transcripts were burnt, so that all copies of the Qur'an become uniform in script and the sequence of Surahs, leaving no room for differences. The copy produced by Sayyidna Uthman, Radi-Allahu anhu, is still extant. All copies of the Qur'an available today in the world are exactly identical to the Uthmani Version, which was completed less than twenty years after the death of Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. Later some improvements were made in the Arabic script, like the adding of dots and diacritical marks, to make it easier for non-Arabs to read, but of course, the text of the Qur'an has remained, and will remain the same forever.

Compilation of Hadith

Synopsis

Introduction

Compilation During the Period of the Prophet

Compilations in the time of Companions of the Prophet.

The Time of Tabiun (Successors of the companions)

The Time of Taba Tabiun (Followers of the Successors)

Introduction

The history of the compilation of Hadith may be broadly divided into four stages:

1. The first stage relates to the period of the Prophet till 10 A.H.
2. The second stage is approximately from 11 A.H. to 100 A.H. This is the period of Sahaba, the companions of the Prophet.
3. The third stage is from about 101 to nearly 200 A.H. This is the period of the Tabiun, the disciples of the companions of the Prophet.
4. The fourth stage is roughly from 200 A.H. to 300 A.H. This is the period of Taba Tabiun, the disciples of the disciples.

Compilation During the Period of the Prophet

During the life of the Prophet there was no regular compilation of the Hadith, for they were not generally recorded in writing. However, they were orally transmitted, with great accuracy of detail.

Some companions had, however, prepared written collections of Hadith for their own personal use. Those companions, in particular, who had weaker memories used to write them down for memorizing and preservation. These were also dictated to their disciples. Then, there were those companions who had administrative offices arranged for written copies of Hadith, so that they might carry out their duties in the true spirit of Islam.

Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As, also used to write down all that he heard from the Prophet. He had even asked the Prophet if he could make notes of all that he said. The Prophet replied in the affirmative. Abdullah called this compilation Sahifah Sadiqa (The Book of the Truth). It was later incorporated into the larger collection of Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal.

Anas, was the Prophet's personal attendant. Since Anas remained with the Prophet day and night, he had greater opportunities than the other companions to listen to his words. Anas had written down the Hadith on scrolls. He used to unroll these documents and say: "These are the sayings of the Prophet, which I have noted and then also read out to him to have any mistakes corrected."

Ali ibn Abi Talib was one of the scribes of the Prophet. The Prophet once dictated to him and he wrote on a large piece of parchment on both sides. He also had a sahfah (pamphlet) from the Prophet which was on zakat (the poor due) and taxes. Besides these there were some other documents dictated by the Prophet himself – official letters, missionary letters, treaties of peace and alliance addressed to different tribes— all these were later incorporated into larger collections of Hadith.

Compilations in the time of Companions of the Prophet.

After the death of the Prophet, interest in Hadith literature increased greatly on two accounts. Firstly, the Companions who knew the Hadith at first hand were gradually passing away day by day. Therefore, people became more keen to preserve the precious Hadith literature that had been stored in their memories. Secondly, the number of converts was growing and they showed great eagerness to learn as much about the traditions as possible.

This was the time of the rightly guided Caliphs. In this time the Companions had settled in almost all the countries conquered by the Muslims. People went to them to hear traditions from them. Thus a number of centres for the learning of traditions came into existence with these Companions. When a student had learned all the Hadith he could from one Companion, he would go to the next Companion and so on, collecting as many Hadith as possible. The zeal of these students was so great that they undertook long journeys to collect traditions from different Companions.

In this period, there were not many regular compilations. This was rather the period of collecting traditions. The work of compilation took place on a large scale during the age of Tabiun, the disciples of the disciples.

The Time of Tabiun (Successors of the companions)

This is the time of the followers of the companions of the Prophet. They devoted their entire lives to collecting Hadith from different centres of learning, with the result that a large number of Hadith were preserved. Now it became possible to collect several memoirs in larger volumes. The compilations made in this period do not exist today independently, It has been incorporated into the larger collections of the later period.

After the individual compilations of this period, comes the Al Muwatta of Imam Malik (716-795), the first regular work which contained a well-arranged collection of Hadith. The number of the Hadith collected by him is 1700. This came to be accepted as a standard work. In this period the Hadith of the Prophet and his companions, and the decisions, edicts of the Tabiun were collected together in the same volume. However, it was mentioned with each narration whether it was that of the Prophet, his companions or of the followers.

