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THE IDEA OF BEAUTIFUL IN THE SOURCES OF ISLAM*

INTRODUCTION

Throughout their historical development, the Islamic and Islamicized peoples have been the bearers of more than one branches of art. Some of these arts have been and still are inherent with the Islamic world only (arabesques, calligraphy, carpet making and faience), whereas some others, such as architecture, architectonic mono-dimensional plastic art, and garden architecture, have come to be among the top-world class accomplishments. On the other hand, some other branches have also developed early on in this same world, such as music, miniature painting, poetry and shadow theater; however, they have never obtained the status of mass arts, and there are some branches too which never developed there, at least not officially and under the public auspices, such as sculpture, picture and wall painting, drama and dance. The branches that have developed and evolved have their place in science and they are most often denoted by a collective although inadequate term of *Islamic art* or *the art of Islam*.

The question is arises as to which extent this art has an actual, genetic link with Islam as a doctrine, also used as guidance by the people who have been the bearers of these values. The question can also be rephrased in this way: does Islam have an approach towards art, what is this approach, why is it such, and what kind of role did it play in the life of art?

Thus far, this question has only been brought up in various manuals and studies related to the art history of Islamic peoples, mainly involving painting, and on such occasions it has always been stressed that Islam was against painting, always stopping at this point, without even trying to enter the essence of the phenomena. However, we will not find the answer to this question even in the rules of Islam themselves. There is not a single rule there, which is indirectly *advocating for* or *objecting against* any activity we nowadays denote as art. This is not because Islam did not assign itself with the task to also resolve art-related issues, but this involves a misunderstanding in connection to the term itself. Namely, *art* as an intellectualized perception of unity of action between the man and the spirit itself, and *aesthetics* as a branch of philosophy determining exactly this unity, finding enjoyment in the work of art

* See: "Ideja lijepog u izvorima islama". In: *POF XXIV/1974*, Sarajevo, 1976, pp. 33-54.

and using it as a basis to judge whether the *new* disciplines formed as independent sciences in the world only with the appearance of the Renaissance. Let us not forget that in the West both the Romanesque and Gothic styles saw only *utilitarian* objects in pictures and statues, that is, that it was the Renaissance only that liberalized icons and statues and opened the path for pictures and sculpture as *beauty*, then that the term *aesthetics* was denominated for the first time in science only in 1743, and that even on the today Yugoslav territory the word *art*, denoting this discipline, is a text-book coinage only some hundred years old (Vuk's Dictionary from 1851 does not contain it). Therefore, it is useless to look for mention or discussion of any such discipline either in the rules of Islam or in the older literature of either Eastern or Western origins. That this is so, at least in the East, we have proof in the Arabic philology itself, which has only recently introduced the term for art as *al-fann* (the basic meaning is "type, kind") and for aesthetics as *uṣūl-ul-ğamāl* ("rules of beauty"), anyway not a good one either.

In the civilizations preceding the Renaissance, including Islam and the Islamic world, the perception of the new-age term of art was obviously expressed with the terms of *beauty* and *beautiful*. Unlike contemporary art, in which a piece of work can also be artistic without presence of the phenomenon of beauty (in abstract painting, modern aestheticians see no beauty but it is based on other aspects that they announce it as art), in the past worlds of thought the idea of beauty was the main sensational preoccupation, so it is this that is the exclusive bearer of the work called by a subsequent term *artistic*.

When we have thus gradually reached the term *beautiful* and *beauty*, which are the main topics of aesthetics itself as new disciplines, then, concerning the attitude of the Islam towards art, we have opened the door for a whole small world in which we find not only notions of beautiful and beauty, but also presentations of objects of beauty, even judgements on such objects as bearers of the idea of the beautiful. This is used to establish the essential notion that the *aesthetic of Islam* only exists, naturally, in the form of presenting the basic principles and is communicated in a specific manner, somewhere indirect and somewhere even a direct one.

I have dedicated this paper specifically to the theory of the idea of the beautiful in Islam as the basics of the Islamic aesthetics. Exactly because I have reduced the topic to analysis of the basics, and I have taken information on the very sources of Islam, directly from Qur'an, which is marked as a godly book, and from the *hadith*, which encompasses the Islamic tradition (everything communicated or silently approved by Muhammad the Prophet). Let me immediately stress that both of these sources are rather extensive in terms of these topics and contain answers to many of the questions asked. If we also use the assistance of the aspects of other rules from the same sources, including primarily the attitudes towards monotheism, then those from the domain of dogmatics, as presented in the Islam, and ethics (*aḥlāq*) itself, then it is in this small world as a view of spiritual development that we also find answers to all the questions asked.

This is my perception of the attitude of Islam towards the idea of beautiful and indirectly towards art in general. The path of difficulties and dangers. I deliberately take do not the assistance of any comparative materials, lest I should disturb the water at the very source, or come into a position to have a much broader range of topics opened. This is only a contribution to the debate on the issue – an attempt to catalogue the basic notions in this domain.

1. CULTURAL AND THOUGHT-RELATED BACKGROUND

The Qur'an and Hadith were pronounced in Arabic and, time-wise taken, are primarily intended for the Arabs. The Qur'an commentators emphasize that the Qur'an is communicated with that vocabulary which is understood by people, and when this is so, and there is no reason to contradict this, then the perception of the aesthetic *beautiful* was already there, and Qur'an is now only affirming and developing it. And this further means that the society itself in which the Qur'an was announced had a certain cultural background which was adequate for accepting and understanding the then perceptions of the beautiful and to form some new ones.

There are also a number of historical factors which speak exactly in those terms. It seems to be an injustice for Arabia and the Arabs as the initial bearers of Islam when it is stressed that the pre-Islamic Arabia was a country of the Beduins and that these same Beduins had only tents, with carpets in them and camels or horses outside them, and had poems and poet meetings in the society. Right at the time of emergence of Islam, Arabia was also a country of a definite civilization, that is a soil where cultural influences met and intertwined not only from the country of Hiğaz but also from some other more far away countries. The centers of this civilization were the trading cities of *Tā'if*, *Makka* and *Yatrib* (Medina), as well as a number of oases. The main trading road led through *Hiğāz*, the so-called *spice road*, which, running through all the three aforementioned places, connected Yemen in the south of Arabia with Syria in the north and was the central nerve of this civilization. This road was used for heavy trading activity and the aforementioned places conveyed cultural influences from the south, from Abyssinia, which at the time was also in Yemen and which held the mentioned trade road in its hands, then from the north, from Persia, Syria, and even from Byzantium itself. Here came merchants from the centers of all these countries and there they went with caravans from Hiğaz itself. Let us not forget that Muhammad himself traded and made trade trips until the beginning of revelation of Islam; it is even known that he traveled with goods into some areas of Syria and with had some success. How strong and significant this inter-country trade was is testified by the data saying that a caravan from Makka bringing in commodities from Gaza, involved in the al-Badr Battle of the year 624, had one thousand camels and goods valued at 50,000 Arab dinars (some 20,000 pound sterling). In the promotion of material culture heritage, of particular significance were

also three oases in the vicinity of Makka, and these were 'Ukāz, Mağanna and *Du-l-Mağāz*, as famous annual trade fairs (*sūq*) and meetings where popular poets competed for the first prize. These gatherings where the whole Northern Arabia flocked to exerted a great influence both in cultural interaction and in cohesion of the then urban settlements as centers of the civilization with a deep background. It is automatically understood that this road was also used to bring to Hiğaz pieces of artwork and other influences of spiritual, religious and material nature. Some more comprehensive statements provided by historian Filip Hiti in his renowned book *The History of Arabs* showed that even a whole number of foreign cultural terms entered the very Arabic language heritage through this road, such as for instance *ğahannam* (hell), *mā'ida* (table), *miḥrāb*, *minbar*, *muṣṭaf*, *šayṭān* and the like from the Ethiopian language, or *kanīsa* and *bī'a* (church), *qindīl* (lamp, originally *candela* from Latin), *qaṣr* (castle, palace, originally *castrum* from Latin), and the like, from Syria. The term *ṣūra* (image), which also appears in the Qur'an and Hadīth and which is so much addressed by theologians when speaking about eradication of idolatry in the Islam has also come into the Arabic vocabulary by way of this other road. As reported by Hiti, in his work *Al-Itqān*, the renowned writer *As-Suyūtī* made a sequence of as many as 118 foreign, non-Arabic words in the Qur'an itself, which of itself speaks of these influences and inter-reactions.

