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## HEROES OF THE EASTERN SAGA «AYYAM AL-ARAB»

**Abstract:** *In the history of the world epics study, the Arab epics has long remained unexplored, and this was the reason that sometimes there impression of the absence of an epics among the Arabs. To date, epic patterns have been considered mainly as sources of interest only to historians and anthropologists. One of the unique examples of the early medieval epic stories of the Arabs is the tribal traditions, known in Arabic studies as “Ayyam al-Arab” (“Days of the Arabs”). This collection of oral and later written narratives is not only a unique historical monument, but also a valuable philological source in its broadest sense.*

*This article is devoted to the study of the role and place of man in pre-Islamic society, his essence and dignity, positive and negative qualities, which have reflected in “Ayyam al-Arab.*

*For this purpose, the selection and analysis of tribal legends – “Days” was made, on the basis of which the main participants in historical events – epic heroes were identified, a classification of heroes was made, and the question of the prototype of literary heroes in Arabic literature and their influence on the formation of literary types at the subsequent stage of its development was based.*

**Key words:** *saga, tribal traditions, epic stories, “Ayyam al-Arab”, epic hero, personality, character of a hero, psychologism, prototype, literary type, personage, art portrait.*

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### Introduction

The historical traditions of the ancient Arabs have long been preserved in the oral tradition and handed down from generation to generation. And only at the end of the VIII<sup>th</sup>, and beginning of the IX<sup>th</sup> centuries, Arab philologists began to collect them in special collections, one of which was called “Ayyam al-arab fi-l-jahiliyya” [2] (“Days of Arabs in Jahiliya[5]”). It is known that two collections “Ayyam al-Arab” were compiled by the Basri philologist Abu Ubayda Ma’mar ibn al-Musanna (728-825). The first contained 75 days, the second – 1200. Another fact is given that Abu-l-Faraj al-Isfahani compiled a collection in which he collected 1700 days. Unfortunately, none of these collections has survived, and they have come down to us in the interpretation of later authors [2, p. 6]. A collection of legends about the feats of the Arab tribes – a narrative with included poetic passages, is of particular interest as a literary source [3, p. 33-37; 12, p. 57-85]. “Days” bring us household material about moral and everyday norms

of behavior, psychology of the pre-Islamic society [7, p. 9-10; 10, p. 7]. The value of the “Days” as a historical source is undeniable and is determined not by the number of names known in Arabic history and literature, but, first of all, by the genre features of the reflection of real life, spiritual and moral values. The ancient Arab listener would not be interested in the legend if he knew that his plot was fictitious, and his heroes never existed. The popularity of traditions containing the necessary share of reliability is connected with this, recognizing and experiencing which, the reader or listener could identify himself and his relatives with his heroes. In traditions, people who once lived in reality act, they act in real circumstances, in their homeland, at a certain time, which historicity cannot be denied. But most of all from the other genera of the epic, the Days are distinguished by their stylistics, visual means that are close to the novels, and the objectivity of the Days is also expressed in how the essence of a person, his advantages and disadvantages are revealed in them.

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Researchers of Arabic literature of the early medieval period agree that descriptions of the inner world of a person, his feelings and experiences are not inherent in it, as the human person did not attract so much special attention to become an object of the image [12, p. 45-57]. And, the main thing for the literature of that period was the image not of people, but of events: conflicts, clashes, wars which were, vital for the tribes. And the man is depicted here as if from the outside, as the embodiment of only certain qualities, as is generally characteristic of epic creativity [14; 8; 4].

### Analysis and research results.

So, the participants in the traditions of “Ayyam al-Arab” are kings, chiefs of the tribes, elders, soothsayers (kahins), poets, warriors, envoys of leaders, Bedouin women and just people from the tribe. Like all epic heroes, they are courageous, brave, noble and generous. Their main qualities, which emphasize and glorify the “Days”, are bravery and courage. The kings or leaders of the tribe with their courage, generosity and nobility gain the respect of their relatives.

