

Emir Abdelkader Between Poetic Creativity and Historiography

D. Bali Warda

Higher Normal School of Ouargla, (Algeria)

Educational Media Laboratory

bali.warda@ens-ouargla.dz

Received: 13/05/2026

Accepted: 22/05/2026

Abstract:

The French occupation left evident repercussions across all aspects of life in Algeria. History sought to capture images documenting its crimes in order to reveal its psychological, social, economic, political, and cultural effects on the population. This situation necessitated documentation in its various forms, alongside other approaches. On this basis, the present paper aims to examine the contribution of Emir Abdelkader at the intersection of documentation and literary creativity.

(Remarks: the abstract should be concise, focused and encompassing the main content of the article, without specifying details. The researcher presents the purpose of the research, namely its objective (the problem posed in this research), the methodology of the work and the tools used. (should not exceed a maximum of 140 words).

Keywords: *Emir Abdelkader; Literature; Historiography; Documentation; Creativity, Poetry.*

Introduction:

Literature plays an effective role in the life of nations, as it constitutes a record of their achievements and heritage for future generations, given the knowledge, arts, and emotions it encompasses, which reflect their level and aesthetic sensibility. In this context, Algeria experienced a critical cultural moment arising from the interaction of numerous political, social, and economic factors. This is unsurprising, since sovereignty was usurped and glories were lost, a situation that was reflected in modern Algerian literature.

Based on the foregoing, the presentation is divided into two axes:

- The first axis examines the creativity of Emir Abdelkader.
- The second axis addresses the historical dimension in the poetry of the Emir.

Particularly the poem Khanaq al-Nittah. The presentation reached a set of findings summarized as follows:

- Emir Abdelkader combined poetic creativity with historical documentation.
- The effectiveness of allegiance reflected political and literary maturity.
- The works of Emir Abdelkader belong to the human heritage.

- The Emir incorporated accounts of battles into his texts, creating a dialogue between the historian and the critic.
- The blending of Sufism and historiography in the Emir's works reflects a deep-rooted attachment to authentic Arab identity.
- The artistic sincerity of his poetry enabled it to engage with identity and the human conscience.
- The Emir succeeded in combining Sufism and patriotism despite their lexical differences.
- The Emir united struggle through both the sword and the pen.
- The rhythm of time and place in the Emir's works stimulates scholarly inquiry toward writing the history of Algeria through his poetic and literary legacy.

1. A Pause with the Creativity of Emir Abdelkader. Pride Poetry

It is well known that Algeria possesses clearly defined borders on the geographical map and even clearer boundaries on the horizon of history. Thus, there is no disagreement that without darkness the brightness of the stars would not emerge. These stars reflected in the sea of Algeria an authenticity, belonging, and enduring identity across generations. Moreover, Algeria, by virtue of its geographical location, was expected to serve as a passage for civilizations since the most ancient eras and the remotest times, and as a field for fertile intellectual currents (Murtad, 1982, p. 11). It dazzled with its beauty everyone who came to visit it, and thus Algeria was, and what one may know of Algeria.

It is not hidden from any researcher that the year 1830 constitutes the greatest point of tension experienced by modern Algeria. The entry of French colonialism was a shock of profound impact on the souls of Algerians, Moroccans, and most Arab countries. The aim of the colonizer was embodied in mature resentment and in the destruction of everything, land, people, and culture (Benqina, p. 11). Even the Arabic language in Algeria was subjected to attempts at replacement by the French language, and beyond that, the elimination of all foundations of the Algerian state. The colonizer worked to distort Algerian Islamic history, resulting in cultural dispossession (Nasser, p. 17). This compelled some poets to rescue the literary arena from stagnation (Nasser, p. 24) and to deliver an effective message to all peoples, among whom the most prominent were Hamdan Ben Khodja, Ibn Abi Shannab, Al-Dissi, Ashour, and Kaddour Ben Rouila, as well as Emir Abdelkader (Benqina, p. 20) and others who carried the torch of resistance with the pen despite the suffering caused by malicious hands.

Algeria experienced difficult conditions, as one of the objectives pursued by French colonialism in Algeria since the beginning of its invasion in 1830 was to erase the national and civilizational characteristics of the Algerian people in preparation for their complete integration into the French nation. France began at that time to implement a long-term plan aimed at destroying the Islamic society that existed prior to 1830 (Abdelrahman, 1985, p. 15). Accordingly, the colonizer exerted every effort to isolate Algeria from the outside world and even from its national roots, adopting several methods, foremost among them the

eradication of the Arabic language,¹ the language of the Holy Quran. It sought to obliterate it by using the French language as a substitute in education and official transactions. The most evident manifestation was the elimination of the presence of the language representing a living people, especially when France devised a studied plan implemented in stages to replace Arabic schools with French schools and missionary institutions (Abdelrahman, 1985, p. 16).

