THE ROLE OF ARABIC POETRY IN NATIONAL SECURITY: A CASE STUDY OF UMAYYAD PERIOD

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Abstract
Poetry where like in other culture is deep-rooted in the life of the Arabs. It has once given of tribal community of blood ties which was regarded sacred and the basis of a National Community. The rapid rate of the political parties in the Umayyad age had a great impact on the poetry of the then poets, which made the parties have their poets defending their parties and also expressing their feelings about the societal ills. Thus, this paper is aimed at bringing to the limelight the impact of political poetry on the national security of the people. Also, the paper shall properly dealt with historical account of political icons in Umayyad age and their poetry will be appraised for the purpose of highlighting their literary worth.

Introduction
The emergence of Umayyad dynasty in 661.C.E. and terminated in 751 C.E. with establishment of the Abbasid dynasty has caused a new epoch in the history of Arabic literature. It has contributed immensely to the drastic changes and socio-political development in the Muslim empire. This period is considered as a golden age for literary manifestations imbied with more styles and themes. The coughing of Arabic literature with intervals of poetry and prose, paved the way for poetry to flourish in all sphere of Arabic literature. Since, Arabic poetry is the register of the day-to-day activities of Arabs, there shouldn’t be any surprised that the theme, dictions and styles of the Umayyad age was influenced by the socio-political circumstances of the period. However, it is observed that the emergence of different political parties made the political poetries to be flourished, whereby, each party composed in defending their party.

Evolution of Political Poetry in Ummayad Age
There are many political parties in Umayyad age, among them, which emerged in the early Islamic history after the death of Uthman, was Kharjijite party. This party started during the battle of Siffin between ‘Ali and Mu’awiyyah. Ali established his supremacy, while Muwawiyah was fighting to avenge Uthman blood, when there was a move to stop the fighting arbitrarily, a group of Ali’s army numbering about 12,000 to offend at his submitting decision of his right to the caliphate to arbitration of a man when in their own opinion, it ought to have been submitted to God. The Kharijites revolted many times and were subdued but at least they decided to eliminate Mu’awiyyah, Ali and Amr bin Al-As because they were the cause of the chaos pervading the Islamic state at that time. The political theory of this group was that they affirm that any man may be promoted to the position of Khilafah even though he may not be from Quraysh tribe provided he was a just and pious Muslim and that if the caliph should turn away from the truth at anytime. He might be put up to death or deposed. (1)

The second political crisis was from the Shiite’s party. The Shiites began to appear distinct from others when a group of Ali’s army stayed with him when he was deserted by the Kharjijite. After the arbitration panel had announced their decision, this group expressed their support for Ali by saying “We owe you a second oath of allegiance, we pledge our loyalty to your allies and oppose your enemies”. (2) The Shiites took their basic belief in Ali and Ali’s sons and grandsons as their Imams.

The third political party was the opposition party to the Shiites party which was fighting in support of the Ummayad, they were called the Umayyids i.e. (supporters of the Umayyad). The leader of this party was Mu’awiyyah ibn Abi – Sufyan (from whom the first three Umayyad caliphs were called Sufyanids), and it later became the state party like one or two of Banu-Umayyad. During the early era of Islam, he did not embrace Islam until the conquest of Mecca, Mu’awiyyah and his supporters vowed not to support Ali unless he was able to bring the culprits of Uthman’s assassination to book. They thought that Ali was slow in the way he handled the case and decided to take the law into their own hands and refused to implement Ali’s order in Damascus. For this, Ali had to take up
army against them, which resulted in the battle of Shiffin which technically and politically favoured Mu’awiyyah. However, this makes the loss for Ali and ends his life. According to Rahim (1981), the death of Ali was a great loss to Islam with the republic and ideal day of Islam came to an end.

The Forth political party emerged is Zubayrids, this party was named after its leader Abdullahi bn Zubair who claimed Caliphate for himself in Mecca. The people of this city became seriously annoyed by the way the leadership of the state was conducted which has to do with passing from the father to the son. However, this fourth party was short lived, meanwhile each of the group is considered as a political party, properly because, each one of them armed at eventual control of the machinery of the state of all these parties which the Umayyad succeeded in controlling the state machinery.