From the very first pages of the traditions one can find a description of a generous and forgiving (magnanimous) king:

فدخل هوزة عليه و قصَّ عليه أمر بني تميم و ما صنعوا، فدعا كسرى بكأس من ذهب فسقاها فيها، و أعطاه إياها، و كساه قباغ ديباج منسوجاً بالذهب و اللؤلؤ، و قلنسوة قيمتها ثلاثون ألف درهم، و دعا بعهده من در فعهده على رأسه... [2, p. 12]

*Hawza came to him and spoke about the situation of the Tamim tribe and what they did. Then Khosrov asked for a golden cup, filled it with gold and gave it to Hawza, dressed him in a brocade dressing gown made of gold and pearls, and a headdress worth 30 thousand darhems, ordered to bring a necklace of pearls and tied it to his head... [13]*

In the “Day of Zahru al-Dahna”, the leader of the tribe is described as a brave and generous person:  
كان أوس بن حارثة لأم الطائي سيداً مُطاعاً في قومه، و جواداً مقدماً... [2, p. 109]

Aus ibn Harisa Lam at-Thai was a generous and courageous leader, and all his tribe obeyed him ...

Some of the narratives mention the high position and generosity of the leaders, as, for example, in the “Day of Man’ige”:

كان زهير بن جذيمة العبسي سيد قيس عيلان، فتزوج إليه النعمان بن امرئ القيس ملك الحيرة لشرفه و سؤده و أرسل إليه يوماً يستنزيه بعض أولاده، فأرسل إليه ابنته شاساً – و كان أصغر ولده – فأكرمه و حباه أفضل الخيوة مسكاً و كساً و قُطفاً و طنائس... [2, p. 183]

*Zuhair ibn Jazima al-Absi was the leader of the Qais tribe, because of his fame and high position, king of Hira, Al-Numan Ibn Imruulqais, married his daughter. Once, Zuhair sent one of his sons – his youngest son Shas – to al-Nu’man, and he received him with honor and generously endowed with musk, elegant clothes, velvet robes and carpets ...*

Tribal elders are most often heroes of venerable age who have received “battle training” in battles and wise experience. They are a kind of “advisers” to the tribe, to whom the tribe turns in a difficult moment for them. So, in the “Day of Kulab al-Sani” (“The second day of al-Kulab”), the elder of the tribe Aksam ibn Sayfi not only advises, but suggests a win-win strategy in the battle between the tribes:

و لما بلغ تميم أن مذحجاً و أخلاقهم عازمون على غزوهم فرعوا إلى أكتم بن صيفي – و له يومئذ مائة و تسعون سنة – فقالوا له: حَقَّق لنا هذا الأمر، فإننا قد رضيناك رئيساً. فقال لهم: «لا حاجة لي في الرياسة، و لكني أشير عليكم»: لتتنزل حنظلته بالدهناء، و لتتنزل سعد و الرباب بالكلاب، فأبي الطريقين أخذ القوم كفى أحدهما صاحبه... [2, p. 268]

*When the Tamimites found out that the Mazhiji tribe and its allies were going to raid them, they turned to Aksam ibn Sayfi – at that time he was one hundred and ninety years old – and told him: Judge us this matter, we are pleased that you are our leader. To which he replied to them: There is no need for me to be a leader, I will tell you: let Hanzala be in ad-Dahna, and Sa’ad and al-Ribab – in al-Kulaba, and any of the two roads will be taken by the tribe, it is enough to take possession of one of them ...*

In another legend, “Day of Shi’b Jabal”, an elder of the tribe, although in the past an experienced and decisive warrior, before giving advice, wants to listen to the opinion of each of his fellow tribesmen:

و لما سمعت بنو عامر بمسيرهم اجتمعوا إلى الأحوص – و هو يومئذ شيخ كبير، قد وقع حاجباه على عينيه، و قد ترك الغزو، غير أنه يدين أمر الناس، و كان مجرباً حازماً ميمون التقيية؛ فأخبره الخبر، فقال لهم الأحوص: قد كبرت فما أستطيع أن أجيء بالحزم، و قد ذهب الرأي مني؛ و لكن إذا سمعت عرفت، فجمعوا آراءكم، ثم يبتوا ليلتكم هذه، ثم اغنوا علي، فاغرضوا علي آراءكم... [2, p. 268]

