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## ARABIC PROVERBS AND SAYINGS: ORIGIN, STUDYING AND WRITING COLLECTIONS IN ARABIC LITERATURE

Аннотация: Предметом настоящего исследования являются арабские пословицы и поговорки. Автор рассматривает вопросы, касающиеся возникновения и изучения сборников арабских пословиц и поговорок. Арабские пословицы интересовали многих литературоведов и философов, которые стремились сохранить словесное наследие, защитить язык от неарабского влияния. Литературоведы собирали, изучали и объединяли пословицы и поговорки в литературные сборники, где можно по ключевым словам найти любую необходимую паремию. Данная работа позволит расширить знания об арабском народе и понять его культуру.

Ключевые слова: арабские пословицы, поговорки, составление словарей, арабская литература, арабская культура.

Abstract: The main concern of the article is the Arabian proverbs and sayings. It focuses on compiling and studying of the collections of the Arabian proverbs and sayings. The Arabian proverbs present interest to many literary critics and philosophers, who aspired to keep the proverb heritage, to protect the language from non-Arabian influence. Literary scholars had collected and studied proverbs and sayings in the literary collections. It is possible to find a necessary proverb by the keywords. The given work will allow to expand knowledge about the Arabian people and to understand their culture.

**Keywords:** Arabic proverbs, sayings, compiling dictionaries, writing collections, Arabic literature, Arabic culture.

Origin and development of proverbs and sayings refers to high antiquity. Proverbs and sayings have undergone a long historical establishment and development process in the history of Arabic literature. Man's concern not only about food but about his dwelling, close people is deeply rooted. The man strived to apprehend the surrounding world; he compared various phenomena, created new in the nature and in his own imagination. The results of century-old observations and reflection of Arab people, their dreams and hopes are reflected in proverbs and sayings. In this way peoples created their art, their poetry.

It doesn't seem possible to illustrate all the definitions that linguists give to a proverb. They call it folk wisdom, practical philosophy, oral tradition, set of life laws, historical memory of people. Scientists have drawn impressive conclusions about the development of proverbs and sayings. For example, Yarmouk University Professor (Jordan) Dr. Salim Mar Hidarusi noted that "The very first occurrence of proverbs and sayings was in the form of short story and were represented as an oral folk art. They fully reflect mentality, feelings, traditions and view of the world of Arab people" [6; c. 3]. The above idea was confirmed by many acknowledged literary scholars such as a German scientist Zilhoim Rudolf [12, c. 7-11], Arab researchers Shauki Daif [6, c. 16] and Muhammad Abuфli [6, c. 7].

The acknowledged Russian paroemiologist V.I. Dahl wrote: a proverb is a "code of a wisdom of experience and of distracting tangents; it is moans and sighs, weeping and mourning, gladness and rejoicing, grief and consolation all in people's faces; it is worldly truth, a sort of a law book which can't be judged by anyone".

Proverbs and sayings refer to folk genre. Proverb is a common sentence in which people's appraisal and wit are represented but not the opinion of individuals. It reflects people's spiritual character, its aspirations and ideals, judgment about several aspects of life. A proverb has existed in common environment for such a long time that there's nothing accidental anymore (both in form and content) but only a deep meaning which is collected in ultimately short catchy form. Folklorists are right to notice that a proverb always has a polished form to the uttermost.

Created centuries ago proverbs and sayings were passed from generation to generation and maintained common way of life, kept spirit and moral of people alive. They are as though precepts of people regulating the life of every plain man. They are expression of thoughts to which people came through their age-long experience. A proverb is always instructive but not necessarily didactic. However in every proverb there is an implication which should be taken into account.

Thus a proverb is a short instructive, rhythmically organized turn of a phrase in which people generalized their social and historical experience.

Proverbs and sayings have many common features and that is why they have always been analyzed together. The issue about distinguishing proverbs from sayings is still arguable.

Saying is a vivid expression meant for emotional and expressive evaluation (e.g. "Someone bored somebody as a bitter horse-radish" – expression of annoyance). Saying is a vivid expression, a turn of a phrase which aptly observes some phenomenon. Unlike proverbs sayings don't have explicit abstract instructive meaning. They are restricted to a figurative, often allegoric expression: *talk of him and he is sure to appear* (speak of the devil and he will appear), *like a snow on one's head* (like a bolt from the blue), *beat off a log* (twiddle one's thumbs). All these are typical sayings without any complete judgment.