Some even more direct indicators of the material and philosophical background of Hiğaz in the Muhammad era are provided by the hadith itself by way of telling, that is, stating the words of Muhammad. All the hadith collections contain vast information on this, of which I have reviewed and used for this paper the two of the most famous ones, *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* by *al-Buḥārī*, and *aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* by *al-Muslim*. According to the data from these sources, the Arabs of Medina and Makka do not live under tents, but in brick houses, denoted by the word *dār* or *bayt* (the word *bayt* is used equally for the house of people in Hiğaz and for the house of believers in the paradise!), and this same house has a sofa (*suffā*), probably a porch, and in the interior itself it had a carpet on the floor, armchairs and textile curtains, which seem to be replacing the wings of wooden doors.

Houses echoed with singing and with such singing the music could be heard of the tambourines, drums and some other instruments, and this activity was predominantly performed by the Ethiopian immigrants. Such events also took place at Muhammad's home, and in this way female slaves also had fun on their holidays, and according to a hadith text, Muhammad saw this and ordered that singing and music should be continued and stressed that everyone has a holiday and the right to have fun on such an occasion.

The city of Medina was a strong trade and handicraft center. There were also permanent merchants from other places. This city also had a separate quarter of textile products. This source was used by Muhammad's wife 'Āi'ša to decorate her own home. These textiles that 'Āi'ša brought into her home contained embroidered or woven *living* being images, in relation with which,

directly following this, numerous pieces of hadith were created banning making and keeping images of living beings (as tools of idolatry). Two hadith texts from the collection of hadiths by al-Muslim, vol. VII (Istanbul, 1331), pp. 155-162, show two specific painting motives on 'Āi'ša's home textiles: birds and winged horses, and another hadith text in the same collection even show the images of Maria (*tamāfilu Maryam*) in another home in Medina during the very Muhammad's times.

Among handicrafts flourishing at Muhammad's times, in addition to weavers, sewers, blacksmiths, masons, lumberjacks, wicker crafts, wood carvers, leather workers, shavers, butchers and the like, who are all mentioned in hadith texts, there were also *goldsmiths*, and even *painters*. This former handicraft, as reported by Rifa Rafi' in his work *Nihāyāt-ul-īğāz fī širāṭi sākin-il-Ḥiğāz*, was in the hands of the Jews. There were even some masters in this handicraft. There is a reported case of a man who had lost his nose in the war, so the metalworkers of Medina made first a silver nose for him, and then when the silver started oxidizing and stink, Muhammad gave a recommendation that a nose of gold should be made, which the man did. Muhammad's wife 'Āi'ša wore a *necklace* around her neck. Muhammad himself wore a *ring* on his hand, made for him by those same goldsmiths of Medina and he used it as his personal seal. According to hadith texts from the collection by Al-Buhari, vol. VII, pp. 50-54, this ring of Muhammad was first made of gold, and then the people started making rings for themselves made of this precious metal, and Muhammad then made for himself another one made of silver as a less expensive material. The same sources state that one ring had an engraved (*naqsh*) inscription *Muḥammad resūl-Allāh*, and another, subsequent ring had an engraved inscription consisting of three lines, with the following names one below the other: *Muḥammad, Resūl, Allāh*. Al-Buhari also reports that this second ring of Muhammad was later on worn by khalfas *Abū Bakr, 'Umar*, and then *'Uṣmān*, until the latter had by negligence dropped into the *Arīs* well, where every trace was lost of it.

Two hadith texts indicate of existence of painting in Medina at the times of Muhammad, exactly among the initial Muslims. According to one of the two, brought by al-Muslim at the aforementioned place, in Medina there lived a man who did painting (*taṣwīr*), even as a profession. He showed his paintings to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās, Muhammad's contemporary and teller of a large number of hadith pieces, and told him that he had done those paintings by himself. Abdullah ibn Abbas warned him of Muhammad's words related to painting living beings and in the end, he happened to add as follows: "If you have to work, then do vegetation (*šağar*) and that which has no soul!" Let us mention by the way, this report contains the preserved basis in its most original form for development of the arabesque as the most original artistic branch of the Islamized peoples. In another text of hadith, contained in the collection by al-Buhari, *Abū Zur'a* communicated the report on the wall painting: he entered with *Abū Ḥurayra* a house in Medina and in the upper section of the house (*a'lāhā*) he saw a painter painting something

(*yusawwiru*), and then on this occasion he cited the words of Muhammad restricting painting.

There existed in Hiğaz a specific collection of sculpture, too. This is the temple of *Ka'ba* in Makka, an ethnic and religious meeting point for the pre-Islamic polytheist Arabs, a real gallery of statues as idols. One of those statues is said to have been even eaten by the pre-Islamic believers, which means that those idols were also represented in some ways other than stone. It is possible that those works were made there, in Hiğaz itself, but also that they were made by some masters in some other regions. Thus, Muhammad's biographer *Ibn Hišām* preserved a tradition whereby the principal idol, the statue of *Hubal*, represented as a human, had been brought in from aside, from Moab or from Mesopotamia.

The data presented provide a picture of Muhammad's era in Hiğāz, a place also containing significant material values such as works of art, regardless of the question whether the Arabs of Hiğaz had ever seen beauty or art in such manufactures. An Arab was surely not even watching nor seeing the beauty in the sculpture of an idol, these were only items of utilizable nature or, the categorical manner of Muhammad's monotheism, capable of eradicating polytheism and communication with Allah through iconography, had overshadowed any artistic sense in those pieces of work, but one can by no means say that at the time there was no artistic work at all, and we have even seen some examples of even keeping some items of art as a vision of beauty. It has been proven that we now have a direct proof of existence of painting (both picture and wall painting) at Muhammad's times in Medina itself, and the opinion that the Arabs had no inclination towards painting will have to be thoroughly reviewed. The inclination obviously existed just like with other peoples too, but here in the very conception of the new Islamic epoch it was extinguished by requirements of a quite different nature, that is, diverted into a new branch manifesting itself in the arabesque and in the mono-dimensional vegetable and geometrical ornamental painting in general.

On the very occasion of revelation the Qur'an and hadith, the Arabs of Hiğaz obviously had a developed vision of beauty, they even sought it and enjoyed it, and with the announcement of Islam they accepted this same beauty and brought it way further on the established paths of knowledge, however partially in a quite new direction (abandoning picture painting and sculpture while adopting the arabesque).

2. TERMINOLOGY OF VALUE-RELATED QUALITIES

In relation to the above presented, it is natural to assume that in Hiğaz as the soil where Qur'an and hadith were announced, even before such announcement there existed appropriate terms used in aesthetic evaluation. And we can find such terminology in the language of Qur'an and hadith. It represents small monuments for itself on the path of exploring the Arab-Islamic concept

of beauty as a basis for the idea of art, so this is why I present it, even though in a brief excerpt.