*When the Banu Amir tribe heard about their advance, it gathered at al-Ahvas – at that time he was a deep old man, his eyebrows drooped over his eyes, and he no longer fought (raided) – nevertheless, he settled the affairs of people, was experienced, decisive, firm and calm; they told him the news, and he told them: I was already old, and I can’t make a decision, the opinion has left me; however, if I hear (opinion), I admit (him), collect your opinions, then get enough sleep that night, come to me tomorrow, and present me your opinions...*

The main theme of the narratives is clashes and feuds, but, if you look at it, they are all conflicts between people that arose as a result of their interests and passions. In every conflict, clash, the essence, its true virtues and qualities, are manifested. All battles described in the “Days” are motivated by human characters and their interests. These motives were not always personal and individual: the human personality had not yet been isolated from the collective, tribe, and in its actions was guided by its principles. In the first place, a man of that time has concern for the good name of his tribe, for his honor and dignity. During the battle, the hero’s courage, his strength and dexterity are demonstrated. This moment is dominant and

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determining in hero's life, and any tradition consists of these episodes. The hero of "Ayyam al-Arab", like all epic heroes, is not tormented by doubts and does not face the necessity of choice. He only fulfills what is destined for him by fate. At the same time, one cannot help but notice the presence of extreme opposites in it. He is brave and cruel to enemies, but loyal to his tribe and sentimental, if necessary, ready to sacrifice not only his good, but also the most precious that he has – his life.

In one of the legends, "Day of Az-Zurayn" a battle that was fought between Bakrites and Tamimites is depicted. Before the battle began, the Tamimites tightly bound the two camels, vowing not to back down until they came loose. Then one brave man of bakrit Umar ibn Qays knelt and said: "I will be your camel, kill me and do not retreat until I retreat". Encouraged by such an appeal, the Bakrites launched an offensive, in which they defeated the Tamimites. In another legend, "Day Akil", it is said that someone named Mus'ab ibn Abu Khair sacrificed his hand to avoid a clash between two tribes, one of which he belonged to.

Despite the fact that the heroes of the "Days", endowed with certain qualities, and stand out among their fellow tribesmen, they cannot yet be called literary types and characters, they are usually more vital and real. Their behavior and actions do not always stem from their characters. For example, in "Day Kulab al-Avval", it is told about the sons of al-Haris ibn Umar al-Maksur ibn Khujra, nicknamed Akil al-Murar, whose relations were upset after the death of his father. Between the two brothers Salama and Shurakhbil, a real feud began. Encouraged by King al-Munzir ibn Ma 'al-Sama', interested in their deaths, the brothers entered into war with each other. During the battle, Shurakhbil announced to his people: "Whoever brings me the head of Salama will receive 100 camels". Then Salama announced that he would give 100 camels for his brother's head. During a clash between brothers, Shurakhbil was killed. As a result, Salama, who himself provoked people to kill his brother, experiences pain and remorse. Or in another story – "Day of Rahrahan" – a warrior of noble birth Lakit ibn Zurara leaves his brother Ma'bad captured by the enemy tribe, refusing to pay a royal ransom for him. In captivity, his brother dies and, having learned about this, Lakit gathers an army to avenge his enemies for the death of Ma'bad.

At first glance, it seems that the description of such events is aimed at revealing the human person in all its complexity and inconsistency. However, at this stage in the development of narrative prose, an individual, as a person, has not yet attracted attention as an image object. Interest in a person's inner world, his deep feelings and feelings arises later, at the next stage of the development of the narrative genre, in Syrah (i.e. biographies). Such heroes of Syrah as Antara, Hamza are the result of generalization, the

selection of common to many real persons. And here, the rejection of the image of an individual real person in all its individual complexity and originality is already noticeable, that is, there is a simplification, the so-called schematization [9, p. 115; 4, p. 62]. And in this regard, "Ayyam al-Arab" is more truthful than a Syrah, since the people described in them are depicted as if "inadvertently", only as participants in any events, and that is why their description is more realistic.