The major criterion to distinguish sayings from proverbs is their intended purpose. A speaker uses proverbs as an argument, unquestionable evidence that he is right. A saying is not completed judgment so it can't be used as an argument. Its main purpose is to enrich the speech. In speech a saying can become a proverb and visa versa. For example, a proverb *It's easy to pull out of fire by someone's hands* (pull the chestnuts out of the fire for somebody) is often used as a saying *to pull out of fire by someone's hands* that is as figurative picture of a person who likes to make use of other people's work. On account of specific feature of proverbs they are much closer to language phenomena than sayings. In proverbs we find more nationwide implication and meaning than in sayings. Often all features of language phenomena are characteristic of proverbs.

In Arab countries people have reverent, full of respect attitude to proverbs and saying. Thus contemporary Egyptian writer Hanna el-Fahuri writes in his book "Aphorisms and sayings": "Arabs like other eastern nations in general and semitic in particular are disposed to wise sayings and they always have them on the tip of their tongues. Arabs use them to back up their words with argument, with their help they explain their deeds, splash them in grief and joy, quote them on every occasion in their life..., thus proverbs and sayings become a sort of the storage of life experience, life law, enrichment of old age, guide in everyday life organization of an individual and of whole race and nation... " [3, c. 10]. In the past century H. R. P Dickson noted that "Arabs always quote proverbs and poets' aphorisms and other "people's words" and they seem to enjoy it like they enjoy the stories" [9, c. 336].

Proverbs and sayings are the essential part of literary heritage and we can come across them in literary sources, grammar and morphology of the Arabic language, in philosophy, Koran and in Mohammed the Prophet tradition (s). Among the numerous forms of set expressions Arab proverb is the most widespread in the Arabic language.

Theorists of literature resort to an Arabic word "masal"(proverb). It is used in various forms such as "matla", "metala", "mesl", "masala or mesale", "meslum" etc. The lexical meaning of these words which is given in dictionaries is "example, resemblance, similarity, analogy, proverb, saying, sentence, fable, tradition etc.".

The majority of Arab theorists of literature investigated and researched Arabic proverbs and sayings. For example, Raghib Isfahani (died about 1109) comments on the proverbs and sayings: "In some cases the word "masal" means "resemblance or similarity" in its essence, situation, quantity and power" [8, c. 462]. Ibn Mandur (died about 1312) interpreted the word "masal" as "equal, alike, similar etc.". Another scientist Ibn Arabi (died about 1241) notes: (أَلْمَتْلُ عَبَارَةٌ عَنْ شِبْهِ أَلْمَحسُوسِ) "Proverbs and

sayings mean sensitive likeness". The word "masal", a proverb, is originated from the root "misl" that means "a proverb, saying, sentence, parable and others"

Researchers Abuamr Ibn Alya (died about 771) and Junus Ibn Habib (died about 799-800) and an acknowledged chronicler Sa'Alyabi (died about 1038) write that proverb and sayings outline a qualitative thought. Several theorists of literature believed that proverbs and sayings were used to instruct, to prove, they were used in Koran or in a Prophet Holy Tradition. Arab culture has been characterized for a long time by its love to verbal expression. Oral poetry flourished among vagrant and settled Arabs. With birth and quick spread of Islam Arabic poetry, both sacred and secular poetry was still popular among the conquerors and the conquered. Set expressions are an essential part of Arab's oral art. It is especially typical for Arab Muslims who over learn parts of Koran; Holy writings learning is not uncommon for believers.

The history of Arab proverbs and sayings writing dates back to the 2 year of the Hijra. The acknowledged German researcher Karl Brockelmann wrote: "Proverbs and sayings aroused scientists' interest since the origin of Arabic literature; historians and philologists competed with each other collecting and explaining them" [10, c. 408]. Arabic school of philological thought strived to reserve oral heritage, to protect the language from non-Arab influence writing down everything ancient, proverbs particularly. In fact, virtually all philologists mentioned above devoted their works to proverbs [10, c. 408]. As a result literature devoted to classical Arabic proverbs emerged and it embraced all the aspects. Later hundreds of books appeared that contained a lot of significant information. The oldest surviving treatise about Arabic proverbs is the book by Mufaddal Ibn Salamah al-Dabbi "Kitab Al-Amsal" (or the Book of proverbs) which was written in the eighth century. Ibn Salamah is an Iraqi philologist and an authoritative specialist. His work about the proverbs is one of the most acknowledged collections of Arabic classical proverb.

