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CHAPTER- IV

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON “AL-ABARĀT (العبرات)”

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

The book “Al-Abarāt” consists of eight popular short stories, four of which written by Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūtī and four from French romances, presumably made from Arabic drafts. The stories which are composed by himself are termed as “Original” and those that are adapted from French literature are named as “Translated” in the book. It is noted that each title of the story has a characteristic feature with the events described here. Al-Abarāt is stated to be a complete version of “al-Nazarāt”. This book is therefore, considered as the fourth part of “al-Nazarāt”.¹

The term “al-‘Abarāt” means ‘The Tears’ and so it is filled with tears of severe moaning for which the writer is wailing here and is also full of unexpected events like sudden death. The author expresses the exploitation of the downtrodden by the powerful class of the society in these stories. The author does not write these stories only by his pen, rather depicts them by the thoughts and sentiments of his heart. He therefore, introduces his book “al-‘Abarāt” by offering it to the miseries of the people such as:

"الأشقياء في الدنيا كثير ‘ وليس في استطاعة بائس مثلني أن يمحو شياً من بؤسهم و شقائهم ‘ فلا أمل من أن أسكب بين أيديهم هذه العبرات ‘ عليهم يجدون في بكاؤهم تعزية و سلوى."

Annotation: “Miseries are of various kinds in the world. There is no other unfortunate person like me to suffer these miseries and agonies. So I do not like to reduce my tears in front of them. Perhaps they would get consolation and comfort in my tragedies.”²
The readers find that "al-‘Abarât" comes down from earthical events, which are full of passionate excitement, anecdotes of sacrifice and devotion. Therefore, the readers would also get a spirit in the events of these anecdotes and translations. The skilled author picked up his pen to write “al-‘Abarât” in order to defend the rights of wretched people, to remove the sufferings of widows, orphans, neglected persons, oppressed prisoner and uncared children for parents etc. Therefore, this collection is very popular till today and may be counted as author’s best known work after “al-Nazarât"- a voluminous work of al-Manfalûti consisting of valuable essays and short stories.

4.2 Objectives of ‘Al-Abarât’:

Al-Manfalûti maintains some principles while writing “al-‘Abarât” and applies them with full skill and ability within the book. The principles are:

I. The prime objective of “al-‘Abarât” is to expose the sufferings of the poor, exploited ones as well as the victims from socially backward classes.

II. To reveal the appropriate position and dignity of women in the society.

III. Al-Manfalûti selects here various kinds of topics depending on social situations in which nothing has been comprised except the human values and sentiments. These stories can be termed human essays.

IV. Al-Manfalûti always prefers the nurturing of human justification in all aspects of his writings in al-‘Abarât, which is marked by grief, anguishment and deprivation. Moreover, he describes the real pictures of humanity as well as the sufferings of victims. We, therefore, can firmly say that al-Manfalûti was not only a writer,
but also a role model of excellent character, exposé of Arabian tradition as well as Islam, a great advocate of social justice and an architect of Modern Arabic Literature.

V. One of the most important objectives of al-Manfalūti’s writing is that he always presents a topic going directly to the main theme keeping strong relations with the subject matter till the end. He attempts to raise the concerned issues to draw the minds of readers without exaggerations and digressions. Moreover, he cites concrete evidences and examples in the writings.

VI. Another most significant objective of “al-‘Abarāt” is to lay emphasis on preservation of Arabic culture, its heritage and to revive them in a new shape.

VII. To stress on imparting ethical education to the youths of all sections of the society.

VIII. To deliver the sermons of the old & experienced men towards the people of the society through his writings.

IX. To create awareness amongst the common people regarding the bad effects of Western Cultures and how to eradicate them in a systematic way.

X. To remember the golden days as well as the glorious deeds of Arabs in Spain and to elegize on the downfall of Arabs in the hands of Crusaders. Al-Manfalūti depicts this story superbly in a story of “al-‘Abarāt”, namely “al-Dhikrā”.

XI. Another significant objective of al-Manfalūti’s al-‘Abarāt is to give utmost importance to bring harmony amongst all sections of the people in the country.
4.3 INSIDE THE BOOK “AL-ABARĀT”:

“AL-ABARĀT” is a slim volume of eight short stories, first published in 1915 A.D. Four stories are described as ‘Mawdū’ah’ means composed or original and they are:

1. (The Orphan) 
2. (The Veil) 
3. (The Abyss) 
4. (The punishment) 

The remaining four stories of “al-‘Abarāt” are described as “Mutarjmah” means translated or adapted, namely:

1. (The Martyrs) 
2. (The Remembrance) 
3. (The Requital) 
4. (The Victim) 

Before going to give a critical analysis of the book, a summary of all the aforementioned eight stories of “al-‘Abarāt” is given below:

THE ORPHAN (البيتيم)
(Original)

This is the first story of “al-‘Abarāt” composed by Mustafā Lutfi al-Manfalūti in a lucid manner. The writer, here, describes about an orphan and he minutely observes the movement of that orphan. He inquires into his residence and whereabouts. After completing his inquiry, he comes to know that the orphan is an oppressed and lean & thin youth. The youth has been suffering from immense depression and agony like the groaning of a grief-stricken mother who lost her children. None consoles the young boy. The writer wants to know the secret cause of his grief and melancholy and
likes to sympathize with him and to take share of his distress. The writer comments:

"إن الفتى مريض ولا يوجد بجانبه من يقوم بشأنه، وقد بلغ الأمر مبلغ الجد. فلا بد لي من المصير إليه"

Annotation: “Definitely the youth is sick, there is no body found near him who would like to help in his distress and the matter became very serious. So it is necessary for me to help him.”

Then he goes to his house and sees that the boy has been suffering from an acute type of fever and is lying on a bed. He, therefore, calls a doctor for him, the doctor after examining, finds that he is on the verge of death. Nevertheless, our writer spends whole night with the patient, helps him to take medicine and weeps for him. Thus, he consoles the boy from the core of his heart. At last, the light of the dawn appears and the youth regains his health slightly. The patient is astonished at our writer’s benevolence and asks:

"أنت هنا؟ - Are you here?"

Then the writer asks him about his condition. The depressed boy tells him on a condition that he will keep the matter secret. The depressed boy confides to the writer as follows:

“My parents passed away while I was only six years old. They left me in such an extreme poverty and destitute condition that I had nothing to live by. In such a pathetic condition, one of my uncles took my responsibility. He was one of best uncles, most generous of them, most liberal in kindness and compassion, most sympathetic and beloved of them. He helped me so much so that my life-style had changed. My uncle had a little daughter. She was younger than me. My uncle became happy to see his daughter staying in the company of a brother. One day, he admitted both of us to a school. Then I used to go to the school always along with my sister. She became one of my best friends without knowing myself."
Gradually I found it hard to live even for a moment without looking at her. So I began to love her from the core of my heart."

No one knew of the secret love-affairs growing day by day between them. They were always going together to the school and returning from it, reading together, playing together in the field, talking together in the garden or park, discussing together in the bedroom. In course of time, the girl attained adolescent period and one day, the veil had come to her automatically. She started to stay in her private room, used to read alone and felt ashamed to talk with him.

The love-affairs between them had developed into such a position that none of them could stay without looking at the other. So in this dilemma, restlessness came into their minds. At night, both of them remembered the old days of their childhood that they were seating down on the bank of the river, their pleasant discussions, the drawing-competitions held between them etc. In this regard, Mustafà Lutfi al-Manfalûtî expresses a significant statement through the saying of the youth as such:

"أنا أن أكون أول فاتح لهذا الجرح الأليم في قلبي ، ولا قدرت في نفسي يوما من الأيام أن أصل أسباب حياتي بسباب حياتها ، لأنى كنت أعلم أن أبويها لا يسخوان بمثلها على فتى بانس فتير مثلي

Annotation: “I am the beginner of this painful wound in her heart. Not even for a single moment, did I think of material benefits from this relationship. Because I knew that her parents would never grant her hand to a poor destitute youth like me.”

Thus, the time was passing. One day, his uncle was afflicted by an uncurable disease. On his deathbed, he advised his wife:

"لقد أعجلني الموت عن النظر في شأن هذا الغلام ، فكونى له أما كما كنت له أبا ، وأوصيك أن لا يفقد مني بعد موتى إلا شخصي

Annotation: “Certainly the death is very near to me, now my view in regards of this boy is that – ‘Be a mother for him as I became a father for
him and I suggest you that after my death, he should not lose anything except myself.’”

After passing some days, the boy observed the girl minutely and noticed that her behaviour and love towards him started to change. A strange situation arose in front of the boy, which did not happen earlier. Hence, the extreme grief and anxiety penetrated into his heart and he was perplexed by the situation.

One morning, the boy was sitting in his room. Suddenly the maid servant entered into the room and said to him: “Sir, my mistress had ordered me to tell you that she is determined to hold wedding of her daughter within very short time. She thinks that after demise of her father, your stay here is not suitable anymore. Because some people may suspect her daughter. Moreover, she wants you to leave this room with all your materials and to shift to other room.” After hearing such harsh order, he became bewildered for some time as if a feathered arrow pierced silently in his liver and tears began to flow profusely from his eyes.

Thus, he left the residence of his uncle and came out from it as a vagabond, helpless and anguished. He then, took asylum in a bare room of a house. The past memory of his beloved disturbed him extremely but there was no other way for him except to have patience and to shade tears copiously.

After passing a few years, a woman came to this place searching the youth. At that time, he came out from his room and all of a sudden, he saw that maid who served him at the house of his uncle. Subsequently he asked her: “Are you that very maid?” She replied positively and said to him: “I have been searching you for the last three days in all these places, but I did not find anyone who may give information about you. At last, I find you today.” Then she started crying. The youth asked her: “Why are you crying?” She replied: ‘After your departure from the house of your
uncle, the girl was extremely aggrieved. She gave up eating anything and even did not sleep at night. She was continuously weeping only asking me what was the cause of his departure from our house. She regretted immensely and commented:

"مَا ذَا يَكُون مَصِير هذَا الْبَانِسُ الْمُسْكِينُ؟"

**Annotation:** ‘What will be the destiny of this poor depressed boy?’

At that time, she could not utter a single word. After a few days, she was suffering from illness. Her health deteriorated day by day. The girl was groaning whole day and night. Her beauty withered away causing worry for her mother. Then her mother was frightened looking her serious condition. At night, while the maid was beside her, the girl asked her about the information of her brother repeatedly. Then, she wrote a letter to her lover and asked the maid to deliver the letter to him. Soon the girl died.

The last part of the story has been described thus - “The boy was on the threshold of death due to the mental agony caused by the separation from his beloved. Therefore, he requested the author earnestly to take the responsibility of his burial beside the grave of his beloved along with her letter after his death. After the death of this poor boy, the writer had done all to fulfill his last desire.

Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūṭi, the author of the aforementioned story, would like to say that the real love is heavenly which cannot be destroyed by any earthly means. He also means to say that if there is honesty and purity in the love of two trusted friends, then they will be united under one roof one day. The writer attempted immensely to reduce pains and sorrows of the orphan. When he came to know about the secrecy of his tragedy, then he did not hope that he would be able to recover the boy from his sufferings. He became sad for him. After his immature death, the writer buried him at the vicinity of his beloved from whom he was separated in his whole life. He writes this story in splendid formation comprising some
fantastic phrases & idioms that boost its beauty and magnificence, which has been mentioned in the Table No-1 of analytical column. It is mentionable that the writer uses some obscure words, which create confusion in the minds of readers.

THE MARTYRS (الشهداء)

(Translated)

It is a translated story derived from the work by the French writer and diplomat Chateaubriand (1768-1848 A.D.). The fiction “al-Shuhadâ” is based on the French original “Atala” (1801 A.D.). This is a story in which the theme of the “Noble Savage”, beloved of the French Romanticists, plays a prominent role.

This is the first story of Mustafâ Lutfi al-Manfalûti translated from European origin consisting of almost ten pages. It describes a story of a widow whose husband and parents passed away at an early age. So, the widow had none in this world except her only a little son and a favourite brother. After facing severe financial crisis to maintain the family, her brother emigrated to a Western country to earn livelihood. Thus, she had to separate from her brother for a long time. Hence, she had to face many problems along with her little son. The widow was very sad for her separation from her brother and had been thinking about him all the time.

One day, her boy told his mother that an art exhibition cum competition would be held in Washington, the capital of U.S.A. The organizers have announced many valuable prizes for the successful participants. Therefore, her boy also wanted to participate in the competition in order to meet his maternal uncle. The little son beseeched her mother repeatedly seeking permission to tour U.S.A. After obtaining the permission, the boy travelled to Washington, U.S.A. Here he participated in the art exhibition and exhibited there a fantastic scenery of
farewell which depicted his own farewell from his mother on the bank of the ocean on the day of his departure. The scenery was pathetic and beautiful which particularly attracted the visitors’ attention. Subsequently, he was selected for the award of the prize in the competition and remained in Washington. During his stay there, he lost his connection with his mother for a long period. This loss caused extreme pain for the mother and at times, she even fainted remembering her son.

After some days, the boy sent a small amount of money to his mother by post. Then, he started to search for his maternal uncle in all possible places there. At last, he reached a deserted Island in which a tribe of Negroes lived and they detained him as he was a ‘white-man’ and kept him in a dark tunnel under the ground to take revenge on the whites. In this situation, he broke down weeping and lamented his condition. Mustafa Lutfi al-Manfaluti expresses his tragic situation in the following lines:

Annotation: ‘One year passed in this situation, at last he forgot himself, his mother and forgot that world in which he was living as well as that world to which he is to go. He forgot day-night, dark & light, and happiness & grief. He was in between two positions: ‘The life and death’. He had neither gladness nor any grief. He did not remember the past happenings and had no hope for future.......’