The Effects of Political Evolution on Arabic Poetry in Umayyad Age

During the Umayyad age, poetry experienced two far-reaching transformation: Urbanization and Islamization. The literary scene shifted from the desert of inner Arabia to the arch which comprises the fertile crescent and the Hijaz. The poets were mostly dwellers of cities and urban areas of the states. The Islamization of Arabic poetry was pervasive, ranging from the poetry of the traditional poets to the expression of deeper religious sentiments in the poetry of the political parties.

The development of the political parties during the Umayyad age had a tremendous influence on poetry in general which was far different from the early Islamic time. During the early Islamic time, poetry witnessed only political satires and religious poems, whereas, the Umayyad time mainly witnessed only political poetry, as the poet time witnessed the features of literary themes of Arabic poetry like Eulogy, Description, religious, love, satire and political poems. The early Umayyad poets imitated the pre-Islamic models and were excessively concerned with the eulogy of their patrons. Panegyric occupied a crucial place in the output of poets which made every governors or rulers of repute observe that there was one or more poets in his court whose main task was to celebrate his achievements and immortalize his name. For instance, Farazdaq composed a panegyrics poems in praise of Ali’ s grand son which goes thus:

Translation

1. That is the man who is well known to the stones of Mecca, so, also his step is well known, Ka’abah and Harram also know him.
2. This is the son of the best of all worshippers of Allah, this is God – fearing, pious and leader of the people.
3. That is the son of Fatimah, if you don’t know him, and with his grandfather the messengership had ended.
4. By your question who is this? Would not harm him, the Arabs and non – Arabs knew who you ignored.
5. His two hands were full of alms with great benefit, which will never stop.
6. Naturally, he is simple and those who come to him have nothing to fear, and two things made him unique these are: good nature and disposition.
7. If a Quraysh meets him, he will say! to this man nobility and honour ends.
8. God had honoured and dignified him ever since and this is what had been written down by the pen of destiny.

9. He lowered his face for shyness and yet the people feared him, and you cannot talk to him except when he smiles.

10. He whose grandfather’s honour is that of a messenger and the honour of his people made them succumb to him.

Another effect of political evolution in the Umayyad age is known as “Naqaid”. The Umayyad made use of this as one of their poetical themes in lampooning their political opponents. Among the factors that brought Naqaid during the Umayyad was the conquest made by the successors of the prophet, which brought enormous wealth into Mecca and Medinah.

Profiles of the Political Poets during Umayyad Age

1. Al–Akhtal At - Taghlabiy

He was ibn Malik Ghyath ibn Gawth at-Taghiby an-Nasrani. He came from Banu Taghlib and born in 640 A.D. and he was from Christian home, his family settled in Mesopotamia and remained in Christianity till the end of his life. Caliph Abdul-Malik bn Marwan offered him 10,000 dirhama in cash pension if he could turn to Muslim, but to him the supreme virtue of Christianity lay in the license which gave him the privilege of drinking wine as often as he pleased. He composed on al-Khamriyyat (wine poet), he was also recommended by Ka’ab bin Umayyad who refused to satirize the Ansar because an Ansar poet composed a mock amatory verse to Yazid Sister and Yazid wanted a poetical revenge. Thus, Akhtal wrote among other verses satirizing the Ansar of Medinah.

.example of his Political Poetry

"Quraysh has borne away all the honour and glory, and baseness alone is beneath the turban of Ansar. Please leave great things, you're not of it, take your hoes Banu Najar and go back to the land." On this, he was reported to Mu’awiyyah who threatened to cut his tongue and he sought refuge with Yazid who begged for pardon from his father. He was very submissive to the Catholic Bishop, through Christianity, sat highly on the heart of the poet and on the occasion of seeing the Bishop he called out his pregnant wife to run after him and touch his robe. But the poor lady could only touched the tail of the Bishop’s donkey consoling her, he said, “He and the tail of his donkey there is no difference”. Al-Akhtal used to enter the Caliphate court with cross pendant from his beard and still he was doubly welcome in the caliphal court. On hearing an ode he composed in eulogizing the Umayyad dynasty, Caliph Abdul – Malik ordered one of his cheriff to conduct him round the street of Damascus calling that “Here is the poet of the commander of faithful, Here is the best of the Arabs, Thus, he became the court poet of Abdul-Malik and the Umayyad in general living in splendor and luxurious life.

