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## **The Concepts and Realities of the Eastern Culture in "The Knight in the Panther's Skin"**

To the present day the research on *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* (hereinafter KPS) in connection with the Eastern Muslim world has been conducted in two main directions:

1. *KPS* and literature composed in the Muslim world (for example, parallels with Nizami, Ferdowsi, Fakhraddin Gorgani etc.);
2. *KPS* and the confession of the Muslim faith: this includes the works, which agree or deny the presence of the Muslim understanding of God, world, romantic love and the relationship between men and women in the *KPS*.

The Muslim religion of the heroes is emphasized by the mention of various realities of the Muslim culture (Musapi (Koran) which is repeatedly mentioned; the attitude of the characters of the poem to wine; the weapons made by the renowned gunsmiths of Khorezm and Basra; metaphors associated with the symbolism of stones which have long been known in the East, etc).

When analyzing the concepts and realities of the cultures of the East in KPS the most significant is the concept of *mijnuroba* (love). Substantiating his own understanding of *mijnur* in the Prologue, Rustaveli refers the reader to the Arab culture. Presenting the suffering from love as an incurable malady obtained a special literary and aesthetic meaning in the poetry of the Bedouin (Udhrah) tribes of Central Arabia in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, the poets of which wrote verses on a fatal and almost mystic love that could bring only ordeal, with death being the only possible way out of it. The main motifs of the Udhri lyrics (loss of consciousness, shedding tears of blood, roaming the plains, etc) acquired greater meaning and depth not only in Sufi poetry, but in the KPS and Troubadour poetry.

Yet, the conventional motifs, which are typical for both concepts – *mijnuroba* and Islam – are encountered in Rustaveli's work only as readymade formulae, which are given a different interpretation as a result of literary revision.