The Time of Taba Tabiun (Followers of the Successors)

This time of the followers of the companions' successors from 200 to 300 A.H., is the golden age in Hadith literature. In this time the Prophet's Hadiths were separated from the reports of the companions and their successors. The authentic time were very carefully sifted from the "weak" Hadiths and then these were compiled in book-form. Elaborate rules were framed, canons were devised to distinguish the true from the false traditions in accordance with clear principles.

The main attention of scholars who engaged themselves in the critical scrutiny of Hadith was given to the recorded chains of witnesses (isnad); whether the dates of birth and death and places of residence of witnesses in different generations were such as to have made it possible for them to meet, and whether they were trustworthy. This activity, to be properly carried out, involved some feeling for the authenticity of the text itself; an experienced traditionist would develop a sense of discrimination.

This is the period in which six authentic collections of traditions were compiled. These works are considered standard works on Hadith, and are known as the "six correct books" (sifah-e-sittah). The authors' names and book titles are as follows:

1. Sahih Bukhari, By Muhammad b. Ismail al Bukhari, (194 A.H.-256 A.H.):
2. Sahih Muslim, By Muslim bin Qushairi (204 A.H.-261 A.H.):
3. Sunan Ibnu Majah, By Ibn Majah (202 A.H.-275 A.H.):
4. Jame At Thirmidhi, By Abu Isa al Tirmizi (209 A.H.-279 A.H.):
5. ASunan Nasai, By bu Abdur Rahman an Nasai (214 A.H.-303 A.H.):
6. Sunan Abudawood, Abu Da'ud (202 A.H.-275 A.H.):

Hassan ibn Thabit Ansari

Synopsis

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His Life

His Poetry

Introduction

Hassan ibn Thabit Ansari (died 674) was an Arabian poet and one of companions of Mohammad(PBUH). He was born in Yathrib (Medina), and was member of the Banu Khazraj tribe. According to tradition, he was the court poet to Prophet Mohammad(PBUH)

His Life

Hassan lived for 120 years, sixty years before converting to Islam and another sixty thereafter. In his youth he traveled to Al-Hirah and Damascus, then settled in Medina, where, after the arrival of Prophet Mohammad(PBUH), he accepted Islam and wrote poems in his defense. This was regarded as an example of early Muslims using their pagan talents to advance their new faith. After the death of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) Hassan was supposed to have traveled east as far as China, preaching for Islam along with Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas, Thabit ibn Qays, and Uwais al-Qarni. Later he died in 674 AD.

His Poetry

Hassan ibn Thabit (Ra) was a very dear companion of our beloved Prophet (saw). He was the first and most notable poet who used his beautiful poetry to praise the Prophet (saw). Hassan ibn Thabit (ra) had won acclaim at the courts of the Christian Arab kings in Syria and the kings of al-Hirah in Iraq. He settled in Medina, where he accepted Islam at about the age of 60.

He became earliest poetic defender of Islam. His writings in defense of Prophet Muhammad (saw) contain references to contemporary events that have been useful in documenting the period. He was also first religious poet of Islam's, using many phrases from the Qur'an in his verses. The work of Hassan Ibn Thabit (ra) was instrumental in spreading the message of the Prophet (saw), as the Arabs were great poets and this formed a large part of the culture. The work and words of Hassan Ibn Thabit (ra) are still regarded as the most beautiful in praise of the beloved Messenger (saw), and confirm how Islam permits the use of different talents and abilities as long as they are in support of Allah (swt) and His Prophet (saw).

