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## **The Literary Genre of Arabic Poetry in Khorasan in the 4th Century AH**

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### **Abstract**

From the first century AD, Khorasan has been popular as one of the bases of Arabic poetry and this era has been the heyday of Arabic poetry in this place. As the study of poems based on literary genres enables people to study these works more cohesively, we have divided the Arabic poems of the 4th century into four genres, namely lyrical, epic, dramatic and didactic. Then, we discuss the history of each of these types among Arabs and afterwards analyze the Arabic poems of Khorasan. We concluded that lyrical and didactic genres are the most widely used types of poetry among Khorasani poets and that their poems did not have the dramatic genre. Also, epic poems did not exist in the poetry of this period, neither in the world literature sense, nor in the sense that was considered among Arabs. We just observed boasting and praise poems that are a subset of epic poetry.

**Keywords:** Literary genres, Arabic poetry, Khorasan, The 4th century AH.

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## Introduction

Khorasan has long been part of Iran and its borders were not the same during history. It was very wide in the 4th century; in addition to the current Khorasan, it included three republics of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, part of Pakistan and an important part of Afghanistan. Shortly after the conquest of Khorasan by the Arab people, this land became popular as one of the important bases of Arabic poetry alongside the main centers of the Arabic poetry (Daif, 2007, Vol. 2, p. 161). After the establishment of the Arab governors in Khorasan, many Arab poets came into this area and it led to the emergence of the Arabic poetry in that land. Also, the choice of Arabic as the official language of the Muslim world caused Khorasani people to become familiar with the Arabic language and literature and use it in their poetry. Khorasanians' acquaintance with the Arabic language was first for the purpose of gaining knowledge in religious sciences. But over time, the narrative poetry and Arabic literature came into consideration, as if awareness of Arabic literature was a prelude to Arabic religious education. Khorasanians' skills in Arabic language and literature gradually reached to the point where they could compose Arabic poetry and write literary prose in addition to narration of Arabic poems and stories. A look at Arabic works that are remaining from the 4th century –most of which are collected in the “Yatimah Aldahr” book- shows that Arabic poetry had been widespread in Khorasan. However, it should be noted that the date of birth or death of many Khorasani poets in that era is not mentioned anywhere and just because they were all contemporary with the author of "Yatimah Aldahr" we perceive that most of these poets were among the poets of the 4th century. This book is regarded as the oldest source about Iranian poets who composed Arabic poems. Thus, first of all, the question that comes to one's mind is that what were the subjects by which Khorasani poets of this period composed their poetry? And which of those themes had the most applications? To find the answer to these questions, we need to have an accurate classification in order to reach to a proper conclusion. Classification of poetry themes continued from the past to modern times and each author has classified them by considering a certain aspect of poetry. Nowadays, poetry themes are recognized as literary genres and there are different classifications for literary genres. Some authors have classified these genres into 4 genres, namely, lyrical, epic, dramatic and didactic (Parvini and mir Ghaderi, 2014, p. 7). We selected the same classification for our study and after a brief outline of the history of each of these genres among Arabs we studied Arabic poetry of Khorasan. It is worthy of notice that so far, there is no independent investigation that has been done about this area of study.

## Discussion

### 1. The lyrical genre

In lyrical poems, poets describe the emotions, personal impressions and ideas of a speaker (Saber, 2009, p. 403). Therefore, whatever expresses the speakers' emotions and feelings, can be regarded as the lyrical literature (Shamisa, 2007, p. 55). Themes like whimper, complaints, propitiation begging for sympathy, congratulations, intoxicants, brotherhoods, satire, etc. are regarded in this classification.