Eastern wisdom, Arabic in particular, aroused interest of Russian scientists – Ignatiy Krachkovskiy and Dmitriy Semenov ("Anthology of colloquial Arabic language"). The work includes examples of folk art, proverbs in Arabic. Orientalist V.A. Gordlevskiy wrote a work "Arabic proverbs from Damask. Oriental antiquities". An expert in Arab studies, professor Kh. K. Baranov created "Arab-Russian dictionary" which is a reference book about Arab-Russian lexicography.

Proverbs and sayings are the units of the language that are used with special purpose. Different authors point out the following functions of proverbs and sayings:

1) informative function. It allows proverbs and sayings to report in speech some content;

2) argumentative function. It means that we can trust the wisdom of proverbs. Common wisdom of proverbs makes them irreplaceable argument in speech. And we obey to it;

3) aesthetic function (that is enrichment of speech). When one uses a proverb he certainly enriches his speech;

4) accumulative function. People record the most valuable experience in proverbs and keep it in memory. This experience is passed to the next generations through proverbs.

Scientists confirm that proverbs and sayings are able to change behavior, manners, deeds and actions of one man toward the other.

Arabic poet Kaab Ibn Zuher writes:

كانت مواعيد عرقوب لها مثلاً

ما مواعيدها إلا الأباطيل

In Arkyub's promises was symbolized as proverbs,

Because he doesn't make his promises in real.

Arabic, as the language of Paradise and God, is the most expressive, refined and beautiful language among all the languages. Its abundance of expressive power has no parallel.

Practised orator or a poet, a man who is inclined to discourse, a politician or a man who uses proverb makes himself respected through his linguistic mastery. A form and a manner of delivery is as significant as the meaning of the proverb.

Arab society has long been characterized by its respect to linguistic mastery. In ancient Arabia poetry was recognized as a powerful mean of strengthening reputation of one group and decreasing of the group of the enemy. In substance, poetry is still regarded as an effective tool of social and political comments. In the same way Arabs have a "deep feeling of pride when they have an opportunity to resort to a proverb if necessary" and they respect "every person who has an ability to use proverbs correctly" [1, c. 7]. Evaluation of "correct" proverb usage is based on two criteria: sufficient awareness of proverbs. It means that every person could recall a proverb himself. And besides a man should have skills to use proverbs on the spur of the moment and in accordance with the situation. A man who uses Arabic proverbs should have an extensive supply of ready-made proverbs activated in memory and the feeling of relevance.

Theorists of literature divided all Arabic proverbs and sayings into three groups:

a) ancient proverbs and sayings of pre-Islamic and Islamic period;

b) mixed or new proverbs and sayings which represent the total of proverbs and sayings of the IV-th Hijra century; Mutanabbi poem and the book "Kalila and Dimna";

c) contemporary proverbs and sayings in accordance with Islamic religion.

Arabic proverbs and sayings include sentences and wisdom of other nations. For example, Salim Ar-Rasy Lubnani compared proverbs and sayings of several nations. A famous Arab researcher Farih Lubnani compared Arabic proverbs and sayings with the French ones. The same comparison was made by Ahmed Timur. He also gave explanation to each proverb and saying which is a very valuable contribution to literature. Some scientists such as Said Ubud, Ali Halili, Isa Ataullah and Salim Arafat made a list of Palestinian proverb and sayings on the base of abdjad alphabet.

The most ancient work which is still known today is a book by Al-Mufaddal Ad-Dabi (died about 786) "Kitab Al-Amsal" (The book of proverbs and sayings). It was printed in Al-Asitana (Istanbul) in 1300-1882. Al-Mufaddal Ad-Dabi was born in Kufa, he was collecting Arabic poetry for khalifa Al-Mahdi in the book which was entitled in his honor "Al-Mufaddaliyat". A famous Russian scientist I.Y.

Krachkovskiy wrote: "Thus he gives us not just an ordinary collection of proverbs and sayings which are familiar to us from other sources, he also provides us with phrases, greetings, verses and so on" [5, c. 193]. German researchers Lichtenshtadter [10, c. 489] and Goidziher [11, c. 35] noted that all the works by Al-Mufaddal Ad-Dabi were devoted to proverbs and sayings. An acknowledged contemporary professor of Yarmouk University Professor Dr. Salim Mar Hidarusi wrote about the first book of proverbs and sayings and noted that famous Arab theorist of literature Udeid Ibn Sharria (died about VIII century) was the first to write a book "Collection of proverbs and sayings" in the beginning of the VIII century. Reesarchers mentioned one more valuable work. It is "The book of proverbs and sayings" by Muridja Ibn Amr As-Sidusy.