The condition of the Algerian elite during the colonial period was deplorable, akin to that of every ordinary citizen who found himself bound by constraints that imprisoned his aspirations and even silenced the word he regarded as a release for his hoarse voice. Moreover, if a writer contemplated establishing a newspaper, the colonial authority would intervene. It would approach his newspaper and suspend it, confront his project and demolish it from its foundations, and turn to his workers and their families, leaving them to misery and hardship, to deprivation, poverty, and hunger (Al-Zahiri, 1933, p. 367; Murtad, 1977, p. 60). This meant that the authority was utterly indifferent to their fate, whether they were fed and able to earn a living, or whether adversity afflicted them and they perished of thirst and hunger. Thus, suffering extended socially, economically, and politically within the consciousness of the Algerian people, including the Algerian intellectual who embodied the thought and future of the nation.

When freedoms are violated, pens refuse submission, and if they write, they do so in a tone of anguish, revolt, and struggle. This was the condition of the Algerian pen, which advanced in parallel with Algerian reality in the modern era. It became the first spark of resistance literature, a reaction that rejected every foreign intrusion, every destructive force, and every means that narrowed the space of national sovereignty. Consequently, literature emerged as a literature of jihad, confrontation, and sacrifice among the people, in its various themes and modes of expression, poetry of struggle, nationalism, and social, intellectual, and political reform, all directed toward a national cause in its broadest scope and most far-reaching dimensions (Benqina, p. 62). This calls for addressing the relationship between literary creativity and historiography, particularly through the works of Emir Abdelkader. Accordingly, we have chosen to examine the aspect of the battles he mentioned in his poetry as a form of historical documentation of the periods he experienced, from a more artistic perspective through the employment of the local environment. This differs from earlier approaches, such as the first Battle of Kheng Ennattah on 4 May 1832 and the second on 4 June 1832.

The subject of this research paper is the works of Emir Abdelkader between poetic creativity and historiography. We shall indicate the reason for choosing this title, drawing on the statement of Abu al Qasim Saadallah, who observed that European and American writers produced a considerable body of literature inspired by Algeria. In reality, this literature was not inspired by admiration but by fear, as has been noted. It is self-evident that what these authors wrote about Algeria far exceeded, many times over, what Algerians themselves wrote about their own country. One need only consult any recent bibliography

¹- The educated Algerian elite wrote in French in French-language journals.

and reflect on the works authored over the centuries to realize that Algeria at that time, like the Islamic East in general, was a land closed upon itself, not a tourist destination nor an international region. It is also true that not everything contained in those writings was truthful or impartial. Our concern here is not the accuracy of what was written nor the integrity of the authors, but rather the sheer quantity of writing about Algeria, whose primary motivation, as we have stated, was fear ([Saadallah, p. 39](#)).

Algeria has undergone numerous political experiences, foremost among them the French occupation, which was the longest in duration. In order to build bridges between historiography and literary creativity, we have focused on recent studies that seek to construct a general conception linking the writer to his environment and to his intellectual and political struggles, thereby revealing his language, aesthetic vision, and the artistry of his texts. Through this approach, we may find sufficient justification to affirm the existence of a literature that documents Algeria and interacts with the particularity of the Algerian individual, expressing his conditions and aspirations.

Algeria has been a state since ancient times. Its foundation stone was laid by Uqba ibn Nafi, and it was further strengthened by Tariq ibn Ziyad, Yusuf ibn Tashfin, Ibn Tumart, Abd al-Mu'min ibn Ali, Ibn Khaldun, Emir Abdelkader, the heroes of November, and other noble souls ([Saadallah, 1982, p. 143](#)).

The history of our cultural and political struggle contains literary traces left by writers who combined resistance on the battlefield with resistance through the poetic pen. The images impressed upon their minds were recorded in their works and transmitted into historiography and documentation of the Algerian homeland as a focal point of struggle and a source of inspiration. This raises several questions. What was the effectiveness of the allegiance pledged to Emir Abdelkader. How did he combine historiography with poetic creativity. How was Algeria represented in his poetic works.