1.1. **Sonnet:** sonnet is a kind of lyrical poem which has theme of love and infatuation and expression of emotions and feelings, or expression of beauty and perfection of a beloved and recall of events and happenings, memories and adventures of a lover (Jacob and al-Asi, 1987, Vol. 2, p. 902). Poems of Khorasanian poets in the 4th century reveal that sonnet has been one of the most common themes in that era. Also, they show that different poets portrayed their feelings in a different manner. Among the sonnets of Khorasanian poets who composed Arabic poems, the Afif sonnet is the most common sonnet. Sometimes, Khorasanian imitation of Arabic poetry is so obvious that they quickly bring Arabic poetry to the mind, such as the sonnet of Abu-Muhammad Abdullah Ibn Al-Faghih Abi Saleh Al-Seraji about his separation from his beloved which reminds of the lyrics of the pre-Islamic period, especially the Amr-alqys lyric. He says that: "When the departure time came to pass, the beloved sighed and said with sadness: After me, you have to get used to sorrow and tears and tolerate my absence. Do not destroy yourself out of grief, and be patient. Then, my tears was flowing on my cheeks like a sea that because of the intensity of its waves, it has a foaming surface" (Bākharzi, 1994, Vol. 2, p. 1052). Also, sometimes the poet presents his poem in a different way like Abu-Bakr Kharazmi who presented his numerous and unparalleled lyrics with his own innovations. In a sonnet, he describes the beauty of his beloved by resorting to allegory simile and says: "When the lover whose face is like the sun, shows her face, shows us that the sun in the sky has got its light from the beloved's light. Her beauty increases over time as a wine that becomes clear and pure with aging (Taha, 1976, p. 115).

1.2. **Whimper or elegy:** it is a poem that its poet composes it in grief over the loss of relatives, friends, prominent people in religion, social or political personalities etc., and expresses the virtues and attributes of the missing person and talks about his inner feelings and spiritual sympathies (Saber, 2009, p. 322). Because this kind of poem has a strong emotional foundation, it is regarded as lyrical poetry and has long been existed in Arabic poetry (Daif, 2007, Vol. 1, p. 207). Also, when Khorasanian poets composed elegies, they used the same common concepts in Arabic poetry and composed poetry in memory of their emirs, governors and close relatives. Abu-Bakr Sarakhsi composed verses in the memory of

Abu-Bakr Kharazmi and said that death is an imminent doom. So, even it will come to Kharazmi who was a prominent person in that time (Bākharzi, 1994, Vol. 2, p. 831). The poet's affection in the absence of the deceased is to the extent that sometimes, besides people, he contributes this disaster to other objects; as in composing the memory of Ali Ibn Muhammad Askafi –who was one of the authoritative teachers of the Rasa`el Court in Khorasan- Harsami Abiverdi regards pens and books of the Rasa`el Court mournful in the loss of this personality and says: “Don`t you see that the pens and books of the Rasa`el Court have been disabled and useless due to his absence? They are like borders whose defenders have gone and nobody can fill that empty place except themselves. They are like a fragile object which cannot be reformed easily. [What has been remained of his unique works, such as] his own handwriting and statements must weep for him, because the author of that handwriting and the magician of those statements are dead” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 113). Elsewhere, in the memory of one of their knowledgeable friends, Abu-Muhammad Abdullah Ibn Yousef Jowaini, not only sees his friends and acquaintances deeply affected and stricken, but also sees the whole world of knowledge and grace mournful, and says: “I saw knowledge weeping and stricken and saw grace is full of sorrow. I asked them why they are so. Then, I was told that Muhammad Ibn Musa Abu-Sahl is dead” (Bākharzi, 1994, Vol. 2, p. 999). Sometimes, the poet imagines himself after his death and composes verses in the memory of himself shortly before his death, Abu-Hossein Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Moradi says: “Moradi lived to serve his guests and finally he became the guest of the Lord of Heaven. And the Lord is more worthy to welcome his guests. So, his weeper should call others to weep over him” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, p. 87).

**1.3. Complaints:** In complaint poems, the poet complains about separation and faithlessness of the beloved, the uncompromised world, ungrateful friends, etc. He talks about his spiritual sympathies (Saber, 2009, p. 416). Therefore, because the content of complaints, feelings and sympathies are personal, this kind of poem will be a sub-set of lyrical genres (Shamisa, 2007, p. 247). Poetry, whose content was complaints about the world and its events, emerged in the era of the Abbasid government and gradually became popular, so that it became one of the main issues of poets in the Abbasid era and subsequent eras (Daif, 2007, Vol. 3, p. 186). Complaints are also observable in the poems of Khorasanian poets. Also, sometimes the poet complains about his residence in an area e.g. Abu-Tayyeb Taheri was tired of his residence in Bukhara and said: “We resided in Bukhara reluctantly, but we would go out of that city obediently (and willingly). O` Lord of creation! Help us go out of the city and if we come back again to it, we will be oppressors” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 81). Complaints about friends were one of the most common issues among Khorasanian poets who wrote Arabic poems (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, pp. 90-98). Another issue was complaints about economic