On the other hand, the mother of the boy had become impatient waiting for her son everyday on the bank of the ocean. She thought that her son had died.

The jailer arrived at the prison to observe the boy in the evening. He approached him and extended his hand to his motionless chain in the
wall. Then he snatched it away from its position. The jailer did not say anything whether it was the time of his release or the time of his death. Then he took him to the outer side of the prison. At last, he reached with him to a falling stone near the gathering of the tribe. Subsequently, he bound his chain with the stone and left him there and he went away. At that time, his consciousness started to come back gradually. At last, he recovered his senses and remembered what had happened to him. Then he opened his eyes and saw a position different from his earlier place, a scene different from earlier one, a sky and an earth different from former sky and earth. He remembered all previous events as his mother and her misery after his departure, native place and bank of the sea etc. Tears started flowing continuously.

Lamenting over the chain of unfortunate event, he fell asleep. He was awaken by touch. He saw a white strange person and a white beautiful girl in front of him. He asked the girl: “Who are you?”

She said: “I hail from this region. I have come to know that you are a wretched person. Now I sympathize with you and want to rescue from your bondage.” Then the girl liberated him from the captivity. The boy was surprised for the generosity of that Negro girl. She started shedding tears copiously looking at the tragic conditions of the boy. At last, the girl fell in love with the boy. Both of them proceeded ahead to a safe place. Expressing his ardent love, the boy says following lines:

Annotation: “Definitely happiness is present in front of us; there would have been no happiness amongst us, if we would not have desired it (Love) in this remaining period (life). So we should first take shelter in a house in which we have to meet each other according to the rule of
God............. No barrier can interfere; no trouble can disturb our pious love."

When asked about her, she told him in this way: "I am a strange girl in this region like you. I have no acquaintance with its inhabitants except myself. I am not familiar with its land except the part of my grave. With the passing of time, the impression of grave and its buried one have been diminished. My mother gave birth to me on a bed of a white man who was coming from your regions twenty years earlier. He met her while passing her area. He used to love her and she also fell in love with him. Thus, one day, she escaped with him to this desert. So she embraced his religion. He got married to her and out of this nuptial bond, I was born. We lived together for long period of time in happiness and safety."

On the other hand, the people of my mother's tribe were vigorously searching for us. At last, they found out our dwelling place at the darkness of night and captured us. Then they took all of us to their lands. Suddenly, they killed my father in front of my mother and me. At that time, I was only ten years of age and witnessing such a brutal scene. I became senseless. It was a barbaric killing. This dreadful scenery is still alive in my mind. My mother was severely shocked witnessing such heinous act. This tragedy had spoiled her whole life and she reached gradually the verge of death. Then, she called me and said to me: "O, my daughter, verily my mother had given birth to me for miseries in this world. I think that I have also given birth to you for the same cause. Hence, never be a coward and shameless girl in any condition. Give me your promise firmly for protecting your virginity to which only the solution is death." Then her mother's face was shining in happiness and delightness. At the dying hour, she looked at the sky and said: "O, Rafäel, You are there in Paradise". Hearing the word Rafäel, the boy was excited and asked the girl: "Do you know the motherland of your father and his family?" She
said: “Yes”. Then he was overjoyed with happiness and said: “O, Allâh, praise is for you. Today I have found my goal after constant search.” She was surprised at his words and asked: “Which goal you are searching persistently?” The boy replied: “I have been searching my maternal uncle for a long time. I have already established my relationship with you by the sacredness of love only. Now I have joined you with another relation, that is blood relation. So from today, you are my beloved as well as the daughter of my maternal uncle together.”

Then she said with a fading voice: “All praise is for Allâh, today I have found a brother for me in this crucial moment.” After a while, her body trembled severely and her mouth started to change its colour gradually. Hence, the boy was terrified and frightened. She again said: “I have kept my mother’s last advice exactly and endowed my virginity. I feared that my love would influence me over my religion. I have been always carrying away a long bottle of poison with me. Now that dreadful day has arrived. Because, my virginity must have to be saved to keep my mother’s last instruction. Hence, I would like to hand over you to the hand of Great Allâh.”

Then the girl indicated him towards the empty glass of bottle. Then, he understood everything and the boy fainted pondering over his destiny. After a while, he recovered his consciousness, opened his eyes and suddenly he saw the girl lying senseless beside him. At that time, the priest, the owner of the hut was standing in front of him with food on his hand. The priest brought it for both of them. At first, he was in confusion and then he saw the unbelievable event. The priest looked at the youth with suspicion and started to talk irrationally: “O, man, do you know why this girl died? Because she promised herself to keep her virginity.”

So it is known from the study of the story that in spite of many terms and conditions laid down by her, she had loved him heartily.
Therefore, she fell in a bewildered position that is her heartiest love and maintaining her religion. So, she did not find any other way for her salvation except the way of committing suicide.

After this tragic incident, the boy was shocked tremendously. His speech was choked. His face became pale and his body trembled. He fell down and started moaning. Then he started to wail with pathetic grief and tragedy. The priest then, kept his hand on his head and said: “O, my son, treat gently to your soul, because you are not the first bereaved man on this earth, your deceased one is not first in this world. Definitely, for the enduring person, there is consolation as well as satisfaction in the mercy of Allāh. Moreover, there is reward for the performers of good deeds.”

Then the boy stretched out his hand and started to say: “O, my father, pardon my sins, because I was from amongst the oppressors.” Then the priest said: “O, my son, may Allāh forgive you, because the Almighty forgives all and there is no resistance in His way.” The boy said to him: “O, my father, this is an extraordinary girl of this world; there is not a single person for her in this earth except me. She died for the sake of me only. Hence, do you permit me to go near her so that I may bid her farewell for the last time with a kiss? He said: “O, my son, do it” Then the boy crawled towards the body of the dead girl, embraced her firmly and fell upon her face. Subsequently, he kissed her for the first time in his life and he too left for heavenly abode.

Describing the story, Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūtī, mentions about the importance of real love very clearly in the following lines:

"أَنَّ الَّذِينَ خَلَقَتْنَاهُمْ وَأَرْوَاهُنَا فِي أُجُسَامٍ مِّنْ أَلْبَاءٍ هُمْ الَّذِينَ خَلَقَنَا هَذَا الْقُلُوبُ وَخَلَقَنَا لَهَا الحُبُّ، فَهُوَ يَأْمُرُنَا أَنْ نَحْبُهُ وَأَنّ نَعْيِسُ فِي هَذَا الْعَالَمِ سَعْدَاءَ هَاتِنَهُنَّ.

Annotation: “Definitely, He (Allāh) who created us and gave souls to our bodies, He also created for us these hearts and created love. Hence, He ordered us to love and to live in this world with happiness and delight.”}
He once more, writes about the significance of love as mentioned below:

"إن كنت تريدين أن نعيش على وجه الأرض بلا حب، فاتنزعوا من بين جنوبنا هذه القلوب الخفافة ثم أطلبو منا بعد ذلك ما تشاءون؛ فإنا لا نستطيع أن نعيش بلا حب ما دامت لنا أفندة خفافة."

**Annotation:** "If you would like to live on the surface of earth without having love, then you pluck out these throbbing hearts from our sides, after that, you search from us what you need; because we would not be able to live without love until we have throbbing hearts."12

Moreover, Mustafa Lutfi al-Manfaluti, compares love with the songs of birds, the mild breeze, the stars in the sky, the sun in the universe, the flowers of the gardens etc. He says:

"هذه الطيور التي تغرد في أفانها إنما تغرد في بنغمات الحب، وهذا النسيم الذي يتردد في أجوانه إنما يحمل في أعطافه رسائل الحب، وهذه الكواكب في سماها، والشمس في أفلاكها، والأزهار في رياضها، والأعشاب في مروجها والسوائم في مراعها، والسوارب في أحجارها... إنما تعيش جميعاً بنعمة الحب."

**Annotation:** "These birds are singing in the branches of the trees, certainly they are singing the songs of love, this breeze that blows constantly, definitely carries away the letters of love on its shoulders, these stars in the sky, the suns in the universe, the flowers in the gardens, the green-grasses in the meadows, the freely grazing livestock in the rich grazing lands, the reptiles in the stones......... all these things live together by the ‘Grace of love’."13

At the same time, the author did not forget to give a theological thought in the story, expressing the unity of God, His majesty, His power in the following lines:

"إنا لا نعبد إلا الله وحده، ولا نشرك به مشرك، وفي اسْتِطَاعَتِنَا أن نعرف الطريق إليه وحدها بدون دليل بدنا عليه،"
Annotation: “Certainly we worship only one Allah and we never compare other things with Him. In our capability, we should profess His oneness in a way without furnishing any evidence.”

Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūti also would like to reveal the beauty, magnificence and splendor of creatures of Almighty through this story. He has cited a verse from the Holy Qur‘ān in this respect:

أَيْهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ حَجَرٍ فَمَثَّلْنَا شَعْبًا، وَمَنْ خَلَقْنَا حَيَاةً لِلْجَمَالِ فَلْحَبِّوهُ.

Annotation: “O, people, verily Allah created the beauty for your enjoyment, so you enjoy it. Certainly your life has been created for beauty, so you revive it.”

He states that our Lord has created beauty along with all His creatures. If we observe all His creations, then we shall find that there is a beauty in each creature of the Lord as in the making of sky, sun, stars and setting up the different oceans, mountains in the earth etc.

This story of al-Manfalūti has been severely criticized for its contradictory title by some columnists. Since the girl has committed suicide by swallowing poison, she can never be a martyr in the eye of Islam, because, the act of committing suicide is unlawful activity and it is a big sin. According to Prophetic Tradition, the man who commits suicide will have to live in the hell. Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūti has forgotten such strict dictate of Islam at the time of writing of the story.

THE VEIL

(Original)

This is an original story written by Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūti in “al-‘Abarât”. The writer wants to show here the bad effects of Western culture influencing the daily life of a man who toured Europe and stayed there for a few years. The man, who was a friend of the writer, had some indigenous qualities of ethics related to his religious principles and native
culture, when he went to Europe. But it was a matter of astonishment that the man returned from Europe ignoring all his previous characters and natures as well as made himself a western cultured gentleman. The writer has expressed in the following line about the changing behavior of the man:

 Annotation: “He (The man) went (to Europe) with a holy and pure, pious heart, who was blessed with forgiveness and pleased in showing mercy. He came back with a dirty heart and became continuously angry on the earth and its inhabitants with revenge to take on the sky and its creator.”

It has been seen that the author, al-Manfalūtī, observed the behavior of this fickle minded person very minutely and established good relation with him keeping self-morality, to detect the man’s nature after coming back from Europe. But the author’s strong morality failed to bring him back to the right path. One day, he accidentally, had to go to his house. At that time, the man was seen as silent and sad. Our writer congratulated to him. He indicated to him by a mimic salutation. Hence, the writer asked him about his information. He told him: “Since night, I have been suffering from mental agony from this woman. I could not find out any solution to save from her behavioural gesture.” The author has written in this way: “I asked him: ‘Which woman do you mean?’ He replied: ‘That woman who was called by the people as my wife. Now I consider her as an impediment in the way of my aspirations and high ambitions.’ I asked him: ‘Which aspirations & ambitions do you mean?’ He told: ‘There is nothing in my life except one aspiration that I would never see any veil on the face of any woman in this city.’ I said to him: ‘It is such a matter on which I cannot give my opinion.’ He said: ‘Definitely most of the people desire what I aspire and like to remove the veil from the faces of their women.
They need that their faces should be displayed to other men. Moreover, such types of people opine that all women always fear the men without any cause but other than the weak and old man. According to me, a new system should be attempted to start on the model of Westernization. Now the reason of my grief is that I, at first, took up this proposal to my wife. Hearing this speech, she vehemently opposed it and commented on it as a great calamity and big disaster to her. She again said that even though the female had surpassed the male in some cases, but it would not be possible for her to go above in the field of her shame and shyness.

After listening to his views regarding the veil, al-Manfalūtī’s heart was filled with anxieties and sadness. He, therefore, questioned him: ‘O, my friend! Do you know what are you telling?’ He answered: ‘Yes, I know, I have told you what is genuine and true.’ I said to him: ‘You have spent a long period of time amongst the Western people. They have traditionally no veil of women. So their cultures influence upon you. Human soul is like the water of stagnant pond, which is clear and pure, but when a stone falls there, suddenly it is transformed into muddy water and becomes unfit for consumption. There is lack of chastity and purity in the western culture. In real sense, the Devil wants to mislead you through a wrong way.’ He asked: “Do you reject the existence of purity amongst them?” I said: ‘I do not reject it because purity is still present amongst the weak, simple-minded and laborious people. At the same time, I reject its existence amongst the powerful, deceitful man and the skillful woman. So, at first, purify yourself in your transactions then purify the women. Generally, the women are weaker in comparison to men. But she has an exceptional quality to attract the man by her love.’

The man told: ‘You should know it that the women are unaware of their legal rights in the society and they always have been observing the rules of their religions. Thus, they never complain against the injustice
done to them by the powerful male dominated society. Therefore, they do not come out to claim their legitimate demands and to establish their equal position in the society fearing disputes amongst the family members.'