The Prophet (saw) was so happy with Hassan Ibn Thabit (ra) that he ordered to establish and construct for him a *mimbar-pulpit* for him to stand upon when he delivered his poetry. The Prophet (saw) prayed for him saying that the Angel Gabriel (as) will support you as long as you defend Allah and His Prophet (saw). In one of his poem written in praise of Muhammad (PBUH), Hassan bin thabit (RAL) says: And (the truth is that) by my poetical compositions I could not praise Muhammad (PBUH). Rather my poetical compositions have become praiseworthy due to its contents being blessed with the sacred mention of Muhammad (PBUH). This one couplet is excellent in expressing the deep love, respect and devotion the great poet had for the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

Some examples are given of the beautiful and melodious poetry from the greatest religious poet; Hassan Ibn Thabit (radi Allahu ‘anhu). These words have been translated from Arabic these words do help us to understand the love of the Companions for our Prophet (PBUH)

When I saw his light shining forth,
In fear I covered my eyes with my palms,
Afraid for my sight because of the beauty of his form.
So I was scarcely able to look at him at all.
The lights from his light are drowned in his light
and his faces shines out like the sun and moon in one.
A spirit of light lodged in a body like the moon,
a mantle made up of brilliant shining stars.
I bore it until I could bear it no longer.
I found the taste of patience to be like bitter aloes.
I could find no remedy to bring me relief
other than delighting in the sight of the one I love.
Even if he had not brought any clear signs with him,
the sight of him would dispense with the need for them.
Muhammad is a human being but not like other human beings.
Rather he is a flawless diamond and the rest of mankind is just stones.

Al Farazdaq (643 - 728)

Synopsis

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His Poems

His Rival

Introduction

Hammam ibn Ghalib commonly known as Al-Farazdaq (الفرزدق), was an Arab poet. He was born in Basarah, in the end of Caliphate of Umar, and lived in Kazma. He was a member of Darim, one of the most respected divisions of the Bani Tamim, his family is famous for generosity and hospitality. Al-Farazdaq is recognized as one of the greatest classical poets of the Arabs.

His Poems

At the age of 15, Farazdaq was known as a poet, and though checked for a short time by the advice of the caliph Ali to devote his attention to the study of the Qur'an, he soon returned to making verse. He devoted his talent largely to satire and attacked the Bani Nahshal and the Bani Fuqaim and he also composed poems in praise of Umayyad caliphs.

Al-Farazdaq was among the greatest poets of his time. He made an appropriate ground for his poetic talent, some said that without al-Farazdaq, one-third of Arabic would be lost. His poetic talent mostly matched satire and most of his poems were either in the form of satire or tribal pride.

Al-Farazdaq attended the courts of Umayyad caliphs including al-Walid & Sulayman and others composed poems in approval of their position. Those poems show al-Farazdaq's view about Umayyad caliphate. However he cannot be considered a court poet. But he became official poet to the Umayyad caliph Al-Walid I, to whom he dedicated a number of panegyrics. He also composed satires against the manner of some Arab rulers who behaved opposite to the principles of Islam. He is most famous for the poem that he gave in Makkah when Ali (Ral) entered the Haram of the Kaba

angering the emir, tThe poem is extremely powerful because of this poem that he was imprisoned.

Much of his poetry was now devoted to his matrimonial affairs. He had taken advantage of his position as guardian and married his cousin Nawar against her will. She sought help in vain from the court of Basra and from various tribes but all feared the poet's satire. Quarrels soon arose again the Farazdaq took a second wife, and after her death a third, to annoy Nawar. Finally, it ended up in divorce.

His Rival

His rival in poems was Jarir, the poems of Jarir & Farazdaq were recited everywhere and each poet had thousands of supporters who maintained that one was superior to other. The verbal fight between Jarir and Farazdaq was common that no one could escape it without being involved in it either as actual participant on one side or as critic who wanted to review the merits of either and pass a judgment as to who was superior. It has not been possible to establish the absolute superiority of any to the other except by learned men. Badeel Zaman Al Hamadani says that :

- ✓ Jarir is sweeter in song and excelling in copiousness. Farazdaq is as strong as a rock and surpassing in boastfulness.
- ✓ Jarir has more circastic in satire and nobler in his tribe. Farazdaq is more ambitious and noblest of his tribe.
- ✓ Jarir if he describes he inspires, If he rebukes he destroys, and If he praises he exalts.
- ✓ Farazdaq if he boasts it is sufficient, if he scolds he degrades, and if he describes he fulfills.

Al-Akhtal

Synopsis

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His Poems

Introduction

Al-Akhtal , was one of the most famous Arab poets of the Umayyad period. He belonged to the Banu Taghlib tribe. He became famous for his satires and panegyrics in a period when poetry was an important political instrument. Akhtal was introduced to Yazîd bin Muâwiyah and became a close friend of the Yazid. when Yazid succeeded to the throne, was very kind to al-Akhtal. Although he was Christian, he was favoured by leading Umayyad caliphs. All his life al-Akhtal followed the reigning Umayyad Dynasty.