problems. For example, Abu-Muhammad Salmi`s complaints were about the economic conditions and high taxes on lands and has said that: “Previously, the farmlands were fertile and grew many crops and the owners of that lands were always dedicated to do handle the lands` works. Now, everyone who is the owner of that farmland is wasting away, because the taxes have increased and cost all the crops. So, they just bring about hardship and difficulty for their owners. So, if the owner delivers all his crops he will be saved. Otherwise, [tax officials] will shave his mustache (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 104). Generally, it can be said that Khorasanian poets often used concepts in their poems that had a potential to be complained about, and sometimes they used innovations in this field, e.g. when Ali Ibn Hasan Ibn Loham Harani wanted to complain about his lack of access to his desires and demands, he used a syntactical and lexical interpretation and said that my status among the other members of society is like “Af`al” among syntactical forms, i.e. as “Af`al” is a finite verb or noun, I am also a disadvantaged person and cannot enjoy the blessings of life. I am like useless and obsolete words and nobody comes to me (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 117).

**1.4. Propitiation and begging:** Propitiation or seeking for desires has long been existed in the Arabic literature and poets like Torfa Ibn Abd used poetry as a means to get money in the pre-Islamic eras (Al-Fakhoury, 2001, Vol. 1, p. 229). It can be said that the form of such demands were different during times. A look at poetry of the pre-Islamic era reveals that poets often did not appeal for their demand explicitly. Rather, they composed poems in which they praised someone in order to draw the concerned person`s satisfaction, and to be offered by his bestowals, so they could meet their demands. Gradually, poets expressed their demands more clearly in their poems. This issue can be seen in the Arabic poems of Khorasanians such as Abolghasem Kasravi. He asks his praised one not to suspend himself and begs to forgive him and requests that if he wants to forgive him, does not hesitate anymore (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 95). Sometime, the poet asked a certain thing from someone and expressed it with some verses and sent it to the concerned person. The aim of composing such poems is asking gifts from someone. Samples of such poems can be seen in the poetry of the 4th century in Khorasan. For example, in the year of scarcity for food in Bukhara, Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Matran wrote a poem asking for wheat: “O` my Lord! I am in great difficulty imposed by the heavy burden of this era of scarcity that is being put on my shoulders! This burden is splitting my joints. Three things have made my life difficult; they are my family, unemployment and scarcity... Wheat bags which are carrying are better than a beloved who walks gracefully! Because the life of human is dearer than any beloved" (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 135). Sometimes, the poet expresses more accurate features of what he desires. For example, Ibrahim Ibn Ali Faresi wrote a poem to ask clothes. He also mentioned features like its color

and its material and says that he wants this cloth to be new and no one should not have put on that cloth before (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 171).

**1.5. Congratulations:** It is a short piece of poem which is used in special occasions to congratulate someone (Saber, 2009, p. 403). Such kinds of poems were one of the new issues that were first introduced by Ahmad Ibn Yousef in the Abbasid era (died in the year 828). Congratulations in poems were first used in ceremonies and high days. However, over time their use expanded to other cases like birthdays (Daif, 2007, Vol. 4, p. 28). This kind of poem can also be seen in Khorasan. For example, when living in Bukhara, Abolghasem Kasravi congratulated his friend for his newborn baby: "I congratulate you on the blooming of the happiness star which landed in your home yesterday morning. I ask God to grant him high levels of knowledge as yours. I also ask God to add to your life and dignity and grant more children to you!" (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 97).

**1.6. Intoxicants:** These are poems that describe wine, drunkenness, cabaret, wineglass, and explain the beauty of the cupbearer (Saber, 2009, p. 298). So, they are regarded as a sub-set of lyrical literature. (Shamisa, 2007, p. 249) This kind of poem has been existed in the pre-Islamic era and became more popular in the Abbasid era, so that it emerged as an independent profession. Over time, these poems were in the service of mystical themes and figurative meanings came into it (Saber, 2009, p. 298). The remained works of Khorasanian poems show that intoxicant poems were one of the common aims in the poems, especially in the 4th century. For instance, Muhammad Ibn Musa Haddadi Balkhi describes his generosity to his friends while serving wine, (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 98) or elsewhere, Hasan Ibn Ali Matran states that the heated wine is very palatable for drinkers (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 132).