At that time, I said to him: 'The free movement of woman without wearing veil, definitely harm themselves, because they play a significant role in bringing up their children and maintaining the overall functions of the family. They have a biological relationship with their upbringings and responsibility for them. In this perspective, women themselves would not like to seek further freedom. This is surprising that you are going to fight for that freedom which is not sought by the women. I think it will be an oppression done to them. Moreover, you are not mourning for them rather you are lamenting for yourself. You are not weeping for their interests rather you are searching your opportunities from them in order to enjoy their beauty enforcing them to unveil their curtains. Thus, the dignity of the women would be degraded gradually in the society. They are to plunge in shameless and disgrace. Therefore, I would like to say that you are seeking their unveiling and liberties at the cost of their degradation in the society. So you are giving preference to a Western life-style for them and your weeping for the woman is your hypocrisy.'

Subsequently, Mustafâ Lutfî al-Manfalûti, the author of the story has depicted a splendid picture of natures of Egyptian woman in the following lines:

"عَلِّمَتْ السَّاعَةَ كَلَّ السَّاعَةَ فِي وَاجِبٍ تُؤْدِيهِ لَنفْسِهَا؛ وَفَقْهَةٌ تَقْفُهَا بِنَفْسِهَا؛ وَوَقَفْتُهَا بِنَفْسِهَا؛ وَصَلَّتُهَا طَلَفَتُهَا عَلَى وَلَدَهَا؛ وَجَلَّسَتْهَا إِلَى جَارِتِهَا طِبِّبَهَا دَاذَّهَا وَقَبْتُهَا سَرِيرَةٌ قَلَبُهَا؛ وَتَرْفِي الْشَّرْفُ كَلَّ الشَّرْفِ فِي خَضْوَعَهَا لَأَبِيهَا وَاتِبْعَارُهَا بَأَمَّ زُوجِهَا؛ وَنَزْولُهَا عَنْ رَضَاهَا. وَكَانَتْ تُفْهِمْ مَعْنَى الْحُبِّ، وَتَجْهِلُ مَعْنَى الْغَرَامِ، فَتَحْبُّ زُوجَهَا لَأَنَّهُ زُوجَهَا؛ كَمَا تَحْبُّ وَلَدَهَا لَأَنَّهُ وَلَدَهَا؛ فَإِنْ رَأَيْ عِلْبَرَهَا مِنْ النَّسَاءِ أَنَّ الْحُبُّ أَسَاسَ الْزَّوْجِ؛ رَآَتْ هِيْ أَنَّ الْزَوْجَ أَسَاسُ الْحُبِّ.

Annotation: "The Egyptian woman lives in peace and tranquility
for a long period at her house, satisfied with her life. She enjoys all happiness in performing her duty, stands in front of her Lord, sympathizes her child, or sits with her neighbor to spread piece to the inner side of her heart. She takes care of her father by all honour and obedience, her cooperation with the work of her husband. She keeps both of them satisfied. She understands the meaning of love and does not know the meaning of excitement. Therefore, she loves her husband because he is her husband just as she loves her child because it is her son. The woman thinks that love is the basis of marriage and the marriage is the basis of love.”

The author intends to convey that the European people achieved development in education in accordance with their requirements, whereas the largest part of Egyptian nation is still unaware of alphabetical letters. Therefore, it is high time to educate them first in the right direction avoiding other insignificant things. There are many philosophers in Europe who have been producing philosophy of infidelity amongst the unbelieving people with their knowledges while the believers here are deprived from proper theological teachings. The Europeans are absolutely free, they do what they want to do, they live as they want to live without the bindings of religious conviction. But it is true that there is a limitation of freedom, because if they deviate from right direction, then whole nation would be hurled down and could not able to grip their essences and at last, would fall into the abyss.

Mustafa Lutfi al-Manfaluti, also mentions the characteristics of European woman in this story as he expresses in the following lines:

Annotation: “The European man has patience to see his wife’s walking together hand in hand with whom she wants to walk, she can accompany
anyone anywhere. Therefore, her husband stands in front of that assembly like a stupid, motionless person. So you want to amuse like the Eastern man who stands in the park and grips it strongly.”

The Western styled man was insisting on his point. Then the author said to him: “Now it is your choice whether you may follow my advice or you may violate it. But you should remember that, from today, I would not come to your house because a portion of the veils in your family would die out in the form of shame and disgrace which would resist me as a disciplinarian.”

Thus, three years passed and the writer did never visit him. One day, the author unexpectedly met him in the way and saluted him but he was seen as an unseen man. He did not speak anything.

Once, at mid-night, the writer had to go out on some urgency. All of a sudden, he saw his friend coming out from his residence along with some policemen; at that time, he looked pale, confused and absent-minded. Actually, the police detained him and led him to the police station. Seeing the condition of his friend, he was saddened greatly and asked him about the matter. Then the man said: “I do not know anything what has happened. The police knocked the door of my house, entered my house, and detained me. Then they took me to the police station. I do not know the cause of my detention at this time. O, my friend, I am neither a guilty person nor a suspected one. Please forgive me for what had happened earlier. Now, would you accompany me to the police station tonight?”

Then the writer walked with him silently leaving all his urgent matters and did not say anything to him. Subsequently, he noticed that the man was ready to speak something to him, but due to his shame and disgrace, he could not say anything. Therefore, our author asked him: “Do you remember any reason for your detention?”
Being perplexed, his friend looked at the writer and said: “My wife has suspected me on account of my behavior with her and she has left my house and has not come back till now.” Our writer asked him: “Did anyone accompany her?” He said: “No.” He asked: “Do you know the place where did she go?” He said: “No.” He asked: “Whom do you suspect?” He said: “I do not suspect anyone. But I think that my wife is an ignorant and jealous woman. Perhaps some people tried to amuse with her in the way. So she became malicious on him, definitely, something happened amongst them, and thus, the incident shifted towards the Police station.”

After some time, they reached the Police Station. Then one police led them to the chamber of Commissioner. They stood in front of him. Then the Police Commissioner indicated to a constable for doing something, which they could not understand. The Police Commissioner said: “Sir, it pained me extremely to say that the police was patrolling last night and they found a male and a female in compromising position. The police took both of them to the Police Station. Now I have come to know that you have a relationship with the woman. Therefore, we have called you to investigate the real facts whether the woman has any blood relations with the youth or she is a prostitute. Both of them are behind you. So look at them.” Subsequently, one police had brought both of them from another room. The friend of the author had gazed at both of them and all of a sudden he saw that the woman was his wife and the youth was one of his close friends. Then he shouted loudly and immediately innumerable persons assembled at the Police Station. Suddenly, his friend fell down in the spot and became senseless there. At that time, our writer promptly requested the police commissioner to send the woman to the residence of her father. The commissioner did accordingly. Al-Manfalūṭi, hurriedly arranged a vehicle to take his aggrieved friend to his residence and called
for a doctor. Our writer served him the whole night. At dawn he regained
sense and looking at Al-Manfalūtī, he felt embarrassed. When he did not
utter a single word for quite sometime, the writer asked him: “Do you need
anything?” He replied in a weak and unintelligible voice: “I do not want
any other person here.” Then he broke down. The author asked him: “Why
are you weeping?” He replied: “Do you know where my wife is now?” He
asked: “What do you need from her?” He answered: “Nothing, I only want
to say to her that I have forgiven her.” When told that she was at her
father’s house, he said: “Let mercy be upon her and all her family. In real
sense, she was a pious woman and maintained all her ethics in all
situations. I also promised her father on the day of my marriage, to keep
her dignity and chastity at any cost. But I have committed serious mistake
by forcing my wife to embrace Western culture such as unveiling in front
of other person, free meeting with other, taking evening walk with other
men etc. Hence, I pray to Allāh to pardon my sins before my death because
I fear – ‘would Allāh forgive my sins by His generosity?’ He used to
repent very deeply, which has been expressed in the following lines:

 فلا يسألها أحد عن ذنبى. البيت بيتي، والزوجة زوجتي، والصديق صديقي، أنا الذي فتحت
باب بيتي لصديقي إلى زوجتي، فلم يذنب إلي أحد سواء.

Annotation: “So that nobody would ask her about my sin. Because the
house was my house, the wife was my wife and the friend was my friend. I
was only the man, who opened the door of my house for my friend to go to
my wife. So no other person has committed sins towards me except
myself.”

The author tried to console his depressed friend by reminding him
the greatness of Allāh. But he was moaning intensely because the memory
of his wife pierced his heart and tore the veil of his mindset. He said:
“What a severe oppression happened in front my eye! Today how the
world has become so much narrow in front of me, in this room, on this
seating place and under this roof. Since my wife behaved with me normally, so I did never suspect her seating and discussing together with my close friend. Moreover, she sometimes pleased me by her sweet speech. I, therefore, praised Allâh for His kindness that He offered me such a faithful friend, who kept deep intimacy with my wife secretly. She was also a generous, kindhearted wife, who treated my friend politely and hospitably in my absence. Ultimately, she fell in love with him.”

Finally, Mustafâ Lutfî al-Manfalûti, wants to show some bad-cultures prevailing in Western society such as movement of girl without veil, after marriage of a couple to keep continuous close relations with boy-friend and girl-friend and thus leading the nation to moral degradation. According to him, rejecting self-culture is very dangerous, as the author has expressed this ideology by the narrations of his friend in the following lines:

“فقولوا للناس جميعاً: إنَّ ذلك الرجل الذي كان يفخر باللمس بيذكائه و فطنته و يزعم أنه أكيِّس الناس و أحزهم، قد أصبح يعترف اليوم أنه أباه إلى الغاية من البلاهة، و غبي إلى الغاية التي لا غاية وراءها.”

**Annotation:** (O, my friends), Please tell all the people: ‘Definitely the man who was proud of yesterday by his intelligence and sagacity, who felt himself that he was more skillful as well as more judicious than others, today he has confessed that he has become an very stupid person and foolish and become a complete ignorant of reality that has no limitation.  

Consequently, the man thus, repented profoundly for the sake of his previous misdeeds because he was an honourable man in the society. He thought that the people would now laugh at him; the friends would mock him while he would pass by them. He considered himself a criminal, rather than accusing his friend even though this friend turned his wife into a prostitute and made his house a brothel. The man was moaning himself thus: “I am not fit to remain alive on the surface of the world after today for
a single moment. Alas! After my death, let my corpse be buried in a solitary corner which would keep me away from the eye of people!"

Thus regretting himself, he closed his eyes, fell in a perplexed position and then sank into sleep. Suddenly, his wife entered the room with her son, kept her son beside him and then she went away. The baby used to move slowly on the limbs and the breast of his father. The father saw his son, smiled looking at his beautiful face, embraced him with love and passion and wanted to kiss him. But suddenly he began to shiver and tried to hide his joy and avoided the baby by his hand forcefully. He began to cry out: "Take him away from my side whom I do not know. Because I have neither child nor any woman. You ask his mother about his father: 'Who is he?' Take him away to his father. I can never conceal my offences in my life."

After hearing the crying of the boy, the mother immediately came back and carried him away. As a result, the father kept silent for some time, then burst into tears and shouted: 'Bring back my child towards me.' The mother hurriedly came back hearing his shouting. Subsequently, the father took the child in his cradle, began to turn his glance towards his face and said: 'O, my son! Your father has left nothing for you except the orphanage while your mother has left nothing for you except nakedness. Hence, please forgive both of us for sins committed by us. Your father had done offence upon you while your mother had also committed mistakes for you.' At that time, he embraced the child and kissed him on his forehead.

Affected by severe fever, the man lost senses. The writer immediately called for a doctor. The doctor observed him for a long time. Afterwards he regained his consciousness. But he was on the verge of death and was groaning, his round eyes were constantly shedding tears. At that time, a woman wrapped in a black shawl, entered into the room and came forward slowly towards him. She knelt down beside him and began to tell
him: "Do not go away leaving me alone in this world. You are suspecting on your child. His mother knows it very well. Now you are going to meet almighty Allāh. I assure you that I did never commit the crime although at first I agreed to do the offence. So please pardon me, O, father of my child, I appeal to Allāh for your livelong. Because it is meaningless for me to live in this world after your death." Afterwards she burst into tears. Moved by this, he slightly opened his eyes and threw a smiling glance at her face. It was the last hour of his life and after a while, he passed away.

At the end of the story, Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūṭī writes that he is extremely aggrieved at the premature demise of his close friend and wept profusely in sorrow. He buried him by himself and laid down his beautiful young friend in the hole of the grave in a bright, shining garden. To sum up, the author wants to emphasize the revival of the rich cultures of his nation and the native country as well as social values other than Western life-style.

