

Frolov³ on Arabic metrics show that the system of handling data and describing linguistic phenomena is compatible with the system itself, moreover, they reveal all the ingenuousness of the ancient Arabic scholars.

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Gesellschaftlicher Umbruch und Historie im Zeitgenössischen Drama de Islamischen Welt. Herausgegeben von Johann Christoph Bürgel und Stephan Guth, Beirut 1995, in Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart [Beiruter Texte und Studien. Herausgegeben vom Orient Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Band 60]

This volume contains materials of a conference held in Bern in 1989. The conference was organized under the auspices of the Institute of Islamic Studies (Institut für Islamwissenschaft) at the University there. It was the editor of this volume—Professor Bürgel, the untiring researcher and the driving force behind a number of initiatives which aim at bringing nearer the Islamic culture—modern and classical—to the European public. J.Ch. Bürgel not only has organized this conference and but also, together with Stefan Guth, prepared this volume for print.

The volume is a collection of utmost importance for all those interested in the relatively new subject of research—the theatre and the drama in the Islamic world. The book covers all the most important parts of the Muslim „dramatic” scene: the Arab World, Turkey, Persia, Pakistan. Perhaps only a study (or studies) on Indonesian drama are really lacking to make this work perfect.

Of course, special attention is devoted to the drama in the Arab world. There is a general introduction by Mustafa M. Badawi (*Arabic Drama and Politics since the Fifties*, pp.1-22). Of similarly general character is the study by Ewa Machut-Mendecka, who in her *The Concepts of history and Society in modern Arabic drama* (pp.179-189) gives a vast panorama of ideas prevalent in modern Arab theatre.

In the book, one can find also interesting reflections on the prehistory of the dramatic thinking in the Arabic literature. Marianne Chenu is hunting for

³ Frolov's book: Д.В.Фролов, *Классический арабский стих. История и теория аруда* [D.V.Frolov, *The classical Arabic verse. History and theory of the 'arūd*], Moscow 1991, was published later than Stoetzer's study, but it contains similar reappraisal of Al-Ḥalīl's system although this work is based on different premises.

drama structures in Al-Hamaḍānī's and Al-Ḥarīrī's *maqāmāt*, showing that the idea of theatre was not thoroughly alien to the classical Arabic culture (*Dramatische Strukturen in den Maqāmen al-Hamaḍānīs und al-Ḥarīrīs*, pp.87-100).

However, it is the modern drama which is of chief interest to the authors. Hartmut Fähndrich is keen to detect and to describe dramatic background in Naḡīb Maḥfūz's novels (*Beschleunigung durch Reden: Zur Dialogverwendung bei Naḡīb Maḥfūz*, pp.101-110), while As'ad E.Khairallah analyses poetical drama by Ṣalāḥ 'Abd aṣ-Ṣabūr (*The Individual and Society: Ṣalāḥ 'Abdaṣṣabūr's Laylā wal-Majnūn*, pp. 161-177). The same drama is analysed by Angelika Neuwirth in her contribution entitled *Idealität und Verwirklichungsängste: Zu einer modernen Bearbeitung des Maḡnūn-Laylā-Stoffes bei Ṣalāḥ 'Abdaṣṣabūr*, pp.205-234). W. Walther turns her attention to the modern Syrian drama, and in particular Sa'd Allāh Wannūs's theatre (*Machtspiele: Von Humoreske zum masraḥ at-tasyīs. Die Geschichte vom erwachten Schläfer" und Sa'dallāh Wannūs' Al-Malik huwa l-malik* (pp. 281-295).

The Turkish drama is also very well represented in this book. There is an article devoted to the classical Ottoman shadow theatre (Erika Glassen, *Das türkische Schattentheater: ein Spiegel der spätosmanischen Gesellschaft*, pp.121-137), but, again, it is the modern Turkish theatre which is described in detail. Petra de Bruijn's *Turkish Verse Drama: the impact of verse on Turkish drama* (pp.23-37) covers the period between classical literature and modernity, while J.Ch. Bürgel in his reflections concentrates on the way politics is reflected in modern Turkish drama (*Gesichter „heiliger" Macht in modernen türkischen Dramen*, pp. 39-64). Priska Furrer turns her attention to the ever actual problem of woman's role in modernizing society (*Geschlechterkampf auf der Venus: Zu einem unveröffentlichten Stück der türkischen Autorin Sevgin Soysal*, pp. 111-120), while Zehra Ipşiroğlu shows how borrowed and local traditions are intertwined in Turkish drama (*Neue Formen und Tendenzen im türkischen Gegenwartstheater: Haldun Taner—Sermet Çağan—Ferhan Şensoy*, pp. 149-160).

The Persian drama is described in four articles: Peter Chelkowski's reflections pertain to the Persian theatre in exile, and in particular to the work of the famous playwright Parwīz Ṣayyād (*Parviz Sayyad and the Persian Theatre Far from Home*, pp. 65-85). Also Milla Riggio presents Persian theatre outside Iran, and in her contribution gives a vivid picture of ta'ziyas produced and presented by Moḥammed Ġaffārī in the United States and elsewhere (*Tā'ziyah in Exile: Transformations in a Persian tradition*, pp. 235-258). For Gisèle Kapuscinski the work of the Persian playwright Ġolām Ḥusayn Ṣa'īdī forms the background against which she attempts to

give an analysis of realism and surrealism and their meaning in discussing political problems (*The Real and the Surreal: Two Approaches to social criticism in the plays of Gholam-Hosayn Sa'edi*, pp. 149-160). Isabel Stümpel-Hatami shows how a politically neutral subject—the Adventures of Sindbad the Sailor could serve social and political critique („*Sindbads achte Reise*”: *Geschichte und Gegenwart im Werk Bahrām Baiža'īs am Beispiel eines frühen Dramas*, pp. 259-280)

One article is devoted to Urdu drama, it is presented by the well-known Czech specialist on Urdu literature Jan Marek (*Social Change in Modern Urdu Drama*, pp. 191-203).

In sum, this an insightful collection of seventeen papers, which despite their differentiated subjects give us a vivid picture of the Muslim theatre. One would agree with the editor—J.Ch.Bürgel—that it is the political factor which occupies a really prominent place in Muslim drama. The reasons might be manifold, but no doubt the close relationship between drama and the modern society makes it politically functional. There is a point which is often noted by the authors namely that a thorough study as this in this collection allows us also to belie the common belief that there never existed original theatre in the Muslim world, and that all forms of drama are nothing but a direct borrowing from Europe.

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