His Poems

His satires attacked all opponents of the caliphs. al-Akhtal became official poet to the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik, to whom he dedicated a number of panegyrics. But he fell into disfavour under Walîd I. The pre-Islamic tradition is always apparent in the poems of al-Akhtal and his panegyrics show the continued vitality of this tradition and it acquired a classical status. His poetry was accepted by critics as source of pure Arabic.

Some of his poems influenced very much and brought disgrace to Madina Muslims, he has praised the Umayyad dynasty so much. Akhtal was induced to support Farazdaq and he treated Jarir as an enemy and always attacking him with the help of Farazdaq. His style was admired by the Arabian critics, as it was pure and polished and correct. His poems were longer compared to that of his contemporaries. He himself claimed to have surpassed all competitor in three themes namely panegyric, satire and erotic poetry.

Together with the poets Jarîr and al-Farazdaq, Akhtal forms a famous trio in early Arabic literary history. Because they closely resembled one another in style and vocabulary, their relative superiority was disputed. But Abû ‘Ubaydah, placed al-Akhtal highest of the three.

Jarir (662 - 728 AD)

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Introduction

Jarir ibn Atiyah al-Khatfi Al-Tamimi was an Arab poet and satirist. He was born in the reign of the caliph Othman, and was a member of the tribe Kulaib,. He was a native of al-Yamamah, but also spent time in Damascus at the court of the Umayyad caliphs.

His Life

He succeeded in winning the favor of Al-Hajjaj bin Yousf, the governor of Iraq. He praised him and eulogized him in such a way that it aroused the jealousy of Caliph Abdul Malik, who thereafter received him on his appearances at Damascus, afterwards he praised him also and obtained his pleasure. He was considered greatest satirist of his time. He became more widely known by his rival poets Farazdaq and Akhtal. From neither of these did he receive a warm welcome.

One of the poets introduced him to Yazid Bin Muawiyah, When Yazid was a prince he appreciated his poem. One day Yazid quoted a few lines of Jarir in order to reproach his father. He was, more successful with Umar II, and was the only poet received by the pious caliph.

His Poems

He would degrade his enemy among his contemporaries, however he might deserved their esteem. There was a poet of repute called Rail Ibil who loudly published his opinion that Farazdaq was superior to Jarir although the latter has praised his tribe and also Farazdaq has composed poems against him. Jarir immediately met Rail Ibil and expostulated with him when Rail kept silence.

Jarir composed a satire of 80 lines against the Banu Numyar, When he finished the poem he shouted praised of God and rode away to the place where the expected

to find Rail Ibil and Farazdaq and their friends. He did not salute Rail but immediately began to recite. Farazdaq and Rail bowed their heads and with the rest of the company sat listening in silence.

His Rival

Jarir and Farazdaq are intimately connected by a peculiar rivalry for many years. They engaged in a public scolding match and as neither had any scruples on the score of decency the foulest abuse was exchanged between them. These abuses were vulgarity, but in its literary excellence they were marvelous expressions ever made in Arabic poetry. There were very often quarrels between the supporters of each poet who maintained that one was superior to his rival.

Al Mutanabbi - (915 - 965 CE)

Synopsis

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His Early Life

Al-Mutanabbi and Saif Al-Dawla

His Poems

His Death

Introduction

Abu Tayyib Ahmad bin Husayn al-Mutanabbi was an Arab poet. He is considered one of the greatest, most prominent and most influential poets in the Arabic language, and much of his work has been translated into over 20 languages worldwide. Much of his poetry revolves around praising the kings he visited during his lifetime. His great talent brought him very close to many leaders of his time. He praised those leaders and kings in return for money and gifts.

He started writing poetry when he was nine years old. He is well known for his sharp intelligence and wittiness. Al-Mutanabbi had a great pride in himself through his poetry. Among the topics he discussed were courage, the philosophy of life, and the description of battles. Many of his poems were and still are widely spread in today's Arab world

His Early Life

Al-Mutanabbi was born in the Iraqi city of Kufah, 915. He was the son of a water carrier. He received an education in Damascus, and for completion of education he visited other towns in Syria. He passed much of his time among the Bedouins, the influence of which we can see in his poems. Among the Bedouins he pretended to be a Prophet which earned him the title "Al Mutanabbi" (The Pretender of Prophecy).

