

С. М. ПРОЗОРОВ

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ИСТОРИЧЕСКАЯ
ЛИТЕРАТУРА
В ИРАКЕ, ИРАНЕ
И СРЕДНЕЙ АЗИИ
в VII—середине X в.

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SUMMARY

This monograph is the first complete historiographic and biobibliographic review of the early-shiite historical literature in the national and world Arabic studies. It is a part of the general work on the history of Moslem historiography of the 7th—11th centuries, being prepared by the researchers of the Arab section of the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

The monograph consists of two parts. The first part characterizes the basic stages of the development of shiite historiography in the 1st—3rd/8th—10th centuries, examines its genres and trends, describes the emergence of the centres of the shiite written language and their role in the formation of the religious and political ideology of the Shiites as revealed in the social composition and tribal affiliation of shiite scholars. In this part, also for the first time, an attempt is made to set forth the history of the shiite commentaries to the Koran and the hadith literature of the Shiites.

The second part contains biobibliographic essays on 70 shiite authors of the 8th—middle of the 10th centuries, who played a significant role in the development of shiite historiography.

The formation of shiite ideology was closely connected with the development of shiite literature, the diversity of whose genres and types reflected the multiformity of shiite ideology. The author's task was to review one of its main forms — the historical-religious literature of the Shiites that occupied an important place in Moslem historiography and expressed, in a most profound manner, the process of the formation of the socio-political and historical views of the Shiites, particularly, their views on the history of Moslem community, their ideas about the nature and characteristic features of supreme power etc.

The review of shiite historiography covers the initial period in the history of the shiite movement — the 7th—middle of the 10th centuries. By the end of this period the initial stage of the formation of the religious-political ideology of the Shiites was completed. During that period the theoretical foundations of the shiite dogma were laid, and following it began the stage of the elaboration and codification of shiite dogmatics.

Geographically the review is limited to the countries of the Eastern Caliphate — Iraq, Iran and Middle Asia — which played the main role in the 7th— the first half of the 10th centuries in the creation of shiite ideology and literature.

For almost three centuries (up to the coming to power of the shiite dynasty of Buyids in Iraq in 334/945) shiism remained an opposition trend which, from time to time, surged to the surface of social life in armed uprisings. During that period shiite traditions and written works by shiite authors were distributed clandestinely. Not once, destruction of shiite writings was accompanied by destruction of their authors. No wonder the majority of shiite works of that period was lost irretrievably, and only a small part was preserved to be transferred to the subsequent generations of shiite authors.

The fate of early shiite literature (just as any kind of opposition literature) makes it incumbent on the researchers to take a most thorough account of all available materials pertaining to shiite literature and its creators in order to avoid an one-sided evaluation of the role of individual authors and restore, as fully as possible, the development process of shiite historical literature.

As far as the methods of investigation are concerned, the most fruitful way to solving the task set is an analysis of the isnad chains, the basic form of fixing knowledge accepted by the Moslems. With this aim in view the isnads of two works have been studied: *Makatil at-talibiyin* («The massacre of talibits») of Abu-l-Faradj al-Isfahani (died 356/967) and *Kitab ar-ridjal* of Abu Amr al-Kashshi (died 370/980), the native of Kashsh (modern Shahrisyabs). The first contains factual material about the political struggle for power waged by the Alids and their followers, and the second — historical-biographical information about the Shiites. The processing of the material of the isnad chains of these two works made it possible to solve some significant problems.

The arrangement of columns in the first part of the book (commentaries to the Koran — hadiths — history) reflects a genetic approach to the emergence and development of shiite historical-religious literature. The task of such an approach is to trace the emergence and accumulation of the specifically pro-Alid and then shiite interpretations of certain events of both the interpolitical history of the caliphate and universal history, and also the formation of the independent shiite historical concept. The basis of the shiite concept of history was the religious-political theory of *imamate* — supreme power in a Moslem state.

In the first part of the monograph there are special sections in which an attempt is made to give the history of two important fields of shiite historical-religious literature — commentaries to the Koran and the hadiths. Usually, the commentaries to the Koran and the hadiths are not included in historical literature. However, the commentaries contain an account though fragmentary, of the history of the Prophets and ancient peoples, the early history of Islam etc. Shiite commentaries are distinguished from sunnite ones, above all, by their political tendency and the interpretation of certain historical events. Moreover, shiite com-

mentaries are much more tendentious than sunnite. From this point of view the shiite commentaries to the Koran give an idea about the specifically shiite interpretation of the historical past, the early history of Islam, the history of the caliphate, including the history of the shiite movement itself.

The shiite collections of the hadiths (we have in mind the hadiths themselves and the «science» of the hadiths) are also an important document for understanding the historical views of the Shiites. The very selection of the hadiths and the interpretation of certain historical developments by the Shiites reveal their concept of history and their approach to evaluating historical facts and the activities of various persons.

The study of the collections of the hadiths is of primary importance also for understanding the entire complex process of the formation of the religious-political ideology of the Shiites.

Proceeding from this we took into consideration, when writing biobibliographic essays on individual historians-Shiites, not only their historical works as such, but also their works commenting the Koran and the hadiths.

In many cases we consider these works as historical ones, judging by their names only, as they were not preserved to our day. Naturally, some of them were defined as historical by mistake, and conversely, historical works proper might not be included in the review. These errors, though they could result in some inaccuracies in characterizing certain authors, did not, in our view, influence the general picture of the development of the history of shiite historical-religious literature.