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RESEARCH ARTICLE

SABA MULLAQAH: A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO IMRUL QAIS FURRUKH FAIZAN MIR



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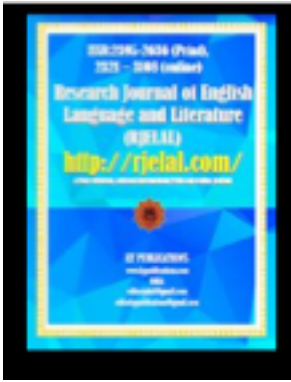
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Ph D Scholar, Dept. of English, University of Kashmir, Srinagar.

ABSTRACT

The present paper is an enterprise in trying to refresh in the modern readers' minds the much forgotten glory of the most famous and breathtaking piece of poetry in Pre Islamic Arabic literature, namely the *Saba Mullaqah*. The paper will delineate the reason behind the special and revered place these *mullaqah* possess in the Arabic literature. This research aspires at teasing out the age old traditions and poetic excellence governing these *mullaqah*, and to analyse in comparison Imrul Qais's *mullaqah* and map out the places where his *mullaqah* follows the tradition and instances where he trends his own path thus establishing him as the most famous and unparalleled poet among all the poets of *Saba Mullaqah*. Last but not the least, the present study will try to establish these *mullaqah*'s apart from their poetic excellence and aesthetic pleasure, as the only valuable source of knowing closely the Arabic life and literature of the times during which they were composed to which otherwise we would have no access.



Discussion

Mullaqah literally “the suspended”, is the name given to the most ancient and very famous pre-Islamic collection of seven Arabic Odes (*qasida*). This name was given to them in the eight century AD by a renowned Arab rhapsodist Hammas-al Ramiya. It may be pointed out here that no collection of the *Mullaqah* was attempted until the *Umayyad* period. It was Hammad who chose the seven golden odes undoubtedly from among many others and complied them into many European and Asian languages.

These odes are still honoured throughout the Arab speaking world as masterpieces of poetic composition. Legend has it that each of these seven odes was awarded the annual prize at the fair of *Ukaz* in Mecca and was inscribed in golden letters and suspended on the walls of *Ka’bah*. The fair of *Ukaz* stood in pre-Islamic days for a kind of academic festival and poetic competition of Arabia.

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Arabic literature like most literatures, sprang into existence with an outburst of poetry; but, unlike many others Arabic poetry seems to have issued forth full grown. The oldest pieces of poetry under review are believed to have been composed some one hundred thirty years before the *Hijra* (Prophet Muhammed’s (peace be upon him) flight from Mecca to Madina). These odes with their rigid conventions, presupposed a long period of development in the cultivation of the art of expression and the innate capacities of the language. In this heroic age of Arabic history the *qasidah* (ode) represented the only as well as the most finished type of composition. The *qasidah* appearing with Homeric suddenness surpass even the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in metric complexity and elaborateness. The *qasidah* is governed by a fixed set of conventions: stereotyped beginning, common epithets, stock figures of speech and same choice of themes—all of which point to a long period of