Al-Mutanabbi and Saif Al-Dawla

Once he was captured by Lu Lu, the governor of Hims and was thrown into prison. After his release he wandered reciting and chanting the praises of all chieftains until fortune guided him to the court of Saif Al Dawla in 948. During his nine years

stay at the court of Sayf al-Dawla he stood high in the favour of that cultured prince. He celebrated his virtues in songs of splendid eulogies.

Once a quarrel broke out in between Mutanabbi and Saif Al Dawla in consequence of which he fled to Egypt and attached himself to the ruler of Egypt, but he did not like to continue with him.

His Poems

Al-Mutanabbi Poems were deep in meaning and excellent in style, no other language can reflect that style through a translation. He wrote his greatest and most famous poems, he wrote in praise of his patron. During his stay in Aleppo, great rivalry occurred between Al-Mutanabbi and many scholars and poets in court of Sayf al-Dawla.

Al-Mutanabbi has received much praise in past centuries for the careful structure of his poems' opening lines, transitions between sections, and endings. Some defects are also noted in his poems. He concerns little about the clarity of the ideas sometimes, and makes it difficult to follow. He uses words resembling each other so as to make confusion among the readers. He often puts forward vague similes of same kind and strange comparisons.

His divided into five sections:

- ✓ First part consists of poems written in Syria;
- ✓ Second part contains 161 poems, most dedicated to Saif al-Dawla;
- ✓ Third part contains numerous poems written for a variety of occasions;
- ✓ Fourth part consists of five poems written for Ibn al 'Amid; and
- ✓ Fifth and final part consists of seven poems for the Prince of Southern Persia, 'Adud al-Dawla.

In all, the Diwan encompasses 287 individual poems, ranging in length from a couple of lines to sixty stanzas.

His Death

His nature seems to have got him in trouble several times and might be why he was killed. He was killed because one of his poems contained a great insult to a man.

Abu Thammam

Synopsis

Introduction

His Youth

His Poems

Introduction

Abu Thammam was born in Jasim in Syria in 788 AD. He belonged to a poor family who migrated to Egypt. He remained in Egypt engaging in minor jobs and thereafter he was employed during his boyhood selling water at a mosque in Cairo. By the contact of men of letters and literature he learned Arabic and poems in the meter.

His Youth

While he as a young man he left Egypt realizing that Egypt could not fulfill his poetic talents. Thereafter again he returned to Syria and praised many high personalities. Then he was invited to Iraq by Mutasim in whose company he stayed for long, praising the caliph and ministers. But considering the suggestions of some of his friends that it was not better for him to earn his livelihood by praising, then he gave up that business. Then he was appointed as the chief of the postal department and remained there for two years.

His Poems

His first appearance as a poet was in Egypt, but as he failed to make a living there he went to Damascus, and then to Mosul, from there he sought patronage from the Syrian-based caliph Al-Ma'mun of the Abbasid Empire, but failed to impress him. He was considered the head of the 2nd category of poets who had the choice of keeping contact with ideas of ancient as well as modern poets. He concentrated much in refining meaning than words. He used proverbs and pieces of wisdom profusely in his verse and brought evidences in plenty.

Another specialty of his poem was the application of metonymy. This inimitable style is one of the special features around which no ancient poet had and no

contemporary poet had successfully been able to imitate. Thus he formed a new way in Arabic Poetry.

Abu Tammam is best known in literature by his 9th century compilation of early poems known as the *Hamasa*. Abu Tammam gathered these works together when he was snowbound in Hamadan, where he had access to an excellent library. There are ten books of poems in the *Hamasa*, all classified by subject. Some of them are selections from long poems. This is one of the treasuries of early Arabic poetry, and the poems are of exceptional beauty.

Two other collections of a similar nature are ascribed to Abu Tammam. His own poems have been somewhat neglected owing to the success of his compilations, but they enjoyed great repute in his lifetime. His poems reflect a stylistic break from prevailing oral-based concepts of Arab poetry, often describing historical events and people. They were distinguished for the purity of their style, the merit of the verse, and the excellent manner of treating subjects, and have been linked to the prevailing philosophy of the Abbasid period. His poems were published in Cairo in 1875.