THE REMEMBRANCE (الذكري) (Translated)

The story "al-Dhikrā" is written by the French writer and diplomat Chateaubriand (1768-1848 A.D.), which is based on his original topic entitled "Les aventures du dernier Abencerage (1826 A.D.). It is translated by al-Manfalūṭī with the help of some friend. This story with its historical setting during the period of the collapse of Islamic rule in Spain, seems to sit slightly uneasily in the collection as a whole. The essence of this story has a similarity with the narrations of his other works "al-Yatim" and "al-Hāwiya" and both the stories describe the tragedies of man in this world. The author writes that the people should assist the distressed men and women at the time of crisis.
The story “al-Dhikrā” has portrayed such a catastrophic event, which is related with the tragedy of the people. The kingdom of Granada was the last fortification of the Moors in Spain. After the conquest of Valencia, Cordova, Seville and Murcia by Ferdinand III of Castile and Jayme I of Aragon, the rule of the Moors was restricted to the province of Granada. The founder of the kingdom, Ibn al-Ahmar, was a vigorous ruler but he could not resist the power of the Christians who held nearly the whole of Spain. The writer sought to relate the genuine tale of last king of Granada, Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar, whose rule was also terminated by the dominations of Christians, after the Moors ruled over this territory more than eight hundred years that is from 92 Hegira /711 A.D. to 897 Hegira / 1491 A.D. The capture of Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar, by the Christian sovereign was a fatal blow to the Moorish power in Spain. The Christians found in Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar, the greatest weapon to overthrow the Moorish power in Andalusia. They received him with honour and advised him to become their vassal. As soon as they had completely mastered their tool, they sent Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar back to Granada with the Castilian army to capture Granada. Al-Zaghal, uncle of Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar who was the last great Moorish king of Andalusia proposed to his nephew to rule together and stand jointly against the common enemy. Had he been helped by his nephew Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar, Granada might have remained in the hands of the Moors. But the ungrateful young man refused to accept al-Zaghal’s proposals. While he himself was trying to foil the efforts of his brave uncle al-Zaghal, the Christians were capturing Alora, Kasr-Bonela, Ronda and other important cities. Loxa and Malaga also captured by the Christians later on. Only a few cities like Baeza and Almmora remained in the hands of al-Zaghal. Fardinand now began to push his army towards Baeza. Al-Zaghal, driven to desperation, appealed to the Muslim ruler of Africa but no
response came forth. He at last, after a heroic resistance, lost heart and submitted to Ferdinand. He was allowed to hold the district of Andarax with the title of king. But he was soon exiled to Africa. Only Granada remained for the Moors. After dethroning al-Zaghal, Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar, the ruler of Granada, was asked to surrender the city. He, now fully realizing his foolishness, refused to comply with the request. Being assured by the people of Granada, led by Musa, he began to carry the war into the enemy’s quarter and they succeeded in capturing some of the frontier posts. Ferdinand came with an army consisting of 40,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry and laid siege to the whole Spain. The Moors made a last desperate attack upon the enemy. Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar and Musa fought like heroes at the head of their cavalry. Soon the invaders compelled them to surrender. Therefore, they sent delegates to the Castilian camp to arrange the conditions of surrender. Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar surrendered on the following terms: “That the city of Granada should be delivered over to Christians, that the king should take the oath of obedience to Ferdinand and that no would possess property in the Alpuxarras and that the Moors should be left secure in person and religion.” On January 3, 1492 A.D., the last glory of the Moors, thus came under the possession of Ferdinand.

After the surrender, Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar came to live at Andarax but his presence in Spain was looked upon by Ferdinand with a suspicion of future danger to the Castilian kingdom and he was soon alongwith his family, exiled to Fās, the capital of Barbara in Africa where he passed the rest of his life. It was a tragic scenery while Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar alongwith his family had to leave the kingdom forever which was depicted in “al-Dhikrā” by Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūtī in the following lines:
Annotation: “Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar, the last king of Granada, was standing in front of the armies of king Ferdinand (The king of Aragon) and Isabella (The queen of Castile) on the coast of bay of Rome near the base of Gibraltar. At that time, his wives and sons, the elders of his community of Bani al-Ahmar were also standing while he arrived at the ship ready to embark to Africa. He was gazing continuously for long time being grief-stricken at the loss of his empire. He could not turn his eyes except to shed copious tears.”

Thus, all his family members and seniors were wailing continuously for their missing kingdom, suddenly Abū ‘Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar heard a sound of a weak old man, who came from one of the caves, he said the following lines:

“أنيك ان تبكي أهب الملك الساقط على ملكك بكاء النساء. فأنت لم تحتفظ به احتفظ الرجال. إنك ضحكت بالأسما كثيرة، فأبك اليوم بمقدار ما ضحكت بالأسما. فالسحر نهر الحياة والحزن ليلها..... لا يظلم الله عبدا من عباده، ولا يريد أحد من الناس في شأن من الشرعون شرا ولا ضيرا.”

Annotation: “Yes, O, defeated king! It is obligatory upon you to weep for your kingdom like the wailing of the woman. Because you did not defend the people by your rule. You were laughing more yesterday. Hence, weep today as much as you laughed yesterday. Because, the happiness is like the day of life and the anguish is like the night of life....... Allāh does never oppress any one from amongst his servants and He does not intend to harm any one of the people in any affair.”

The man was constantly reminding him about the evil-deeds of the king and made him to memorize his excessive amusements and how Allāh
snatched away the brilliance and strength of his children so that Abū 'Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar could not fight against his brutal enemies and strong warriors taking their helps. Ferdinand and Isabella, on the other hand, could not think it proper to abide by the conditions of surrender of Abū 'Abdullāh bin al-Ahmar. In 898 A.H./ 1492 A.D., Ferdinand issued a decree by which the Moors were given the choice of baptism or exile. The mosques were closed, the valuable Arabic manuscripts were burnt and Islamic culture was banished altogether. The majority of the Moors yielded finding it easier to spare their religion than their homes but the old moors clung to their faith and they were inhumanly tortured and executed by the persecutors. In spite of these cruelties and atrocities, the Moors defended themselves and in 907 A.H./ 1501 A.D. gained a victory at Jabal Balansa. But temporary success only aggravated the reprisals of the exasperated Christians. The Count of Tendilla stormed Guejar and Ferdinand was seizing the key of the passes, the Castle of Lanjaron. The remnant of the rebels fled to Morocco, Egypt and Turkey. Thus, the first revolt was suppressed.

The Moors were now forced to convert to Christianity. They accepted Christianity outwardly but in their hearts they had not changed. 'They took care to wash off the holy water with which their children were baptized, as soon as they were out of the sight of the priest.' As time went on, the Christians became more and more cruel and false. They ordered the Moors to take up the Christian manners and customs. When the oppression exceeded its limits, the Moors rose in arms. After three years of continual struggle, the insurrection was suppressed and crushed by wholesale butchery and devastation. It stated that 'no less than three millions of Moors were banished between the fall of Granada and the first decade of the 17th century.'
After twenty-four years of aforementioned happenings, there was only one member of Bani al-Ahmar in South Africa. His name was Sa‘id bin Usuf bin ‘Abdillâh and he was then twenty years old. He came to know all previous events of his royal family. He heard about Granada, enchanting beauty of al-Hamrâ palace, garden of al-‘Arif, Spring of Shanil, mountain of ice etc. Hence, he intended eagerly to visit these places although it was a very difficult job for him. However, he proceeded to Granada with determination in disguise wearing a dress of Arabian doctor with a view to search the herbal plants in the mountain of Andalusia.

When Sa‘id bin Usuf bin ‘Abdillâh reached at the city of Granada, its captivating beauty excited him intensely. The vast red palaces and towers constructed by their forefathers were seen there. He saw many mosques, but he could not hear the sound of Mu’azzin. Hence, he was weeping bitterly like a bereaved woman at dark night. Then, he shouted loudly:

 Annotation: “This is the heritage of my forefathers & grand fathers. But I inherit nothing from them except the standing of a distressed bereaved woman in front of her huge devastations.”

He thus, began to regret remembering their contributions. After a while, he fell in deep sleep using his arm as a pillow in the open ground. When he awoke, walked to a flowing fountain in a foot of a mountain. After performing Morning Prayer, he proceeded to the city seeking a rental house but he did not find. He stood confusion on the bank of river Shanil. After a while, he saw that the grand Mosque of the city transformed into a great Church. Looking at this situation, he began to weep copiously.
Consequently, Sa‘īd bin Úsuf bin ‘Abdillāh suddenly saw an open gate of a great palace where a Spanish girl was seen wearing black veil on her face. He also noticed a small golden cross in her chest. Then she proceeded towards him and when she lifted her veil, her enchanting beauty was revealed and she started to ask him in incorrect Arabic: “O, boy, Are you a new-comer in this city?” He said: “Yes, I have just arrived here and I am looking for a rental house.” She gave importance to his speech and took him away to a rental house. At the time of her parting from him, she said to him thus:

'لا تنس أن تزورني أيها الغريب كلمة عرضت لك حاجة ...

Annotation: “O, New-Comer boy! Please don’t forget to visit me again if in case, you need something.”

Then she went away to the Church. He was pleased at her behavior. Later it was found that her name was ‘Florindā’ and she was the most beautiful girl in this area. Her father was a president of the Association of Holistic Federation, which was established with a view to set up the right to religion. But the Governor of the province oppressed him and then assassinated him. In such a tragic situation, ‘Florindā’, his daughter, grieved severely as her mother also died in this tragedy. At that time, she was not even eighteen years old. After losing her parents, she used to live as a nun in the Church and she was called ‘beautiful nun’.

One day, ‘Florindā’ passed by a grave of Bani Ahmar. There she saw an Arabian youth at a distance, lying on the grave as if he was kissing the tomb and wet its soil by his tears. Then, she approached him; and to her surprise that the boy was known to her. She said: “O, my boy! You are weeping for your previous kingdom; weep abundantly for them because the soils of the graves have dried up due to lack of tears.” He asked: “O, Madam! Do you mourn for them?” She said: “Yes, I am saddened by them
because they were our great men.” Then he thanked her for her noble attitudes. She also accepted him as her best friend and then went away.

Mustafà Lutfi al-Manfalûti describes thus: “Florindâ’ decided firmly to help her friend in all his possible affairs. Therefore, she again came to him and showed him the monuments constructed by his ancestors. While both of them were visiting different places in the historical cities like Cordova, Granada, Aragon etc., they used to discuss on diversified topics. Thus, both of them fell in love. But no one expressed their love. Sa‘îd bin Úsuf bin ‘Abdillâh was astonished at the beauty of al-Hamrâ’ palace, its decorative rooms etc. Looking at its vastness and splendour, he remembered his forefathers’ contributions and started to weep profusely. While Florindâ’ wanted to know the cause of his wailing, he informed her as one of the members of Bani Ahmar. After a while, he suddenly fell down at the ground of al-Hamrâ’ and became senseless for some time. After regaining his senses, Florindâ’ told him: “I was thinking from sometime ago that you have been concealing something in your heart from me. Now, I have come to know that you are neither a servant of Bani Ahmar nor a master of them; rather you are one of their princes.”

At that time, the prince told her the entire history of his family in detail. During his chat with her, he expressed his deep love to her. But he requested her not to disclose it to others. She said to him: “Would you be able to love a Christian girl whose religion is different from you?” He said: ‘Yes, because religion is a way of life but love will remain forever in your heart. Moreover, I have found all my desired qualities in you.’ Then Florindâ’ replied: ‘O, Prince, I also love you as you have loved me and my love will remain towards you without any self-interest. Though religion has separated our bodies still our love will unite our hearts.’ So, this passionate love used to influence both of their hearts. All of a sudden, Duke Rodaric, the son of Governor of Granada passed secretly by them. It is mentioned
here that Rodaric loved Florindâ’ very much and wanted to marry her. But, she refused his proposal of love because her father was killed by his father. Hence, she determined not to respond to him in any condition. Enraged by her rejection, Rodaric announced publicly “This Arabian has come here to seduce my girl so that she gives up her religion, her self-value. He wants to convert her to Islam and even he likes to kidnap her to his country.” Rodaric, the Duke, therefore, ordered to arrest him and he was taken to the Court for trial. The Court gave its verdict as to choose either of the following options: “The accused person either to give up his religion and convert to Christianity or to face capital punishment.”

But the prince did not comply with the court’s order to give up his religion. Hence, the judge passed an order to award him capital punishment. Florindâ’ shouted loudly hearing the verdict. After a while, the prince was taken out and beheaded executing the court order. On the marble plate of his tomb, a significant sentence was written which is a message for all, such as:

"Iلها مولك بني الأحمر"
من صديقته الوفية بعدة حتى الموت."
فولندافيليب،

**Annotation:** “This is the mausoleum of last prince of Bani Ahmar dynasty. It is a symbol of love from his faithful darling (Florindâ’) in accordance with his promise at the time of the death. ‘Florindâ’ Philip’.”26
This is an original story written by Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūti in “al-'Abarât. It describes a story of his friend who becomes an alcoholic and narrates his downward course till he ends up in a madhouse. The writer relates its story as follows: “The author had been searching a friend for long time who possessed good qualities and noble virtues. At last, he found a friend having the qualities desired by him. He spent most of the time with him and thus he became one of his close friends. The days were passing on in this way and one day, the author had to go to Cairo leaving his residence for some purpose. He felt extremely sorry for the separation of his close friend. At the time of leaving, the house of his friend was quite peaceful with his children. After a few years, the writer came back to his residence and at first, he went to visit the house of his friend. After much difficulty, he found it, entered into it, and he saw that the condition of his friend’s house had been drastically changed. The house was covered with dust; the furniture was lying scattered; its curtains and chairs became very old. A small boy was seen inside the house. So the writer enquired him about his father and the boy informed him that his father seldom came to his home. Then his mother said to him: “After your departure from here, my husband came in contact with the head of his office. Both of them became bosom friends. From this time, his character took a downward turn; his behaviour started to change and he cut off his relationship with the children and me. He only came to his house at mid-night because, he was addicted to wine and thus he became a great drunkard, a habitual gambler, a harsh husband and a cruel father.” The author came to know everything.