1.1 A Reflection on the Virtues of Emir Abdelkader

The name of Emir Abdelkader is, among both the elite and the general public, too renowned to require introduction. He enjoys a degree of global recognition greater than is often acknowledged. In this respect, he is among the personalities who imposed themselves on the political scene as the founder of the Algerian state through allegiance, resistance, and leadership. He was also a pioneer in poetry by general recognition. While Mahmoud Sami al Barudi, 1838 to 1904, is considered one of the pioneers of the modern literary movement in the Arab East, Emir Abdelkader al Jazairi is regarded as one of its pioneers in the Arab Maghreb in general and in Algeria in particular. Together they represent the school of revival and renewal. They shared the qualities of heroism in both poetry and warfare. Each fought battles on the field of combat, and both experienced exile and estrangement. Al Barudi spent seventeen years exiled on the island of Serendib for his participation in the Arab revolt, while Emir Abdelkader endured exile in France and estrangement in Prussia, and later in Damascus after he was betrayed following his surrender, when he had lost support and assistance, as he himself stated ([Benqina, p. 15](#)).

From this perspective, there is no disagreement that the first to delineate the enduring contours of Algerian literary identity was Emir Abdelkader, who combined leadership by

the sword with leadership through poetry. He was born in his homeland of Qitina, west of Mascara, in 1222 AH corresponding to 1807 CE. He grew up and studied under the guidance of his father, Sheikh Muhyi al-Din, whom the Ottoman authorities compelled to reside in Oran in 1236 AH corresponding to 1821 CE. There, his knowledge expanded through study under the city's scholars, and his awareness broadened, diversifying his intellectual orientations as he engaged in both intellectual and geographical travels across Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Libya, and Iraq, among other regions. He toured most parts of the Arab and Islamic world as well as Europe, befriending prominent political figures, interacting with men of thought and literature, and contributing his positions and opinions to numerous issues. He also devoted himself to study, research, discussion, and mosque-based teaching in Damascus, adopting a Sufi orientation. Among his most notable works are *Dhikra al-Aqil wa Tanbih al-Aqil* which is a treatise (Al-Sabaa, 2000, p. 195), *Miqarad al-Hadd li-Qat Lisān al-Ta'in fi al-Din wa al-Islam min Ahl al-Batil wa al-Ilhad* (Al-Sabaa, 2000, p. 203), *al-Mawaqif al-Ruhiyya wa al-Fuyudat al-Subuhiyya* (Al-Jazzar, 1996, p. 40), the memoirs of the Emir (Al-Sabaa, 2000, p. 203), and others.

He died on 19 Rajab 1300 AH corresponding to 24 May 1883 CE and was buried in Damascus beside the Sufi scholar Muhyi al-Din Ibn Arabi. After Algeria gained independence in 1962, his remains were transferred to Algeria, where his grave was placed in El Alia Cemetery near the city of Algiers (Benqina, p. 22).

When the people of authority and determination among the Muslims gathered to pledge allegiance to Emir Abdelkader, the speech was initiated by his father, Sheikh Ibn Muhyi al-Din. This was fitting, as he had studied jurisprudence, language, and literature, and his intellectual maturity had begun to develop during youth and early adulthood. He had become aware of the conditions and circumstances of his homeland. Given that the Emir possessed all these virtues and merits, leadership came to him without effort or hardship, and he recited:

Therefore the bride of sovereignty became my betrothed
like the sudden call of Moses to prophethood in Tuwa
She taught me the finest ways to attain her union
and how many suitors driven by desire fell away from her
I joined with her as a virgin who revealed her adornment to me
she yielded to me, while the aggressor resolved to depart (Saleh, p. 186).

This passage indicates that agreement had been reached that they should bring them forth in attendance to perform their pledge of allegiance, just as others had done, and this was recorded in writing. Abdelkader distinguished himself from the rest through courage and horsemanship, and he was trustworthy. The saints, nobles, and righteous blessed him, while the poor, peasants, and soldiers gathered in the plain of Ghriss, affirming the pledge and joining the party of jihad under the banner of the new Commander of the Faithful. As for the second pledge, it took place on 13 Ramadan 1248, corresponding to 4 February 1833. The scholar Sayyid Mahmoud ibn Hawa al-Mujahiri drafted a text, which was read publicly. This pledge was written by the servant of the Sharifa, Muhammad, known as Ibn al-Hawatim. He approached them, accepted from them what they offered, and delivered a

sermon to them after their hearts had opened to him. He bestowed honors upon them, distributed wealth among them, showed them kindness, and then dismissed them to their homelands. This pledge functioned as a free popular referendum in which the people, with full freedom and responsibility, chose a suitable individual to assume the affairs of the state and the emirate. After that, the Emir began organizing his state (Al-Sabaa, 2000, pp. 23-24). Militant poetry is defined as everything expressed in revolutionary situations, which means that revolution occupied the attention of poets and became the central theme of their poetry (Boukassa, 2007, p. 07). Consequently, revolutionary poetry represents a literary orientation that expresses revolutionary and resistant positions and reflects the political, social, and cultural condition of peoples during periods of transformation and conflict. The pledge of allegiance was among the most prominent circumstances and challenges that made the Emir's expression emerge directly from a context that led him to proclaim his rule to his people, arising from a popular stance that honored him and made him the focus of attention. It thus became the central cause of his political, military, and even poetic struggle.