Ahmed Shawqi - (1868-1932)

Synopsis

Introduction
Early Life
His Works
His Poetry
His Legacy in Egypt

Introduction

Ahmed Shawqi an Egyptian poet and dramatist who pioneered the modern Egyptian literary movement, most notably introducing the symbol of poetic epics to the Arabic literary tradition.

Early Life

Born in a in a wealthy family, his family was prominent and well-connected with the court of the Khedive of Egypt. Upon graduating from high school, he attended law school, obtaining a degree in translation. Shawqi was then offered a job in the court of the Khedive Abbas II, which he immediately accepted.

After a year working in the court of the Khedive, Shawqi was sent to continue his studies in Law at the Universities of Montpellier and Paris for three years. While in France, he was heavily influenced by the works of French plays. He returned to Egypt in 1894, and remained a prominent member of Arab literary culture until the British forced him into exile in southern Spain in 1914, Shawqi remained there until 1920. when he returned to Egypt. In 1927 he was crowned by a title “Amir al-Shu’araa” (The Prince of Poets) in recognition of his considerable contributions to the literary field.

After returning to Egypt he built a new house. He met Mohammed Abdel Wahab, and introduced him for the first time to art, as he gave him a suite in his house. The house later on became Ahmed Shawki Museum and Mohammed Abdel Wahab became one of the most famous Egyptian composers.

His Works

Shawqi’s work can be categorized into three main periods during his career. The first coincides with the period when he occupied a position at the court of the Khedive, consisting of eulogies to the Khedive, praising him or supporting his policy.

The second comprised the period of his exile in Spain. During this period, his feeling of nostalgia and sense of alienation directed his poetic talent to patriotic poems on Egypt as well as the Arab world and panarabism.

The third stage occurred after his return from exile, during that period he became preoccupied with the glorious history of Ancient Egypt and Islam. This was the period during which he wrote his religious poems, in praise of the Prophet Muhammad. The maturation of his poetic style was also reflected in his plays, the most notable of which were published during this period.

Shawqi was the first in modern Arabic literature to write poetic plays. He wrote five tragedies and two comedies, he also wrote chapters of prose.

His Poetry

Since his college days in Paris, shawki was a close friend of Emir (Prince) Shakeeb Arsalan, a lebanese political leader and poet. Oftentimes, shawki would read out his poetry to the Emir who admired and regularly read his published writings. The Emir expressed to shawki a wish to see in print someday a collection of shawki's poetry, bearing his name "Al shawkiyat". Conscious of his moral and social responsibility as a poet, shawki intentionally excluded from this collection many of his early poems. He felt that, it would be more detrimental than beneficial to the rising generation. However, in memory of his glorious youth, he maintained in the collection a few specimen poems. At the end of every Hijri year, shawki regularly pursued the practice of publishing in serial parts, all his prose and poetry writings completed during the year, no matter how short or long.

After a series of popular uprisings and civil resistance to British occupation of Egypt, the colonial power was forced to accept the principle of negotiation. The British announced their willingness to receive an Egyptian delegation in London. shawki played a significant role in this situation. He wrote a supplication expressing the hopes and aspirations of the people. The supplication was recited simultaneously in the mosques and churches. The supplication was commonly known then as the "Supplication of Global Prayer".

His Legacy in Egypt

- ✓ His home was turned into Ahmed Shawki Museum and the street of his home in Giza was named after him.
- ✓ Many statues were erected to honor him inside & outside Egypt.
- ✓ Shawqi is celebrated in several parts of the world and in Egypt there is a monthly lecture series about his poetry.
- ✓ Many books were written about his life.
- ✓ An Egyptian postage stamp was issued in 1957 to honor his memory.
- ✓ Google made a doodle for him on selected Arabic-speaking countries on October 16, 2010

Hafiz Ibrahim - (1871-1932)

Synopsis

Introduction

Early life

His Poems

Introduction

Hafiz Ibrahim was a well known Egyptian poet of the early 20th century. He won title the "Poet of the Nile", and sometimes the "Poet of the People", for his political commitment to the poor. His poetry took on the concerns of the majority of ordinary Egyptians, including women's rights, poverty, education, as well as his criticism of the British Empire and foreign occupation.