**1.7. Brotherhood:** "These are the loving letters that different classes of people write to each other. This letters are called friendly letters because they are exchanged among friends. Brotherhood sayings can be written in prose, poetry or combination of these two" (Anuse, 1997, p. 29). The content of these letters is often complaining about separation from friends or praising them (Shamisa, 2007, p. 252). These kinds of letters have emotional and lyrical themes and "have long been common in Iran. In the Sassanid era, brotherhood was regarded as a sub-set of correspondences and it had special terms and conditions. It had a technical style in which there were special terminologies regarding the appropriateness of the location and topic, the quality of starting and doing a correspondence, the way of interpreting the writer and his audience and their ranks (Anuse, 1997, p. 29). This kind of poetry was regarded as one of the new issues in the era of the 3rd Abbasid (Zaydan, 2012, p. 655) and we can find numerous samples of them in the Arabic poems of the Khorasanian poets. For instance, Abu-

Muhammad Yamami Bushanji wrote a letter to his friend in the last day of Shaaban and invited him to his house gathering (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 107). Sometimes, poems that friends write to each other contain wisdom and advice in addition to explaining ones` feelings to their friends, e.g. Askafi wrote a poem to his friend about wisdom and sent it along with a piece of crystal rock (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 112).

1.8. **Satire:** In literary terms, satire is: “blaming and pointing out the evils of a person or a thing by using poems”. Therefore, any emphasis on the evils of a thing is called satire. Some people regard satire and blame as having the same meaning. Others believe that satire is more about a certain person or group and blame is more about abiotic (Anuse, 1997, p. 1434). Satire has always been one of the main issues of poetry and poets had different reasons for their satires. They did their best to humiliate and discredit the concerned person and used improper words and concepts. In the pre-Islamic era, poets used satire as a threatening weapon against their enemies and their tribes (Daif, 2007, Vol. 1, p. 197). In the first century, the presence of Arab tribes in Khorasan and the emergence of tribal and partisan differences and disputes led to the entrance of satire to Khorasan poetry. and besides individual, tribal and partisan satires, the Khorasanian governors (Daif, 2007, Vol. 2, p. 231) such as the family of Mohallab, Ghatibah Ibn Moslem Bahli, and so on) were not safe from satires (Daif, 2007, Vol. 2, p. 235). Sometimes, poets considered a person`s attributes and behaviors in writing satires. For instance, Abu-Muhammad Kateb wrote a satire against Abu-Abdullah Jaihani and criticized his incompetence for taking the position of ministry. Abu-Mansour Abdouni wrote this satire about the laziness and slowness of a person who worked in the Audit Court: “I swear God and His revelations that you are working as slowly as a millstone and it is as I said. If it was not so, you would not stay at home till the evening. People came to the court, but they saw that the holder of the court is not there to do his job. So, they returned to their houses” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 86). Abu-Tayyeb Taheri satires the Samani governors and says that although they are seemingly the owners of the throne, their nature is the origin and nature of baseness and servants (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 81). Sometimes, the poet just considers external attributes and portrays an evil face of the person. As Ali Ibn Hasan Harani –one of the poets of the 4th century- satires a person called Aba-Talheh and says: “O` Aba-Talheh! Listen to someone who is honest to you! Your face has wrinkles like a jug. Get up and go! Because you won`t do a good thing! You are the most worn-out people in creation and nature!” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 121) and sometimes, the poet considered both internal and external attributes. For instance, Ali Ibn Muhammad Askafi –one of the authoritative teachers of the Rasa`el Court in Khorasan- satires a person: “His head is like a taw. He has no status but stupidity. His turban on his head is like a quince”. Also, hyperboles which were the dominant feature of poetry in the Abbasid era (Al-kfravy, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 64)

can be seen in the poetry of the poets of the 4th century such as Abu-Zakaria Harbi satirizes Abu-Mansour Khazraji. First, he puts him at the same level with the Lord of the universe and mentions some attributes for him that can be only attributed to God and then deals with his satire (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 86).