Sometimes this misguided man returned home with his wicked comrades at night. Then, he along with his companions, arranged drinking party in one of his rooms while his wife and children slept in other room.
His companions created noises and sometimes, they approached his wife, but her husband in spite of looking at all these, did not raise any objection. The woman resumed to speak: “After a few years, he spent all the money that was in his hand. So he had no alternative but to borrow. The load of debt crushed him very badly, then he mortgaged his soil and could not recover it. So he sold off all that he possessed, even this house in which we live and now nothing is left in his hand except the small monthly salary. But the salary is also spent either in gambling or in paying the debts. Now, I am staying in such a position that I have sold off all my ornaments. A kind-hearted poor neighbour has saved us from starving. Sir, now I request you to help me to rescue this unfortunate man from calamity. I think you will be able to influence him due to his high regards for you.” Then, the author promised to help her.

Mustafâ Lutfî al-Manfalûtî says: “His friend became gradually weak, his handsome, shining face was turned pale & ugly and his eyebrows and forehead had become wrinkled, his eye-lids had become heavy, his cheeks were relaxed.” Hence, the author said to him:

"وَاللَّهُ مَا أَدْرَى مَا ذِلَّتْ لَكَ أَعْطُكَ ... وَقَدْ كَانَتِ وَأَعْطَى بَلَاسَسٍ، وَنَجْمُ هَدَايِ النَّفْسِي أَسْتَنْتِرَ بِهِ فِي ٱلْطَّلَامَاتِ ۗ ۖ أَمْ أَسْتَرَحِمَ لَأَطْفَالِكَ ٱلضَّعَافَاءِ وَزُوُّجُتُكَ ٱلسُّكَرَىَّةِ ٱلْمُسَكِّيَّةِ ٱلَّتِى لَا عَضْدُ لِلَّها فِي ٱلْحَيَاةِ ۡوَ لَا مَيْعِنَ ۡسَوٰٰكَ؟"27

**Annotation:** ‘By Allāh, I do not know what should I say to you? Should I advise you while you were my adviser until yesterday and you were the star of my guidance from which I used to seek light in the darkness of my life? .......Now should I seek mercy for your weak children and your helpless and unfortunate wife who has no supporter for her in the life and no helper except you?”27
The writer again attempted to persuade his close friend with these words:

"إنك تمشى يا سيدى في طريق القبر، وما انت بنام على الدنيا و لا بتيزم بها، فما رغبت في الخروج منها خروج الناس المنتحر! عذرتك لو أن ما ربحت في حياتك الثانية يقوم لك مقام ما خسرت من حياتك الأولى، ولكنك تعلم أنك كنت غنيا فاصبحت قفيرا، وصحيح فاصبحت سقيما، و شريفا فاصبحت وضيعة؛ فإن كنت ترى بعد ذلك أنك سعيد فقد خلت رقعة الأرض من الأشياء."

Annotation: “My dear Sir, You are moving on the path to the grave and you are neither critical of this world, nor disgusted with it, and your inclination of coming out of it is not like one of hopeless and suiciding person. I would have excused you if you have gained in your second life, which would stand for you in place of what you have lost in your first life. But you know that you were rich and now you have become poor, you were healthy and you have become sick, you were respectable and now you have become wretched. So if you realise your downfall and come back to your previous life then there would be no unfortunate man in this land.”

Then, the author requested the man to extend his hand towards him and to become the virtuous man that he earlier was. But the misguided man did not move his hands. So the writer asked him: "Why have you not extended your hands?” He burst into tears and said: “Because I do not like to be a liar or breaker of promise.” In this way, he expressed his inability to give up the habit of drinking.

The head of the office, who actually misled him into this condition, expressed severe resentment for the lack of skill in his works and irregularity in his duty. He, therefore, dismissed him from his service disapproving his performances. Due to heavy financial crisis, he along with his wife and two children, left his rental house and thus, to take shelter in a small room in an old house in a deserted lane. After several years, the man
became absent minded and was lost in oblivion. One day, his unfortunate wife, unable to arrange for meal for the children, decided engage them as servants to earn meals. During this period, her husband had to escape from the house to get rid of the police. Hence, he seldom came to the house at night. It is mentionable here that in spite of all these happenings, she did not quarrel with her husband or never kept any malice in her heart against her husband, because she was a noble woman. The woman tolerated whatever destiny had burdened upon her. In the midst of these, there happened a great incident. One day, she felt a living being moved in her womb. She regretted that the baby in her womb would bring greater misfortune for her. So she shouted secretly: “O, Allâh! I seek thy help because the cup is full and is unable to accommodate even a single drop any further.” Thus, she had been suffering from the pain of pregnancy and at this critical condition; there was none to help her except her old lady neighbour. So Allâh helped her in this situation and she delivered a child. After that, she suffered severely from puerperal fever, which is related to childbirth. She could not avail the service of any physician as their fees were very high and they were not ashamed of demanding their fees from the relatives of the patients. Hence, it was not possible to find out a physician who would treat her on humanitarian ground. Death was slowly and steadily approaching her. In this way, she met her death in such an hour when no one was found by her side except her newly born baby who was clinging to her breast.

At that moment, the husband entered into the room demanding wine and searching his wife who would bring for him what he wanted. So he moved his glances all around the room and at last, saw her lying on her mat and saw her newly born daughter crying by her side. So he thought that she was sleeping, then he drew near her and pushed the little child
away from her and started shaking her with great force, but he did not feel a single movement. So this thing put him in doubt and he felt a shivering slowly moving in his body. Realising the truth, he shrieked and said: “Owe to misfortune! Owe to misfortune!” Then he ran in the streets and struck his head against pillars and walls. At that time, he was shouting, “My daughter! My wife! Come to me and meet me.” At last, he was tired and fell down on the ground and he was shrieking like one who was slaughtered. The people assembled around him. Then he was sent to the hospital. At the end of the story, the author prayed to Allāh to bestow mercy on him and his dead wife and his crushed baby as well as his miserable, strayed children.

THE REQUITAL (الجزاء )
(Translated)

This story is translated by al-Manfalūtī from French literature with the help of his friend Farah Anton. The essence of the story has been discussed in the following:

Suzân and Gilbert, were the brothers and sisters. They were cousins. They were brought up together in the same like two flowers in a stem. Suzân played with him and looked after him from her childhood. Thus, she used to love him from the core of heart. Both of them passed their times in happiness. They did not spend their childhood living in the amusements of buildings and nice gardens. They did not put on decorated dress because they were poor and village dwellers. But it was noticeable that the holy and pious love gave both of them heavenly pleasure in their hearts. In this way, their love affairs continued till the day of meeting on the bank of the lake.

One day, Suzân sat on the bank of the lake to fill her jar and the water was quiet and calm as if it had spread over the bright surface of ice.
So it was difficult to break this smooth polished ice like a mirror by her hands. Then she used to move her glance here and there. Suddenly she saw a white, beautiful face, who was looking at her with a pleasant glance. Both of them smiled looking at each other. Then she came to know that the face was of a youth from a beautiful village.

She was enchanted by this scenery for a little moment and then she saw another image beside her reflection in the water. Subsequently she saw another youth in a little distant. But the girl did not notice him and she filled the jar with water. Then, she stood to carry the jar. The boy immediately came to her and said: “Madam, do you permit me to help you by carrying your jar?” Then she looked at him and saw that he was a strange, handsome, cultured youth with attractive dress. She did not know him. She felt ashamed and did not say anything. She carried her jar and went out in her way.

Suzân came back to her house with a happy mind, cold-eye, but it was neither due to great love in her heart nor the cause of her life’s relationship with someone, rather she was pleased knowing that her beauty could easily attract others. So she always used to see that cultured youth in morning or in evening who greeted her, smiled looking her, asked her about something, offered nice flower to her, or talked to her passionately. Eventually, one day, they sat together in a solitary place.

Jostâf Rostân, the owner of a farm house, lived in a beautiful palace who saw Suzân in morning on the bank of lake while he was coming from the city “Nis”. Her beauty attracted him immensely and she was also fascinated by his personality.

Gilbert got up from the sleep as usual. Then he proceeded to the cowshed and untied the cord of the cow. He called Suzân loudly...
accompany him to the meadow along with the cow. But there was no reply from her. Gilbert, searched for her in the house but did not find her. He asked his mother about her, even she could not answer. When she did not return till evening, Gilbert went out looking for her in each possible place asking the people whom he met. He did not find anyone who could give genuine information about her. While the night was approaching, he came back to the house with extreme depression and sorrow. At that time, he saw his mother sitting outside the house. He moved towards her and his mother asked him: "Where were you, O, Gilbert?" He replied: "I went out to search Suzân in all possible places. But she is still untraced." His mother shed tears in grief and said: "O, My son! It is good for you. Do not wait for her from today." Hearing this, he started to shiver and asked: "Why?" She said: "One of our neighbours informed me that she had seen her last night with a strange nice youth coming from this city on the bank of the lake. I think he is Jostâf Rostân, the owner of the farmhouse. She has also seen her at mid-night riding on a horse along with him. So, definitely she eloped with him." Being excited, Gilbert shouted loudly and fell down in his place unconscious. His mother spent the whole night weeping without sleep beside him. In the morning, the son asked her: "O, my Mother, Why are you wailing?" She said: "O, My son, I am weeping for both of you." He said: "Please don't weep for me because I am not aggrieved. I loved this girl since she loved me. Now my heart has been converted into a hard stone. I would never accept her from today." At that time, his tears were flowing over his cheek.

After a few months, Suzân was sitting by the window of a red palace on a moon lit night. She was alternately looking at the bed of her baby and her face. Suzân was regretting thus: "O, moving Moon, I have seen you in this manner here for the last twenty four times. Now, would my
beloved come back to me and look after you living with me, O, my son? O, Lighting Star, you were my helper in the dark nights at the time of grief and sorrows. Can you tell me about Jostāf Rostān ........ Where does he stay and when will he return? Shall we meet together in near future? Please tell me about him......... Would he remember me as I remember him? Would he keep my promise as I am keeping his promise? O, my baby, would he sometimes sit beside you and ask you about me as I am asking you about him? O, lighting star, you tell him thus: “Definitely his baby girl is extremely beautiful and white like an egg.” Thus Suzān took a consolation in her heart addressing the full-moon at night. She loved her baby and kissed her. At night, she saw a dream: “Jostāf Rostān has come back from his tour, then she has embraced him and he took his baby on the door of the palace. Tears of happiness flew from their eyes.”

In this way, Suzān was thinking very deeply of her spouse. Suddenly, the maid servant rushed smiling to her and said: “Madam, It is a good news for you that our master has arrived.” Then, she rejoiced extremely and said: “O, Allāh, All praise for you, you have transformed my dream into reality.” She rushed to her dressing room, put on new dress, and entered his room carrying her baby in her hand cheerfully. Then she saw a bizarre scene that the man was standing in the midst of the room and his mood was quite different which was diametrically opposite to her thoughts. Because she saw a man who had neither love nor a passionate glance. Being depressed, she was gazing at him without closing her eyelids. Then he questioned her:

Annotation: “Are you still living here?”
Facing such an unexpected question, she was perplexed and did not understand what he wanted to say. So she asked him: “Sir, then, where do you want me to stay?” He said: “You have been residing in this palace but from today, you cannot stay here.” She asked: “Why?” He said: “Because my wife arrives today and she may get disturbance from you.” At that time, her blood was about to impede inside her pulse hearing this speech. Her tears were continuously flowing over her cheek. She asked him: “What will happen to your baby?” Then his reply was as the following:

لليس لي ابنة ايتها السيدة ولا ولد لي ..... لأنى لم اتزوج إلا منذ ثلاثة أيام.

Annotation: “O, Madam, I have neither any daughter nor any son; because I have got married just three days ago.”

She burst into tears and regretted thus: “Alas! My misfortune, he gives me the price of my work today.” The night was approaching gradually. The baby started to cry. She put off her new dresses and wore old village dresses. In this way, she came out from the building taking the baby in her hand at night and arrived at her old house in grief and disgrace. She was thinking about her tragic events deeply and went out to a hill on the bank of a flowing river beside the palace with her baby. Suddenly, she heard a weak sound calling her name. Therefore, she went ahead in the direction of the sound. All of a sudden, she saw there Gilbert calling her repeatedly in a trembling and feeble voice thus: “Good bye, O, Suzân! Good bye, O, Suzân!” She came to understand everything and shouted loudly saying thus: “Ah, O, son of my uncle! Certainly I have killed you.” Afterwards, she fell down on his hand shedding copious tears and said: ‘My Gilbert! I am kneeling down beneath your foot; pardon my sins.’ Then he felt her sound and moved his glance towards her, saw her and a drop of worm tear fell down from his eyelids. That was the last moment of his life and then he passed away. Suzân too committed suicide by jumping into the
water. At that time, her baby started to cry. Hearing the crying of the baby, Jostaf Rostan came to that spot and brought her to his house; but the baby also died after three days. On the other hand, the life of Jostaf Rostan was not peaceful and happy because her wife divorced him and went to "Nis."

In real sense, Suzan was misled by Jostaf Rostan. He did not love Suzan from the core of his heart, although she really accepted him as her husband. He enjoyed her physically and betrayed her. It was a tragedy in the life of Suzan that she had been betrayed by Jostaf Rostan, on the other hand, it was a matter of great regret that she did not understand the real love of Gilbert!