Accordingly, the pledge contributed to strengthening the people's awareness and motivated the Emir to participate in struggles for the freedom of his homeland. The pledge is considered a source of inspiration and encouragement for him in confronting the enemy. It therefore constituted a starting point for outlining and pursuing objectives aimed at achieving positive change and realizing popular and psychological stability for Emir Abdelkader as leader, soldier, and poet alike.

The poetry of the Emir is characterized by features that distinguish it from other types of poetry, since it is devoted to political, social, and psychological themes, including struggle, justice, freedom, and liberation. Among the characteristics of his poetry are the following:

- **The Sense of Grandeur:** The sense of grandeur may appear to conflict with Islamic ethical principles, yet for the Emir it was directed toward demonstrating to his contemporaries that admiration for material progress, however great, should not cause them to forget that moral virtues are superior and more complete. Nevertheless, it is necessary to acknowledge his greatness and lofty ambition, which appear abundantly in his collection of poems that addresses ethical virtues and spiritual values rather than external appearances and material attributes. This is highly significant and must be taken into consideration (Benani, p. 152).
- **The Sense of Bearing a Religious Mission:** Here the poet turns toward Sufism, as his personal emotions lead him to focus on religious dimensions, particularly under the influence of his teacher Muhyi al Din, enabling him to exert a more positive influence on society. The Sufi symbol reaches its peak through the activation of Sufi gestures and suggestions, which the poet strives to interpret in his love poetry. He presents numerous examples, varying between traditional and innovative forms, between deeply symbolic meanings imbued with Sufism and diverse metrical patterns. In addition, his Sufi love poetry is refined in expression and richly adorned, drawing its inspiration and meanings from a genuine love that its author claims to have attained symbolically rather than literally, thus imparting to it a distinctive symbolic character.

- **The Emir and Politics:** He expresses his rejection of the prevailing situation at the time and calls for liberation and change. The poet employs poetry as a means of issuing an appeal for freedom and genuine independence. This aspect appears prominently in the pledge of allegiance and in the battles he led, such as Kheng Ennattah.
- **The Emir and Women:** Women occupy a place in the Emir's poetry, appearing as wife and mother, as well as fighter and martyr. In order to attract the reader's attention and create a compelling rhythm that reflects poetic emotions, he composed poems and letters addressed to his wife while in exile in Syria, in Damascus, where he spent the period of his maturity and old age, honored and revered.
- **The Emir and Poetry:** The Emir employed numerous poetic purposes in most of his poems in order to contribute to both historical documentation and creative expression. Each thematic mode may symbolize a different meaning, ranging from praise and elegy to pride.
- **The Emir and the Homeland:** His poetry reflects genuine and sincere emotions toward his homeland, which constituted his primary concern. As an Algerian warrior and one of the world's most renowned figures for his humanity before his warfare, he resisted the invading French forces with utmost sacrifice. France regarded him as a source of pressure, and his battles remain among the greatest testimonies in Algerian history.

From the foregoing, it may be concluded that the Emir's creative energy was comprehensive, powerfully expressing his feelings toward his homeland. The pledge of allegiance functioned as an effective political instrument in both historical and artistic, as well as literary, dimensions. It reflected the position of the leader and the social and political conflicts he experienced, along with his personal emotions. The idea of historiography, aimed at motivating the people toward independence, remained ever present in his work.

In this research paper, we primarily seek to highlight the pledge of allegiance to the Emir, through which its author adhered to enduring values aimed at preserving life and advocating freedom and humanity. Consequently, it assumed an important role in awakening the people, particularly during the period of occupation and resistance. The political and social conditions experienced by the Algerian people at that time constituted a source of inspiration for many poets, foremost among them the leader Emir Abdelkader, whose most prominent forms of resistance will be briefly outlined as follows.

- **Political Resistance:** When the colonizer entered through Sidi Fredj, the Emir decided to make his birthplace the capital of the central government established in Mascara. This government was represented by a consultative council composed of eleven scholars, dignitaries, and notable figures (Bouaziz, 1983, p. 44). He also divided the country into eight provinces, appointing a deputy over each of them (Bouaziz, 1983, p. 79). The government structure was organized according to three ministerial departments: interior, foreign affairs, and justice.
- **Armed Resistance:** After the country fell into the hands of the occupier, the Emir directed his efforts toward armed struggle and considered the path to independence to

lie in the battlefield, for freedom is attained only through sacrifice and struggle. He soon prepared himself for this course, realizing over time that the Muhammadan army constituted the path of resistance. The regulations governing the military units became its official voice, embodying the ranks of struggle with the principle of either victory or martyrdom.

