

## **"Oral Epic Literature in Afrin" during the Qamishli seminar**

*The region of Afrin was characterized by the narration of legends and epics through the two methods of storytelling and the lyrical method by professional storytellers and skilled singers*

To highlight the importance of "oral literature" in the lives of peoples and nations, a member of the "Lelûn Association for Victims", the writer "Walid Bakr" from his place of forced displacement in the city of Qamishli / Qamishlo, gave a lecture devoted to talking about "Oral Literature in Afrin", in the presence of a number of intellectuals and who are interested in literature and culture.

During the seminar, Bakr highlighted the importance of literature historically, as well as its oral and written forms, and its importance to the Kurds in general and in the Afrin region in particular. He spoke about a number of famous Kurdish epics and legends, including: "The Legend of Azdahak", "Rustam Zal", "Mame Shevan", "Lawke Gharib", "Mount Judi", "Mount Agri", "Munzer River" and "Shah Maran" and "Night and Day".

As for the epics mentioned by the member of the Lelûn Association, they were: "The Epic of Siyamad and Khajah," "Farhad and Sherin," "Darwishe Abdi and Adolah," "Banafshe Narin and Jambali," "Khane," "Zambil Frush," "Mame Alan," "Dalal," and the epic of Fatma Saleh Agha.

In his speech during the lecture, "Bakr" touched on the oral folk stories that were narrated by parents and grandparents on winter evenings and in the sessions of family and loved ones in an interesting and attractive manner, in addition to recounting some of the sayings of the ancestors, which were circulated as Kurdish popular wisdom and proverbs.

During his speech in this part, he focused on the narration of myths and epics through the two methods of storytelling and the lyrical style by professional storytellers and skilled singers, which characterized the Afrin region in particular. He also mentioned the names of some folk singers who highlighted these stories with their epic singing, including Hamoush Korek, Ibrahim Turko, Jamil Kareh, Jamil Horo, Omar Jamlo, Adik Najjar, Ali Zenouba, Khalile Rabano, Khalil Bud, Ali Tejo, Nazmi Omar, Ahmed Daghli, Ahmed Alkour, Abdel Raouf, Aliko, Bave Salah, and others. In addition to mentioning some of the stories that are told lyrically and circulated in the Afrin region, including: "Sinem", "Babuk", "Mame Alan", "Khalil Bag", "Lawke Matini" and "Halima Khatoun."

In the context of the evening, the most important epics that Afrin is famous for were mentioned, including: "Raqib Ahmad", "Jaafar Qorbat", "Mariam Maho Bag", "Fattah Bey", "Tayer Agha", "Aziz Tak Mustafa", "Hanifa and Basmam" and "Asmar, Khorzi Muhammad, Sheikh Saeed, Be Mal, Berivana Jundi, Damiazoglu, Khalil and Hanan, Osebeh Shar, Salih Naso, Aisha Ibeh and Zainaba Oseh", which is considered one of the most famous love epics sung in the Afrin region, where a wedding party is not without it being sung in addition to the song "Aisha Ibeh."

The researcher also singled out some folkloric epics in Kurdistan, which have been sung in the Afrin region for hundreds of years, including "Siamand and Khaje", "Mam and Zain", "Farhad and Shirin", "Mame Alan", "Jambali", "Dalal" and "Halwaji Gozel". and etc.

At the end of the seminar, the epic "Zainb Oseh" was narrated briefly and the details of this story were discussed, how it began and ended, which the writer considered a "one-sided love story", which is the man, due to the social customs and traditions that limited women's freedom of expression. Her feelings, as they are narrated by going into the depths of the feelings of the man (Zainab's lover who is her fiancé) without delving into the position and feelings of the other party, the beloved.

The lecturer indicated that he had previously conducted research about this epic, that it is a beautiful love story that grew in a village in the Afrin region, and those tender feelings mixed with the nature of the beautiful mountain village, where through this epic an accurate description of the beloved Zainab and her high morals is done through dealing with her neighbors, relatives, and family members. Her family, in addition to the beauty of her figure from her height, thinness and long hair.

The story of "Zainab" is one of the Kurdish tragic stories that ends with deep sadness without the two lovers achieving their goal. Zainab dies after a struggle with illness, but her beloved's deep love for her, as well as everyone who knew her was affected by her death, starting from the farmer and ending with the imam of the mosque, made her a symbol of love, tolerance and beauty. It enriched the region's heritage with the beauty of this love, and it has become a timeless story that song is still echoed by all generations in Afrin.

It is noteworthy that the seminar was held on Saturday, March 25, 2023, at the HRRK Center of the Kurdistan Rojava Intellectuals Union in Al-Hasakah Governorate, northeastern Syria.