Concerning the denomination of beauty, here we come across three terms: *al-ğamāl*, *al-ğusn*, and *al-bahğa*. The first term denotes exclusively the sensual, aesthetic beauty, and the second expression is used equally for both sensual beauty and for something beautiful in a non-aesthetic sense, in the meaning of *goodness* in general. In one hadith text in the collection by al-Muslim, vol. VIII, p. 145, for representation of beauty of *the face and clothes* of those who enjoy in paradise, both these terms were used one after the other (*ğusnan wa ğamālan*), even four times, which clearly shows that these two expressions can be considered synonyms. The term *al-bahğa* is met separately, and in one place in Qur'an only (surah XXVII-60). It is used as a description of beauty of a park in paradise in the meaning of a particular value: beauty shining through with its freshness (for instance, a rose with the morning dew), the beautiful at its very source (*fa anbatnā bihi ħadā' iqa dāta bahğa*). Derived from the same base of the same term, here you can also meet the adjective *bahğ*, used in the meaning of the beautiful also used for the objects of nature (surah L-7).

Deriving from the language root of the first two terms, we can also meet the adjectives used for description of value of the beauty quality, as follows: *ğamīl*, *ğamīla* and *ğasan*, *ğasana*, beautiful (*m* and *f*), where the first expression denotes aesthetic, sensual description, and the second one denotes both the aesthetic and non-aesthetic beautiful. We can also meet evaluation in the third degree of this second base, exactly used for aesthetic evaluation of artistic beauty (surah XCV-4). The Qur'an also contains the form *al-ğusnā*, used as an adjective in superlative in plural for the names of god, and in fact for synonyms of adjectival nouns. "It is only the most beautiful names that belong to Allah" and "He has the most beautiful names" (*asmā' -ul-ğusnā*) as it says in the Qur'an in two places (surahs VII-179 and LIX-24). From this same base, the verb *ağsana* can also be found in the Qur'an in two places, in the meaning of *give a beautiful shape or form* (*wa ağsana şıwarakum*).

Among the 99 godly names, ordered subsequently by the Qur'an and hadith, four can be found that can contain the sense of aesthetic judging: *al-muşawwir* (the one giving the shape, shaping or forming), *al-'aliyy* (exalted), *al-badī'* (splendid), and *al-ğalīl* (magnificent). This last synonym as an adjective is used really, at least later on, directly for aesthetic evaluation of architectonic objects in the expression *āthār ğalīla* (magnificent monuments).

The repertoire of aesthetic terms in the Qur'an also contains in several places the expression *zayyana* in the meaning of *decorate*, *adorn* and the nouns derived from the same base *zīna* in the sense of *decoration*, both in the aesthetic and non-aesthetic senses.

In one place in the Qur'an (surah XXXI-19) it was said: "The ugliest of voices is a donkey's braying" (*Inna ankara-al-aşwāti la şawt-ul-ğamīr*). In this adjective we have the phenomenon of aesthetic "radiation" in the domain of singing and music as activities that we today denote as tonal arts.

There are some examples in the Qur'an and hadith where the adjectives *laḥf* and *ṭayyib* are also used in the sense *beautiful* for aesthetic evaluation, although both of these epithets are mostly used in the sense of nice, good, in the normal, popular sense.

The Qur'an has three more specific terms of the purely artistic aesthetic type; these are the noun *taqwīm* and the verbs *sawwā* and *'adala*, and they are, I believe, the terms in the most expert sense of the word, in theoretical assumptions of Islam on beauty, but exactly due to this specific quality, I will explain them later on.

3. GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS BEAUTY

A more detailed analysis of the text of Qur'an brings up an almost surprising conclusion that a solid segment of the corps of this basic source of the Islam is woven through with the idea of the beautiful. There is a similar phenomenon in the hadith texts as well. This fact already shows that the thought of Islam, expressed in the Qur'an in particular, invests particular efforts towards the idea of the beautiful. In these same sources, however, we also have an explicit attitude of Islam towards beauty as an aesthetic experience. This attitude is even given in a determined and undoubted form and it is, so to say, a stressfully active, positive one.

Islam teaches that all the spheres of the heaven, the earth and everything that is in the heavens and on the earth has been created by the will of Allah as his own creations. Such an approach has been stressed in the Qur'an in more than one place. According to this, these efforts of Allah also include the idea of the beautiful which the man experiences and enjoys, as an integral part of everything that is on the heaven and earth and that he, Allah, has given.

According to the Islam, Allah is the creator of everything living and dead (organic and inorganic matter) and gives beauty in the worlds, and he himself is the personification of beauty in its aesthetic sense. Allah is also the one not only inclined towards beauty but he who, and it has been explicitly said, also *likes* beauty. This can be testified by the aforementioned godly names probably constructed on the idea of the beautiful, as registered in the Qur'an and hadith. Related to this topic there is even an explicit attitude of Muhammad that can be denoted as a *par excellence* approach of the Islam towards the beautiful. This assumption is found in a piece of hadith in al-Muslim's collection, and it literally states as follows: "Allah is beautiful and likes beauty" (*Allāhu ḡamīl we yuḥibbu-l-ḡamāl*). As seen in the text of hadith, the definition was pronounced on the occasion of a discussion on beautiful clothes and shoes, that is, at discussing about aesthetic, that is, artistic beauty, and this shows, and it is important to note it here, that even the given Muhammad's thought about beauty pertains exactly to beauty in its aesthetic sense. According to this principle, and according to some other, indirect statements in both the leading sources of Islam too, beauty is *a godly quality*.

It is significant that Islam also stresses a further attitude that beauty is not only in Allah but that it is found in what He, Allah, has created. Such a sense is contained in the verse (*āya*) in the Qur'an as follows: "Allah is the one who creates and who establishes and gives a shape to everything" (surah LIX-24), and it is quite explicitly given in surah *as-Sağda*, XXXII-7, stating as follows: "He who has made beautiful each thing he has created" This latter, interesting thought, significant for the Islam aestheticians, by no means addresses the beautiful in the sense of the *good* in general, but exactly the beautiful in the aesthetic, artistic sense, and this is confirmed and testified by the verses in this same surah, given immediately following the one aforementioned, stating as follows: "And he started creating the man on the earth, and then he made his stock from the seed of a rare fluid. Then he completed him (*sawwāhu*) and breathed into him a part of his spirit..." This continuation of the thought also contains the explanation that "things" that Allah has created and made beautiful need to also be understood by the *man*, and thereby also by all the rest of the *organic world*.

Leaving aside both the teaching of Islam on the method of world's creation, and the principle of European and American aesthetics according to which art can only exist in what represents creative human activity and at the same time imbued with spirit, idea, there are a number of phenomena in both organic and inorganic nature which are in concordance with the perception of Islam that there exists an idea of the beautiful in things and beings even beyond the human activity. In keeping with the presentation of European aestheticians, that art is a creative activity in which spirit, idea and ideality emerge, which is not contrary to the Islamic doctrine either, we look today at this same phenomenon in a number of occasions not formed by human: vegetation with a certain *order*, *harmony* or *eurythmics* of branches and leaves, the pineapple fruit and the snail, whose growing form develops exactly with the mathematical proportionality in the shape of logarithmic spiral, then honey comb with its hexagonal cells integrated into a system without faults and considered by modern architects the most favorable and most aesthetic shape of integrating and creation of architectonic bodies (Americans *Frank Lloyd Wright* and *Buckminster Fuller* and *Predrag Ristić* in Belgrade, who designed comb-shaped buildings, finding this shape to be "the most rational engineering construction"), and in particular, crystals in minerals, where you meet perfect distribution, an actually amazing picture of regularly distributed atoms, ions or molecules, based on which French mineralogist *A. Bravais* (1811-1863) has even systematized and introduced into science 14 crystal grids, and Soviet mineralogist *I.S. Fiodorov* established 230 spatial groups of the crystalline symmetry. When we join to these examples human build itself, which will be addressed separately, in all these phenomena established by the science thus far, there is an existing notion of *creative activity* (we do not touch on the issue of holder of such activity) and, secondly, *order system*, bordering with intellectuality, and this after all means a notion of idea, spirit, presented in even multiple, non-repeated variations. In comparison with the

theory of European and American aesthetics on the being of art as a matter of human activity, on this occasion we can ignore the issue as to whether the aforementioned phenomena constitute the being of art, but by this same rule one can not deny the fact that in these phenomena there is a spirit of shaping and distributing, an idea which is not even repeated, and an image which in accordance with even strictest philosophical rules we must denote with *order*, with beauty.