**1.9. Description:** Description is regarded as one of the issues that have always been existed in all eras of the Arabic poetry and we cannot find any poet who has not composed verses regarding this issue. The environment in which individuals live has a large impact on the way they describe issues, e.g. the description of the phenomena they encountered in the pre-Islamic era is different from that of other poets in other times and places. As a result of different factors, the descriptive poem developed considerably in the Abbasid era (Hadarah, 1963, p. 454) and it can be said that poets have nearly described everything in the Abbasid era (Farroukh, 1981, Vol. 2, p. 43). Also, this issue has been used in many poems in Khorasan and poets have described place, time, people, events, and so on. In description of the Marv city, Abu-Ali Saji says: "Marv is a clean city that has a flowing river. It has moisture that smells better than musk and if people imagine passing the city, the name of the city -Marv- prevents them from leaving the city" (Browne, 1956, p. 688). Abu-Al-Fath Basti describes Samarkand and says: "In the hereafter, people have a heaven and the heaven of this world is Samarkand. O` builders of Balkh! Are these two cities equal?" (al-Hamawi, 1995, Vol. 3, p. 247). Sometimes, the poet describes time and the time of cheerfulness and happiness as Abu-Tayyeb Mas`abi describes this time (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 91). The description of nature and its phenomena has been one of the interesting issues of Khorasanian poets, especially in the 4th century. Hasan Ibn Ali Matran is surprised by the snow in the spring and describes this phenomenon: "Surprisingly, the December has come in the spring! And the difference in the stars' orbits at different times is also surprising. The last night, the raids of stormy clouds destroyed blossoms and made the disappeared. The spring revealed us a hidden winter that did not want the trees to be refreshing. Winter became remorseful for the extermination and returned to [Again in the winter] take its revenge or retaliation (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 136). Another type of description is describing people and their status or the relationship between people. This type can also be seen in Khorasan poetry. For instance, Abu-Hossein Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Moradi presents a description of his state of well-being and pleasure and says: "All of my concerns are about the bones, meat and stew which is in the pot and the wine which is in a little container. And a few Dinars that I have that spend the night in our bag. Anyone who sees my pleasure [just like me], Wants to live like me and does not ask another kind of life" (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 85).



## 2. The epic genre

The epic genre is “a literary genre that has a long story, often composed in verse and has an elegant and graceful style and athletic themes in which the poet talks about extraordinary events and acts of war heroes” (Anuse, 1887, p. 553). In the Arabic literature, epic is different from the epic of other nations (Saber, 2009, p. 281). Here, epic has another definition that is: “a kind of story or poem that is full of heroic actions and amazing adventures in which -with a heart full of hatred towards the enemy- the poet describes the fighters` battle, heroism, courage and victory and is very proud of them (Saber, 2009, p. 280). This kind of poem forms a major part of the Arabic poetry and has existed from the pre-Islamic era. Poets of that era presented an accurate description of their bravery and prowess in battles. They defended the dignity and privacy of their tribes and persuaded other people in their tribes to take revenge. Epic has always been accompanied by honor and glory. The poets were proud of themselves and their tribes and praised their valuable properties and lofty goals. They described their bravery as well as their moral virtues (Daif, 2007, Vol. 1, p. 202). The Arabic system was based on tribal system. Even after the emergence of Islam, this system still remained unchanged because it was of great importance for the people in tribes. The poets of each tribe did their best for its defense. The most common issues of the Arabic poems in that era were description of bravery of commanders or tribesmen against unbelief and conquering countries and cities and all things that they were proud of, and individual or tribal honors (Al-kfravy, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 72). With the emergence of the Abbasid government, these glories remained stable. The only difference was that tribal honors had become less than before and poets mainly emphasized on moral traits such as valiancy, manhood and other good traits (Daif, 2007, Vol. 3, p. 170). The situation remained the same in the 4th century (Daif, 2007, Vol. 4, p. 213). The first samples of epic genre in the Arabic poetry of Khorasan can be seen in the poems that are known as conquests. The conquest of Khorasan was very important for the Arabic government and invoked conquerors to have more eagerness to conquer this land. Such eagerness can be seen in the poems of Arab poets in the way towards conquering Khorasan (al-Hamawi, 1995, Vol. 2, p. 352). Epic poems (as they are common in the Arabic literature) were not very evident in the Arabic poems of Khorasanian poets. Instead, the praise and boasting lyrics –which were sub-sets of the epic poem (Anuse, 1997, p. 176) were evident in the poetry of this era.

2.1. **Boasting:** In this kind of poetry, the poet describes his maturities and virtues. (Shamisa, 2007, p. 227) Boasting can be seen in the poetry of the pre-Islamic era. There are also many samples of this type of poetry in the poems of Khorasanian poets. Often, poets of such kind of poems are proud of their deeds or their relatives` deeds and talk about them with excessive

pride. As Abu-Ahmad Kateb wrote this poem to a person who had satirized him: “We are such kind of people whom our deeds praise our dynasty. (If our good deeds lead to praise and admiration of our dynasty) and if other people satirized us, we will not be afraid of disgrace. If we satirize ourselves with improper deeds, no praise can make us venerable, even if such praise prevails (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 76). Also, Ab-Muhammad Salmi boasts about the accuracy and discernment of his nation and says that although other nations also have smart people, people of our nation have more expertise and capabilities (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 105).

