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STUDIES BY JURJI ZAYDAN ON THE SPREAD OF ARAB LITERATURE AND ISLAMIC CULTURE IN EUROPE

The article has been dedicated to the work titled “The History of Islamic Culture” (“Tarikhu Tamadduni-l-Islami”) consisting of five volumes and written by the Arab writer and publicist Jurji Zaydan, who lived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the five volumes, Jurji Zaydan researched almost 6-7 centuries of literary-cultural, religious-social aspects of Arab societies, including the Jahiliyyah period, on the basis of ancient Arab historians, philosophers and travelers. In the article, special attention is paid to examples of material-cultural heritage created by Arabs in Andalusia within the borders of modern Spain after they went beyond Arabian Peninsula, conquering vast areas. The article also presents detailed information on the Alhambra Palace – a monument that demonstrates historical Arab existence in Andalusia and preserved its magnificence up until today without undergoing any significant destruction or natural disaster. Besides, significant information can be found in the article on mosques and grand mosques, which can be considered as apparent material-cultural examples of the Andalusian period reflecting Muslim cultural features of the mentioned time. All the above mentioned complexes were constructed during the reign of Umayyad dynasty, members of which ruled the namesake Umayyad Caliphate. Constructing such architectural monuments and trying to establish good neighborhood relations with surrounding states on the Iberian Peninsula and in Europe, Umayyad Caliphs demonstrated their unique Muslim culture. Umayyad dynasty and its descendants firmly established in Andalusia their language, literature, customs and traditions, which in turn reflected richness and loftiness of Islamic values. In such a way, they propagated their culture and lifestyle through material-cultural examples they created and constructed. Besides, Andalusian-Arab culture presented to the world literary-cultural and philosophical heritage numerous profound poets, philosophers and authors. Deep philosophical and literary-artistic thoughts of such persons had serious influence on literary-cultural environment not only in the East, but also in the West. This unique culture created by Arabs in Andalusia finds its evaluation in works by both Eastern and Western researchers, including Jurji Zaydan.

Key words: Jurji Zaidan, Arabic culture, history of Arabic literature, Western Europe, history of Spain.

Introduction. Muslim culture was a new and most advanced page of the history of humankind. This unique culture stretched from India to Spain and incorporated Middle and Near East, North Africa and important areas of South-Eastern Asia [22]. It should be noted that together with Arabs, other nations, especially Jews and Christians, including non-Muslim minorities also significantly contributed to the development of Muslim culture.

Being an important branch of historical Muslim culture, Andalusia (nowadays Spain) has always been studied throughout history. The high valued culture created here by Arabs has always attracted attention of researchers, historians and travelers, who desired to visit Andalusia, a historical regions in Southern Spain, magnifying in their works historical monuments, examples of art, palaces and mosques constructed there. One of such researchers was Jurji Zaydan – a Christian Lebanese Arab writer and publicist, who

spent most of his lifetime in Egypt. In his book titled “The History of Islamic Culture” and consisting of five volumes, he rigidly and persistently studied all color tones of Muslim culture from the emergence of Islam up until the end of the Abbasid period.

1. Umayyad Dynasty as the Initial Missioner of the Muslim Culture in Spain

As known from the history, after conquering Northern Africa during the Umayyad period, in 710 AD Arabs stepped to the land known today as Spain (8, p. 470). The prominent Azerbaijani scholar known specially with studies conducted on Arab world prof. A.N. Imanguliyeva writes that initially Arabs headed to Spain with the purpose to get rid of poverty and to live a better life, while after the beginning of the Abbasid rule in the 50’s of the 8th century, their number significantly increased as many successors of the previous dynasty, including rich people, tribe chiefs and etc. left their regions as

a result of Abbasid oppression and fled to Andalusia [2, p. 35].

The founder of the new Umayyad Andalusian state in Spain was Abd al-Rahman al-Dakhil (reign – 756–788), who was, actually, one of the above mentioned refugees [2, p. 35]. Later, Umayyad Arabs could establish a rich Muslim culture in the region, surprising with it many later researchers, authors and travelers, fine examples of which could preserve their popularity from the 12th century up until recent times.

In the new state established in Spain, Umayyad dynasty was in constant rivalry with the Abbasid dynasty in the sphere of cultural influence from one hand, while from the other hand it tried to create good neighborhood relations with their Iberian and, in general, European neighbors in order to demonstrate their rich culture and especially to prove their unique Muslim culture. Making sure they would not undergo invasion from the Abbasid front, the Umayyad dynasty and its successors quite conveniently and developed their language, literature, customs and traditions, richness and loftiness of Muslim values in the region, which they propagated through material-cultural fine examples of the culture they established and developed.