- **Literary Resistance:** The role of the word in confrontation was no less powerful than that of the sword. When France imposed a siege on Algerian intellectuals, particularly after recognizing the national spirit that animated the elite, poetry, like any form of literature, articulated a position. Thus, the poetic inspirations of Emir Abdelkader largely emerged from the concerns and crises of the homeland. He was among the most prominent figures who resisted colonialism, whether directly on the battlefield or through literary expression.

There is no doubt that he shaped these experiences within his diverse literary productions, especially poetic texts, which reflect the relationship between the individual and struggle under colonial conditions.

The most precise objective of this research paper is to examine the concept of poetry, which we consider a fundamental pillar of this study, insofar as it represents the artistic dimension motivated by the pledge of allegiance.

1.2 The Concept of Poetry:

The subject of the concept of poetry emerges anew in every era despite the developments that occur. This, if it indicates anything, points to its immense value, about which there is no disagreement. Thus, creativity in poetry, from beginning to end, is both a skill and a divine gift bestowed upon humankind alone (Al-Ardawi, 2010, p. 01). Language serves as the medium through which the poet translates his experience of life, as well as his exploration of the inner recesses of the self and the emotions that animate it. If we trace the lexical trajectory of the word poetry, we find numerous synonyms such as *al-qirid* (Manzur), craft (Al-Jahiz, 1969, p. 132), knowledge (Al-Fayruzabadi, p. 60; Eid, p. 201),² and others. This multiplicity corresponds to an even broader diversity in the views of Arab critics. Among those who defined poetry are Qudama ibn Ja'far in his book *Naqd al-Shi'r* and Ibn Tabataba

²- The general taste among the Arabs was manifested in the "pillar of poetry" ('amūd al-shi'r), which was ultimately stabilized by al-Marzūqī when he identified the Arabs' method of composing poetry. Its conditions were as follows: nobility and correctness of meaning—namely, that the meaning be presented to reason and sound understanding; eloquence and propriety of diction—so that it is neither obscure, colloquial, nor trivial; accuracy in description—through the sharing of similar attributes between the compared elements in simile; appropriateness in comparison—the presence of a point of similarity without affectation and with effective imagery; cohesion of the parts of the composition—following pre-Islamic convention in smooth transitions, such as the pause at the ruins; suitability of the borrowed image to that from which it is borrowed—bringing the simile closer so that it accords with the object of comparison; and the correspondence of wording to meaning—interpreted as the placement of the word in its proper position so that it conveys its intended meaning fully, while both conform to the requirements of rhyme. These criteria were employed by numerous critics, among them Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī in *al-Ṭabaqāt* and al-Āmidī in *al-Muwāzana*, to distinguish the accomplished poet from others.

al-‘Alawi in his work *‘Iyar al-Shi’r*. The former states: "Poetry deviates from what is not poetry, and there is no expression more eloquent or concise, while fully conveying meaning, than to say that it is speech that is metered and rhymed, indicating a meaning. Our statement that it is speech refers to the origin of discourse, which functions as the genus of poetry, and our statement that it is metered distinguishes it from what is not metered." (Ja‘far, 1965, p. 64). He thus emphasized the musical aspect, which, even in the absence of written notation, is perceived by the listener through its lyrical character.

We also find al-Jahiz, who, after discussing meanings available in common discourse, stated: "Poetry is a craft, a form of weaving, and a type of depiction." (Al-Jahiz, 1969, p. 132). Ibn Sallam likewise defined it as "the knowledge of a people for whom there was nothing more authentic than it" (Al-Jumahi, 1980, p. 05). As the centuries progressed, Ibn Rashiq al-Qayrawani asserted: "Poetry, after intention, consists of four elements: diction, meter, meaning, and rhyme. This constitutes the definition of poetry, for speech may be metered and rhymed yet not be poetry due to the absence of intention and purpose, as occurs in passages that are metrically balanced in the Qur’an, in the speech of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and in other expressions that may be described as resembling poetry" (Rashiq, 1981, p. 245). The concept of poetry continued to evolve from one era to another, particularly when discussion proliferated around poetry as an expression of emotions, a depiction of meanings, and a psychological activity that affects souls. Such discourse on the essence and spirit of poetry led to a dilution of its concept and constituted an initial step toward destabilizing its foundations and undermining its constants (Boumenjel, 2010, p. 33). Consequently, the transformation of the concept of poetry becomes apparent from the pre-Islamic era to the Abbasid period, in which several foundational efforts emerged, followed by major shifts. Perhaps most significant was the contribution of the Diwan group, who considered the essence of poetry to be genuine feeling and its authenticity, distinguishing its core through expression of the self (Al-Aqqad, 1997, p. 11).