In connection to what has already been mentioned about the perception of Islam of beauty as a godly quality, now is an occasion to mention the assumption of Islam (which is indirectly presented in a number of the Qur'an and hadith texts) that the aesthetic beauty is the *adornment* (*zīna*), that is, the *blessing* (*ni'ma*) given by Allah to humans and to the world. I believe that it is exactly in this sense that the following two verse in the Qur'an mean directly, surah VII-30-31: "The sons of Adam, take your adornment (*zīnatukum*) at visit to each temple (*masjid*), avail yourself of drinking and eating, but do not dissipate, because He does not like those who dissipate. Say: who has forbidden Allah's adornments (*zīnat-Allāh*), which he has taken out for his slaves, and beautiful food?"

Finally, it is possible to establish one more specific perception of Islam related to the phenomenon of aesthetic beauty. Namely, beauty as adornment and blessing from Allah, based on this same perception, is not inherent only to humans in this earthly life and this earthly environment, it is also incorporated into the presentation of lives of believers in an eschatological world, in paradise. In many descriptions of paradise, objects of beauty and beauty itself are stressed in exaggerated dimensions. According to them, beauty is considered to be an integral part of paradise itself and to be a promised blessing for the believers. The Qur'an and hadith state that paradise and paradise enjoyments are eternal, so according to this the notion of beauty is also eternal in paradise. This entails, according to the perception of Islam, that beauty is not just the earthly adornment, but also a godly blessing in paradise, it is there as an integral part of the world of enjoyments, and just like paradise and all life within it, it is *non-passable*, eternal. Based on this one can claim that the notion of beauty is also an integral part of the Islamic faith. By these same elements, the phenomenon of beauty in the Islam can be denoted by the degree of *exaltation*.

4. WORLDS OF THE BEAUTIFUL

The previous text have shed light on and corroborated existence of a separate and thus far non-addressed side of the Islamic thought, the idea of the aesthetic beauty in general. This is how I could even end the presentation, because it was actually my goal to analyze and show whether there is at all a place for aesthetic beauty in the philosophy of Islam and what is the approach of Islam towards this specific sensitivity. However, now the other door to this

world is now also opening, providing an opportunity to also view an interesting problem: what is that which Islam sees beauty in. This question has an even broader scientific interest to it, because until to date philosophy has not offered an answer as to what *beauty* is and where this sense comes from and, secondly, the objects of beauty, as determined in a sensitive way, in the historic sense are rather variable ones, dependent on the meridians, parallels, on centuries, worlds and on a number of other material and spiritual conditions.

In these terms too there are a number of data and approaches. Let me say right away, findings partially indicate of the identity with the theories of other civilizations on what *the beautiful* is, but there are a number of specific qualities too, inherent only with the Orient, and even there where ideas meet that are identical or approximately similar to those coming from other civilizations, a novelty can now be introduced that such ideas exactly are also found here, in the Islam, which thus far has not been scientifically emphasized anywhere.

The sources available indicate that Islam has stressed the following types of beauty: godly, cosmic, natural, human and the beauty of inorganic objects as human creations. And this means, based on the Islamic perception, that the *beautiful* as the basic or at least one of the ideas of the *art* is turned towards the god, the cosmos, the living and material nature, humans, and towards products themselves, as works of those same humans. A very vast expansion of space. Except for the human creations, imbued with *spirit*, that is, *idea*, in all the other aforementioned forms of the Islamic *beautiful* the contemporary European and American aesthetics finds no necessary, real attributes of *art*. Nevertheless, this does not in the least prevent a claim whereby however there is the *beautiful* and the *artistic* in the perception of Islam even beyond human activity. When we speak about the philosophy and the perception of the *beautiful*, that is of the *artistic* in general in the East, including Islam, then we should abandon the European and American logos and be tolerant in acknowledging the right to the Islam to have its own philosophy, a perception of the world, and based on this also its own notion of the *beautiful and artistic* at least to the extent to which that same East (which emphasizes existence of the *beautiful* even beyond the minds and ten fingers of the humans) has indebted the West with its large humanistic heritage (while the West does not recognize existence of art beyond the activities of humans and their spirit). The more so because by its *history* and by its *spirit* the East is older than both Europe and America.

THE BEAUTY OF THE COSMOS is expressed in those segments of the Qur'an addressing the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky and the seven heavens. A particular documentary quality in those terms provide all these statements in the Qur'an:

- "We have adorned the heaven nearest to the Earth with a divineness of stars" (surah XXXVII-6),

- “We have adorned the heaven nearest to the Earth with bodies shining and we are guarding them. This is the order of the Almighty, the All-Knowing One” (surah XLI-12).
- “Why do not they look into the skies above them as we have built and adorned them, without a single hole existing in them?” (surah L-6).

The aesthetic sense of these verses as the position of the Qur’an towards beauty of the cosmos may be formulated approximately like this: there is a beauty of the visible sky, because it is adorned with stars which represent a divinity of themselves, because it is whole, and there are no holes in this wholeness, there are no faults. From the position of the art theory, a particular attention in these statements is drawn by the emphasis that there are no *holes* in the sky. If we have the perception of the sky and the stars on the sky such as we see them nowadays, we associatively call into our mind and spirit the idea of order, and by the very theory of order and harmony we can not but have the impression that the “there are no holes in it” means exactly this and that there is no *disharmony* in the idea, the spirit and the order of the sky. This is also indicated upon by the fact that the very term *hole or cavity* (*furūġ*), used in the aforementioned description, in its lexical, picturesque meaning does not offer a possibility for creation of any other different perception of the expressed thought.

THE BEAUTY OF THE NATURE. This type of Islamic perception of beauty can also be denoted by the term of *the landscape beauty*, and this expression corresponds either as much as or even better to the assumptions in the Qur’an and hadith. The Qur’an contains more than one examples of stressing the beauty of *land*, true, not in a quite definite speech, but the deepest expressions of natural beauty both in the Qur’an and in the hadith are found in the descriptions of the *ġannat*, the eschatological Eternal Home of the believers. In the Qur’an itself I found 26 picturesque descriptions of the paradise, and in all these places paradise is presented as a garden or a park adorned with exactly the earthly organic nature and other amenities. Paradise as a whole is pictured as the world of the beautiful both in the aesthetic and profane senses, and in a very emphasized form, and this represents the thought of obvious animation of man to exactly the representations of the *beautiful* (spiritual and bodily enjoyments). All these assumptions on the beauty of paradise, based on this, in fact speak about the elements of the earthly *landscape*, experienced by the man as beautiful, although all these descriptions were obviously created with a specific purpose, as an antithesis to the *ġehennem*, hell, the place of fire, ugliness and suffering. To these terms do the very terms of the paradise speak: *ġanna* and pl. *ġannāt*, *ḥadiqa* and pl. *ḥadiqāt*, which in the lexical sense mean nothing else than literally *garden, courtyard or park*. Let us just take a look at several such descriptions, in the essence of emphasizing the beauty of the earthly landscapes, the vegetal nature:

- “Hurry up to get the forgiveness of your Lord and off to the paradise whose broadness is like the heavens and the earth” (surah III – 33-134).