THE PUNISHMENT ( العقاب )

(Original)

It is an original story composed in the style of an American story. The event of this story is such that it raises more questions in the minds of readers than it answers at the very least. However, it presumably indicates an acquaintance on the part either of al-Manfaluti himself or of one of his collaborators, with one or more collections of American short stories, either in Arabic translation or in the case of a collaborator, in the English Original.

The author would like to describe a story, which was experienced by him. He went out for an extensive tour and visited many places. During this tour, once, he saw a big building where a number of people assembled, the armies were moving all around the building with their open swords. So, the writer asked one of the people there: "What has happened? Why do the people assemble here?" Then he came to know that the building was of a tribal chief and it was scheduled as a specific day for trials and settlement of the disputes that occurred amongst the people. After a while, an
announcer called the people to assemble in the seating place of hall and to be ready to give evidence for each case.

The author, therefore, along with the other people entered into the seating hall and sat there. After a short time, the tribal chief arrived there and he was seen sitting on a golden throne in the midst of the hall. There was a priest in his right side and in the left, there was a judge. Then he ordered to bring the criminals to the hall for trial. The door of prison was opened and it was seen that the jailer took out an old man from there. The tribal chief asked: “What is his crime?” The priest said: ‘This man is a thief who entered into a house of poor and stole all the valuable materials.’ Then the people shouted loudly and said: ‘Woe unto the criminal.’ Subsequently, the priest gave eyewitness for his offences. The chief was delighted for getting witness and immediately instructed: ‘Let the criminal be tied well and then let both of his hands be chopped off along with other parts of his body. He also ordered the prison guards to behead him and allow his flesh to be eaten by birds and animals.’ Hearing this order, the old man knelt down in front of the chief and sought his mercy. Then the jailers beat on his face, pulled him to a fixed place, and did accordingly. Afterwards, an eighteen-year-old youth was taken out from the jail, who was thin, trembled in terror and stood in front of the chief. The chief asked: “What is his offence? The priest said: “He is a killer of one of the revenue collectors of the chief.” The people shouted loudly: “Killing the official of our chief is like killing our leader.” Then the tribal chief slowly raised his head and said: “The accused should be given capital punishment. Firstly, let him be crucified on a timber of a tree. Secondly, let all his veins be cut to bleed so that not a single drop of blood remains in his body.” Then, the youth shouted very loudly in terror and the jailer pulled him out and did accordingly.
After that, the jailer brought out a most beautiful girl for trial. The tribal chief asked: "What is her offence?" The judge replied: 'She is a beautiful girl. One of her family members saw her staying alone with a young stranger, who loved her and wanted to marry her.' The people were excited and screamed loudly thus: 'Kill, kill her; kill by stoning...... because she has committed big crime.' The tribal chief asked: 'Where is eyewitness of her crime?' Then one of her relatives stood and gave evidence against her. The judge whispered something in the ear of chief. The chief immediately, said: 'The girl should be given capital punishment. Hence, make her nude and stone her to death so that there would be no skin in her body and no flesh in her bones.' The people rejoiced and were astonished looking at the justification and firmness of their leader.

While he was returning, the writer had to pass by the prison, where he saw such a dreadful scene whose impression was still alive in his heart. He saw the dead body of that old man lying in the ground, that had no head, no limbs. Then, he noticed his separated head, the other parts of the body spread all around the place. After that, he saw the body of the youth tied in a tall tree in such a way as if his body turned into part of the tree, all his veins were cut up, and blood flew freely. He went ahead a little, saw a most inhuman scene that the widely spread fleshes of that beautiful girl, which had neither head nor legs; there remained only the blood and the heaps of stones.

Then, it has been seen that the author, Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūti was vehemently aggrieved by this system of trial of the tribal leader. According to him, the leader in some cases has not done the trial on justification because the punishment was not in proportion with the offence. He wants to put a question in this regard that how the chief can be justifiable after killing so many people cruelly and inhumanly.
After some times, the author reached a village, where he saw a funeral function. Many people were mourning, shedding copious tears. At that time, he came to know that the corpse was of that old man, who had been cut into pieces by the order of the chief for theft. Hence, he started to inquire about the nature of the killed man. Subsequently, the wife of that old man informed him:

"ان زوجي لم يكن في يوم من أيام حياته لصا ولا سارقاً، بل قضى أيام شبابه و كهولته عاملاً مجدًا، لا يفتر ساعة واحدة عن السعي في طلب رزقه و رزق اهل بيته......"

**Annotation:** “Definitely my husband had never been a thief or robber in his life. He spent his youth doing hard labour. He did not spend a moment without working to earn his livelihood and for his family.”

In this way, she began to tell him all in detail about the good manners of her husband, which proved his innocence clearly. It was also known that the old man was a victim of the conspirators. The author, therefore, would like to declare this poor victim as a martyr and who is oppressed by the oppressors. The woman was gazing constantly at the grave for long time and was weeping profusely.

Afterwards, the writer went a short distance ahead and suddenly saw a beautiful girl, who was shedding tears copiously looking at a crucified body of a youth on a timber of a tree. So he immediately approached her to inquire about the incident that happened to the youth. The girl informed him that the crucified youth was her brother, who, in spite of his innocence, was crucified by the order of the chief. She described him as follows:

“One day, an army official of the chief came to our village to collect revenues. He went house to house for this purpose and at last reached our house. While I was standing in front of the door, he looked at me lasciviously that created terror in my heart. Then he asked me about my
brother and I led him to his place. The official asked him to pay revenues. Due to the heavy financial crisis, he promised to pay him the dues selling the crops. Then, the official refused to accept his request. At that time, his escorts surrounded me and he approached me. My brother quickly stood near me and said to him: "You have no business with this girl. I am the owner of my wealth and now I will mortgage my property and thus I will pay my revenues." The revenue collector said: "The mortgage must take place according to my choice; if you refuse it, then you will have to loss your life." Hearing such unjustified speech, my brother became very much angry and started to shiver. He immediately took out his sword and killed him in the spot."

Afterwards, the author began to move ahead slowly, suddenly he saw a stoned corpse of a girl, which was lying unattended and uncared for in an open place. So he quickly covered the corpse with his shawl and arranged for its burial beside the other two martyrs. Subsequently, a bereaved youth arrived there and wanted to look at the stoned girl for the last time. So the writer asked the youth whether he knew anything about that girl. Then, the youth told:

"أنا أحبتي هذه الفتاة مد كانت طفلة لاعبة، احبتي كذلك، ثم شبابنا وشب الحب معنا، فتعلدنا على الوفاء والأخلاق."

**Annotation:** "Definitely I loved this girl since my childhood; she also loved me equally. Then we grew likewise as lovers and promised to fulfill our aspirations sincerely."

While the time of her wedding drew closer, she informed her father about the youth with whom she wanted to get married. Her father became happy with this news. But it was a matter of extreme grief that the father of the girl died incidentally and it created problems in the fulfillment of her aspiration. Once, the girl went to the Judge (Qâdi) in relation to the heritage of her property after the death of her father. The Judge (Qâdi)
informed her that her uncle was then guardian in the absence of her father and asked her to bring her uncle. It was found that her uncle was not a good man because he was a greedy man and wanted to marry the daughter of his brother illegally. Despite having known about her engagement with a youth, he proposed her for marriage. At that time, she said to him; ‘It is not possible for me to be a fiancée at a time with two persons.’ So he forcefully fixed a date to get married with her. Finding no other way, she escaped the night prior to the date fixed by her uncle for her marriage with him. She did not know where to go. At last, she took shelter in the house of her lover. The wicked companions of the man chased her and found out her at the house of her fiancé. Her fiancé was severely beaten up by the hooligans and he became unconscious. Then the hooligans of her uncle captured the girl and took her away to the Qâdi and her uncle gave witness against her. Thus, the life of this girl met a pathetic end.

It is mentioned here that such kinds of events tremendously pained the heart of Mustafâ Lutfî al-Manfalûtî. He, therefore, regrets as follows:

"لبيت شعرى!... الا يوجد في هذه الدنيا عادل، ولا راحم؟"

Annotation: “I wish if I would have known……! Would there be found a just and generous man in this world?”

Here, in this story, the author expresses his severe resentment at the activities of rulers in respect of their administrations, the system of trial, the bias of the judges, the hypocrisy of the learned men, the unlimited corruptions of subordinates of the rulers, the inhuman oppressions by the leaders of the tribes, the excessive imposition of revenues on the common people and its collections from them mercilessly etc.
THE VICTIM (الضحية) 
(Translated)

This story, the last and longest one in the collection consisting of fifty nine pages, has been originally written by French writer Alexandre Dumas Fils entitled “La dame aux camellias (1848 A.D.)”, a story that was subsequently to re-appear as the libretto for Verdi’s La Traviata, and that has been aptly described both as a ‘four handkerchief tale’ and as exemplifying G.K. Chesterton’s category of “Good bad books.”

“The Victim” is a pathetic tale of Margaret Gautier, who dies with a broken heart when her lover Armand deserts her. He returns in time to assist at her funeral together with her maid Prudence. In the latter part of the story, al-Manfaülti relies largely on his heroine’s diary, in which she writes as if addressing her absent lover. The gist of the story is described below in short:

Margaret Gautier, was a beautiful girl of Paris; but she was very poor and sick at her early stage that no one came to her with a proposal for her marriage. It was also significant that Margaret did not give any importance to such kind of people. She was brought up in the environment of Paris and gradually started to progress financially. Once, she toured to Albania in order to get refreshment with her maidservant. After reaching there, she met with ‘Duke Mohan’ an old archaeologist, who arrived there with his daughter. His daughter had been suffering from the disease of breast and did not recover from it. She died there. For the memory of his daughter, Duke Mohan always was shedding copious tears looking at the tomb of her grave. One day, while he was coming back from her grave, met Margaret and looking at her, he felt as if his daughter had come out from her grave. He, therefore, asked her thus: ‘O, Madam, Do you permit me to kiss your hand?’ In this way, Duke Mohan adopted her as his daughter and
accordingly helped her time to time. He could not remain a single moment without her. However, Margaret was thinking profoundly about the expired daughter of the Duke and his deep love towards her. It strikes her mind that Duke loves and weeps for her so much so that she does not feel that her parents are no more in this world.

Margaret remained in Albania for a long period. As winter was gradually approaching, she decided to go back to Paris. After knowing this decision from her, Duke also wanted to accompany her. One day, both of them came back to Paris. It is significant that after arrival at Paris, the lifestyle of Margaret started to change drastically because she had been living luxuriously in the beautiful palace of Duke. Moreover, she had private car to travel and servants to do work. Within a very short time, the people of the area came to know about the new and changing life of Margaret.

Once, Margaret had been suffering from some disease during the season of intense cold of winter. After a few days, she went out one night, to enjoy a theatre. At that time, she saw a gentle and beautiful boy beside her seat. The boy was looking at her steadily for a long time and his face became dark red as if he wanted to speak something to her; but could not say anything. It was a surprise that the boy was weeping due to emotional attachment with the tragic events of the play. Margaret was observing his gesture minutely and was sympathetic to him.

In a cold day of winter, Margaret was alone in the house with unsound health. Suddenly, she was about to fall down from her chair. At once, a youth quickly came forward to save her, caught her from falling on the ground and went away immediately. She was astonished that this was the youth whom she saw at the theatre hall near her seat. Then the maidservant of Margaret approaches her and says that the boy comes now
and then with a bunch of flower for Margaret, but he could not dare to offer it to her himself.

One day, Margaret was sitting at the balcony of the building looking secretly and expecting the arrival of that youth. After a while, she saw that the youth was arriving there and quickly ordered her maidservant to bring the youth in front of her. When he was brought near her, she asked his whereabouts; then he informed her that he hailed from "Nées" and unfamiliar with the city of Paris, his prime destination was to meet Margaret and wanted to say something to her. At that time, Margaret said to him:

"قل ما تشاء إلا ان تطارحني حبك و غرامك ، فانى امرأة مريضة لا استطيع ان احتمل الحياة..."

Annotation: “Tell me what you want except offering your love & affection to me because I am a sick woman and unable to bear the earthly life.”

Hearing the speech of Margaret, his face became colourless and shed tears copiously, he then said to her: “O, Madam, it saddened my heart because I loved you in my first glance. I have already come to know everything about you. My other aspirations have already ended but my cordial love will remain forever for you in my heart.” In this way, both of them, Armand and Margaret fell in love with each other. Margaret could not sleep at night peacefully after her meeting with Armand, because a number of thoughts came to her mind, which gave her much trouble. Hence, once she said to Armand:

“O, My friend! Please be seated beside me for a few moments. Today, I would like to say something and I think that it may be my last speech with you and later I may not see you again and you may also not see me again.”
Thus, Margaret told him about the disease that she suffered from childhood, physical weakness, initial financial crisis, indifferent attitudes of the people towards her and lastly the sympathetic approach of Duke Mohan, who adopted her as his daughter etc. Hearing such ups and downs of Margaret, Armand burst into tears.