The Emir extended literary creativity, particularly poetic creativity, to all nations with pride and documentation. Undoubtedly, poetry in one of its forms is an emotional expression reflecting the intellectual and psychological turning points of the poet, which makes it the literary genre most responsive to events and the most truthful.

Since pride stirs the human being to the depths of his being, it was inevitable for the Emir to weave a piece of himself in which he would point to the hopes and sufferings of the Algerian people. He expressed this by taking pride in himself and his army, treating poetry as a pure source from which artistic beauty is woven with a poetic sensibility appropriate to the context in which it was composed.

He says:

We have in every noble deed a domain (Al-Jazairi)
 Above the heavens we have men
 We rode the paths of virtue through every terror
 And plunged into seas that have their own tumult
 When others, in succession, fail before them in incapacity
 We are those who hasten toward them

Are not others unintended when

The one seeking support calls, come forth

In these verses, Emir Abdelkader does not present an imagined martial image, but rather describes a reality he experienced and devoted his life to. Evidence of this lies in the gravity of his most significant battles, such as the Battle of Macta and the Battle of Sidi Brahimi. The Emir also enumerated his moral virtues, including courage, forbearance, and generosity. My words are confirmed by deeds. We have raised our garment above all blame, and we have learned when the foolish erred one day, and before asking, generosity was ours. He also took pride in his steadfast endurance.

The poetic discourse reveals manifestations of life, whether social or political, and thus discloses its trajectory, especially those crises that require psychological mobilization. It plays an active and influential role in an aesthetic and artistic experience that constitutes a living testimony to the historical period lived by the poet.

The phonetic level is manifested through both external and internal rhythm. The former appears through metrical segmentation, which highlights the meter al Wafir, one of the pure meters suitable for expressing pride and dignity. As for the rhyme, the pattern *halu 0101* and the rhyme letter *lam* appear in most of the poems. The poet was well versed and preserved the system of the classical poem in terms of meter and rhyme, offering resistance even in his creative writing. Prosody represented an extension of Arabness and the Arabic language, through which he fought the colonizer by rejection and defiance.

The internal rhythm resulted from the repetition of sounds such as *lam*, *mim*, and *ra*, and from the repetition of words such as *rijal*, *nawal*, *suala*, and other terms. The poet relied on repeating both voiceless and voiced sounds in order to urge jihad and influence his men. The same applies to lexical repetition. The feature of repetition is among the characteristics of poetry in the works of Emir Abdelkader, and it appeared clearly in his poems.

- **The Syntactic Level:** The poet employed numerous nominal sentences in his poem, such as "the departing ones" and "to us belongs pride." These sentences were carefully constructed to disseminate awareness and inspire determination among his soldiers. The poem also interacted with verbal sentences spanning the past, present, and imperative forms, such as "we rode for noble deeds," "the distressed calls," and "ask France." Verbal sentences indicate movement and continuity in achieving victories. This stylistic diversity in the Emir's poetry reflects the multiplicity of his roles as both soldier and humanitarian.
- **The Semantic Level:** The semantic fields vary as follows:
 - The field of expressions denoting pride includes *men*, *al Simak*, *aspirations*, and *pride*.
 - The field of expressions denoting courage includes *noble deed*, *glory*, *men*, and *we rode*.
 - The field of expressions denoting nature includes *seas*, *sky*, and *mountains*.
 - The field of expressions denoting war includes *struggle*, *war*, and *combat*.
- **Poetic Imagery:** The poet employed numerous rhetorical images, particularly metaphor. The expression "the book spoke" constitutes an implicit metaphor

indicating pride in lineage. The expression "others attain their wishes from us" is an implicit metaphor indicating sacrifice and jihad for the homeland. Another implicit metaphor signifies purity and striving in the path of the homeland.

A close reading of the verses reveals that their author relied significantly on the Quran as a sacred text. He did not depend solely on direct language but also invoked certain lexical items derived from it. On the cultural level, Arab identity is manifested through the employment of the classical poetic structure, reflecting artistic creativity and authentic Arab culture. This poetry constituted resistance on the political level and struggle through the pen on the literary level. His poetry represents a model that expressed the Emir's position in service of the national cause. It also represents an emotional experience from which he derived his feelings and sentiments. Consequently, improvisation predominates, supported by rhythm, musical sensibility, concision, and semantic density.