He was one of several Egyptian poets that revived Classical Arabic poetry during the latter half of the 19th century. While still using the classical Arabic system of meter and rhyme, these poets wrote to express new ideas and feelings unknown to the classical poets. Hafez is noted for writing poems on political and social commentary.

Early life

Hafiz was born in 1871 in Dayrut, in Egypt. His father was an Egyptian engineer and his mother was of Turkish origin. After his father's death, at the age of four, Hafez was sent to live with his maternal uncle in Tanta where he received his primary school education. He then moved to Cairo to live with his mother and an uncle, where he completed his secondary education. After his mother died, Hafez moved back to Tanta and worked alongside the lawyer Muhammad Abu Shadi, here he discovered numerous literary books and became familiar with prominent leaders of the Egyptian National Movement.

In 1888, Hafiz attended the Military Academy and graduated three years later as a lieutenant. He was then appointed by the Ministry of Interior, and, in 1896, he was deployed to Sudan as part of Egypt's Sudan campaign. There, Hafiz and several of his colleagues were involved in a rebellion against the mistreatment of the Sudanese, whereupon Hafez was sent back to Egypt

In 1911 Hafiz was appointed the head of the literary section in the Dar al Kutub, and the Minister of Education bestowed upon him the title "Bey" which provided Hafez with financial stability. Thereafter, he began to devote more time to

literature and poetry. Hafiz joined a circle of neo-classical artists of modern Arab poetry, in imitating the Arabic classical writing style of meter and rhyme.

His Poems

He began writing poetry in Sudan, and in 1901 his first collection was published. Thereafter, he wrote the nationalist poems for which he is best known and his well-known poems. In addition to his ability to express the sentiments of the common man, he had a superb skill as a reciter of poetry, both of which won him a prominent place in society.

As a poet he was the miracle of his time. His poetry was marked by a great beauty of verse. He also, had a remarkable memory for 60 years that was all his life time. It is said that he memorized thousands of poems; both classical and modern. He used to read a lot and was able to memorize anything he read or heard. Although he had a limited imagination, he was a great linguist who chose his words very carefully. His style was fascinating. His word and sentence structures were charming. He had a special and very impressive voice. He had a theatrical poetical performance that attracted every attention.

Hafez Ibrahim was a poet of community. He was a partner for all disasters of his people. He heard cry of the oppressed people. His affection took all the emotions of human beings and he reflected the cries of suffered people in his poetries. Hafez Ibrahim's poem is easy, fluent, eloquent and full of excitement. In many of his poems by using the passionate language transfers emotions to the audience. Themes of the poetry of Hafiz was traditional themes of Arabic poem such as praise, praise, elegy, comic and Brotherhoods.

Hafez Ibrahim frequently criticized social bad habits and because of his critics called him "Poet of Society". He knew the root of bad habits to spread of the cultural west in Islam. Social poetry put in the context of his political poetry that causes it gets consistent. He blamed the West Description of west as "greedy". He praised the Japanese that stood against colonialism of West and he wrote "Hey West, we the Japanese are not satisfied to live in poverty".

Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi

Synopsis

Birth & Education

His Literary Works

HIS LIFE AS A SCHOLAR AND PREACHER:

Institutional positions and Affiliations

Death

Birth & Education

Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi was a historian, Islamic scholar, and author of well over fifty books in various language. He was born on 5 December 1913 and received his early education at his home in Takiya, Raebareli, UP, India. His education was started by his mother with teaching of Holy Qur'an and then formal education of Arabic and Urdu was started. When he was nine years old, his father Hakim Sayyid Abdul Hai died(1923 AD)and the responsibility of his education then came to his mother and his elder brother Maulana Hakim Sayyid Abdul Ali Hasani, who was himself a medical student (after graduation from Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and Darul Uloom Deoband).Later he was enrolled in Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama where he learnt Arabic, Urdu, English, Theology and Islamic Studies. He got his formal Arabic education under the guidance of Allama Khaleel Arab in 1424 A.D. and completed his Arabic studies under him. He attended the Dars of Hadith by Allama Muhaddith Haider Husain Khan and Sahiyen-Sanana-Abudaud and Sanan-Tirmzee word by word from him. In 1927 He took admission in Lucknow University and obtained the degree of Fazil. In this period of University Education between 1927-30, He learnt English language which helped him to study English books on various Islamic topics and gain useful information directly.