**2.2. Praise:** Praise or eulogy is a kind of poetry that deals with the merits and virtues of a certain person or persons (Saber, 2009, p. 617). This type of poetry has always been considered by Arab poets. Poets had different reasons and motivations to praise the tribe leaders, governors, emirs, caliphs, officials and famous people. In the pre-Islamic era, poets praised their elders and wise men in their poetry and expressed their special characters (such as their grace, patience, courage, protection of privacy and so on). This way of praising continued during the Islamic and the Umayyad era and many poets supported officials with their praise and eulogy (Daif, 2007, Vol. 2, p. 215). This situation remained unchanged in the 4th century. However, the praises were accompanied by exaggeration and hyperbole and poets gave them an equal level as the Lord of the universe (Daif, 2007, Vol. 4, p. 204). Also, sometimes some poets regarded themselves at the same level with their praised one (Al-Fakhoury, 2001, Vol. 1, p. 785). This type of poetry is abundant in the poetry of the 4th century and many poets had composed poems regarding the praise of the Samani governors and ministers. For example, there is a story in which Nasr Ibn Ahmad Samani (913-942) went to a desert to play polo. When he arrived there, rain began to fall. He stayed there for a while and after playing polo he came back to his city. Abu-Hossein Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Moradi praised him in this poem: “I testify that rain and clouds are in the service of Emir Nasr. The rain will come in order that soils of the desert do not offend emir. Three things always remained for him: honor, kingship and youth” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 85). Sometimes, such praises are accompanied by broadening something, e.g. Abu Ahmad Kateb wrote praise of Abu Abdullah Jaihani and said that the relatives of the minister had taken him away from the court of the king and he states his dissatisfaction: “O` my Lord and leader! Your grace and dignity is not measurable. You have such excellence and grandeur but your relatives are mean and poor” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 76). Sometimes, the poet expresses his high praise and admiration so that he even praises himself and puts himself at the same level as his praised one. For instance, Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Aziz Nasafi praises Abu Ali Saghani (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 93). Abu Hasan Loham Harani brings a literary reason for his own praise and says that the dignity of the praised person is so superior

that I praise him in my poems. My intention is to make my poems more attractive by mentioning his name and attributes (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 118).

### 3. The didactic genre

A didactic poem is a kind of poem whose intention is to “teach philosophy, ethics, science and technology, theory or philosophical and political beliefs and so on” (Anuse, 1997, p. 887). Therefore, as it is obvious in its definition, this genre of poetry includes wisdom and moral poems (Shamisa, 2007, p. 55). This genre also has a considerable history in the Arabic literature and there are different forms of didactic genre in different eras of the Arabic poetry, e.g. in the pre-Islamic era, it was used in the odes of poems in the form of wisdom, advice, and reflections of life experiences of the poets (Daif, 2007, Vol. 1, p. 218). Also, it was at the service of the Islamic concepts and ethics in the 1st century and after the emergence of Islam. (Al-hamed, Al-zeir, Al-atram, Al-gaesam, and Al-ready, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 495) and accordingly, the concept of asceticism entered the Arabic literature (Daif, 2007, Vol. 2, p. 370).

3.1. **Wisdom:** It can be said that any kind of poem that includes advice or guidance for human can be regarded as a sub-set of wisdom. Regarding the necessity of having good behavior of the regime, Abu Ahmad Kateb believes that if the regime does not have proper behaviors with the people of society, it will be doomed to be overthrown. He says: “If a person could not gain benefits of a certain government, he will wish the regime to be overthrown. Such wish is not because of a feeling of hatred or grudge. Rather, this person wishes a different government other than the current government and hopes that it will be transferred to other people” (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 76). Abu Ali Nassaji -who was one of the wise men of Bukhara - suggests that two blessings of Islam and wellbeing are superior and better than any other things in the world. He believes that as far as human beings benefit from these blessings, they ought not to grieve over absence of other things (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 91). Abu Abdullah Zarir Anbourdi states that good management is one of the Divine blessings and its loss causes destruction and ruin of everything (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 104).

