

The Great Silk Road & Integration of World Culture: development of concepts of love in the Dialogue of Eastern & Western Traditions

Mojeiko Marina Alexandrovna

Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Full Professor

Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts

Abstract. The article aims to reveal the role of the Great Silk Road in the evolution of the concept of love in the dialogue of the traditions of the East and the West. As results of this analysis have been proved that thanks to the emergence of cities as unique cultural centers along the Great Silk Road in the culture of the East, the Uzrit and Omarite lyrical traditions were synthesized, which led to the formation of the concept of high love. The meaningful influence of the eastern tradition of the interpretation of love on European lyrical poetry was revealed, which allows a new look at the formation of the courteous tradition of interpretation of love, embodied in the poetry of troubadours, was formed.

Keywords: Uzrit poetry, Omarite lyric poetry, the concept of high love, the symbolism of Sufi poetry, the courteous tradition, the poetry of troubadours.

The Great Silk Road can be studied from the point of view of various scientific disciplines: history, geography, cultural studies, etc. However, a purely disciplinary approach does not reveal the full depth of this phenomenon, which has played an outstanding role in the history of civilization. The Great Silk Road can be considered not only in a particular historical context, but also as a unique phenomenon of cross-cultural interaction that integrated such large-scale cultural patterns, which allows us to speak of its role in shaping the culture of humanity as a whole.

In civilizational terms, the Great Silk Road largely ensured the unity of the ancient and medieval world, integrating East Asia and the Mediterranean into a single civilizational space and ensuring the spread of the most important achievements of civilization (paper, gunpowder, silk, glass, etc.).

In cultural projection, the Great Silk Road represented not only trade communication, but also a channel for the exchange of new ideas, enriching the spiritual life of countries and peoples. Scientists, philosophers and poets traveling with caravans ensured not only the

acquaintance of Europe with Islam and Asia with Christianity, but also the integration of traditions on an *East-West* scale.

One of the most interesting areas of this large-scale interaction of the cultures of the East and West is the sphere of the interpretation of such a phenomenon as love. Among the worldview universals of culture, universal *love* occupies one of the central places, acting as a base for cultural traditions of various types, but in different traditions (both lyric-poetic and cultural traditions in general) it is interpreted differently [1, p. 588-590], and the ups and downs of the development of these interpretations in certain moments were influenced by the factors brought about by the Great Silk Road.

1. Lyrics of the East: the development of ideas about love in the culture of a medieval city

The Great Silk Road gave birth to the unique cities of the ancient and medieval East, that is, gave birth to outstanding cultural centers, whose significance in the history of mankind goes far beyond national cultures, acquiring an international character. So, in particular, in the context of these cities, a fundamental transformation of ideas about love in the eastern poetic tradition was carried out.

The symbolic system of classical oriental poetics, which is based on a systemic, philosophically based idea of love as a phenomenon of human existence and cosmic existence in general, has gone through several stages in its formation.

As the earliest, the traditional Uzrit lyrics can be singled out, which took shape on the basis of archaic epics, in which love is thought in the context of archaic ideas about the connection of human sexuality with recitations of the cosmogonic marriage of sacred ancestors and the fertility of natural forces. So, for example, in Imruulkais: "Seeing, hearing Suad, "Appear again!" - the land will ask: / Where its tents are, the earth bears fruit more abundantly" [2, p. 23]. In traditional Uzrite poetry, the construction of a lyric line is not formalized by a stable code, but the analysis of the *gazal uzri* allows us to say that the feeling glorified by Uzrite authors is thought of as chaste and pure: Jamil, who praised his love for Busseina; Qays Ibn Zariikh, who immortalized the name of Lubna; Qais Ibn al-Mullawah, nicknamed for his boundless love for Leila Majnun - maddened with love. This feeling, however, is tragic due to the inevitable separation: "I saw that the time has come for us: / The camels are already loaded ..." (Antara [3, p. 47]) "Say Goodbye to Hurayra!" - we had a time to part: / The caravan is leaving ..." (al-Asha [3, p. 64]). The classic plot of *gazal uzri* is the cry of a lover over the former parking lot of the beloved's caravan, which had long been taken away and passed off as another: "They hid Lubna in patterned tents, / A lot of her were

guarded by sentinels, - / But the wind would mix the lovers' breath...<...> / ...and in a woeful tremor / The constellations will mourn the sleepless bed"[2, p. 81].

The second most important stage in the formation of the symbolic system of classical oriental poetics was the design of the Omarite lyric tradition, which was directly related to the culture of medieval cities. Early urban oriental culture gives rise to the tradition of Omarite lyric poetry, whose poetic plots - in contrast to the Uzrit tradition - are focused not so much on the analysis of emotional movements as on the fixation of sensual eventfulness. For example, in Omar Ibn Abi Rabia: "Yes, I knew her! She smelled of musk, / Only the Yemeni cloak covered beauty without blemish. She was sneaking secretly, her heart trembled with joy, / The body in the folds of her cloak shone with the blush of the east..."[4, p. 190].