2. The Historical Dimension in the Poetry of Emir Abdelkader. The Poem "Khenq al Nattah"

There is no doubt that Algerian poets composed works in various traditional themes reflecting the condition of the Algerian people, and this had a profound impact in both the eastern and western parts of the world. This poem emerged at that time from its context as if it were a correspondence for one of the major newspapers. Emir Abdelkader, may God have mercy on him, addressed every Algerian, particularly the educated elite. In this text, the poet glorifies the memory of Khenq al Nattah as a symbol of Algerian resistance and the beginning of the struggle against French colonialism. He addresses this great memory through the wound of time, which confers upon the text a sacred dimension of jihad and demonstrates that the people are always ready to sacrifice for the homeland. The poet evokes scenes of armed struggle through expressions of spirit, highlighting the courage of the fighters and their steadfastness in the face of the colonial machinery of repression.

The text concludes with glorification and heroic pride in the pursuit of freedom, indicating adherence to national identity. In addition to this poem, there is a group of poetic texts, among the most important of which is his treatment of human compassion, such as themes of women and national sentiment.

The poet commander documented Algeria and recorded its glories in his poetry through his humanitarian stances and his intellectual, religious, and literary contributions ([Benqina, p. 22](#)). He states:

Did you not see in Khenq al Nattah our fierce clash
On the day we met, how many of their brave men were struck down.
How many heads that day I split apart
With the edge of my sword, while the spears delivered piercing blows.
A bay horse beneath me was wounded by eight of their lances
Yet it did not complain of pain, nor did it falter.

In the remaining verses of this passage, the poet expresses his heroism in the Battle of Khenq al Nattah near Oran in 1832, when the leadership of the fighters was in the hands of his father, Muhyi al Din. The Emir described it in a manner characterized by vivid vitality, a

description filled with a spirit of pride, overflowing with the gentleness and sweetness of its diction and its musicality.

With these concise lines, we conclude the experience of the poet, the pioneer of struggle in Algeria.

There is no doubt, therefore, that poems which adopted resistance as a poetic subject derive their significance from the historical circumstances in which they were composed and from their function as documentation of history, first and foremost.

Arab identity and chivalric pride stirred the poet's sensibilities, prompting him to express them in various contexts. He indicated that it is not appropriate for the poet to live in imagination detached from reality. A substantial portion of the Emir's poetry relies on historical facts that evoke events with a conscious awareness that distinguishes him from others. He lived the reality and grounded his poetry in it, so that his poems appear as reflections of life, in which he depicts the pains and hopes of the Algerian people despite colonial harassment.

Through his poetry, the Emir portrayed numerous visions, ideas, positions, and even emotions as a reaction against the colonizer and against those whom France attempted to win over among the Emir's supporters. The colonial authorities exerted every effort to attract the deputies of Emir Abdelkader to their side. For example, Marshal Bugeaud offered Ibn Allal in 1842 the restoration of all his properties and the allocation of a substantial state pension if he agreed to surrender to France. This is what Changarnier wrote in his memoirs: at the end of February 1842, Marshal Bugeaud offered Khalifa Ibn Allal, who was among the most devoted and powerful deputies of the Emir, a sum of 500,000 francs, the restoration of his extensive properties, and an annual pension of 50,000 francs, on the condition that he surrender to France and reside in the city of Algiers or in Kolea, the birthplace of his family of prestige and authority ([Baktash, p. 314](#)).

There is no doubt, therefore, that poems which adopt documentation as a poetic subject derive their importance from the historical circumstances in which they were composed. The reason that led the Emir to mention the battle was his awareness of the reader's historical background, which invites engagement with and inquiry into the history of the ancestors' glories. The observer of the Emir's creativity notes that it relies on numerous and diverse references, most notably religious ones represented by Sufism, which is often employed for exhortation and guidance. As for religious references, the present context does not allow for an expanded description of Sufism in the Emir's work. The focus is therefore directed toward the nucleus of documentation and historiography, proceeding from his awareness that poetry serves the national cause in two ways: through writing in Arabic, which the colonizer had prohibited, and through poetic resistance that directly signals Arab belonging.

In this manner, the Emir clarifies his ideas on several levels, most notably through selecting historically appropriate facts. Moreover, he does not confine himself to poetic passages alone, but employs all poetic purposes that correspond to his emotions and feelings toward his homeland, combining poetry and prose. This clearly demonstrates the poet's ability to present the legitimacy of the national cause with pride. The perceptive reader becomes

aware of the need to delve, analyze, discuss, and infer documentation and references, recognizing that one of the sources of historiography is poetry inspired by the history of Algeria.

The poetic verses evoke the Battle of Algiers and express pride in all losses measured as sacrifices made for the homeland. From the foregoing, it may be stated that Emir Abdelkader's employment of historiography endowed the poem with a sense of responsibility befitting the historian before the critic, marked by an aesthetic and artistic imprint rooted in Arab authenticity that affirms pride as a poetic purpose, one to which Emir Abdelkader adhered as a means of resistance.