Abu Abid Al-Kasim Ben Sallam Al-Garavi Al-Bagdadi (died about 838) wrote 'The book of proverbs'. The 2-nd and the 17-th parts were translated into Latin and printed in 1836 by professor Petro Guta. The whole book was published in the collection "Splendid treasures and fascinating curiosas" in 1885 in Istanbul. Hamsa Al-Isfagani (died after 961) was a Persian scientist and theorist of literature, he traveled a lot and lived in Bagdad and in Esfahan. He studied the Persian language and compared it to Arabic. His book "Proverbs about the most powerful" is kept as a manuscript in the library of Munich. It served as the main source for those who studied Arabic. Abu Al-Fadl (Ahmed Ben Mohammad Ben Ahmed Ben Ibragim Al-Maidani An-Nisaburi) who died in 1124 included the whole part from this book into his collection "Collection of proverbs". He was of Persian descent. he was born in Nishapur and died there. He earned fame by his studies of the Arabs and their proverbs. His "Collection of proverbs" includes more than 6000 proverbs. The collection was printed in Bonn in 1838 in three parts. Every proverb was translated into Latin. In 1869 the collection was published in Bulak (Cairo) with the assistance of Mohammad As-Sabaga and Mohammad Kyttata Al-Adavia. In 1892 it was published in Egypt by a publishing house "Al Maktaba Al-Heiria" in two parts and accompanied by "A collection of proverbs" by Abu Hilyal Al-Ascari (died about 1005) who was one of the best and well-known Arab-speaking medieval philologist of the tenths century. More than twenty works of this author are known and they survived till now.

European orientalist Shaila Webster believes that "Collection of proberbs and sayings" by Al-Maidani is the best book among other works devoted to Arabic proverbs and sayings. He says that the author was seeking to combine the content of all the Arabian books of proverbs and sayings in one collection. Karl Brockelmann and Goidziher described the book like this: "The original work and its translation is kept in every library of the world" [10, c. 144-115, 409; 11, c. 35]. The abovementioned book consists of two volumes and includes ancient proverbs and sayings, the history of life of pre-Islamic and Islamic Arabs.

Zamahshari (died in 1144), while writing his book "Deep investigation of Arabic proverbs", used poems of different periods as well as poems from the book "Kalila and Dimna".

Thus, as it was said above, the majority of poets described the life of Arabs, their customs and traditions in their works. As a result proverbs and sayings were being created.

Proverbs and sayings have several values:

a) historical value. Proverbs and sayings reserved historical heritage;

اليوم خمر وغدًا أمر

Today the wine is bitter and tomorrow is an order. The night is followed by a dawn. The dark is followed by light. The grief is followed by joy [4, c. 95] There is hope in despair. The end of the dark night is light. Nizami [4, c. 95] Grief and joy are together. Saadi [4, c. 95].

b) social value. Proverbs and sayings reflect culture, traditions, everyday life of Arab nation, relations between the people;

إنّ البغاث بأرضنا يستنسر.

Even small birds become eagles [7, c. 8].

## البغاث – Al-Bugas (type of a bird).

Above the first root consonant it is allowed to use three diacritic marks: fatha, damma, kasra. The plural number is bighsan. They say that it is a bird which is smaller in size than vulture. The proverb is about the one who after his weakness and humiliation became strong and respected.

Below is the Arabic poem:

أنصر أخلك ظالمًا أو مظلومًا. لا في العير ولا في النفير.

Help your friend, though he is repressor or oppressed, Neither in foolishness nor in weakness.

Kh. K. Baranov translated this proverb like:

Neither candle for God, nor rake for devil (good for nothing) [2, c. 707].

c) proverbs and sayings express the sensibility in the thought and faith in splendid future;

إنَّ في الشَّرِّ خِيَاراً

*There's much good in bad! Compare Russian.: There's nothing ill without kindness*[7, 7] (It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good).

That is in anything negative we can find something positive.

We find the meaning of this proverb in the following lines:

One evil is less than the other.

After the thunderstorm comes serene weather, after grief comes joy.

There's no today without tomorrow.

The night is dark but is obedient to daylight.

The night is dark but not forever [4, c. 97].

However the following proverbs and sayings show that after joy grief may come:

إن في الحسن شقوة.

Really many bad things are in good.

For kindness one pay with ill. I served to him, but he betrayed me [4, c. 189]. پِهِ دَاء ظَبَي He has an antelope disease [7, c. 23].

It means that he doesn't have any disease at all because antelopes don't have diseases. It is also considered that when an antelope is ill no one knows what it is. Thus when one refers to this saying he means that someone has an unknown disease.