He visited Lahore in 1932 to receive the teaching in the commentary (Tafseer) in selected surah from a well known Mufassir Sheikh Maulana Khaleel Ahsan and studied the complete Tafseer of Al-Qur'an by Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In the same year he also stayed few months at Darul Uloom Deoband where he took lessons from Shiekhul Islam Maulana Husain Ahmed Madni in Sunan Tirmizi and Sahih Bukhari. He also took advantage of his stay and learnt commentary and Qur'anic science and subjects. He also took lesson in Fiqah from Sheikh Aizaz Ali and in Tajweed as per the reference of hafs from Qari Ashghar Ali Sahib.

His Literary Works

Nadwi primarily wrote in Arabic, although also in Urdu, and produced more than fifty books on such topics as history, theology, and biography. His seminar papers, articles, and recorded speeches number in the thousands. His book *Maza Khasiral Alam be Inhitat al-Muslimeen*, translated into English as *Islam and the World* had a great impact increased his visibility in the Arab world at a time when the influence of the British, French, Russians, and Germans was an issue of contention.

HIS LIFE AS A SCHOLAR AND PREACHER:

He Was appointed on the teaching staff of Darul-Uloom Nadwatul-Ulama in July 1934, worked primarily as a teacher of Tafseer & Hadith and Arabic literature, sometimes taught History and logic too. He went to Bombay in 1935 to invite the Dalit leader Dr. Ambedkar to embrace Islam. Undertook a journey in 1939 in order to acquaint himself with the religious and Islamic Missionary centers, and was introduced to Shaikh Abdul Qadir Raipuri and eminent religious reformer Maulana Mohammad Ilyas Kandhalwi. This contact continued with the former's spritual training and enlightenment and started missionary and reformation work inaccordance with the latter's methods. Undertook many journies in this connection and this continued - with a slight difference of opinion in the method of working - till his mortal sickness in Zilhijja 1419 Hijri corresponding to March, 1999 Founded Anjuman Taleemat-e-Islam (in 1943 for imparting education of the Holy Quran and Hadith. This program became very popular. The working class and the educated, specially attended these lessons in large numbers. Was elected a member of the Managing Committee of Nadwa in 1948 and was appointed as Assistant (Deputy) Seceretary Education of Nadwa in 1951 on the proposal of Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi, and was unanimously elected the secretary following the death of Allama in 1954. He was appointed the Rector of Darul-Uloom Nadwatul Ulama in 1961 following the demise of his elder brother Dr. Abdul Ali Hasani. Became the General Secretary of the movement of Payam-e-Insaniyat (The Massage of The Humanity) in 1951. Life Sketch of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi www.abulhasanalinadwi.org 4 Established the Academy of Islamic Research and HeParticipated in the establishment of Deeni Taleemi Council (The council for Religious Education) in 1960, and Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat in 1964, and of Muslim Personal Law Board in 1972.

Institutional positions and Affiliations

Maulana was a founder member of the Muslim World League (Rabita), a member of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), a member of the World Supreme Council of Mosques, and a member of the Fiqh Council of Rabita. He was also a member of Advisory Council of the Islamic University of Madinah alMunawwarah, a

member of its Supreme Council, and a member of the Academy of Arts and Letters of Damascus, Syria. He was also a founder member of the League of the Islamic Literature in India.

This was in addition to his participation in many other activities through Islamic organizations and institutions such as the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY). In India, he was a rector of Nadwatul Ulama, and president of the Academy of Islamic Research and Publications. He was highly respected by Ulama and political leaders alike, and in 1980, he was awarded the prestigious King Faisal Award for serving Islam. He was also awarded the Sultan Hassan Bolkiah International Prize and an 'Islamic Scholarship' plaque by Oxford University in 1999.

Death

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi died on 23 Ramadan, 1420 AH (Dec. 31, 1999) in Raebareli, India at the age of 86. More than 200,000 people attended his funeral and the prayer was led by his nephew and successor Mulana Muhammad Rabey Nadwi. He was buried near Shah Alamullah, founder of Takiya Kalan.