What appears in the poetry of Emir Abdelkader is his use of classical Arabic, which reflects authenticity and mastery. From the foregoing, we observe Emir Abdelkader's adherence to truth, which we have attempted to approach as closely as possible.

In conclusion, it becomes evident that the political pledge of allegiance was not merely a political act expressing the will of the people, but rather a catalyst reflecting an intertwined religious and national consciousness. Through it, Emir Abdelkader expressed adherence to Islamic values and Arab identity, extending to Sufism, in addition to his concern for the national dimension calling for jihad in the path of God and the homeland. He did not neglect the cultural dimension, including historiography and literature, and this interconnection rendered his poetry a truthful mirror of his awareness and of the awakening of Algerian society.

Thus, the pledge of allegiance to the Emir succeeded in preserving religious and national identity and in consolidating national sentiment. It evolved from a political instrument into a historiographical medium whose objectives were primarily political, namely the expulsion of the occupier, and subsequently artistic and literary, serving as a motivating force that wove poetry as a message addressed to all who questioned the Arab and Islamic character of Algeria.

Bibliography List

- Abdelrahman, A. (1985). *Arab Journalism in Algeria: An Analytical Study of the Press of the Algerian Revolution, 1954–1962*. Algiers: National Book Institution.
- Al-Aqqad, A. M. (1997). *Al-Diwan in Literature and Criticism* (4th ed.). Cairo: Al-Shaab Foundation Press.
- Al-Ardawi, R. M. (2010). *Components of Creativity in Classical Arabic Poetry* (1st ed.). Beirut: Modern World of Books Publishing House.
- Al-Fayruzabadi, M. A.-D. (n.d.). *Al-Qamus al-Muhit*. Beirut: Dar Al-Jeel.
- Al-Jahiz, A. U. (1969). *Al-Hayawan* (3rd ed.). Arab Heritage Revival House.
- Al-Jazairi, E. A. (n.d.). *Diwan of Emir Abdelkader al-Jazairi* (1st ed.). Arab Awakening House for Authorship, Translation and Publishing.
- Al-Jazzar, A. K. (1996). *Distinctions in the Knowledge of Emir Abdelkader and the Great Sainly Masters* (1st ed.). Cairo (Al-Maadi).
- Al-Jumahi, M. I. (1980). *Classes of the Leading Poets* (1st ed.). Cairo: Dar al-Madani.

- Al-Sabaa, A. (2000). *Emir Abdelkader and His Literature*. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Babtain Foundation for Poetic Creativity.
- Al-Zahiri, M. A.-S. (1933). *Al-Shihab*, 9(9).
- Baktash, M. (n.d.). Emir Abdelkader in a Poem by the Poet Victor Hugo. *Athaqafa*.
- Benani, M. A.-S. (n.d.). Some Features of the Emir's Personality through His Poetry. *Athaqafa*.
- Benqina, O. (n.d.). *Modern Algerian Literature: History, Genres, Issues, and Figures*.
- Bouaziz, Y. (1983). *The Emir: Pioneer of the Struggle*. Tunis: Arab Book House.
- Boukassa, F. (2007). Djamila Bouhired as a Revolutionary Symbol in Contemporary Arabic Poetry. *Master's Thesis in National Movement Literature, Mentouri University*. Constantine, Algeria: Mentouri University.
- Boumenjel, A. (2010). *In the Midst of Transformation: The Debate of Modern Arab Criticism on the Concept of Poetry* (1st ed.). Modern World of Books.
- Eid, R. (n.d.). *The Term in Critical Heritage*.
- Ja'far, Q. i. (1965). *Critique of Poetry* (5th ed.). Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah.
- Manzur, I. (n.d.). *Lisan al-Arab*.
- Murtad, A. (1977). The Struggle of the Arab Press in Algeria before the Revolution. *Athaqafa*.
- Murtad, A. (1982). *Arab Culture among Algerians: Influence and Mutual Influence* (1st ed.). Algiers: University Publications Office.
- Nasser, M. (n.d.). *Modern Algerian Poetry: Its Trends and Artistic Characteristics*.
- Rashiq, A. A.-H. (1981). *The Pillar in the Craft of Poetry and Its Criticism* (1st ed.). Cairo: Dar al-Jeel.
- Saadallah, A. a.-Q. (1982). *Intellectual Foundations* (2nd ed.). Arab Book House.
- Saadallah, A. a.-Q. (n.d.). The Influence of Algeria on American Literature. *Athaqafa*.
- Saleh, F. (n.d.). *Emir Abdelkader and a Poet*.