2. Formation of Arab Literary-Cultural and Philosophical Thought in Europe

As known in the history of literature, the Andalusian-Arab culture provided the background for formation of cultural environment, in which Ibn Zaydun, Ibn Hani, Ibn Abdi Rabbihi, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Hazm, Ibn Arabi, Ibn Rushd and many others emerged as prominent poets, authors and philosophers, having their contribution to the world philosophy and literary-cultural heritage. Deep philosophical and literary-artistic thoughts of such figures had substantial influence on both Eastern and Western schools of literature and culture. In this sense we can recall “Spanish fraud novels describing real social life events and influenced by medieval Arab philosophical magamas, not forgetting also the “Robinson Crusoe” written under the influence of “Hay bin Yakzan” of Ibn Tufayli and the “Divine Comedy” by the Italian playwright Dante Alighieri influenced by “Risalat al-Ghufran” of Abu al-Ala al-Maarri [1, p. 8].

It should be noted that the Arab literature emerged in Andalusia had great influence on Western literature and especially and inevitably on creative works of Jewish authors, who lived in Spain. Thus, initial renaissance in the medieval Jewish literature and science showed up namely in the Muslim Spain, which apparently had no intention to prevent development of any religious or national community, folk and etc.

In general, in the last century, Andalusian literature and culture have been studied in Azerbaijani, Russian, English and Arab literary studies in the respective languages in different levels. Among such scholars we can see I.Y. Krachkovsky [7; 8], A.B. Kudelin [9], D.V.Frolov [10], B.Y. Shidfar [11], Conde J.A. [12], Menocal M.R. [14], Nykl A.R. [15], Ihsan Abbas [16], Hassan Jad Hassan [19], Shawqi Dayf [20] and dozens of other prominent researchers, including Aida Imanguliyeva [2; 3], M.Mahmudov [4] and other Azerbaijani scholars, who conducted research works on Andalusian literature and culture, which proved to be a considerably rich and multi toned sphere for studies.

Notably, in works of the above mentioned scholars, Muslim culture has been examined as the main factor paving the way for development of Andalusian literature and culture, which, with no doubt, was introduced and developed by Muslim Arabs living in Andalusia.

3. J. Zaydan and his Work Titled “The History of Islamic Culture”

The prominent Arab writer, historian, literary researcher and publicist Jurji Zaydan (1861-1914), who devoted 22 novels to the most global events, happened in the Arab Muslim world in the period from emergence of Islam up until the 17th century, left behind a rich, worth to read research works. Among research works that immortalized his name in the history, one can recall his work titled “Tarikhu Tamadduni-l-Islami” (“The History of Islamic Culture”) consisting of five volumes, which he published in Cairo in 1901–1905. This five-volume work was translated into English by Morqolius, who evaluated it as following: “I think it is the most serious work Arabs ever devoted to the history of the old Caliphate” [13, p. 584].

In the fifth volume of “The History of Islamic Culture”, several small and large essays can be found on Andalusia, which, naturally, are bound to the period the volumes are restricted to and consist of.

From historical-chronological viewpoint, long before the above mentioned researchers were born, Jurji Zaydan presented the magnificence of the Arab-Muslim literature and culture in Andalusia. From one hand, this was the requirement of the period the author lived in, while from the other hand, it was related to the interest of 19th and 20th century travellers’ to the medieval Arab culture, its inerascable traces in the history and interminable attention of tourists from all over the world towards these unique constructions. Referring to it in a small section titled “the Alhambra Palace and Similar Constructed Palaces” in the

fifth volume of “The History of Islamic Culture”, Jurji Zaydan noted: “the Alhambra Palace is a very famous palace situated in Granada. It could preserve its magnificence up until today (i.e. the early 20th century) since it was constructed. It is a palace, which is visited by tourists from all over the world” [5, p. 185].

In the volumes of the work “The History of Islamic Culture”, together with issues related to the history of Andalusia, relations of Andalusian rulers with European countries, policy of the Umayyad state as a Muslim country and etc., the Egyptian author Jurji Zaydan laid place also to issues closely related to the Arab Muslim culture in Andalusia. Such mentioned issues were comprehensively researched and analyzed in sections titled “Philosophers of Andalusia” [17] and “Umayyad Constructions in Andalusia” [18]. In this sense, the small but substantially and essentially important section titled “Philosophers of Andalusia” in the 3rd volume draw attention, as it comprehensively describe emergence of philosophy in Andalusia and its main representatives, where an emphasis is put on that philosophers were often called by illiterate masses as “profane” and “unbeliever” and that representatives of the ruling elite encouraged such an attitude. As a result, some of these philosophers were stoned to death or killed as an atheist (*mulhid*) [17].