- “And those who believe and do good deeds we will take to paradise gardens under which rivers flow. They will live there eternally. They will even have clean mates there, and We will take them into deep shadow” (surah IV-36).
- “Those humble ones are on the safe place, in paradise gardens and among sources; clothed in satin and brocade and are turned to each other. So this will be. And We will mate them with large-eyed beauties. They will seek all sorts of fruits in them and will be safe” (surah XLIV- 51-55).
- “In it (paradise) is a source flowing, in it seats are heightened, and beaks laid out, and pillows set up, and rugs spread around” (surah LXXXVIII – 12-16).
- “And for those who are afraid of the throne of their Lord, there are two paradise gardens... Both adorned with groves... In them are two sources flowing... In them there is male and female gender of each fruit... They will be resting on the rug made of brocade, and the fruits of paradise will be at hand’s reach... In them are virgins with their eyes looking down, not touched by either man or genie... They are like sugar and honey... And besides these two paradise gardens are other two paradise gardens... Both are covered in green... In them are two eternal sources... In them there are fruits, dates and pomegranates. In them are beautiful women... The beauties are in tents... Not touched by either man or genie... They will be leaned on green pillows and on a lovely rug” (surah LV – 46-76).

Hadith texts pertaining to descriptions of paradise are also numerous and, for instance, in the work by *an-Nawawī* titled *Riyāḍ-uṣ-ṣāliḥīn min kalāmi sayyid-il-mursalīn* they take up whole five pages of the subsequently printed text. The basic feature of the description of paradise in hadith texts lies also in landscape and the beauty of landscape. Here are two such examples, that I have taken directly from al-Muslim’s collection, vol. VIII, 144-145:

- In *ḡanna*, there is so tall and such tree that a man riding and travelling on the horse can enjoy the shadow of this tree for a hundred years.
- In *ḡanna*, there is a square to which people will come every Friday. And then the northern wind blows and caresses their faces and their clothes, and their magnificence and beauty (*ḥusnan wa ḡamālan*) thereby increases. And they return to their folks, while having become more magnificent and more beautiful. And somebody tells them “Welcome, and by Allah, since you have been gone, your magnificence and beauty have become even bigger.” “And you, and we swear it by Allah, since we left you, have increased in magnificence and beauty.”

Interpreters of the Qur’an and other Islamic theologians stress the description of paradise, provided in the Qur’an and hadith, as I stated, as a representation of contrasts, an antithesis to *ḡahannam*, hell. This logical assumption by itself goes in favor of the perception that the image of paradise focuses on the ideal vision of the *beautiful*. It is understandable to understand it so anyway, because hell is something *ugly*, and paradise is a counterpoint for that, something *beautiful*.

Interpreters of the Qur'an, particularly those more reputable ones, do not allow for the *ġanna* to be understood in literal terms, *ad verbum*, based on the descriptions given in the Qur'an and hadith, and they claim that these descriptions are just allegories for something else, invisible and unknown, the deliberation of which they do not dare enter, because they stress that invisible things can not be subjected to application of analogy (*qiyās*). Commentator *Ġalāluddīn as-Suyūṭī* (1445-1505) is even somewhat more specific in this direction and he believes that the position in *ġanna* is completely different from the position in this world, and that such a description of *ġanna* is provided because we can encourage people to do something only by using *such instruments and perceptions they have become accustomed to*. Such statements, even though not touching on the aspect of beauty in general, directly confirm the thesis that the description of paradise as something elevated uses the image of the worldly landscape and, most importantly, expresses aesthetic sensuality too, which by these same descriptions is understood as an integral part of both landscape and paradise.

Based on the communicated descriptions and those not presented here, landscape and landscape beauty as an allegory for paradise itself could even be pictured like this:

- A park of cosmetic proportions, as large as the earth and the sky. Two and two parks and more individual ones, ones below the others, so the relief is terrace-like.
- Below the parks rivers flow with clear waters, fresh milk, sweet wine and strained honey (XLVII-15), which means that the soil is in elevation towards the valley, the riverbed. The parks themselves contain a number of sources which constantly boil and flow, one of them is called by the name of *Salsabīl* (LXXVI-1718), and from those sources water and mixed beverages are served named *kāfūr* (LXXVI-5), *zanġabīl* (LXXVI-17), and *tasnīm* (LXXXIII-27).
- Parks are abundant in high vegetation, and under this vegetation is vast shade, green has covered the whole park. And fruitful fruits of dates, bananas, adorned with fruits, pomegranates and grapes, and other fruits.
- Parks also have buildings, and these are *castles* (*quṣūr*), *apartments* (*masākīn*), *tents* (*ḥiyām*) and *deep arbors* (*zill zilāl*). Based on these, this involves *landscape architecture* as well. In those buildings, and in the outdoors, the landscape also contains rugs, sofas upholstered in brocade, beds and green pillows.
- Park and all of its parts are intensively populated, but this residing is not regular existential one, but it is experiencing of bodily and spiritual enjoyments, because parks are otherwise spaces only for experiencing. There is conspicuous presence of paradise virgins, Islamic nymphs (*ḥūr*) and boys, pages (*ġilmān*), standing in service to the users of the park.
- The parks are also ruled by weather, slight wind caressing the faces and clothes of the paradise residents, which thus become even more beautiful.

Before us is a picturesque, actually masterful presentation of the ideal landscape, even of garden and landscape architecture. Today garden and landscape architecture is also denoted as art, but regardless of this and regardless of the European aesthetic theories, even if it was not for the art in the nature, it is an undoubted fact that the man has always adored natural landscapes, he observed it, saw in it *beauty*, sensually enjoyed this beauty and took an observant, that is, aesthetic attitude towards it. This is exactly how all of this has been also presented in the Islam, including parts of the Qur'an with descriptions of paradise, and this means with presentations of this world's *nature* and its *landscapes*, which both by their number and contents constitute maybe even the most beautiful segments of this book. The critics of Islam, using some descriptions of *ġanna* from the Qur'an, have gone down a single-direction path and have strayed by reducing sensuality, given in the description of *ġanna*, down to physical enjoyment. Our analysis of the Islamic perception of paradise, presented here from another standpoint, indicates that this perception is a personification of the landscape nature on *the earth* and the world of *aesthetic sensuality*, or, to put it more critically, at least aesthetic also, but to such a large extent that it constitutes both the framework and the basis for the whole presentation.

The given interesting painting composition of *ġannat* with a landscape and landscape that is garden architecture by itself entails an equally interesting question, whence in the sources of the Islam such a vision of paradise and the landscape as an object of beauty and admiration. I believe that it involves a direct influence of the region in which the Qur'an and hadith were announced. It has already been stated that the Qur'an, in terms of time, was announced first to the Arabs and that it contains the vocabulary and the perceptions that people can understand, and these two elements taken together show that the vision of paradise too, that is, the beauty of landscape is presented directly based on the Arab attitude, both existential and aesthetic one, according to the three major elements, so much necessary for living, while being really so scarce in Arabia: water, vegetation and shade, as protection from the strong sun rays. This obviously involves the image of rare desert oases containing these three savior elements. The truthfulness of this is testified in the first place by the fact that in the image of paradise given in the form of a landscape we can see emphasized or even domineering these three elements exactly, and, secondly, that the presentation of this same landscape uses numbering of fruits (dates, bananas, pomegranates, grapes) which grows predominantly in the tropical strip, and some of them (dates and bananas) within the tropical strip only, which also contains Hiġaz.

Science has long ago established that the climate allowing wearing of light and flighty clothes has exerted influence over the phenomenon and importance of nudity in the ancient Greek sculpture. In the presentation of paradise as a landscape, based on images and circumstances of the Arabic oases, we have a completely analogous phenomenon. This second case is thus one more example, a new one, to justify the theory of environment in aesthetic in general.