Almost every conflict or armed clash is associated with a description of the killings: "Then, lulling his vigilance, the Bedouin fired an arrow at him, which, passing between the shoulder blades, pierced his heart. Then he let the horse trample Zayed until he died" ("Zi Kar Day"). "Once al-Haris went hunting and saw people from the Khumur al-Wahsh tribe. They grabbed him, one of them went to al-Haris and began to examine him, then swore that he would not take anything into his mouth until he eats his liver. The next three days they chased him on horses, then they caught him, fried him and ate his hot liver". ("Day Kulab al-Avval"). Of course, from the point of view of modern man, such violence and murder amaze with its cruelty. But, condemning them, it should be remembered that most of these killings were committed out of a sense of duty – a duty of revenge for the murdered relative. After all, the society in which they lived did not yet know the police, prisons and other bodies responsible for fair punishment and retaliation. So, the fulfillment of the duty of revenge should have been mandatory, otherwise this society simply could not have survived.

The source of conflict between people in tradition is not only revenge for the killing. These include all actions that can be regarded as offensive and affecting the dignity of the Bedouin. So the encroachment on property, land, livestock, water sources is considered by the Bedouins not only as loss of property, but also as moral damage that the owner suffers in case of impunity for the abduction.

The "Day of al-Baradan" tells how Khujr al-Kindi once went on a raid on Bahrain. Upon learning of this, Ziyad ibn Habula seized the moment, attacked the sites of Khujra and seized his property and women. Returning from the campaign, Khujr immediately rushes in pursuit and conquers his property. In addition, the Bedouin is extremely sensitive to all manifestations of his attitude to him. An insignificant act, a rashly spoken word can cause his resentment and then, it requires satisfaction.

So in "Day of Tikhfa" it is said that in the kingdom of Khira, the position of "radif" corresponds to the position of Wazir (i.e. Minister). Radif was supposed to sit at the king's right hand at receptions, he rode behind him at the exits, and at feasts he could drink from the royal cup. In addition, he was entitled to a fourth of the king's booty from each campaign and tribute from his subjects. The radif position under

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the Khir kings belonged to the Banu Yarbu'. But when they decided to transfer this position to a person from another tribe, the Yarbuites refused to do this and entered the war with the king. Having won the battle, the Yarbuites regained their prestigious position.

Or it's known that the famous camel war began when one of the soldiers of the Jusham tribe, Kulayb ibn Wa'il, killed the camel Sirab. Kulayb's wife, Jalila, arguing that her two brothers Jassas and Hammam are stronger than Kulayb, provokes her husband. In a rage, he kills a camel, which belonged to his wife's aunt, turned up under his arms. Aunt Basus is inconsolable and demands revenge for the murder of her camel, which became the cause of a long-term bloody war.

The hero of "Days" looks at himself through the eyes of others, he needs their approval and respect. The already mentioned "Day Zahru al-Dahna" tells of the fact that once one of the poets Bashr ibn Abu Hazim in his poems expressed taunts of Aus ibn Haris and his mother. Upon learning of this, Aus attacked his herd and captured camels, and after a while he caught Bashr himself. Ausa's mother, Suuda, advised Bashr to let go, rightly reasoning that only his laudatory verses in honor of her son would wash off the poet's mockery. The conflict ended with Bashr ibn Abu Hazim saying: "Oh, Almighty, be a witness that if I ever add verses, then only to the praise of Aus ibn Haris". In another legend – "The Day of Al-Shibak" there is one such phrase: "They killed our partner and, if they slip away from us now, the Arabs will forever blaspheme us for this". It is clear that the Bedouin is not indifferent to the opinions of others, he must constantly affirm himself.

It is in terms of the hero's self-affirmation that the love story appears in the "First Day of Havza", which, on the whole, does not play an independent role in Ayyam al-Arab [2, p. 221-222]. This legend tells how Mu'aviyya al-Sulami – the brother of the famous poetess Hansa – met in place named "Uqaz" a woman of extraordinary beauty, whose name was Asma al-Murriyya. When Mu'aviyya made an attempt to get to know her, she refused, saying that she belonged to another man. Enraged by the refusal, Mu'aviyya promised that he would take her from her husband by force. There was a quarrel between Asma's husband and her fan, and then a clash, as a result of which Mu'aviyya dies. It becomes clear that the love of Mu'aviyya at first glance is not the main theme, it serves only as a plot to the subsequent course of events that led to the clash of two tribes and the culmination of the story – the death of one of the heroes. However, the tradition does not end there, as the episode follows, telling about the response of the Sahra to the news of the death of his brother Mu'aviyya. Hashim ibn Harmal was sick because of the wound that Mu'awiyya inflicted on him in a duel. But when he saw Sahra, who came to his tribe, he ordered his people to meet the guest well. After greeting, Sahr asked: "Who killed my brother?", To