According to studies of Jurji Zaydan, the first philosopher in Andalusia was Abu Ubayda Muslim ibn Ahmad, who was known by his nickname “Sahih al-Qiblah” and died in the end of the 3rd century by the Muslim calendar (approximately late 10th century). Among later philosophers were the famous doctor Yahya ibn Yahyayi Qurtuba, known in Andalusia as Ibn Humayra (died in 315 after the Hijra) and Abu al-Qasim Muslim ibn Ahmad, who was well known as a mathematician (died in 398 after the Hijra).

There were several scholars in Andalusia, who emerged in the very early stage of the Muslim state and mainly studied mathematics, astronomy and algebra. But upon receiving tractates of the “Ikhwan al-Safa” [21, p. 208] school, members of which came from the East, they revealed much greater interest to philosophy. Such a development was supported also by the Umayyad ruler Hakam ibn al-Nasir, who ordered to bring books of philosophy from the East.

One of the prominent Andalusian philosophers and teachers of the period was Abu Bakr ibn Bajja, who taught even Abu Walid ibn Rushd – a kadi (Muslim judge) from Cordoba. Consequently, works of scholars as Ibn Bajja and Ibn Rushd supported thoughts of European scholars in the critical period

of initial renaissance of philosophy in Europe [21, p. 209]. However, unfortunately, illiterate masses tended to oppress these scholars – an attitude that was inevitably misused by several members of the ruling elite to strengthen their power over population. Jurji Zaydan writes that Mansur ibn Abi Amir, the vizier of the Umayyad Amir Hisham ibn Hakam, ordered to exile all philosophers from Andalusia, including Ibn Rushd, Abu Jafar Zahabi and the Bejaya kadi (judge) Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ibrahim. Later he even notes that in that period “if someone said about a person that “he is deals with philosophy and astronomy”, people would either stone him to death or just kill him” [21, p. 210].

In the history of evolution of Islamic culture, the sphere of town planning has an important role. For instance, Baghdad city, established in 762 by the famous Abbasid caliph Abu Jafar al-Mansur or city of Samarra (*surra man raahu* – anyone who saw him was glad) were such cities built in Iraq. Other examples can be Cairo or Fustat – globally famous cities built in Egypt in the medieval period of Muslim development and considered as large scale architectural monuments of the mentioned period.

Arabs continued their town planning culture in Andalusia, too. The most prominent city among the Arab Muslim cities in Spain was Cordoba-Gamada. Actually, there was an ancient city in the same place, next to a river named “Vadii kabir” (“the big valley”) in Arabic, which was conquered by Romans in 152 AD and was destructed. It was made a province center after Arabs conquered the region.

Basing on information given by the Arab historian Magrizi, Jurji Zaydan writes that in the beginning Arabs extended the area of the city, set 7 gates in the castle and built 21 settlements around it. The area of the city with surrounding settlements was 144 miles; while in the beginning of the previous century area of London was only 117 miles [5, p. 171]. Again referring to Magrizi, Jurji Zaydan writes that the number of all buildings, including houses, grand mosques and bathing houses constructed during the reign of the Andalusian Umayyad ruler Hisham was more than 124 thousand, while the number of all the houses in Cairo in the early 20th century was well below half of it [5, p. 172].

Having a Christian identity, Jurji Zaydan with admiration writes on the Muslim culture Arabs, mainly the Umayyad dynasty created in Andalusia. He especially mentions their town planning abilities and its architectural features, so that one can consider him not an expert on social sciences, but on the field of physical sciences.

Summarizing, Jurji Zaydan writes that with population close to two million, Granada had so magnificent buildings, that did not exist in the region neither in the best period of the Roman rule nor in other regions of the contemporary age.

In the beginning of the essay titled “The Umayyad Constructions in Andalusia” Jurji Zaydan writes: “The ruling elite of the Andalusian Umayyads” constructed in Spain so magnificent monuments that they gained fame all over the world, some of which preserve their splendor even today” [5, p. 179]. Among such constructions the author recalls the Grand Castle, the Grand Mosque of Cordoba, the Zahra Palace, the Bridge of Cordoba and the Alhambra Palace.

