

POETRY OF 'ABD AL- 'AZIZ AL-MAQALIH

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**Abstract:** The article is devoted to the poetry of the outstanding Yemeni poet, writer, and critic 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Maqalih. He has more than 15 books of poems, dozens of critical articles, and several studies on the literature of Yemen. 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Maqalih is an active member of the Union of Yemeni Writers. 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Maqalih also lectures on modern Arabic literature at the University of Sana.

**Keywords:** progressive poetry, a heritage of the past, University of Sana, the Yemen Arab Republic, culture and education, modern literature, book of poems

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The Yemenite poet and literary critic Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih can rightfully be attributed to the most impressive representatives of modern Arabic poetry. He wrote fifteen collections of poems, more than fifteen critical articles, and several books on the literature and history of literature in Yemen, the features of its development, and the nature of the influence of the creative heritage of the past on it.

Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih is one of those few Arab poets whose work has attracted the interest of many literary scholars and critics in various countries for several decades. There are translations of his works into English and French. In 1977, in Sana'a, a book collection of critical articles and essays was published under the title "Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih - in the Light of Criticism", which collected the works of Yemeni and Arab critics about his work for the period before 1977 [10:4]

The poet was born in 1939 in the Yemeni village of al-Maqalih, in the region of ash-Sha'r, in a fellah family. Grandfather Abd al-Aziz was a village teacher who taught peasant children to read and write. He was also involved in the education of his son Saleh al-Makalih, the father of the future poet, who joined the movement of Yemeni patriots against the policy of the reign of Imam Yahya Hamid ad-Din and later became a participant in the uprising in the Habilin mountains, in the territory declared by the rebels as an independent zone. The uprising was brutally suppressed, and many of the participants were arrested and thrown into prison, including Saleh al-Maqalih. After some time, he fled but was again arrested and spent ten years (1942-1952) in a settlement in Nafi Khadja.

The childhood years of Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih pass in this place next to his father and other participants in the patriotic movement, among whom were quite well-known opposition leaders such as Abd ar-Rahman ar-Riyani, Qasem Galeb, Ahmad al-Maruni, and others. Here he attends school. The atmosphere that prevailed in Nafi Khadja and communication with the patriots reflects on the formation of his character and the formation of such qualities as a love of freedom, humanism, and patriotism - those features that would later determine his future life and work.

In the 1940s, a new progressive Yemenite poetry was born. In the works of the Yemenite poets, one can hear notes of protest against the existing system and patriotic motives. These are such poets as Mohammed Mahmoud az-Zubeyri, Ash-Shami, and al-Hadrami [4:13]. Arab critic Mohammed Abdo characterizes this time as the period when new political trends and ideas began to penetrate Yemen[1:133]. During these years, Yemen continues to emerge from political self-isolation and strengthens its ties with other countries. Yemen joined the League of Arab Countries and became a full member of the UN. The first Yemeni magazine Al-Hikma al-yamaniyya was published in Sana. Since 1944, the newspaper Saut al-Yaman (Voice of Yemen) has been published, on the pages of which various aspects of Yemeni life, political and economic problems are covered.

After graduating from school, Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih worked as a teacher, first in Nafi Hajja, then in one of the schools of Sana. In the mid-1950s, his first poems appeared, which he wrote under various pseudonyms. In 1959, al-Maqalih went to Egypt to enter Cairo University, but on the advice of Mohammed, Mahmoud al-Zubeyri returned to Sana. In 1962 the poet wrote a famous poem "Long live the people!". Sounded on 29 September on Yemeni radio throughout the country and became a kind of hymn to the people who won a long-awaited victory in the fight against their oppressors:

You have avenged, O Sana, lifting our heads from slavery,  
And brought whirlwinds of full light out of the darkness,  
And gave birth to this day.

Where are those who considered themselves gods?

They fell as bats fell.

They burned in our fire as moths burned over the fire.

Death to cruel tyrants and long life to our oppressed people! [7:112]

After the new government came to power, al-Maqalih was appointed head of the radio broadcasting committee in Sana, a consultant to the Council of Ministers of the republic on propaganda and culture, and a consultant on enlightenment and education in the YAR.

In 1967, al-Maqalih went to Cairo to work in the League of Arab States as a permanent representative of Yemen. In the same year, he entered the Faculty of Literature at Cairo University. While studying and working in Cairo, Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih met and established close ties with many prominent representatives of the Egyptian and Arab intelligentsia, famous Arab poets, writers, and critics. In the early 70s, the first collections of his poems were published (It is necessary from Sanaa, Marib speaks, Letter to Seif ibn Zu Yazan, Yemeni comments on the emigration of Ibn Zureik al-Baghdadi), and some literary articles.