which Hashim replied: "If you get me or my brother Duraid, consider that you have avenged". Then Sahr asked: "How did you bury him?" Hashim replied: "He was wrapped in 2 cloaks, one of which costs 25 camels." Then Sahr asked to show Muhaviyya's grave, and, seeing it, he said: "You see my grief, I will not rest until I take revenge for his death."

On this episode ends the legend "The First Day of Havza" and it also served as the compositional technique thanks to which the sorrow of Sahra and its desire to take revenge formed the basis of the plot of the next legend "The Second Day of Havza". Thus, we are dealing with a special kind of plot cyclization, which contains the possibility of further development of the plot and the introduction of new heroes.

By the example of this legend, it becomes obvious that love in "Ayyam al-Arab" does not act as the only topic determining the plot, the only factor guiding the heroes, since the heroes of the "Days" are depicted objectively and vitally. They cannot live in a world of "pure love", "idealization of love feelings", they must live with their tribe, conquer ponds and pastures, participate in raids and defend the honor of their tribe.

The interest in the human person in the period under consideration, respectively, is different than at present. The personality in "Days" is depicted somewhat vaguely, it is not self-enclosed and is not sharply opposed to others. The individual clearly opposes the "aliens" – natives from another tribes with whom this hero is not connected by family ties or friendly union. In relation to them, a person takes a position of caution, which at any moment can turn into hostility. An alien can be deceived, robbed and killed, that is, there is a very definite border between himself and "strangers". This border is abundantly watered with the blood of countless clashes and skirmishes. But the relationship of the individual with "his own", with members of the clan, family, with people connected by marriage, friendship, was built on a completely different basis. The circle of "their" belonged to people who asked for patronage from this tribe. The bonds between "his own" were strong and indissoluble, relatives were obliged to help each other, protect and avenge the murdered relative. Inside the "own", the boundary of the personality is diffuse. Contrasting himself with "strangers", the Bedouin cannot take the same position in relation to "his own". On the contrary, he does not separate himself from them, being one link in the chain of generations.

Therefore, it is so important that in each "Day" the full name of the heroes is given, the name of his father, son, the name of the tribe to which he belongs is indicated, up to an indication of the area where his tribe or clan lives. For example, Khujr ibn Umar ibn Mu'aviyya al-Kindi, who was known by the nickname Akil al-Murar. He was the grandfather of the famous Jahili poet Imru'ulqays. Readers of that time undoubtedly got acquainted with this genealogical list

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with great interest. Since each tribe in his mind was associated with some kind of story or a turning point in the fate of the tribe. This is a kind of folk memory, which found its reflection in the traditions of “Ayyam al-Arab”. The enumeration of names in the “Days” is actually extremely informative, it serves as an indication of many other traditions in which these heroes participated. Indication of the name of a person, people connected with him by blood or marriage, was a characteristic of this person, since the name included this person in some kind of community, in the life of a certain locality and reminded of the events in which this person and his team took part.

The Bedouin is not separated from his original collective and can only be understood as a member of this collective. He thinks in terms of the whole and looks at himself through the eyes of society. His consciousness is individual; he cannot give himself a different assessment than that which society gives him. Even in those cases when he is outlawed and expelled from the tribe, he continues to look at himself by prying eyes. He does not accept opposing himself to the collective, and cannot accept proud loneliness, since expulsion from the tribe is a shame and inevitable death.