Exaltation of vegetation and water as the major elements of the landscape and landscape beauty, given in the Qur'an and hadith to the extent bordering with cult has also found a practical application in the profane lives of all the Islamized peoples, with some of them to a good extent while with some other to a stronger one. It is often stressed that in all these cases in the creation of love towards vegetation and water the direct influence was made by just such attitudes of the Qur'an on landscape and the beauty of landscape. I am not a supporter of such a perception as an exclusive rule, except when we speak about tap water which is really intensively brought into settlements, in front of mosques, other public facilities, and houses themselves, by the rules of the Qur'an, but by quite different provisions (requirements for body washing). Such an attitude may be taken primarily based on the generally known fact that there is no people which does not cherish a feeling for water and vegetation in a landscape, and then by historical reports that cults of gardens with vegetation and water existed even before Islam; let us remember only Semiramida's monumental "eternal gardens", which were depicted by as early as ancient Greek authors, then the gardens of the ancient Chinese, who developed this creation as a human accomplishment up to landscape and perfection, and then the holy groves next to the temples in ancient Greece, and the like. However, the fact is that it was exactly the Arabs that based on the Qur'an and hadith texts, expressed and emphasized the ideal landscape and landscape beauty in the literary, particularly codified, form, if not as the first, then surely among the first ones in the world. The presentations of paradise in the form of landscape and landscape beauty here and there also exerted an indirect influence on the formation of similar creations. For two cases we even have obvious evidence. These are the city of Ṭā'if in Hiğaz, which by its vegetation and configuration is very close to the Qur'an description of paradise, particularly that one in surah XLVII, verse 15, and the Moorish summer residence of *Generalife* next to the Alhambra necropolis in Granada (built from around 1248 to around 1359). If this nowadays Granada-based garden landscape complex is still far away from its original contents, he who had a rare experience occasion to see and experience it in person, can not but have an impression that it was built directly based on the Qur'an paradise description pattern. Anyway, this is shown in the title itself: *Generalife* is a hispanicized Arabic name, given after *ğannat* itself: *Ğannāt-ul-'arīfa* – a Famous Park.

THE HUMAN BEAUTY is a completely separate topic addressed in the Qur'an. In there, beauty is not only recognized and emphasized but this category in the scale of aesthetic gradation is literally given the place in superlative. There is one separate reason why the object of human beauty in the Qur'an may be considered both separate and exquisite. This is the phenomenon of an amazing identicalness of the Qur'an attitude with the classical and new age aesthetic science theories, even with the most recent, most modern research related to the nature of the human beauty.

In the presented texts of the Qur'an paradise description we could already notice that among the promised beauties of paradise there appear paradise virgins, nymphs, too, which by itself indicates that this involves emphasis of anthropoid beauty, that is, judgement on the *beauty of the woman*. This example, however, can be subjected to criticism and be left out, because it can also be interpreted in the way that it involves another, erotic sensuality. This is not a problem, because there are also other, more specific attitudes that can be used to derive conclusions. I have noticed three aesthetic judgements on the human beauty, all of the three found in the Qur'an. Here they are:

- In two places, in surahs XL-64 and LXIV-3, it literally says: “He (Allāh) has given you the form and made your appearances beautiful” (*aḥsana ṣuwarakum*).
- Surah LXXXII – 6-8 states as follows: “Oh thou man, what has blinded you towards your noble Lord? Towards Him who has created you and harmonized you (*fa sawwāka*), and symmetrized you (*fa ‘adalaka*).”
- Surah XCV – 4 states as follows: “We have created the man in the most beautiful proportion (*fī aḥsani taqwīm*).”

The first of the aforementioned texts provides a general judgement that the human appearance is also an object of beauty.

The second text does not deal with beauty directly, but sheds light on exactly organic elements of that beautiful quality, and these are *harmony* and *symmetry*. In the third setting, both these are integrated: it deals with the basic element of that beautiful quality, on the proportion, and even specifies that this proportion is the *most beautiful* one. The first of these evaluations uses the expressions *sawwā* and *‘adala*. In an ordinary, lexical sense, *sawwā* means make something complete, finalize something, complete it, assemble it, then make it even in a way that there are no rough places, irregularities, and *‘adala* means make something even so that both sides (around an imagined axis) are equal to each other in all. It is based on this that, viewing these expressions from the standpoint of topics they relate to, I could translate them with terms *harmony* and *symmetry*. The third expression *taqwīm* means proportion (*taswiyya*) in beauty and perfection even in the ordinary sense, thus it has been translated in the form of an expert term *proportion*. For such understanding of those meanings and for the given translation of these words, which now receive their more distinct, aesthetic meanings, we also have support in the commentary of the Qur'an titled *al-Kaššāf* by *az-Zamaḥṣari* (died in 1143-44), Cairo 1307/1889-20, p. 529, and in works by other interpreters of the Qur'an.

The presented Qur'anic explanation of the secret of human beauty entails that the measurement for humans is emphasized to be *the best proportion*. This is a quite definite example in the sources of the Islam, where an observing judgement is taken and where aesthetic is applied directly, and exactly in the field of painting and composition evaluation.

When this is so, then it is exactly in the world of aesthetics that a thought-related contact is established between Islam and the world of the Antics, on

the one side, and between the new age theory of art on the other side, thus revealing that the sources of Islam too know about the measurement of man as *the most beautiful code of beauty* which was developed much later and denoted by the well-known term *golden section* (*sectio aurea*).

The secret of beauty of the human body as the most beautiful measurement and code of beauty lies, as established in the science, in the interrelated measuring, that is, actually mathematical proportion of the parts of such body, in which a smaller part relates to the larger as the larger one relates to the whole. In the case of the very human organism, this understands vertical proportions and in the other cases, such as buildings and the like, both vertical and horizontal ones. By stressing that "man is the measurement for all things", this rule of beauty was known and applied as early as by the ancient Greeks and Romans, of course, each of these in their own way, depending on the starting mathematical figures (the figure of the smallest measuring part), and it was in the Roman society that the first theoretician of the human bodily proportions appeared – *Marcus Vitruvius Polio*, who addressed this rule as the most beautiful measurement in his work *De architectura libri decem*. The Renaissance, considered to be an embodiment of full-flown aesthetics, and the centuries to follow, provided a number of new theoreticians who developed the proportions of human organism as an ancient code of beauty both in mathematical and practical terms, given it a definition and the name of *golden section* and reintroduced it into life: *Leonardo da Vinci* (1452-1519), *Albrecht Durer* (1476-1528), and others, and more recently in our country architect *Milan Zloković* (1898-1965) and in France architect *Le Corbusier* (1887-1965), who, in his work *Modulor* or *An Essay on Harmony Measurement for Human Proportions Universally Applicable in Architecture and Mechanics* has gone furthest, and even patented his discovery. It is exactly in our Yugoslav reference materials that another separate work exists on this same topic, presenting and expertly analyzing the assumptions of all the renowned theoreticians of the *golden section*, as well as those other ones, who based proportions in architecture and in art in general on other measurements. This is the work titled *Teoretičari proporcija* [Theoreticians of Proportions], Belgrade 1967, by Zloković's professional student and today a professor of the Belgrade Faculty of Architecture named *Djordje Petrović* (born in 1927).

It is of interest for science, or rather for the theory of art in general, to state that the circle of the renowned major theoreticians of human organism proportions is also joined by Islam, that is, the Qur'an as its main source, which has thus far remained totally unknown even in the work by Petrović and in other works related to this topic. It was shown that Islam registers and accepts the measurement of man as the most beautiful proportion as early as in the 7th century, exactly in the time between 611-632, in which the whole of the Qur'an was revealed; there is even a certain definite date to be stated as the date of appearance of the theory of measurement of man in Islam, and this is years 611-622, when, according to other Islamic sources, surah *at-Ťin* was announced in Makka, containing the thought that the man was built in

the "most beautiful proportion". This rule of Islam also appeared deep in the Medieval period and, more importantly to state, in an epoch integrating the world of the Antics with the spiritual expansion of the Renaissance.

The finding rises two very significant questions: 1. How come that the build of the human body as a code of the "most beautiful proportion" appears in the Islam as well, and at a very early point and, 2. Was this code also known and, particularly applied, by architects and other artists in the Islamic world?