Al-Akhtal was commended by Arabian critics for the excellence of his long poems, purity, polish and correctness of styles. He died in the year 710 C.E.
The one he used to eulogize Farazdaq on Jarir

1. Weeping were my detractors, raining on me abuses the whole worlds mock me.
2. For drinking out of unadulterated water, water very clean and cold.
3. Allowing my friends benefit us I was opportune.
4. Then I remember Roya and the mother of Abaní as in the remembrance of the wind that blows up our door.
5. Also, Arisiyat that showers on the blowing up of the door praises.
6. Showing me beautiful pictures and decorations in a gathering I met them.
7. Silver is their necklace, reverned ones are like mango fruits.
8. Red was the ornament in their hand and fact like slaughtered animal blood and their palm and fingers.
9. Their big spectacle provide them with sight having knowledge of beauty in people.
10. Captivating with their beauty, tongues and looks.
11. Trouble they dared not move near, girls beautiful pass old women.
12. They stop to love the person, the ignorant girls look vigorous on the youths.
13. I create an everlasting look for the reserved ones, but turning multi-colours.
14. I shun the person a time mock him.
15. I distinguish friends not for malice, I knew how to keep secret.
16. Experts I am on such game of hunting with a type of huse, a horse that runs well.
17. A horse that runs like bush animal the way vulture runs amongst male birds or the ones that hunt.

Literary Appraisal

This is a political poetry opened up with the condemnation of the writer’s detractors in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd stanzas. In the 4th and the 5th stanza, the writer made mention of a sect of people, Roya, mother of Abaní and Arisiyat in describing the blowing up of the door to their house by wind. However, he started describing beauty and gorgeousness of a set of ladies whose beauty and looks are captivating. He did this continuously and repeatedly up till the 15th stanza. In the 16th and 17th stanzas, he described his own personal talents in hunting for beautiful flesh. Noticeable are the use of figures of speech such as simile and metaphor. For instance, feet like slaughtered animal as contained in the 8th stanza, and a horse that runs like bush animal in the 17th stanza are examples of simile. Also, raverned ones are like mango fruits (7th stanza). The poet’s choice of words is very apt and reflects the theme.

2. Al – Kumayt

He is Al-Kumayt ibn zayd al-Asadiy, born in Kufah in the year 60A.H./680A.D. He received his education in Kufa and specialised in Jurisprudence, Hadith and History. After attaining his knowledge, he took up teaching appointment in Kufah and he was very brilliant and well versed in composing poem.

After teaching for sometimes, he resigned from teaching and took to the art of poetry as a profession. He concentrated on praising the nobles, the rulers and khalifa. It was reported that Kumayt was a friend to Maklíhi ibn Yasíd ibn Al-Muhallah and the latter’s father gave him an appointment turning his ruler ship of khirasan under the caliphate of sulayman ibn Abd-al-Malik. It was said that Kumayt came to the palace of sulayman ibn Abd-al-Malik, and his poets gave him his due recognition among other poets.
Al-Kumayt was a great scholar in the days of Arab. His connection was started with the Hashimiyyin initially. He praised and stood with them defending them with his knowledge. Khalid al-Qisray ordered him to be jailed when Kumayt fought with him, but Hisham bn Abdul-Malik welcomed and allowed him to be set free, Kumayt, as a result of this, eulogised him.