In one of the legends, “Nakhla Day” is narrated about a certain al-Barrad ibn Qays al-Kinani, whom the tribe expelled for drunkenness and a wild lifestyle. He went to ask for protection and patronage from another tribe of Banu ad-Dayn, but after a while they expelled him from their tribe, since he did not change his habits. The next stage of his wanderings ended when he was granted asylum by the leader of the Quraysh Harb ibn Umayya. But in Mecca al-Barrad continued his drunkenness. Then Harb ibn Umayya decided to get rid of the ungrateful guest. Having learned about the intention of his patron, Barrad says: “*You are one of those who, knowing me, have not yet expelled. If you do this, then no one else will accept me. I'd better leave myself, but don't declare me an outcast.*” Naturally, a person of that period does not think of his existence outside the collective. Leaving the Quraysh, al-Barrad himself does not lose hope of joining another tribe, which he would not be able to do if he were once again expelled and declared an outcast. In addition, the person had to maintain self-esteem, that is, enjoy the respect of the collective, not only “their own” – recognition should be universal. In the case of causing any damage to a person: physical or moral, the dignity of the person was called into question. And to restore peace of mind could only revenge on the offender.

Tradition continues the story of the future fate of al-Barrad. Every year the king of Khira an-Nu'man ibn al-Munzir sent a caravan of various goods to the fair in place named “Uqaz”. Before the departure of the next caravan, al-Barrad volunteered to accompany him, but present at the conversation of al-Barrad –

Urva ibn Ataba ibn Ja'far said: “*Shame if Khosrov's caravan is led by the exiled*”. The caravan was led by Urva, al-Barrad was refused. The offender could not go unpunished, and al-Barrad follows him. He overtakes Urva and, without heeding his request for mercy, kills, then to lead the caravan himself.

So he restores mental balance, lost due to obvious neglect to him. The Bedouin feels confidence only after receiving just retribution, which meant recognition of his social significance or after the implementation of legal revenge, restoring his honor and dignity in public opinion, and therefore in his own self-esteem. It is interesting how meticulously in each “Day” the number of killed and wounded is given, the damage caused is estimated – these are not just “bare numbers”. Since the size of the compensations received speaks of their status, which was respected. They are indicators of the social prestige of the parties. And the matter is not in the number of camels paid as “vira” (ransom) for the dead and not in material wealth as such. The main thing is that the size of these payments increases adequately to the increase the nobility of the person killed or committed the crime.

In the legend “As-Safka Day” the nobleman Havza ibn Ali al-Hanafi, being captured, offered for himself a ransom of 300 camels. The figure is considerable for one person. But the social assessment of the person acted not only when receiving the ransom, but also when paying it. Thus, nobles offered maximum compensation, confirming their noble origin and social status.

Among the many participants in the events, Bedouin women also occupy an important place. You can find many examples in them that indicate that they played an important role in the life of the tribe, their active participation supported and inspired the men of the tribe for exploits. The famous “Day of Halima” got its name in honor of the daughter of the Gassanid prince al-Haris – Halima, who was considered one of the most beautiful women of that time. During clashes between the troops of the Hassanid prince al-Haris and the ruler of Al-Munzir, al-Haris promises to give his daughter Halima to someone who will kill his opponent. One of the brave warriors of this tribe, Labid al-Gassani, kills al-Munzir and gets Halima as his wife. Thus, according to the legend of Halima, with her beauty he makes her “contribution” to the victory of the tribe. “The Day of Halima” – a beautiful woman and a rather brave daughter – entered the proverbial Arabs fund as a saying: “*Like on the day of Halima*”, the origin of which, along with several other proverbs associated with the name of Halima, was explained by al-Maydani (d. 1124) in his collection “Majma'u-l-amsal”.

But not only the appearance of the women inspired the warriors of their tribe. In the famous “Day of Zi Kar”[6] the daughter of al-Nu'man – Hind, learning about the approach of the troops of the

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Persian king Khosrov, who is at war with the Arab tribes, says:

ألا أبلغ بني بكر رسولا فقد جدّ النفير  
بعثفقيير  
فليت الجيش كلهم فداكم ونفسي و السريز و ذا  
السريير  
كأني حين جدّ بهم إليكم معلقة الذوائب  
بالعُبور  
فلو أني أطقت لذاك دفعا إذا لدفعته بدمي  
وزيري.. [2, p. 29]

*Did not reach the Banu Bakr messenger tribe  
and people did not know about the impending  
misfortune  
Oh, if the whole army sacrificed itself, and with  
them I and my loved ones.  
I'm as if tied between them and you by  
Veronica's hair in the constellation of Twins  
And if necessary, I will cut my veins, protecting  
him.*