Although the answer to both of these questions extends beyond the framework of the specified topic, I believe it necessary to provide at least a briefest kind of an explanation in this aspect as well in order to provide a complete overview of the Islamic attitude towards the idea of the beautiful, that is, towards the beautiful in art. The origin of Islamic vision related to the human build as the most beautiful proportion may without further comment be denoted as heritage of the past epochs, that is, of the ancient Greece, whose artists were still working and building in the Middle East (Syria) too when Islam appeared, and Qur'an could take this rule from the field, from the very life of the Arabs, so as it took from this same source, as I have shown, the very terminology related to aesthetic evaluation. As for the second question, it is more difficult to provide a decisive answer for this one, because until to-date no systematic or extensive research has been done in the Islamic architecture as the most numerous structures where the phenomenon of this type of proportions could be found. Even the little instances when research has been done of the proportions in painting forms on the Islamic architectural structures show that in the composition of space the *practice* both known and applied the measurement in the spirit of the golden section, that is, continuous distribution, in which the proportion of man also stands. Thus, the most recent research done by architect Djordje Petrović, communicated in his other, separate work titled *Kompozicija arhitektonskih oblika* [Composition of Architectonic Forms], Beograd 1972, 105-112, have shed light on the fact that it was in the spirit of the golden section that some of the largest mosques in the Islamic world has been structured, including the largest one actually located in Samarra (built in 848, the proportion of the internal surface sides 11:7), then also mosque *Abū Dulaf* in the vicinity of Samarra (built in 861, the proportion of the ground plan sides 8:5), then the mosque of *Ibn Tulūn* in Cairo (built from 876-879), then some in the Ottoman architecture including the mosque of Sultan Bayazit II in Istanbul (1500-1505), and the Suleymaniyya mosque in the same city (1550-1555) and the Selimiyya mosque in Edirna (1567-1574), these two latter structures done by architect *Koca Sinan*, who obviously had a good knowledge of and used the advantages of the golden section proportions in structuring his architecture.

One example of application of the golden section in the Ottoman architecture is found in our territory. This is the famous *Alağa* mosque in Foča, built in 1550-51, as the work of architect *Ramadan*, as recently reported by art historian *Andrej Andrejević* in his monograph titled *Aladža džamija u Foči* [Alağa Mosque in Foča], Beograd, 1970.

Interestingly, in emphasizing the human appearance as a source of perfect beauty, the Qur'an also considers specific parts of the human organism beautiful forms – it calls them *adornments* (*zīna*). There are several characteristic examples in those terms. Surah XXIV, verse 31, provides the rules pertaining to the company of females, thus providing as follows: “Order to the female believers to remove the eyes of strangers from themselves and let them beware of debauchery, and let them not show of their *adornments* (*min zīnati-hinna*) save the ones normally seen...” And the end of this verse also emphasizes as follows: “And let them not stomp their feet thus publicizing the *adornments* they normally hide (*mā yahfīna min zīnati-hinna*). The same surah, verse 60, states as follows: “And it is not sinful for elderly women, who are not going back into marriage, to abandon their cloaks, if it is not their intention to show their *adornments*, and they had better show their chastity.”

The presented texts show that the *adornments* are in fact specific parts of the female body. I believe that these are primarily referring to breasts and buttocks, which can be understood from the rule forbidding foot stumping, and the rule shows that of bodily adornments there only can be shown those that are seen normally (every day), and it can be understood that here all the parts of the female body have the value of *adornments*. That which the Qur'an commentators understand to be adornments excepted from covering are the face, hands and feet, so based on this these parts are denoted as adornments. Of course, taking the stand that something is an *adornment* at the same time also means the thought that this is *beautiful*. As for the head as part of the human body, it is also interesting to mention a subsequent opinion that the human head is an embodiment of beauty because, as it is stated, it is *round* and the *circle is the most beautiful shape among all geometric shapes*. So was this presented by as early as *al-Qazwini* (died in 1283) in his famous work ‘*Ağā'ib-ul-mahlūqāt wa-l-ḥaywānāt wa ḡarā'ib-ul-mawḡūdāt*, who can based on this be denoted as one of the first not only biologists but also art theoreticians in the Islamic world.

When discussing the beauty of man, that is, woman, as represented in the Qur'an, then it is of interest to inform as to what in this same perception is considered to be the *ideal* female beauty. This is the paradise virgin (nymph) *ḥawrā'*. In the Qur'an, this name appears only in plural, in the form *ḥūr*, and it is exactly from here, from this plural that the Yugoslav Muslims have derived the Arabic-like word singular word *huriyya*. In the Qur'an commentaries, the noun *ḥawrā'*, pl. *ḥūr*, denotes a girl with large black eyes, and in some lexicons also these eyes are identified to the eyes of the *gazelle*. The Qur'an also characterizes these virgins with words “their eyes looking down”, and compares them (their beauty) with the Noah's egg, with the pearl, with the ruby, or the coral (examples found in surahs XXXVII – 48-49, XXXVIII – 52, XLIV – 54, and LV – 56-58).

THE BEAUTY OF HUMAN CREATIONS. In the previous text, the object of beauty, as seen in the Qur'an and hadith, was the world of nature and the human organism itself. However, these same sources, when taking a judgement

directly or indirectly of whether something is beautiful, are significantly also turned towards the objects of human activity. Thus the Islam determines that beauty (and art) can be also represented by what the man himself has created with his own work and mind. A number of such creations were mentioned in the Qur'an exactly as one of the paradise's promised blessings. These are:

- The architectonic creation of *castle*, castles, for which the Qur'an (surah XXV – 10) uses the term *quṣūr*, and this is plural from *qaṣr* (derived from Latin *castrum*) which means better shaped, representative castle or palace.
- *Arbor*, stated in more than one place, and surah IV – 56 states it as *deep shadow* (*zill zilāl*), and then *sofas*, coated in satin and jewels (LVI – 15-16), and *green pillows* and *beautiful rugs* (LV – 76), and then clothes made of *satin* (*sundus*), *silk* (*ḥarīr*) and *brocade* (*istabrak*) – surahs XVIII – 31, XXII – 23, XLV – 53 and LXXVI – 21.
- *Vials, beaks and glasses* (*akwāb, abārīq, ka's*), mentioned together in one place in the Qur'an, surah LVI – 18. Glasses without a particular denotation are mentioned even in more than one place (surahs XXXVII – 45, LXXVI 5 and 17). One place (LXXVI – 15-16) offers the nature of vials (*akwāb*), even the materials they are made of: *vials in the shape of pitchers, made of silver*. The same place also mentions dishes made of *silver* (*aniyāt min fiḍḍa*).
- *Bracelets* (*asāwīr*), made of gold or silver, coated in *pearls*. They are mentioned in three places in the Qur'an (XVIII – 31), XXII – 23, and LXXVI – 21), and everywhere as an object for women to *adorn* themselves with (*yuḥallawna fihā min asāwīr*).

The judgement of beauty in all these aforementioned products is not only indicated upon by the context which contains them, but by our direct perception of those objects, because the vision itself of those objects invokes enjoyment and aesthetic thinking within us. Even by the place of their mentioning, these objects are by no means naked bodies, which have only the material component, such as jewels, corals, gold and silver, which are also mentioned as a promised award in paradise, they also invoke within us that *spiritual* and entice our perception of them being spirited, coated in the idea of beauty, art.

Exactly this emphasis of certain human products as the objects of beauty as well has become, I deem, a solid ideological basis which subsequently supported some major artistic branches in the Islamic world, such as *architecture*, particularly *kiosks* as arbors and resting places, then *ceramics* (faience), and *metalwork* (goldsmith) art. The encouragement for development of such activities as arts lied not only in that the basic source of the Islam had announced beauty in them, but also, maybe even more, in that, based on the given place of their description, they were held to be “*ḡannatic*”, that is, in a way, *holy* activities (let us remember the beakers and trays used to give drinks to the lethally diseased on death-bed!).