If in the context of the Uzrit tradition love appeared as a fateful totality, then in the Omarite one - as a motley scattering of joyful episodes ("My beloved said: "So, desires have come true." / Easy, without care, without sorrow - like a game" by Omar Ibn Abi Rabia [4, p. 184]). The situation of meetings and partings, tragically comprehended in *ghazal uzri*, in Omarite lyrics takes on a purely hedonistic semantics, it is no coincidence that the main genre form of Omarite lyrics is such a kind of *ghazal* as *ghazal ibakhi* (from the Arabic *abakh* 'allow').

The most important stage in the development of ideas about love in Eastern culture is the period of the VIII-IX centuries.: at this time, in the culture of medieval cities, there was a process of imposing Muslim culture on pre-Islamic traditions, acquiring new meanings in a new context, as a result of which, by the end of the IX century, there was a kind of synthesis of the Uzrit (Bedouin) and Omaritic (urban) oriental lyric trends, giving rise to the phenomenon of specific love poetry based on a clearly articulated concept of love. In the X century, the Baghdad school finally formalized this cultural vector into a poetic tradition praising a special *supreme love*. The unattainability of the beloved, who in the uzrit lyrics acted as an objective circumstance of nomadic life, was rethought as a normative value: an unrequited but sensually vivid love for a "cruel" married lady is the canonical plot of the poetic tradition of the eastern cities of the mature middle ages.

Thus, the interpretation of love in classical oriental poetry was a product of the interaction of the traditional Uzritic poetic system, on the one hand, and Omarite poetics, on the other.

2. Courtesy poetry of Europe as a product of interaction of cultural traditions of East and West

The Great Silk Road largely ensured the unity of the ancient and medieval world, integrating Asia, Africa and Europe into a single civilization space and ensuring the spread of the most important achievements of civilization (paper, gunpowder, silk, glass, etc.). However, the Great Silk Road was not only a trade communication, but also a channel for the exchange of new ideas, enriching the spiritual life of countries and peoples. Scientists, philosophers and poets traveling with caravans ensured not only the acquaintance of Europe with Islam and Asia with Christianity, but also the integration of traditions on an *East-West* scale.

One of the spheres of this integration was the interpretation of love in the courtly tradition of Europe, which originally took shape in the south of medieval France. The interpretation of love proposed by the troubadours is distinguished by a high level of complexity and, with the help of complex semiotic constructions, tries to carry out a kind of legalization of the phenomenon of corporeality, giving it a special symbolic interpretation. The concept of love, characteristic of troubadours, was formed on the basis of the influence that the courtly tradition experienced from the culture of the East. The mediating link here was the Andalusian culture - the culture of Arabized Spain.

The substantial influence of the Eastern tradition on the formation of a courtly worldview can be considered in two layers.

The most important factor in the formation of the courtly concept of love was the fact that the spiritual life of Provence proceeded in the field of interaction of extremely diverse cultural influences. For geographical and historical reasons, the south of France was a kind of crossroads of trade relations between France, Italy, Greece and other European countries with the East. The interpretation of love in the courtly tradition was especially influenced by the Arab-Spanish culture. According to IM Filshinsky, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of the "role played by the Arabs of Spain in the cultural exchange between East and West, which so fruitfully influenced the development of world culture" [5, p. 251].

The process of interaction between Muslim culture and the pre-Islamic cultural tradition of the peoples of the Caliphate that took place in the VIII-IX centuries in Arabic literature resulted, as already noted, in the formation by the end of the IX in the concept of *high* love. In the Arabized (in the process of Moorish rule) Spain XI, Ibn Hazm, the author of the famous treatise on love "The Necklace of the Dove" [6], acted as a theorist of this trend. In the XII century, such a genre of stanza poetry as *zajal*, which was created not in the classical Arabic language, but in the colloquial language typical of Moorish Spain, which contained a large admixture of Romanic vocabulary and was equally understandable to both

Arabs and Europeans, became widespread in Arab-Spanish literature. The most important monument of Zadjala is the *sofa* of the Cordoba poet of the early XII century Ibn Kuzman, widely known in the neighboring Spain of Provence. Moreover, the stanza structure of the songs of the first of the known troubadours, Guillem of Aquitaine, largely coincides with the structure of the *zajals* of Ibn Kuzman.

A deeper layer of influence on the courtly representations of southern French knighthood from the eastern cultural tradition can also be distinguished: through the Arab-Spanish culture, the foundations of the courtly system of values (and above all, the interpretation of the phenomenon of love within its framework) experienced a meaningful impact as some areas of Muslim culture (first of all, Sufi mysticism and the Sufi allegorical poetry that developed on its basis, characterized by a high level of semiotism), and the moments of the ancient (namely, ancient Greek) cultural heritage assimilated by Eastern culture (first of all, the Platonic ideas that existed in Arab culture, not deformed ideas of Christian asceticism).