In the same "Day" just before the battle, another Bedouin woman said:

إن تَهْزَمُوا نَعَانِقُ وَ نَفْرَشُ النَّسَارِقِ  
أَوْ تَهْزَمُوا نَفَارِقُ فِرَاقٌ غَيْرُ وَامِقِ  
[2, p. 32]  
*If you win, we will meet you with a warm hug,  
and if you are defeated, then we will part forever.*

In the war over the camel that we have already mentioned, one of the main participants in the events, Aunt Basus, is not a passive observer, but on the contrary, she incites revenge for the murder of her camel and further incites hostility between the tribes:

*Oh Sa'ad! Do not be fooled and leave.  
I am in a tribe whose neighbors die.  
There is no one but you to protect the herd... [2,  
p. 117]*

From the legend "The First Day of Havza" it becomes obvious that a woman in pre-Islamic Arabia did not cover her face, that is, did not wear a hijab, otherwise how could Mu'aviyya see her and fall in love with her at first sight. But in the traditions relating to the later period of the spread of Islam, it is already said that women began to cover their faces with a veil. So on "The second day of al-Fijar", it is told how once the youths from the Quraish and Kinana tribe saw a beautiful, slender Amirit woman, covered with a veil. And when they asked her to show them her face, she refused. Then one of them, deciding to play a trick on her, pinned the edge of her outer clothing so that when she got up, her lower shirt appeared. The boys laughed: "You did not let us see your face, but we saw you from behind." An angry Amirit woman called on the men of her tribe, who taught a lesson to the offenders of their tribeswoman.

In the pre-Islamic period, the Arabs did not allow the familiar treatment of their women, considering it a personal insult. This is also evidenced by the traditions, for example, in the narration "Day of Sahbal" it is said that once the boys of the Banu 'Akil tribe met the girls from Banu al-Haris. A fellow tribesman of the girls noticed how one of the young men winked at a girl from his tribe and immediately dealt with the offender. For the Arabs there was no greater shame than the capture of their women by men from another tribe. To avoid this, the Bedouin could fight to the very end, as was the case in the tradition of "Al-Qadid Day". It tells how the leader of the Banu tribe, Jusham Duraid ibn al-Sammatt, during his next campaign met a certain man who was taking his wife with him. Duraid ordered his people to take the woman and the camel from him. Protecting his wife, despite the fact that the forces are not equal, was more important for the Bedouin than his own life. It is important to note that such events are described in the "Days" in a concise and restrained manner, which creates a false impression of the emotional poverty of the narrative and speech of the characters. In fact, the Bedouin does not say long monologues about his feelings for a woman, his actions speak for themselves.

The already mentioned legend, "Day of Zi Kar" contains a story about the quarrel of the Persian Khosrov with the Khira ruler of the Arabs an-Nu'man, which occurred due to the refusal of the latter to send one of the Arab women to the palace to Khosrov. According to this legend, the Persian kings had their own requirements for female beauty, and the "standard" of female beauty that had developed by that time looked like this: "I am sending the king a beautiful concubine of proportional build, with clean skin and mouth, white as moonlight, with thick and long eyebrows, black-eyed and big-eyed, with an aquiline nose and smooth cheeks, causing desires; with thick hair and a regular-shaped head, small ears, a long neck, high and full breasts, sloping shoulders and forearms, thin wrists and delicate fingers, with smooth nails, with a hot belly and thin waist ... nice in the company, which does not run into trouble, calm behavior, gentle nature, with a beautiful mole, restricting communication with his father and dispensing with the advice of relatives, well-mannered, reasonable in judgments and judicious in actions, with skillful hands, laconic in speeches, in a low voice; praising his patron and condemning his enemies ...

... I told you about their unwillingness to give their women to others. The reason for this is their distress and the voluntary choice of hunger and nudity instead of satiety and rich decoration, they will prefer the winds and the samum to the aromas of your land, even if they are imprisoned ..." [2, p. 23-25]

These words describe the Arab women who are ready to endure all the troubles and hardships near

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their husbands and share with them all the hardships of a nomadic life.