It was the happiest news for Armand that after a few months, Margaret recovered from her illness completely. So both of them decided to leave Paris and toured the village Bougival seeking their residence, which was at the outskirt of Paris. They took a beautiful house on lease on the bank of a lake. Thus, they started a happy life. They were living together there about one year. Gradually, they had to face financial problems because the father of Armand stopped sending money to them due to his resentment against his illegal relation with Margaret. On the other hand, Duke Mohan, who adopted Margaret as his daughter, was extremely angry with her, when he came to know about her unexpected close relation with Armand. Hence, he also stopped to help her financially and cut off all his relations with her. Duffel, the father of Armand, immediately called him to the residence of "Nées" divorcing his girl friend Margaret. Then, Armand, like an obedient son, soon left for "Nées" to meet his father. His father condemned him vehemently for keeping a characterless woman with him, which according to him, would damage the prestige of their genealogies, and the gossip mongers would spread the rumour. He has expressed his discontent in the following line:

"إنّ ‘أرمان دوفال؛ سلالة ‘آل تاليراند؛ يعيش مع امرأة مومس في بيت واحد’.

Annotation: “Definitely (The people will say) Armand Duffel, the descendant of ‘Talleyrand’ lives with a prostitute woman in a house.”36
His father repeatedly requested his son to divorce such a cheap woman otherwise he would have to lose his father. Then, Armand started to shed tears copiously and knelt down before his father seeking his sympathy and mercy. Armand’s reply was very clear in this respect thus: “Swear by God! If I leave her in this hour, it will mean to kill her. I can never live in this world without her.”

Being emotional and aggrieved, Armand came out walking like a perplexed man, who did not see anything what was in front of him and at last, he went to Bougifal. After reaching the house, he saw that Margaret was weeping due to her old remembrance of a boy friend ‘John Philip’. However, she asked Armand about his father and family members. Then, Armand informed her that his father wanted him to return to ‘Nées’ and to stay there. But Armand refused to stay in ‘Nées’. At that time, Margaret requested him not to disobey his father and to go back to ‘Nées’ obeying his father’s wish. He, therefore, again arrived his father’s residence at ‘Nées’. Looking at him, his father became happy and greeted him, embraced him and called him to forget all his bad remarks against Margaret as well as to accept her as his spouse. Hearing such good comments regarding Margaret, from his father, Armand was tremendously happy and rejoiced.

Afterwards, Armand came back cheerfully to Margaret, but he did not see her in the house. He thoroughly searched her in all possible places, yet he did not find her. In the evening, he left for Paris, while he reached at the palace, asked its guard about her. The guard said to him thus: “Margaret came here at mid day today with her maid servant Prudence and she asked me to deliver this letter to you. Now, she went to the house of John Philip.” Hearing this, Armand stood motionless in his place like a
statue; the sound of his mouth faded away and his face became colourless. Then he opened the letter in which the following lines were written:

"هذا آخر ما بيني وبينك يا ارمان، فلا تحدث نفسك بمعاودة الاتصال بي، ولا تسألني عن السبب في ذلك، فلا سبب عندي الا اني هكذا أردت لنفسي ..... السلام."

Annotation: “O, Armand! This is the last meet between you and me. You do not try to make up your mind to resume relation with me; do not ask me its cause. There is no reason for taking such a decision by me except much willing...... Salam.”

Consequently, Armand broke into tears like a child. Then he went to his father and informed him all these unexpected happenings. His father, therefore, warned him to obey his instructions and to avoid such soulless woman. Afterwards, both of them toured to “Nées”. On the other hand, Margaret could not be happy staying with her ex-lover John Philip. She had been suffering from disease for the second time and fell in mental depression. She, therefore, wrote a letter to Armand saying:

“O, Armand, please come to me whether you are satisfied or unsatisfied with me. Now I have been suffering from disease. I want to see you once before my death and to seek pardon from you for my mistakes, which I have committed upon you. Perhaps you are still angry with me. Kindly know that now I am ailing. Please forgive me.”

Then, she despatched the letter by post and was waiting for his reply very eagerly. But, after many days, no response came from even Armand. Because Armand did not read any of her letter after she left him. He was suffering from severe mental agony. He, therefore, sought permission from his father to travel in the eastern countries. Thus, he travelled to Alexandria in Egypt and stayed there for several months. On the other hand, being impatient for Armand, Margaret left for ‘Bougifal’
searching him but she did not see Armand there. She had nothing to do there except to shed copious tears. Afterwards, she came back to her house in Paris and waited very eagerly for her lover’s return. She was mourning in depression with her illness and thus she passed away with a broken heart estranged for her absent lover. At last, Armand arrived there with her maid Prudence and participated in his beloved’s funeral function.

4.4 A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ‘AL-ABARĀT’:

From the above discussion it becomes very clear that the author Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūtī raises some significant social issues in this book “al-‘Abarāt” such as the enslavement of woman, male oppression and society’s impediment, poverty and the contempt of the rich for the poor whom they exploit; love and its victims etc. He also focuses on other social and moral themes relevant to the contemporary Arab society, such as polygamy, the marriage of minor girls to elderly men, the disease due to aping of European ways, drunkenness, prostitutions, card-playing, gambling, marriage with European woman and attacks on feudal or clerical oppression.

The main theme of “al-‘Abarāt” can be stated in the following points:

➢ The class conflict in the society is quite evident. While the rich and powerful have all the luxuries of life, the poor and the weaker class is devoid of the basic amenities of life. They have also aspirations to live together with the dignity of life in the society.

➢ The leader of the people misuses his power while the weaker section of society has to bear all the burdens.
According to al-Manfalūtī, a healthy man can enjoy a peaceful life while the sick man only laments his poor health. He once again makes us realize that health is wealth.

A happy life is for a peaceful man while an oppressor is afflicted with misery at the end.

A refugee always seeks a resting place while a donor lives in his house.

Apart from the above points, this collection has some other specific traits that possess a unity, linking these stories together and hence, the book is full of pervasive sentimentality and pessimism that makes the title of the volume “al-‘Abarāt” a particularly apt one. The author has already mentioned its hidden meaning as ‘Piece’ in the last stanza of ‘Muqaddama’ in “al-Nazarāt”. It is also significant that the mindset of the author is understood with the work’s ‘dedication’ in the first page of “al-‘Abarāt”, in which the author speaks of shedding his tears for the wretched of the world, “in the hope that they will find some comfort and solace in his weeping for them.”40 However, the style developed by him, “Tariqat al-Manfalūtī” is somewhat highbrow. Al-Manfalūtī chose his words with care. He retained a little rhyme (saj’) to give his prose a musical appeal. The stamp of his personal style is revealed in all his writings.41

Scarcely a page of the collection lacks some reference to some form of sadness or unhappiness. A particularly common pattern in the narrative is the descent of an individual or individuals into illness, death or some other form of misery, evoking the narrator’s and by implication the reader’s, reflections and compassion. Thus all of the first four stories in the collection end in graveyards: “The conclusion of the fifth finds the narrator’s friend confined to a lunatic asylum, having lost his reason; while at the end of the story “al-Dhikrā” : ‘they all went to Margaret’s grave
before leaving and wept profusely as they stood around it. But Suzanne wept more than anyone else, even though she was unaware that she was weeping for the woman who had sacrificed herself for her sake.

A link to some of the themes of “al-Nazarāt” is provided by “al-Hijāb” of “al-‘Abarāt”, which relates the progressive disintegration of a man who has spent several years in Europe and returned as a changed man. Here, al-Manfalūtī casts his story in the form of a moral tale intended to represent a warning to the reader about the lax morals of the West and the dangers of their intruding into Egypt. He reflects here the merit and demerit of Western culture in the fictional form during the 20th century. Al-Manfalūtī, had, in all probability, never left his native Egypt. The theme – far from providing the opportunity to expand intellectual horizons that it had for other writers – seems to be merely another excuse to rehearse the anti-Western and anti-feminist sentiments already evident in “al-Nazarāt”.

It has been already told that the book “al-‘Abarāt” composed by Mustafā Lutfi al-Manfalūtī is nothing but the tears of eyes which are shed by him in the pages of his works; tragic events are spread in the midst of its lines, pathetic depictions of the exploited one, have been described. Thus, he endeavors to awaken the readers against the exploitations and calls the people to be kind enough towards the poor, through his holistic writings in “al-‘Abarāt”. The writer deserves appreciation for addressing his issues related with humanity, generosity and eradication of exploitation of the poor from the society. He ascends to a point from where he can focus on the subjects related to the whole humanity. As such, his writings have a universal touch and he can rightly be called a humanist.

Nothing like al-Manfalūtī’s “al-‘Abarāt” had ever appeared before in Arabic literature and soon after its publications, these racy and
sparkling stories caught the attention of the readers. The style, subject matter, the manner of presentation, everything had an appeal to Egyptian people. For this al-Manfalūtī was indebted to no superior power of psychological insight, nor even to a carefully chosen literary art; he looked within himself and put down on paper, with native Egyptian wit, in the style and language of a trained scholar, heedless of inconsistencies and with perfect sincerity, the contents of that microcosm of pre-war Egypt, his own mind.\textsuperscript{42} Al-Manfalūtī’s sympathies were exclaimed; above all, by the weak and the defenseless and in the stories of “al-‘Abarāt”, he preached the duty of charity (Iḥsān), especially towards wronged and persecuted women. He attacked Qāsim Amin as the corruptible of Egyptian womanhood and asserted the intellectual inferiority of women to men, whose descriptions have been seen in the article “al-Hijāb” of “al-‘Abarāt”. We have seen here that the natural tendency of al-Manfalūtī was towards melancholy and sentimentality, which led him to take the most pessimistic view of humanity. According to him, human-life was indeed, a vale of tears, from which he sought an escape in imagination. “I love beauty in imagination more than in reality,” al-Manfalūtī writes; “the description of a garden gives me more pleasure than to view it. I like to read about fine cities........ and care not at all to see them, as though I wished to preserve unspoilt this imaginative delight and were afraid that the reality would rob me of it.” But too often his sense of social injustice resulted in an unqualified pessimism, which was the grave fault in his character as a writer. It is seen that the content of “al-‘Abarāt” is inferior in comparison with his other works, but the style of this collection was such that it won for him a peculiar position in modern Arabic literature. He had a clear perception of the need for a change in Arabic literary methods and repeatedly expressed his conviction that the secret of style lay in the truthful representation to the reader of the ideas, which occupied the
writer’s mind. With this, he held strongly the necessity of studying the great models of Arabic eloquence, asserting that the poverty of so much contemporary writing was due to ignorance and lack of confidence. Because, al-Manfalūtī himself abandoned any sort of imitation in his original writings. He expressed his ideas with complete freedom in this collection, which pleased his own ear. Moreover, in “al-‘Abarāt”, we observe a characteristic mixture of mediaeval and modern, which distinguishes him peculiarly in the field of literature. Here modern is the general smoothness of his writing, especially in the original stories of “al-‘Abarāt”. He delights to begin with a plain illustration or a simple tale, which serves as the text of his discourse and is often expanded into a complete story. As he expresses in “al-Hāwiya” of “al-‘Abarāt”:

""""ما أكثر أيام الحياة وما أقلها"

Annotation: “How plenty are the days of life and how scanty they are!”

His imaginative metaphors and similes are seen in the stories of “al-‘Abarāt”, although European readers may often fail to realize how novel they are in Arabic. From this study, it has been seen that al-Manfalūtī could not completely abandon inherited mannerisms. Though he criticized rhymed prose, he fell into it automatically whenever the emotional tone of his writing rose. The effect is often pleasing and to those who regard rhymed prose as a natural and legitimate ornament of Arabic style, it gives, when properly used, a cadence and a conclusion that is sadly lacking in most of his contemporaries. But the use of rhymed prose is always criticized, when it is employed simply for its own sake and becomes mere pompous- a fault from which al-Manfalūtī was by no means free. It is specifically noticeable that the stories of “al-‘Abarāt” are filled with unexpected events like sudden death, divorce, the weeping of wretched people, tragedies of orphans etc. Al-Manfalūtī gives immense importance
on the application of high-standard words, which provides appropriate meanings of an anecdote and aims to produce stories based on humanitarian issues. Through his stories, al-Manfalūti desires to create a happy nation in the world. He seeks good luck for the nation and makes its foundations. It was divided on the basis of cast and creed.

John A. Haywood comments regarding this book: “His collection ‘al-‘Abarāt’ (The Tears) comes into the category of short story although the longest of its stories runs into about 100 pages. Most of them range between 20 to 30 pages. As was usual at the time, the stories, immediately after their titles, are variously designated as ‘maudū‘a’ (lit-placed=original) or ‘mutarjama’ (translated). The author is believed to have been ignorant of foreign languages and so-called translations would be better described as “adapted form” or based on foreign stories. Presumably, someone helped al-Manfalūti, as he used existing Arabic translations as his guide. These stories are not to the taste of modern readers with their melancholy and pessimism. Their language, too, is at times ornate, though perhaps less so than ‘al-Nazarāt’.”

