

Summary

Satirical poetry is generally considered as a one of the most important genres of the classical Arabic literature. Genre of poetry was in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic society highly appreciated and the Arabs used to regard it as the only form of the real literature. Unlike prose which was limited to the folklore and educational literature esteemed the Arabs poetry as a real art expression and the poet hold also very strong position within the traditional Arab society. Arabic satirical poetry is believed to grow up from curses and lampoons declaimed by traditional Arab wizards, kāhins, and due to the fact that faith in the power of word was still very deeply rooted in people's minds, Arabic satirical poetry was ascribed a very good reputation. The development of society after the rise of Islam also had a very strong impact upon the function of traditional genres of the Arabic poetry. From its original function of discouraging and threatening enemies satirical poetry developed into the means of poet's subsistence, political propaganda and society entertainment. Arabic satirical poetry became an independent genre of art.

This thesis deals with the origin and the development of Arabic satirical poetry from its emergence in the pre-Islamic period until it reached its peak during the reign of Umayyad dynasty and concentrates both on its literal and social function. Special attention is paid to the three most important Umayyad satirical poets - al-Akhtal, al-Farazdaq and Jar ʿir. Commentary on their lives and works illustrates a selection of translated verses or poems along with an appropriate interpretation in order to show the right meaning and impact of the verses. In this thesis we've tried to show the main differences in approach to satire, or satirical poetry, in Western and Arabic cultural tradition and also point out criteria for its form, content and aesthetic appraisal.