However, in some legends, for example, “The War of Ka‘ba ibn Amr” or “Day of al-Baradan”, one can also find stories about the insidiousness and inconstancy of the Bedouin women. The last of them tells how the leader of the Kinda tribes, Khujr al-Kindi, went on a campaign in Bahrain [2, p. 41-43]. Taking advantage of his absence, the ruler of Syria, Ziyad ibn Habul, seized all the property and women of the Kinda tribe, among whom was Khujra’s wife – Hind bint Zalim. Soon, a conversation took place between Ziyad and his captive Hind, in which she confesses that her husband, Khujr, is hateful to her. Hind had long wanted to get rid of her unloved spouse and took advantage of a convenient case of her captivity. Khujr did not forgive the insidiousness and betrayal of his wife Hind and brutally executed her:

“... And his wife Hind Khujr tied to two horses, then they were driven in different directions and they tore her up. About this he said:

*If someone after Hind seduces another -  
That blind and deaf, foolish fellow.*

*Her face and conversations were sweet  
Everything that she hid was bitter*

*You'll never find this among women,*

*To truly love, did not change...” [1, p. 85-86]*

### Conclusion.

The analysis shows that Arab tribal traditions are distinguished by an accurate (sometimes to the smallest details) depiction of real life, real conflicts and situations, heroes and participants who actually lived then. In other words, there is no insurmountable barrier between the real world and the world being represented, which is inherent in some epic works. As a consequence of this, in these traditions there is no free fiction, because an important requirement for them was the requirement of accuracy, which is generally inherent in the epic, and not only in Arabic. The style of “Ayyam al-Arab”, covering events and describing all the participants and other details, is distinguished by the cost of visual means. All events and objects are described briefly, concisely, but very richly, and are necessarily related to the story of conflict, clash, revenge, etc. The main principle of epic narratives, including Arab tribal traditions, is that events are presented in a single-time sequence, that is, there is no return to the past or “running ahead” here.

If we talk about the heroes of “Ayyam al-Arab”, it becomes obvious that the descriptions of human’s inner world, his feelings and experiences were not inherent in the Arabic literature of the early Middle Ages, since the human person did not attract so much

attention to become an object of the image. After all, the main thing was the image not of people, but of turning events and conflicts, clashes and wars, vital for the tribes. And therefore, the character of the heroes is symptomatic, i.e. as if by itself, it consists of his actions and deeds, and not vice versa.

Regarding the status of Arab women of the pre-Islamic period, many examples can be found in the legends, testifying to the almost equal position and important role of the Bedouin woman in the life of her tribe. The feelings and attitudes of the Bedouin towards a woman are expressed in his actions, which speak for themselves: he violently defends the honor of his mother, wife, sister, relative or just a tribe, but does not forgive and severely punishes betrayal and treason. Traditions are not limited to the one-sided characteristic of a woman in pre-Islamic Arabia, her idealization. The appearance of the Bedouin woman is not yet individualized, since the epic, as a genre, did not yet know the art of portraiture and did not honor the woman with an individual portrait characteristic and the disclosure of her inner psychological world. In other words, the type of woman is not yet endowed with “individual” qualities, either they are smart, insightful, and virtuous, either they are brave, initiative, and selfless, or they are evil, cunning, and treacherous. However, the shades of psychologism, a deep disclosure of the character and inner experiences, the depiction of the versatility of heroes are not worth talking about, because the complexity of the human character did not fit into the framework of the traditional heroic content and established ways of depicting reality.

It is important to note that the prosaic Arabic text of the Jahili period does not refer to gods or a superman endowed with mythical and supernatural qualities, but to a simple person, Bedouin, warrior. Later, during the period of the spread of Islam, prose dealt more with Almighty, filled with many edifications and admonitions. Another difference of “Ayyam al-Arab” from late medieval literary works is their originality: there is no influence of Indian, ancient Iranian, Greek literature, as, for example, in later literary works.

So, we can say with confidence that the participants in the historical events of the pre-Islamic period are heroes both in the broad and narrow sense of the word. They really existed and were glorified heroes of turning events in the history of the Arabian tribes, and they characters – heroes of the people’s memory, who received their artistic expression in oral tribal traditions, and later became prototypes of literary heroes in classical and modern works of fiction.

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