He was always busy with learning and later left large books of poetry and compilation of poems with Hashimiyyin. He later distinguished his poetry with true sentiment and affirmation of love which he diffused inside his poems. Al-Kumayt was a prominent shi’ite poet and his poetry was more than five thousand poems. And he died in the year 126A.H./744A.D. Among his political poetry are the following:

قال في بني هاشم

1. فعلى مشاركا إلى البيض أطرب # ولا لعبا مني وتوا الشيب يلعب
2. ولم ينظر بني بنان مخطب # ولا سلمي القرن أم مر أغضب
3. ولكن إلى أهل الفضائل والنبي # وخير بني حواء والخير يطيب
4. إلى الفقر النبي الذين بحيم # إلى الله فيما ناليت أضرب
5. من هاشم رهط النبي، فتنى # بهم ولهم أرض مارة واغضب
6. خضت لهم مئتي جانبي مودة # إلى كنف عطافه أهل ومرحب
7. وكمت لهم من هؤلاء وهو لا # المجنا على أبي أم واغضب
8. وأرمى وامي بالعداؤ وله # وابن لأوردي فيهم وأرنب
9. فما ساني قول أمري ذي عداوة # بعواء فيهم يجدني فاجد
10. فقل النبي في ظل عموم جمعه # يرى الجهر علاء ابن (لا أب) تهرب
11. بأي كتب أبا أبا سنة # فيه عايم على وحسب
12. يا زينب باللايدي إلى وقلمي # الخباث هذا والشجرون أحب
13. فطائفة قد كفرتني بحريم # ينير عقابها على ولد
14. ولا يعيب هاتك التي هي # في غيرها من خبيهم وضلائهم # على حكم باليسرون واعجب

Translation

He talks about the Hashmite’s people

1. I am in joy though I knew not in it for I like ladies flesh, there is no time to play with me.
2. No house slows me down or a part of it, their ornamented fingers do not bring joy to me.
3. I am not alone with a thought that shuts down birds, either eagle cries or fox runs across.
4. Just like birds that migrate from right and left in the evening cannot know if an animal with damage horn will pass or the one without it.
5. I look back on the rich and talented ones and the kind one ant of Hawazu generation so far we are looking for kindness.
6. I go back to a set of influential people those that I benefit from their influence to be closer to God as a result of what I gain from them.
7. Bani Hashim is the tribe of Prophet, I am with them. I am pleased with them all and furicunas at time with them.
8. I love my hands for them, in love a section that has the people of my household.
9. I am their guardian and protector of these and those people.
10. They abusing me, they arrowed me and I arrowed enemy in turn and I am at the receiving end of their abused and I backsliding.
11. I never entertain sadness in an enemy in which a woman is out of them that is linking for friendship with me and is luring me.
12. Let the person under dark shade be aware the treachery of where to go in.
13. Which book shows you that I hate their love for me.
14. They appoint at me with finger, what they said was, listen, doom is it and those that point me are equally doomed.
15. A congregation has declared me as a non-believer as a result if my love for you, some even see as a sinner.
16. I am not saddened at their calling me non-believer likewise am I saddened at their mockery?
They messed me due to their own mess and pity on my love for you if not that they mock and I feel concern for them.

**Literary Appraisal**

Kumait was a political icon whose poetical works had spoken tremendously in his literary acumen. He was in this political poetry expressing the feelings right from the first stanza to the third stanza. He described a bit in the talented and influential people in his society and what he has been able to gain in his relationship with them especially his closeness with God. This continues on to the 6th stanza. In the 7th stanza, Kumait went to the target of his poetry, which was the household of Bani Hashim, the tribe of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). He used the 7th, 8th and 9th stanza to praise the tribe of Hashim and portrayed them as people of great honour and repute. Meanwhile, he came back into where he began when he started talking about what people did for him or the kind of treatment people mated on him as a result of his love for the woman.

In the 15th stanza, he described a congregation as referring to him as an unbeliever or even a sinner though he said he remained firm and undeterred by their mockery and standing. In the 14th stanza also, he rained curses on his detractors calling for there way to be doomed. One very important note derived from the message was the attitude of remaining firm in the face of oppression, abuse, curse and mockery. If one is doing something to be right, one should not be bothered or disturbed, if some people are trying to discourage him.

The poet’s use of imagery is powerful and his phrases can be no less than brilliant. We noticed in the poem that his choice of words heightens both the tone and the movement of the stanzas as it also builds a very effective images. Al – Kumayt was very prominent shi’ites poet used to compose on panegyrics Ali and his son.