According to Jurji Zaydan’s notes in the 3rd volume of the “The History of Islamic Culture”, one of the examples of the material-cultural art monuments of Umayyads in Cordoba is the Grand Castle, which was built in the middle of the second century of Hicra by an Umayyad ruler Abd al-Rahman al-Dakhir, who was known also as the Arab Eagle. It is a structure known with uniqueness of its architecture. Other smaller structures within the castle were built later. There were 430 rooms in the castle. Palaces named Kamil, Mujaddat, Hair, Rawza, Mashug, Mubarak, Ristag, Surur and Bedi were also built within the castle. Water was brought to the castle from distant mountains through lead pipes and was used in large marble pools, big golden, silver and bronze water tanks. The source of the information for Jurji Zaydan is Ibn al-Asir [5, p. 179–180].

Naturally, among material-cultural monuments reflecting medieval Andalusian Muslim culture, mosques and Grand mosques built in the region by Muslims can be considered as one of the most important ones. Such structures are among sacred places for every man and woman, who adopts Islam and considers himself/herself a Muslim. Mosques, in general, are called “homes of God” in Muslim tradition, which is natural, as according to the religion, prayers of every believer can be accepted by God, especially if done in a mosque. In this regard, Umayyad Muslims in Spain paid special attention to mosque construction for the purpose of propagating their customs and traditions and their adherence to the religion. One of such magnificent structures built in Andalusia was the Mosque of Cordoba. Jurji Zaydan writes about it: “One of the biggest constructions in Cordoba was the Mosque. According to reliable sources, there was no mosque in Muslim countries as valuable and magnificent as the one in Cordoba”. They say there had been a church in its place before it was built” [5, p. 180]. Describing the structure, Jurji

Zaydan also writes that it still preserves its Islamic appearance, eastern patterns and ornaments even today [5, p. 181].

Among spectacular monuments created by the Umayyads in Andalusia Jurji Zaydan also mentions two grand palaces beside the Alhambra palace. They were built at the cost of limitless financial expenditure, were built with fine art and drew attention throughout centuries. The first of the two palaces is the Zahra palace. One can think that it was named after the Prophet’s daughter Zahra, however, it is a false assumption. A comprehensive description by Jurji Zaydan informs us that the construction of the palace began in the year 325 of Hijra by the Umayyad ruler Nasir and continued after his death during the reign of his son Hakam. The construction lasted for 40 years. Its length from East to West is 2700 ziras, while the width constitutes 1500 ziras. It was built in 4 miles distance from the city [5, p. 181]. Some of columns were brought from Rome and North Africa, while some of them were given as a present by the Emperor of Byzantium. In the floor of the palace there was a pool constructed with marble brought from Constantinople, around which were sculptures of various animals as a lion, an antelope, a crocodile, a snake (all next to the other one respectively), others being a dove, a peacock, a chicken, a rooster and etc. Each of the statues had a water fountain through their mouths, conducting water to the central pool. 10 thousand men and 1500 animals worked in the construction of the palace and a limitless amount of dinars was spent to it. Finally in the end, Jurji Zaydan notes that the ruler ordered to build the palace after a concubine of him named Zahra asked him to do so [5, p. 182–183].

In the 5th volume of the “History of Islamic Culture”, Jurji Zaydan presents comprehensive information about a palace that preserved its splendor up until today, enduring all natural disasters and surviving all kinds of destruction. It is the Alhambra palace – the palace, which the famous American writer Irving Washington visited in the early 20th century and being inspired by its magnificence wrote his namesake work *Alhambra*.

The original name of the palace – *al-Hamra* is the feminine shape of the word *hamra* (red in color) – a name given to the palace referring to the color of its roof tiles [5, p. 185].

The famous Arab mahjar writer Amin al-Rayhani (1876–1940) wrote in the introduction of his work titled “Arab Kings” (*Muluk al-Arab*) that he knew Arabic not well at all, despite that he was an Arab. In general, he had limited knowledge on Arabs, because

he immigrated to America long before and it was T. Carlyle and Irving Washington, who caused him to have a travel in the Arab East. The Alhambra palace, which Irving Washington see with his own eyes and depicted, inspired al-Rayhani as a splendid example of Arab medieval culture and so he visited Spain to see it personally. It was a visit that continued later in other Arab countries. The mentioned work of Irving Washington has been since translated into many languages, including Russian [6].