The core of the Sufi concept is the doctrine of revelation, interpreted as the fusion of the soul with the Absolute (*tawhid*), at the moment of which the mystic comprehends both his essence and the truth of God (the metaphor about a drop that poured into the ocean and became it is widespread). When a *murid* experiences *hakykat*, that is, a direct feeling of oneness with God, a good thought fills his heart, demanding permission. This connection of the heart with the tongue (*dhikr*) presupposes two forms of its manifestation: one of them is silence ("How strange a Sufi is silent! - How strange that you have no ears" in Jelal ad-Din Rumi [see 7, p. 39]), the other is the verbalization of mystical experience in a poetic text by means of allegories and allusions to an ineffable mystery. Early Sufism used ready-made lyrics of lyric songs for this purpose (a significant role in this was played by the fact that one of the key figures in the formation of Sufism, Rabi'a al'Addaviya with her classic thesis "the ardor of love for God burns the heart" [see. 8, p. 317], was a professional singer). In addition, in the early stages of development, Sufism was persecuted as a heresy for the idea of the possibility of direct merging with the Absolute, due to which the use of secular lyrics to address the mystic to God had a disguising function [see. 8, p. 61].

We can talk about a wide range of symbolic structures that make up the symbolic arsenal of Sufi texts: a Sufi is denoted as *ashik* (lover) or *rind* (vinopian), God is conveyed by the term *durst* or *hum-mar* (respectively 'beloved' and 'intoxicating'), a spiritual mentor - as butler, etc. The special dictionary of Mahmud Rabbi Shabistari (XIV century) provides an interpretation of such terms of Sufi texts as eyes, lips, curls, fluff, mole, belt, and many others.

others [see 8, p. 110-111] So, if the face of the beloved symbolizes the authenticity of the existence of the Absolute, then the curls that hide it are the transient phenomenality of the temporary existence of the objective world. Consequently, the rings of curls, in which the heart of a lover is entangled, is a symbolic designation of the temptations of the external world, which the soul, aspiring to God, must cast aside; and the lover, removing the curls from the girlfriend's face, symbolizes tawhid and the contemplation of the divine light. As Omar Ibn al-Farid writes, "My love, I'm drunk only with you, / The whole world has blurred, hid in fog, / I myself disappeared, and only you are alone / My eyes, looking inside, are visible" [8, p. 521]. Thus, the motives widespread in Sufi texts, which are evaluated from the outside as erotic by an outside reader, in fact act as complex symbolic systems for verbalizing mystical experience. In turn, Sufi poetics significantly influenced the secular lyric tradition, within which the concepts of sublime love took shape, which, describing interpersonal relationships, preserved the religious and philosophical symbolism of Sufi texts.

This symbolism of Sufi poetry had a significant impact on the European cultural tradition, and above all on the southern French knightly tradition, which found its expression in the poetry of the troubadours, who created the cult of sacred love for Donna as a path to truth and perfection.

Later, the symbolism of the troubadours formed the basis for such a direction of European lyricism as *le dolce stil novo* ("new sweet style"), which, in turn, influenced the symbolic systems of Petrarch and Dante. The semantic conjugation of love and the comprehension of truth was preserved in European culture up to the 20th century, in the last decade of which P. Sloterdijk wrote about the need for a kind of "decognitization of love", which in European consciousness is closely linked with the semantic figures of "love of knowledge" and "knowledge through love" [see. 9].

Thus, the interpretation of the phenomenon of love in European culture reveals the deep meaningful influence of the spiritual heritage of both pre-Islamic and Muslim Eastern cultures.

1. Mozheiko, M. A. Lyubov / World Encyclopedia: Philosophy. – Moscow: AST – Minsk: Harvest, Contemporary Writer, 2001. – P. 588-590.
2. Arab love lyrics: poems / Intro. article, information about the author, and notes by B.Ya.Shidfar; transl. from Arab.; Fictions in Moscow, 1974. – 316 P.

3. Arabian antiquity: From ancient Arabic poetry and prose / Ex. ed. B. Ya. Shidfar; lane with arab. L.A. Dolinina and V.V. Polosin. – Moscow: Science: Gen. ed. eastern literature, 1983. – 142 P.
4. Arabic poetry of the Middle Ages / transl. from Arab. Eppel Asar. – Moscow: Fiction, 1975. – 768 P.
5. Filshinsky, I.M. Arabic classical literature. – Moscow: Science: Gen. ed. eastern literature, 1965. – 309 P.
6. Ibn Hazm. Dove's necklace / Ed. I. Yu. Krachkovsky; transl. from Arab. M.A.Salye. – St. Petersburg: Lenizdat, 2014 – 288 P.
7. Stepanyants, M.T. Philosophical aspects of Sufism. – Moscow: Science: Gen. ed. eastern literature, 1987. – 192 P.
8. Bertels, E.E. Selected Works: Sufism and Sufi Literature. – Moscow: Science, 1965. – 527 P.
9. Sloterdijk, P. Critique of Cynical Reason / Transl. A. Pertseva. – Yekaterinburg: Ural University Publishing House, 2001. – 584 P.