

The Art of Maghami

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ABSTRACT: The word, “Maghami” has got an Arabic origin in term. It has got several meanings, even its literary meaning is observed in the literary works of the pagan state before Prophet Mohammad. Maghami has two meanings: 1- Maghami meaning assembly and meeting 2- Maghami meaning a group of people who gather in an assembly or meeting.

Keywords: Art of Maghamis, Initiators of the Maghamis, The name of the Maghamis.

INTRODUCTION

Idiomatically, Maghami is a sort of tale that regardless of its literary ceremonial and spirit which is its main purpose, it has got no value in story or plot. The author aims to produce a literary prose which is rich in word combination and collocation as it is usual in this type of prose. As malek-al-shoara-Bahar says; “Maghami or Maghami means stories or myths that are collected or written by an author and is recited which is rhythmical and rimed and others recite it in public and meetings and enjoy its rhythmic and rimed words that is like the harmonious cadence of the pigeons and ringdoves. “However some of the literary critics recognize the art of the Maghami as a way of practicing a composition and eloquent piece of art and its pedagogical aspect comes second to its form.

From its tale aspect, Maghami is a kind of short story or future event that only connected aspect of their unite narrator which is describing a person in different moods. In Arabic Maghamis this is observed in all of the Maghamis, but in Persian Maghamis do not stick to a particular and assigned champion. The main difference between Maghamis and the tales is that the story of the Maghamis is created by a particular author who has created it intentionally at a specific time and has decorated it with literary terms whereas the authors of the ancient stories and tales among nations are anonymous. At the end of each Maghami that generally its hero is disappearing from the scene of the story and the narrator is unaware of his or her fate, the narrator ends the story with the expressions showing and indicating his grief and deep sorrow resulting from the hero’s loss.

The name of the Maghami

Each Maghami takes its name from the place in which the story takes place, like “Halabieh” or “Moselieh”. The narrator of the Maghami is a sagacious person who travels a lot and is familiar with the literary art. The hero of such stories is a sociable person who travels from place to place . The hero sometimes teaches and some other time gives speech. The Maghamis are usually descriptive or scientific or humorous anecdotes. They are also sometimes literary or philosophical or allegorical from the social life or pedagogy.

The beginning of the Maghamis in Arabic literature

The art of Maghami started with Badi-al-Zaman- Hamadani in 4th century onward in Arabic literature. It seems he had applied the term rhythmic and created a piece of literature including stories or the events. It should be confessed before Badi-al-Zaman Hamadani winning fame for the art of Maghami and his name spreads as the initiator of this art as a literary art, master Ibn Darid had created the short stories and the humorous anecdotes which are ornamented with word craft or perhaps had tried for the art of Maghami. But what is apparent in this regard and there is consensus among all the scholars is that Ibn Darid has called his stories “tradition” and up to Badi-al-Zaman-Hamadani ’s time the art of the Maghami and calling the rhythmic , decorated prose and full of literary terms as Maghami has not been usual . However, it is worth to mention that Badi-al-Zaman-Hamadani has imitated from Ibn-Darid. However, referring to various sources the first author who started writing Maghamis is

Badi-Al-Zaman- Hamadani who opened the way to Maghamis, later on some other authors stepped on the way. He describes this field with two adjectives; first, he assigned a narrator for the stories who talks clearly about the heroic deeds, techniques, and legerdemain of the hero that he has observed in different cities in which he had been begging and now tells the people in public. Second, a hero who is coming from the low level people like the beggars who extort the people by using rhythmic and rimed words. Except these two foundations, there is another element as the tradition of Maghami and it is the number of Maghamis that reaches 50 Maghamis. Hamadani's Maghamis Khatibi believes that the style of Badi-al-Zaman Hamadani's Maghami is influenced several factors:

1. From the aspect of the story-telling Maghamis are influenced by Arabic tales
2. From heroic aspect of the stories Maghamis are influenced by the method of the beggars because in this period rhythmic expression had been usual among the beggars to persuade people to help them.

The style of Badi-Al-Zaman Hamadani is quickly picked up by the authors and opened a new way in Arabic literature , to the extent that from fifth century up to the middle of fourth century about eighty writers produced Arabic Maghamis and in some other languages. It is worth mentioning that in all of them Badi-Al-Zaman's style and method of Maghami writing is imitated in fact, they had imitated Badi-Al Zaman Hamadani.

Maghami is continued in the same way and even in eleventh century and twelfth century that the Arabic literature is diminished, but the style of Maghami is still applied for different subjects. From among all the works that are produced in art of Maghami writing " Hariri's Maghami" is very popular and its author has won the title of the greatest Maghami writer. The number of the Hariri's Maghami is fifty which is the imitation of Badi-al-Zaman that is the first "Sananieh". The main subject of all Hariri's stories and the basis of his stories is "Kadieh" and in all his stories the hero and the narrator are opposing each other.

It should be acknowledged that Hariri' s works are sheer amusement and a kind of art and the reason is that in his period, art and diversion and word craft is far away from rhythm and is like an art competition and in this field Hariri has won the medal. Some believe that his works are following the unpleasant metaphors and moral and social life.

Literary Value of the Maghamis

Professor Hana-Al-Nakhoori has dealt with these values in his book , He says; "although Maghamis are written in the form of a story , they don't have the real value of a story , because the main feature of a story is to have prominent characters and flowing analysis and moral pedagogy . Maghamis are deprived of these values and in this type of writing some tricks are used to describe the life of the beggars in a unified way, one of the advantages of Maghamis is practicing composition, prose and poetry. Sometimes parts of sweet expressions and sermons could be found in them. But from historical aspect, Maghamis are images of part of the life of ordinary people when begging and mendacity had been counted as the profession and job for people. In other words, they are retelling and reciting the fools of the people in which bootlicking and flattery is victorious over thought.

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