THE CULT OF THE GREEN COLOR. In the descriptions of the *ġannat* in the Qur'an there is another particular feature which has also found direct reflection in the subsequent art. This is the appearance of the *green color* as the color most often mentioned in the descriptions of paradise. In addition to the *green pillows* in surah LV – 76, it was stressed that women as residents of paradise will put on green clothes made of thin and thick silk (surah XVIII – 31), and surah LXXVI – 21 mentions for all paradise residents in general that they will be wearing clothes of *green* and gold-woven silk. One can not but get an impression that this also involves an evident influence of the landscape and color vision which is pervasive in the vegetable nature of oases. It is exactly on this basis that the green color has become predominant not only in the art of the Islamic peoples, but also in their profane lives, in the clothes of the Islamic Orient, because it is a “*ġannatic*” color. This same source was also the cause for the Yugoslav Muslims, both in art and in life (clothes, flags, etc), even in folklore, to have a real cult of the green color created and retained, which, as we can now see here, is wrongfully called the “Turkish” color.

IDEJA LIJEPOG U IZVORIMA ISLAMA

SAŽETAK

Teorijska rasprava o tome da li u islamu postoji, kao teološka i filozofska doktrina, koncept lijepog u estetskom smislu, odnosno da li islam ima stav prema umjetnosti i kakav je taj stav, traje već dugo. Autor je odlučio razmatrati to pitanje direktno u Kur'anu i hadisu; ta dva izvora odabrao je namjerno, da bi na samom početku rasvijetlio ideju lijepoga u islamu, odvojeno od stavova koji se kasnije pojavljuju u islamskoj literaturi. Autor je došao do sljedećih zaključaka:

U prerenesansnoj civilizaciji, uključujući i islam i islamski svijet, ideja koja se u savremenom svijetu izražava terminom umjetnost bila je izražavana terminima *ljepota* i *lijepo*. Veza između termina *ljepota* i *umjetnost* ustanovljena na ovaj način, omogućava nam da vidimo cijeli jedan svijet u navedenim izvorima islama, gdje se susrećem ne samo sa konceptom lijepog i ljepote, već i sa predstavljanjem lijepih stvari, pa čak i sudova o tim stvarima kao istinskim nosiocima ideje lijepog.

I Kur'an i hadis komuniciraju jezikom razumljivim običnom čovjeku. Imajući to na umu, a i kako i Kur'an i hadis sadrže veliki broj primjera estetske ocjene (razumijevanja i vrednovanja), to znači da je preislamsko arapsko društvo u Hidžazu, gdje su se Kur'an i hadis pojavili, imalo određene kulturne i filozofske temelje koji su omogućili da ideja lijepog bude primljena i shvaćena. Navedeno je nekoliko dokaza u prilog ovome.

Terminologija estetskih pojmova preuzeta direktno iz teksta Kur'ana i hadisa je također ovdje tata. Autor citira hadis: *Allah je lijep i voli ljepotu*

(Allāhu ḡamīl wa yuḡibbu-l-ḡamāl) i druge primjere, i zaključuje da je, prema osnovnim principima islama, ljepota Božije svojstvo. Navodi i da, prema istim izvorima, ideja lijepoga postoji i u stvarima koje su proizvod ljudske ruke i u stvarima koje proizvodi sama priroda (ananas, puževa kućica, saće, itd.).

Posljednji dio govori o svijetu lijepoga prema osnovnim citiranim izvorima islama: autor zaključuje, citirajući tekstove i iz Kur'ana i iz hadisa, da islam vidi ljepotu, kao i umjetnost, u jedinstvu kosmosa, u prirodi, u proporcionalnosti ljudskog organizma, i u onome što je djelo ljudskih ruku. Nalazi dokaze pozitivnog stava islama prema ljepoti prirode u opisima raja, koji jasno naglašavaju ljepotu vegetacije, vode i krajolika. Analizirajući stav islama prema ljepoti ljudskog organizma, autor dolazi do značajnog otkrića da su Arapi poznavali pojam zlatnog dijela ili presjeka (lat. *sectio aurea*) već u prvoj polovini sedmog stoljeća (vrijeme pojave Kur'ana).

Na kraju, autor piše o kultu zelene boje među muslimanima. Tvrdi da je kult uveden prenaplašenom zelenom bojom raja u mnogim citatima Kur'ana i hadisa. Misli da je zelena boja uvedena u Kur'an i hadis kao vizija krajolika i boja koja dominira vegetacijom rijetkih arapskih pustinjskih oaza.

Zaključak: Islam ima poseban stav prema umjetnosti; taj je stav čak i jasno naglašen i, što je još važnije, pozitivan. Shodno tome, postoji i estetika islama, mada nije sistematizirana, već izražena u formi pojedinačnih, nepovezanih stavova, te, stoga, u formi koju možemo nazvati osnovnim temeljima estetike.

THE IDEA OF THE BEAUTIFUL IN THE SOURCES OF ISLAM

SUMMARY

The theoretical discussion on whether or not there exists in Islam as a theological and philosophical doctrine the concept of the beautiful in the esthetic sense or whether or not Islam has an attitude toward art and what that attitude is, has long been carried on. The author has undertaken to consider that question directly in the Qur'an and Muhammad's tradition (hadith); he has deliberately taken these sources only in order to elucidate the idea of the beautiful in Islam in the very beginning, apart from the attitudes expressed in the latter Islamic literature. The author has reached these conclusions:

In pre-Renaissance civilizations, including Islam and the Islamic world as well, the idea expressed in modern times by the term art was expressed by the terms beauty and beautiful. The connection between the terms beauty and art having been established in this way makes it possible for us to see an entire little world in the quoted sources of Islam, where we encounter not only the concept of the beautiful and beauty, but also a representation of the object of beauty and even judgments of these objects as true bearers of the idea of the beautiful.

Both the Qur'an and the hadith communicate in the language which is understood by the common man. Having this in view, and as both the Qur'an and the hadith contain a large number of examples of esthetic evaluation (understanding, valorization), it means accordingly that the pre-Islamic Arab society in Hijaz, in which the Qur'an and the hadith appeared, had a certain cultural and philosophical foundation which made it possible for the idea of the beautiful to be received and comprehended. Several pieces of evidence concerning this have been quoted.

A terminology of esthetic notions taken directly from the texts of the Qur'an and the hadith has also been provided. The author quotes the hadith: "Allah is beautiful and loves beauty" (Allāhu ḡamīl wa yuḡibbu-l-ḡamāl) and other examples and concludes that according to basic principles of Islam beauty is a divine capacity. He also states that according to these same sources the idea of the beautiful exists both in things which are the product of human hands and in thing produced by nature itself (pineapple fruit, shell of a snail, honeycomb, etc.).

The last chapter deals with the worlds of the beautiful according to the principal quoted sources of Islam: the author concludes, quoting texts from the Qur'an and the hadith, that Islam sees beauty, and also art, in the unity of the cosmos, in nature, in the proportions of the human organism, and in that which is the product of human hands. He finds evidence of the positive attitude of Islam toward the beauty of nature in the descriptions of paradise, which greatly emphasize the beauty of the vegetation, water and landscape. Analyzing the attitude of Islam to the beauty of human organism, the author comes to the important discovery that the Arabs knew of the notion of the golden section or cut (Lat. *sectio aurea*) as early as the first half of the seventh century (the time of the appearance of the Qur'an).

In the end the author writes about the cult of the green color among Muslims. He claims that the cult was introduced because of the overemphasized green color of the world of paradise in many quotations in the Qur'an and the hadith. He thinks that the green color was introduced in the Qur'an and the hadith as a vision of the landscape and the color that dominates the vegetable nature of the rare Arab desert oases.

Conclusion: Islam does have an attitude toward art; that attitude is, moreover, strongly emphasized and, what is more important, positive. Accordingly, there exists also an esthetics of Islam, only it is not systematized but expressed in the form of individual, unconnected views and thus in a form we might call basic foundations of esthetic.