

A Description of the Components of Sustainability in Contemporary Mauritanian Poetry

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Received:17March2018

Accepted:1July2018

Extended Abstract

1 Introduction

Clearly, every nation has its own particular literary orientation during each period of its literary history; in fact, these orientations reflect the society and living environment of that nation. Despite the slight differences in terms of poetic bahrs (بحر شعری) or necessitation of different rhymes, Arabic literature in Mauritania shares similarities in other aspects with the Arabic literature of other Arab nations; subsequently, the Arabic literature in this country can be regarded as an extensive, significant part of Arabic literature across the Islamic West. Mauritanian literature is eloquent, has deep roots, and owes its rigor to the strength of the Arabic language and the pure environment of vast Mauritanian deserts. The literature of this country is born out of the coexistence between man and nature. The vastness of deserts as well as the rough climate in Mauritania has tangibly affected the taste of the country's poets, creating an inherent, conscious literature accompanied by firm intellectual ways. The dignity, serenity, and effectiveness of poems written by the Mauritanian poet is the result of his connection to the desert's silence, gravity, and the scorching heat. Literary critics believe that the Mauritanian literature is the result of the amalgamation of primitive affection and desert-borne imagination; more than anything, the Mauritanian poet is in love with his surrounding nature. Such love and admiration brings the poet closer to drawing various ways of living, describing the taste and behavior of the inhabitants of the land, and more importantly, supporting them against strangers.

2 Review of Literature

Arabic literature in Mauritania has a long history. However, the onset of its evolution can be traced back to the eleventh century AH. Arabic poetry in Mauritania shares many similarities with the poetry of the *Jahiliyyah* era. The similarities are highlighted mostly in two aspects including lexical and environmental literature. The living environment in Mauritania is very similar to that of the Arabic peninsula in terms of the people's nomadic lifestyle, how they look for water supplies and pastures, and the primitive simplicity of life. Additionally, in terms of social and moral functions, the country fully adheres to the values of the *Jahiliyyah* era including courage, honesty, hospitality, and pride in origins. Research into the Mauritanian literature suggest that it has been heavily influenced by Umayyad era poets and the Andalusian literature.

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Before setting foot on the literary field, the Mauritanian scholar must first learn the Quran and certain literary interpretations such as Al-Zamakhshari's Al-Kashshaaf very well; he must also memorize the poems of the Jahiliyyah era poets so as to attain a flow of taste; finally, to evolve his writing skills, the scholar must become completely familiar with the works of Andalusian Arabic speaking authors, particularly the works of Lisan Al-Din Ibn Al-Khatib and Ibn Jubair.

Factors such as the diversity of literary themes, antiquity, and the large number of Mauritanian literary figures have led to numerous researchers to conduct studies on the Arabic literature in Mauritania. The published works in this field can be divided into two groups; the first are books written to describe and explain the quality of how the Arabic Literature was shaped in Mauritania as well as introducing the biographies of the literary figures in this nation. The second group consists of books written to critique and examine the poems of Mauritanian poets. The most famous books in the first group includes *al-Wasit fi Terajim Adaban Shanqayt* by Mohamed Amin Shanqayt (1989), *al-Sha'ar va al-Shu'ara fi Mauritania* (2003), *Madkhal ila al-Adab al-Mauritani* (2005) by Dr. Mohammed Mukhtar Valad Abaa, *al-Sha'ar al-Mauritani al-Hadith* (1998) by Mubarakah Bint al-Baraa, and *Shu'ara Mauritania al-Qadamah va al-Muhadithoun* (1962) by Mohammed Yousef Muqallad. The best works written in the area of the second group include *Nisha al-Sha'ar al-Arabi al-Fasih fi Mauritania* (2000) by Abdullah Hassan Ahmaydah, *Dharirah al-Sha'ar al-Muasir fi al-Maqrib* (1979) by Mohammed Benis, and *Mawsuah Hiyat Mauritania* (1994) by Mukhtar Valad Hamden.

3 Method

The present inquiry is a qualitative study conducted using the descriptive-analytical approach and library sources. With the purpose of introducing the Mauritanian literature and expressing its components and principles, it is attempted to describe the best component of resistance according to the three stages mentioned above along with certain poetic samples from each period. Finally, the study concludes that the Mauritanian Arabic poetry is an inseparable part of the Arabic literature and is considered as one of the most important tools for battle, criticism, social reform, and politics. In this study, it is attempted to provide answers to the following questions:

- Is the Arabic literature in Mauritania a part of the Arab world literature or separate from it?
- What are the most important components of resistance in contemporary Mauritanian poetry?

4 Results and Discussion

The findings of the study can be examined based on three main subjects including the criticism of thoughts, deep historical insight, and the anxiety of thoughts. Using their immensely rich literary strengths, Mauritanian poets of resistance have been able to express the best resistance-related concepts using the three patterns mentioned above.

5 Conclusion

The Arabic poetry of Mauritania is, in fact, a complete cultural system which is heavily connected to the ancient and new Arabic literature; it adheres to both new and old poetic patterns and is influenced by their orientations.

Mauritanian poetry is one of the rare examples of romanticism in the Arabic literature, its rich conscious-related aspects have led to the formation of a human literature that does not tolerate tyranny and strives in line with identifying and solving the problems of humans and the contemporary society.

Rather than being the product of the poet's personal thoughts and affections created beyond closed doors, Mauritanian poetry is connected to the people. Mauritanian poetry is the result of complete amalgamation of needs, desires and orientations of the people with the poet's soul and body; an amalgamation that follows a blissful life, worthy of the nation of Mauritania.

Keywords: Mauritanian Poetry, Arabic Literature, Criticism, Arabic Poetry

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