3.2. **Proverb:** Proverbs are short poetries or proses that contain moral and social concepts as well as advice and orders and percepts of having a good life. In fact, it is part of people's culture that is transferred from one generation to another. Iranian people have long been well-known in wisdom and proverb (Anuse, 1997, p. 92). Thus, some Iranian scholars -who had acquaintance with Persian and Arabic literature- transferred these concepts to Arabic. Abolfazl Sokri Morouzi had brought many Persian proverbs to Arabic in the form of poetry (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 100). Another Khorasanian poet who has done the same work

is Abu Abdullah Zarir Anbourdi who was one of the poets of the 4th century. He wrote an ode and translated some Persian proverbs into Arabic (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 103).

**3.3. Asceticism:** Khorasan had been the center of asceticism and mysticism in the 3rd and the 4th century. Therefore, many Sufis who were familiar with the Arabic language and the Islamic sciences wrote their works in Arabic and sometimes, they used the language of poetry to express their moods or ascetic advices. For instance, Abu Abbas Sayyari was one of the Sufi leaders who lived in Marv and in addition to his mastery in science he had also mastery in jurisprudence and Hadith (Al-Sam'ani, 1962, Vol. 7, p. 329). When he was asked: "How can a disciple teach himself?" He said: "Through patience on performing God's commands, avoiding what religion has prohibited and friends' assistance and companionship with the poor people, because their dignity is where they put their souls in it" (i.e. if people lay emphasis on nurturing their soul, they will have a higher dignity and position and if they neglect it they will have a poor dignity). Then, he read the following poem: "When pleasures took control of everything, I tolerated and forced my soul to have patience until those pleasures are survived and when my soul saw that my patience humiliate my humble, it remained adored all the time. Then, I told myself to be generous in life, because some days the world is on our side and some days it is not. O` my friend! I swear God that disasters some days come and some days they will be disappeared and our souls will be where we put them. So, if it is deceived, it will be hopeful and aspires for many things. Otherwise, it will be calm (Hanbali, 1986, Vol. 4, p. 230). Abu Sahl Al-Sa'louki who is one of the famous Sufis of Khorasan says: "By forgetting the dear world, I could achieve it and I achieved it when it had brought me ideal wishes. Then, I understood that how the end would be (i.e. my destiny). So, I left it before the end of my life (my death) (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983, Vol. 4, p. 483). A look at books which are about the status of mystics of the 4th century such as "the levels of Sufis" written by Abi Abd Al-Rahman Salmi reveals that although ascetic poems had been existed in the poetry of that era, most of the time, Sufis resorted to prose in order to express their intentions.

### **Conclusion**

Khorasan has long been part of the ancient land of Iran and has always been attracted by various ethnic groups. After the conquest of Iran by Arabs, this land attracted them and many of them resided there. This led to the entrance of the Arabic literature and poetry to Khorasan even for centuries. On the eve of the 4th century, there was the heyday of the Persian and Arabic literature in the Samani government. Although it seemed that during that time Arabic poetry was not used as before, it was still used in poetry beside Persian. A look at the "Yatimah Aldahr" book shows that Arabic poetry had been widespread in Khorasan and

Persian scholars had competency in using Arabic in their poetry. Also, by looking at the remained works of that era we can see that their poems did not have the dramatic genre. The Khorasanian poets mostly used the lyrical genre to talk about their intentions and they used different issues in their poems, namely sonnet, whimper, complaints, propitiation begging for sympathy, congratulations, intoxicants, brotherhoods, satire and description. Moreover, the authors concluded that there are not considerable works that are written in the epic genre (whether considering its universal concept or the concept that had been popular among Arabs). Instead, we can see the praise and boasting lyrics which are sub-sets of the epic poetry. As to the didactic genre, lots of works have been written about wisdom, most of which were the personal experiences of the poets. But, some of them were the experiences of a whole nation that were written by using proverbs. Anyway, although most of the poetry of this era is imitation of Arabic poems, poets often presented these imitative concepts in a new form and provided many literary devices. Thus, they had a great influence on the Arabic literature by integrating the Persian literature and culture, the most important of which was the translation of Persian poetries and written wisdoms into Arabic. The translation of Persian proverbs into Arabic through poetry which was done by people like Abolfazl Sokri confirms the influence of Persian literature on the Arabic.

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