Proverbs and sayings of Islamic period reflect religion of Islam. They are created to praise one God and they are necessary to describe Islamic values.

رأس الدين التقوى. Goodness is the basis of religion. مَنْ صَدَقَ الله نَجَا The one who is faithful to his God will be saved.

In the modern age Arab researchers collected and studied proverbs and sayings. Muzhir Ad-Duri and his "Iraqi proverbs and sayings about moral and ethical relations"; Abd Al-Latyf Ad-Dileyshi and his work "Al-amsal ash-shaabia fil-Basra". Among others Abd Al-Halik Ad-Dabbag "Madjmaa amsal al-Mavsil", Mahmud Ismail Syniy, Nasyf Mustafa Abdel-Aziz, Mustafa Ahmed Suleiman "Encyclopedia of Arabic proverbs".

Hana Al-Fahuri connected proverbs and sayings with the most important periods in Arabs' history: pre-Islamic period "djahilia", abbassyd period etc. Besides in every section proverbs are given in accordance with the author. There are many examples among Arabic paroemias when poetic or prosaic utterance of famous people became self-sufficient.

The work of Jordan theorist of literature Dr. Hani Al-Amda "Proverbs of Arabian nation" is devoted to the discovering similarities and reasons for differences in Arabic proverbs and sayings. In terms of proverbs widely known not only in Arabian countries, he investigates those common things that are fundamental despite insignificant regional and dialectical differences that can be observed on lexical and sometime grammatical level. He is also the author of "Jordan folk proverbs" that was

published in Amman in January 1978. In this work more than 1800 proverbs and sayings are listed in alphabetical order and each has a number. All the proverbs and sayings are in Jordan colloquial language and are prevailing in Jordan environment. For more convenience there are two indexes: by a theme and by a key word.

Iraqi scientist Abd Rahman at-Tikriti touched upon the issues of investigating and the first Arabic proverbs and sayings classification in his work "Similar Baghdad proverbs". It was published in 4 parts in Baghdad in the period from 1966 up to 1969. Proverbs and sayings are taken from ancient poetry of "djahili" period and from poetic works of other periods. They are studied from the point of view of their origin and their initial meaning. At-Tikriti was the first researcher who went beyond the borders of the region and stepped out to the national scale [3, c. 5].

One more effort of investigation in this field is the book by Egyptian Mohammad Kandil Al-Bakli "The unity of folk proverbs in Arabian countries" which was published in Cairo in 1968. In his work Al-Bakli doesn't only explain Egyptian proverbs and sayings but compares them with paroemias of other Arabian nations. This comparison allows the author to find out on the one hand the unity of spiritual, psychological origin and on the other hand to show that it goes back to ancient source. It also allows him to see what was changed and what can be changed [3, c. 5].

So we can see that proverbs and sayings studies are necessary for broadening our knowledge about Arabian nation and for better understanding its culture. Proverbs, sayings and aphorisms is Arabs' one of the sources of pride since they are "evidence of common sense and discernment ... they are the eyes of Arabian soul, reflection of everything in this soul, direct way to ideal" [3, c. 11]. They reflect the world of Arabian people and they appeal to younger generation and teach nobility, goodness, generosity, courage, honor and dignity, teach to respect parents, and be faithful to each other. However in the context of this article it is impossible to study the issue in all its aspects and to mention all the authors working in this field. Source material is very extensive. In conclusion it's worth mentioning that the historical process of proverbs and sayings development led to creation of a new kind of art, new poetry of Arab people, reflecting spiritual image of Arabian countries, their strives and ideals. We have also found out differences between proverbs and sayings: saying enriches the speech and proverb has an abstract meaning and it's instructive. Scientists who study Arabic proverbs and sayings tried to compare them with proverbs and sayings of other countries and as a result Arab-Russian dictionary was created. It is a reference book in lexicology.

"The Collection of proverbs» (in 2 parts) by Abu Hilal Al-Askari is a significant work for those who study Arabic proverbs and sayings. Abu Hilal Al-Askari is one of the best-known Arab-speaking medieval philologists. We should mention "The collection of proverbs" by Aby Al-Fadl (Ahmed Ben Mohammad Ben Ahmed Ben Ibragim Al-Maidani An-Nisaburi). It contains 6 000 proverbs.

Proverbs and sayings are essential part of literary heritage which we can come across in grammar, morphology, philosophy, literature and in other sources as a set form in Arabic. Many scientists, scholars, writers studied proverbs and sayings, investigated their role and functions, made classifications. In our work we gave a definition, distinguished two major notions, and described the role of proverbs and sayings in the life and culture of Arab nation.

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