In 1971, al-Maqalih received a licentiate degree, and in 1974 a master's degree. In 1977 he became a doctor of sciences of the first degree. The theme of his master's work was "Modern Poetry of Yemen". The theme of his doctoral dissertation was "Folk Poetry of Yemen". This work was the first fundamental research in this area.[9]

At the end of 1977, after Egypt broke off diplomatic relations with some Arab countries, including the YAR, al-Maqalih returned to Sana, where he met with warm recognition and acceptance in various literary, cultural, and political circles. Immediately upon arrival home, he begins work on the creation and development of a Yemeni research center, which later becomes a center for studying the history of the revolution and protecting its gains, studying and publishing literary monuments, monuments of language and culture, documents of the September 26 revolution and the Yemeni national liberation movement.

In 1982, Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih became the rector of the University of Sana'a. At the same time, he heads the leadership of the Yemeni research center. Currently, he is a member of the activists of the Union of Yemeni Writers and Men of Letters, manages the publication of the Yemeni Studies journal, and is a member of the editorial group of the New Yemen journal. Along with this, Dr. al-Maqalih lectures on modern literature at the University of Sanaa. Dr. al-Maqalih owns several studies on literature. One of the most famous is the book "Studies on the Yemeni novel and the Yemeni story"[10:4].

Al-Maqalih gives a central place in his works to the fate of the Yemeni people, their past, present, and future. In all his poems, the leading theme is the theme of the motherland and the people; such is the poems "Yemen..., present and departed", "Who will tell me?", "Necessary from Sana", "Evacuation and the dead", "Sigh of a Yemeni on a bridge over a dried-up river", etc.

On my lips - Yemen,  
My conscience is Yemen,  
Yemen lives under my skin,  
Behind the eyelids of my eyes, Yemen sleeps and wakes up.  
And now I don't know the difference between us,

Which one of us, oh my country, Yemen?!  
When you cry, I fall into the bosom of sadness with a tear,  
And sadness carries me like a symbol of love,  
Goes with me to the ages of eternal sadness and pain,  
And I return to you in a boat of sorrow.  
When you leave, my blood speaks the language of longing  
because you are me..." [7:65-66]

The homeland and the poet, according to al-Maqalih, are inseparable and represent one whole. He cannot separate his fate from the fate of Yemen, the Yemeni people. In the true liberation of his country, liberation from the shackles of the past and foreign dependence, in bringing about progressive changes, he sees the fulfillment of his dream. "The poets of our country began to dream of changing reality in Yemen at the dawn of the forties. And poetry was their means of realizing that dream. Together with the desire to change Yemen, they dreamed of changing qasida. And poetry became a dream for us - our children and grandchildren about changing Yemen, qasida, and the world. Will we succeed in this? This is what we want," al-Maqalih wrote in his article "On Poetry and Yemen." [7:18-19]

The form and content of his works are inextricably related to each other. The form of the poem is one of the tools Al-Maqalih uses to express the theme of his works in the most complete way. Al-Maqalih has a few qasidas in Arabic traditional forms ("Oh, night!", "Long live the people!", "Bourgeois", etc.). The poet uses a variety of rhymes, sizes, and free or blank verse. The range of using various artistic and visual tools is also very wide. So, al-Maqalih uses both symbolism, and allegory, while interpreting ancient legends, poetic ballads, and myths in his way ("Pygmalion", "Judas", "About Medusa Gorgon", "Letter to Seif ibn Zu Yazan, etc.).

The contribution of the poet, made by him to various fields of literature, was highly appreciated in 1985 by awarding the Lotus International Literary Prize. Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih has repeatedly won awards in the field of literature and art. So, in 2002 in Paris, he was awarded the UNESCO Prize, and in 2004 the prize of the International Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science for his contribution to Arab culture.[8]

Today, Abd al-Aziz al-Maqalih is a poet who continues to be at the forefront of modern Yemeni poetry, investing his work in the development of the culture of his people, familiarizing himself with Yemeni literature and history, the creative heritage of the past. Thanks to the efforts of such progressive writers as al-Maqalih, there is now a process of breaking the cultural isolation of Yemen and introducing Yemeni literature to the pan-Arab and global literary sphere today.

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