The palace built by The Grand Vizier of Caliph Nasir, Ibn Ahmar comprises 35 faddans (hectars) and the famous pool with lion sculptures also are situated in it. Skillfully installed, the marble lion sculptures have water fountains through their mouths, which conduct water properly to the pool.

Jurji Zaydan writes that Ibn Hamdis, the most famous of Andalusian poets, describes in one of his poems the pool and the beautiful way water is conducted through mouths of lions to the pool [5, p. 185].

It should also be noted that while studying the "History of Islamic Culture" Quintet of Jurji Zaydan, we had the impression as if the author had a pick with two sharp heads and acted as a skillful archeologist. As if he revealed cultural monuments, which stayed under layers of dust, wood and iron crumbs and small stones during past centuries because of indifference and natural disasters. In this way, he tried to prove

historical importance of the monuments and their unnoticed significance.

Conclusion. As a conclusion, it can be certainly assumed that Islam laid the foundation of a culture encompassing a wide geographical area, where one could securely and in safety travel from Europe to North Africa, Arab countries, Iran, India, China and even to Indonesia. The Andalusian-Spanish branch of this culture deserves special attention and bears high importance, as it was the only enlightened and luminiferous region in Europe with its cultural, social and scientific achievements. Here, Muslims created architectural monuments and mosque complexes, which became sources of proud and splendor of human creativity for Arab culture and Islamic art. Being one of the pioneers of modern Arab historiography and public studies in the late 19th and 20th centuries, Jurji Zaydan comprehensively studied and described the Islamic culture emerged in the mentioned region, its development and diffusion. Based on historical sources, he skillfully and delicately depicted the colorfulness and unique patterns of the Islamic culture in Spain. Notably, without the mentioned monuments, Europeans would identify Arabs as an invading nation with no culture, most of whom later left the region with ultimate humiliation. Today, the monuments once constructed by them in the heart of contemporary Christian state resemble fine examples of medieval Muslim culture in the region.

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Ісмаїлова А. Х. ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ДЖУРДЖІ ЗАЙДАНА З ПОШИРЕННЯ АРАБСЬКОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ ТА ІСЛАМСЬКОЇ КУЛЬТУРИ В ЄВРОПІ

Стаття присвячена праці «Історія ісламської культури» («Тариху Тамаддуні-л-Ісламі»), що складається з п'яти томів і написаного арабським письменником та публіцистом Джурджі Зайданом, який жив наприкінці XIX – на початку XX ст. У п'яти томах Джурджі Зайдан досліджував упродовж майже 6-7 століть літературно-культурні, релігійно-соціальні аспекти арабських товариств, включаючи період Джахилії, на основі праць давньоарабських істориків, філософів та мандрівників. У статті особливу увагу приділяють аналізу зразків матеріально-культурної спадщини, створених арабами в Андалусії в межах сучасної Іспанії, після того, як вони вийшли за межі Аравійського півострова, завоювавши великі території. У статті також представлена докладна інформація про палац Альгамбра – пам'ятник, що свідчить про історичне проживання арабів в Андалусії і що зберіг свою пишність до наших днів, не зазнавши значних руйнувань чи стихійних лих. Крім того, у статті можна знайти важливу інформацію про великих мечетей, які можна розглядати як очевидні матеріально-культурні зразки андалузського періоду, що відображають особливості мусульманської культури вказаного часу. Усі перелічені комплекси були побудовані за часів правління династії Омейядов, члени якої правили однойменним Омейядским халіфатом. Споруджуючи подібні архітектурні пам'ятки і прагнучи налагодити добросусідські відносини з сусідніми державами Піренейського півострова та Європи, омейядські халіфи демонстрували свою самобутню мусульманську культуру. Династія Омейядов та її нащадки міцно затвердили у Андалусії свою мову, літературу, звичаї та традиції, які, своєю чергою, відбивали багатство і високу ісламських цінностей. Вони поширювали свою культуру та спосіб життя через створені та побудовані ними матеріально-культурні зразки. Крім того, андалузсько-арабська культура подарувала світові літературно-культурну та філософську спадщину численних талановитих поетів, філософів та письменників. Глибокі філософські та літературно-мистецькі думки таких людей справили серйозний вплив на літературно-культурне середовище не лише Сходу, а й Заходу. Ця унікальна культура, створена арабами в Андалусії, знаходить свою оцінку у роботах як східних, так і західних дослідників, у тому числі Джурджі Зайдана.

Ключові слова: Джурджі Зайдан, арабська культура, історія арабської літератури, Західна Європа, історія Іспанії.