**Ibn Qays Ar-Ruqayyah**

He was Ubaydullahi ibn Qays ar-Ruqayat born in Mecca in the year 12A.H/633A.D. to Qays ibn Shrayn ibn Malik ibn Rab’at. He was nicknamed ar-Ruqayat, because of one of three ladies he grew up with whom he loved together, one of three ladies was Ruqayat Bint Abdul – Wahid.

It was said that Ubaydullahi left Mecca for Medina and stayed there for a long time. During this time, he used to associate himself with famous poets of Medinah of that time like saib kathir, Budayth and findu. He (Ubaydullah) also practised poetical composition through those three people. Ibn Qays was Qurayshite poet during the early Islam. His poetry comprised perfect praise, effective satire and love topics. One of his best praise poems was that which he composed for Mas’ab ibn Zuhayr. Ibn Qays died in the year 75A.H./694A.D.

Ibn Qays was a follower of the Zubayr party and he worked with them till the time of death. During his lifetime he composed many poems for his party in term of eulogising them and their traders and he also used to composed some poem to attack the opponents of his party. Ibn Qays was a brave warrior, a good horseman an Orator and good poets. This poetry mostly either centred on praise, wisdom, or on self boasting and he also composed some political poetry. Ibn Qays was commended by Arabs critics for the excellence of his long poems. Purity, polish and correctness of style. Example of his political poems composed in praise of Mas’ub son of Zubayr and also in boasting of his tribe (Quraysh).
The Role Of Arabic Poetry In National Security: A Case Study Of Umayyad Period

Translation
1. Kudos as my congregation never allow self—contredness to divide their undertakings.
2. Ever before someone would be sent to Quraysh wealth, before the enemy will be laughing.
3. Can that want the end of Quraish family, the livelihood of Quraish is with God and their end as well.
4. If Quraish bid good bye to the city nobody will live long after them.
5. Should shepherd go living people behind than their sheep are completely.
6. Can you produce somebody that will live longer, only God will remain, every other things will perish.
7. People are Graving for tomorrow as if they are Graving for time though tomorrow is there for judgement.
8. We accord respect to people slander us and with their efforts air lots increased.
9. With sickness, our slanders are in sadness, sickness kills no other person than you.
10. If the heaven is shedding tears on respected and honourable people, if the heaven is shedding tears on us.
11. Mus’ab’s star is from God, which brings fears into your eyes
12. Your might is one that is devoid of pride and high handedness.
13. Your fear God and if your thought is the true fear of God you have gained a lot.

Literary Appraisal
This Literary work centres on the Quraish and a member of that household Mas’ab. Ar-Ruqayat bemoaned the detractors of the Quraish. However, in the 1st stanza, he praised his own gathering and congregation as containing peoples of good characters that does not allow selfishness to override the good intention of the group. In the 3rd stanza, he warned that the Quraish derived their strongness in life from God which bring forth their end corroborating, in the 4th stanza, that demise of the Quraish will mean the end of the world. This ascertainment was also prominence in the 5th and 6th stanza. However, the writer called the bluff of backbiters in the 8th stanza nothing that with all their efforts, their lots have continued to increase.

The last three stanzas vis:11th, 12th and 13th were devoted to Mus’ab as he was described as someone who was earned Allah’s favour as a result of his fear for God Almighty. The use of personification was noticed in the 10th stanza where the writer referred to lear (sama) أسماء بكت like human being do. The poem is very powerful and succeeds in impacting the exact well the poet wants to convey to us.

Conclusion
The greatest intellectual measure of progress achieved under Umayyads, however was undoubtedly in the field of political composition because no sooner had the Umayyad regime (661 – 750C.E.) assumed power in Damascus, witnessed an upsurge of poetic creativity which spread to the cities as well. This poetry expressed is the main two areas: Satirical and political poetry. The former flourished mostly in Iraq and to an extent in Syria. The Umayyad with their more secular approach to affairs encouraged poetry, mainly to uphold and defend their rule as the case of Akhtal, Ibn Qays and Kumait. As also witnessed in the literary poems of some other political poets who composed in other to make the security and civil rights of their people be attained a favourable point. Therefore, these political poetries were given high recognition and cognizance as a mere tool to promote their political dispensation.
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