It is noted that at the initial stage, these stories were known in the term of conventional form as “short novel” or "رواية قصيرة " in the early part of 19th century and gradually this form had to turn into the term of “short story” or "قصة قصيرة " in the literary society. Because the artistic norms of the writers created some differences between the long novel and the short story for its peculiar styles. Majority of authors did not give much attention on the differences between the novel and short story from the artistic point of view. The short novels or short stories of “al-Abarāt” are either compiled one or Arabisized one. Its views and its similarities are found mostly in the three parts of “al-Nazarāt”. For instance, some of its texts as well as its titles have been written repeatedly, specifically in the
third part of “al-Nazarāt”. It has been seen that al-Manfalūti considered these passages as “essay” at the initial stage and sometimes regarded them as “compiled story” and then used to create “translated story” or story-type formation or eventual description or story-type information in the periodicals. He observed different aspects of the works of the other writers very minutely and borrowed some specific views from them to apply in his writings. “Al-‘Abarāt” therefore, discusses the social issues and problems in transparent and direct information. But, its stories are not based upon scientific method or objective type. I have already mentioned that some of his stories, which are included in “al-Abarāt”, depict the human experiences with artistic descriptions depending upon its characters and moralities without having clarity because the pursuance of anything would definitely destroy the beauty of art. Moreover, “al-Abarāt” and “al-Nazarāt” have been divided into two literary categories in respect of the characteristics of linguistic interpretation, namely:

(a) **The Literary Essay.**

(b) **The Story-Type Essay.**

These two types of essays are very close to each other in style. The prime theme of both of the essays is to bring social reformation in different fields, which was elaborately stated by al-Manfalūti in his essays or amongst the story-type essays. For example, we may mention a few lines from the story of “The Martyrs” (الشهداء) of “al-Abarāt” in which al-Manfalūti admonishes those people who do not believe in love, although they are religious persons of the society:

إن كنتم تريدون أن نعيش على وجه الأرض بلا حب، فانزعوا من بين جنوبنا هذه القلوب الخفافة، ثم اطلعوا منا بعد ذلك ما تشاءون، فإننا لاستطيع أن نعيش بلا حب، مادامت لنا أفادة خاطفة.
Annotation: “If you want that we should live on the surface of the world without love, then you pull out these throbbing hearts from ourselves. Afterwards you seek from us what you want. But we can’t live without love till we have throbbing hearts.”

One of the most important features of “al-Abarāt” is that its stories begin with troubles and end with tragedy. An original story, “The Abyss” (al-Hāwiya) tells the story of a friend who becomes an alcoholic and describes his downward course till he ends up in a madhouse. One of the so-called translations, “The Victim” (al-Dhahiya) is the pathetic tale of Margaret Gautier, who dies with a broken heart when her lover Armand deserts her. However, he returns in time to participate at her funeral together with her maid Prudence, which is a painful scenery at the end.

There can be little doubt that one of the attractions of al-Manfalūtī’s al-Abarāt to his contemporary readers was that, in terms of the progression of ideas, his style is straightforward and transparent fully in keeping, indeed, with his own philosophy, which held that good style came from speaking the truth from the heart. It is found that al-Manfalūtī too, unfortunately, showed a tendency in the stories of “al-‘Abarāt” to restrict rhymed prose to just a few passages for satisfaction. A still more dangerous fault, which he shared with almost all Arabic writers, was the habit of balancing words and phrases by rhymed or unrhymed synonyms, which add nothing to the sense and hinder the development of the narrative or thought. We can mention some examples of such phrases and idioms from the stories of “al-‘Abarāt” which are detected during the study:
### TABLE-I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Story</th>
<th>Phrases &amp; Idioms</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>بلغ الأمر مبلغ الجذ</td>
<td>The matter became serious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أطلق السبيل لعبرته</td>
<td>To let one’s tears flow freely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>حال بين و بين</td>
<td>To make something inaccessible to someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>اتصل وجهة الغادين و</td>
<td>To call on him time and again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>الرئّيدين</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>تعود أدراجها</td>
<td>To go back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ولغ في الدم</td>
<td>Become blood-thirsty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أسلم رأسه إلى ركبتاه</td>
<td>To let one’s head to one’s knees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>سنة من النوم</td>
<td>A short sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>انتحت ناحية</td>
<td>To turn aside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>تمشى في أعضائها</td>
<td>To perfuse some one’s limbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>رجعت أدراجها</td>
<td>To retrace one’s steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أبي إلا أن يفظه</td>
<td>He insisted on doing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>هتلك السستر</td>
<td>Disclosure of something hidden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>حنث في يمينه</td>
<td>To break one’s oath.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the above discussions, it is also an important aspect of al-Manfalūti that occasionally, but not often, he uses clumsy sentences with long similes in the stories of “al-‘Abarat”. How far al-Manfalūti is to be charged with the lack of imagination by others, can be answered only by those who knew him personally. Another most important factor of
"al-'Abarat" is that its writing style is more mechanical and less humorous, the decoration more artificial. There is more effort at symmetry and balance. Al-Manfalüti's imagination has no longer the same wide play and the moralistic purpose is more stressed. It has been seen that there are certain stereotyping of his ideas in the writings of this collection. Al-Manfalüti's "al-'Abarat" marks an immense advance on that of all his predecessors. It was the first successful attempt to adapt the classical tradition to the new demands of popular literature, and there is much room for improvement. It also seems that the translations of Nazarat are intended partly as object lessons or experiments in the capacity of Arabic to render exalted passages of Western literary style as we have seen Hugo's discourse on Voltaire and the speeches of Brutus and Antony in "Julius Caesar". In "al-'Abarat", on the other hand, al-Manfalüti abandoned himself to the sentimental pessimism of the extreme romantic school, with the same absence of light and shade in his character drawing which he had already displayed in the Nazarat. It is therefore, seen that the popularity of "al-'Abarat" has remained tremendous till today largely on account of its stylistic qualities and it is supposed to be an important contribution to modern Arabic literature. It has already been mentioned that Mustafä Lutfi al-Manfalüti enumerates all eight stories in the collection of "al-'Abarat" dealing with poverty, suffering, distress, frustration, and oppression and in this way; he wants to give more importance on humanity.

4.5 A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF HIS CONTEMPORARY WRITERS IN REGARD TO AL-'ABARAT:

Mustafä Lutfi al-Manfalüti was undoubtedly the greatest essayist, novelist and a story writer of modern period. But he was not above criticism. Critics have severely attacked him on several grounds. Except the severe but highly disciplined attack against the literary conservatism of
Mustafā Sadiq al-Rafi‘ī (d. 1937 A.D.) by modernist writers like Tāhā Husayn (d.1973), Ibrāhīm ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Māzīnī (1889-1949 A.D.), and Abbās Mahmūd al-Aqqād (d.1964), no other Arab literary figure has ever come under such heavy critical fire as Mustafā Lutfi al-Manfalūtī. Both al-Māzīnī and al-Aqqād in their book al-Diwān: “Kitāb fī al-Adab wa al-Naqd” (Anthology of literature and criticism, Cairo, 1921), were targeting on destroying the popularity which al-Manfalūtī had gained among Arab readers. The controversy, over al-Manfalūtī’s literary skill and achievement was stirred up not only by his subjects and ideas, but also by his ever-changing position on many issues. His emotionalism, his impatience and most of all his lack of consistency, made him unaware that he might simultaneously be a conservative and a liberal, a reformer and a reactionary, a moralist who condemned suicide and an author who showed some of his characters taking their own lives. Ibrāhīm ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Māzīnī (1889-1949 A.D.), an eminent critic and poet, finds out some demerits in the works of Mustafā Lutfi al-Manfalūtī. Al-Māzīnī criticized him severely on issues related with his compositions in the following lines:

"ماذا في كتابات المنفلوطي مما يستحق أن يعد من أجله كاتبا وأديبا. الا إذا كان الأدب كله عيبا في عب عينه لا طائل تحته؟ سمحت بعض السخّافات من شيوخنا المارقين، يقول: "إن فِي أساليبه حلوة" ولو أنه قال "نعمه" لكان أقرب إلى الصواب. ولو قال "أنوته" لأصاب المرح. وهذا كلام يكاد بعده من لا يعقل له يغبر كلام المقلدين من الألغاز والأحاجي..." ویرى مرة أخرى: أن مكلف مكلف مكلف يصنع العاطفة كما يصنع العبارة عنها..." كما يأخذ عليه قدرًا من التساهل في استعمال الألفاظ وكثرت استخدام المفعول المطلق، والنعت، والنحاح. وغیر ذلك مما يبعد النحاح من "مکمات الجملة"، وليس من أركانها الأساسية، كل لفظة يمكن الاستغناء عنها قائلة للكاتب: فإن العالم اغنى في باب الأدب من أن يحتل هذا الحضو ويشير عليه. لكن هذا كلام لا يفهمه المنفلوطي لأن اللغة عنه ليست إلا زيادة يعرضها، وخليخ يخيل بها، لا آدة لنقل معنى أو تصوير احساس أو رسم فكرة..."

Annotation: "What type of things are there in the writings of al-Manfalūtī for which he deserved to be considered as a writer and an
author, since all his literatures are turned in vain into funny story, since there is no psychological power behind him? I heard that some foolish persons amongst our stupid old leaders saying: ‘Definitely his styles are enchanting. Although he said regarding kindness and fineness, he is very close to the correct formation. Though he writes down about femininity, certainly he achieved the right direction and hit the target.’ This speech is to be considered for such a person who has no knowledge and experience except having the speech of imitators of mystery and puzzle...

He again opines: “He is a complexed and troubled person who loves others artificially as he writes down his description artificially. He shows a little negligency in application of the words where as he uses more ‘Absolute Objective ("الناعت المطلق"), epithet (النعت), circumstantial Adverb (الحال)’ etc. in his writings. So the grammarians consider that his sentences of a topic have no basic part.” Moreover, al-Mājīnī again says criticizing al-Manfalūtī vehemently: “Each word of writing is a killer for the writer in which he has no need to use such word. Every academician is mere master over the chapterization of the literature to carry out this parenthesis and to apply in its themes. But al-Manfalūtī didn’t understand how to set a clause in a sentence. According to him, the language was nothing except the display of its beauty and some pieces of ornamentations to express through the medium of languages. There is no any particle in it to transform of conception or expression of feeling or description of thought.”

It is found that the most of the themes of the stories of al-Manfalūtī are filled with the descriptions of deaths and suicides of the people. We have also seen that destiny always plays an important role in his novels and writings up till the end and the roles of the characters are meager in comparison to the writings of other authors.
Accordingly, despite the popularity of "al-Abarât" with some groups of readers, it is hardly surprising that this collection has generally found a cold reception from the critics. Although the narrative generally flows easily, the stories almost entirely lack the wit and sparkle of the best pieces of "al-Nazarât", and the range of subject-matter and emotional experience to which al-Manfalûti apparently has access, are so limited that the collection almost seems designed to reveal the limitations of the author rather than his capabilities. Most readers will probably find it hard to put the book down without the feeling that "Enough is enough."

The majority of al-Manfalûti's other works fall into the category of extended translations or adaptations from French originals and are of varying degrees of interest. Some columnists criticize al-Manfalûti for his views expressed in the writings because he gave more importance in bringing the philosophy of Western literature into Arabic for its development. We, of course, have already mentioned that the translations of "al-Nazarât" seem to be intended partly as object lessons or experiments in the capacity of Arabic to render exalted passages of western literary style. Therefore, in comparison with "al-Nazarât", the weightage of al-Abarât, ranks somewhat below the "al-Nazarât" as a contribution to modern Arabic literature.

It has already been mentioned that Ibrâhim 'Abd al-Qâdir al-Mâzini (1889-1949 A.D.) was a great critic of his contemporary. He studied al-Manfalûti's works thoroughly and commented on his styles of writings in an antagonistic manner. As an outstanding critic and poet, he finds out some demerits specifically in the stories of "al-Abarât" and severely criticizes al-Manfalûti in his book "Kitâb al-Diwan" which was published in 1921 A.D. with the help of his friend 'Abbâs Mahmûd al-Uqqâd. He finds it difficult to accept some
styles of writing applied in “al-Abarāt”. He denounces the method of story "The Orphan" in “al-Abarāt” as such:

"أما أسلوب المنفوطي في هذه القصة (قصة الوريد) وما سواه فأسلوب رجل لا يبالي من أي مدخل دخل على القارئ، ما دام يقدر أن يسيول منه إليه ولا أي بلاء يهدوه في احتياله، ويحميه عليه؛ وإذا كان يعرف من نفسه التليفق والتصنع فهو لا يزال يعالج الإقناع والتآثر بضروب من التائكد والغزو في التفصيل، غير ذلك مما ليس آله فيه على الكترب والتروير. ومع أن قصة الوريد في تسعة عشرة صفحة من الحرف الجليل، فإن فيها أكثر من ثلاثين مفعولا مطلقا، ليس من بينها واحد لا يكون الأسلوب أسلوب وأطوع بدونه.

و يقول - فإذا تقرر هذا وأن المنفوطي ذهب مذهب النحت في كتابته، وملحق سنجبل التليفقات، وأنه لا يزال يعالج التأثير بالطريقة والرخافة في العاطفة المتكافئة، والإحساس المصطنع، وبالغزو والتأكيد في صوغ الكلام، وتصوير المسألة، فإننا بعد هذا أن ننظر كيف يسوغ القصة لأي في الأسلوب بحس الطريقة التي يجري عليها في تناول الموضوع وعرضه.

Annotation: - “As regards the styles of al-Manfalūti, in the story of ‘al-Yatim’ he is quite disinterested to introduce any new theme to impress the reader. He attempts to reach his readers from his side according to his calibre but no creditable performance leads him to his achievement. He only leads the readers towards him whereas he knows himself about fabrication and artificiality. He always considers it as a satisfaction and an impression with different assurances and exaggeration in the interpretation. Moreover, he was not free from making falsification and forgery here in this story. In addition to this, the story ‘al-Yatim’ has nineteen pages with big letters, because there are more than thirty ‘Absolute Objectives’ (المفعول المطلق)، there is no singular number within this story, whereas no style of any literature can be more fluent and delicate without it.”

Al- Māzioni again says: “Most of the stories of al-Manfalūti are related with effeminacy and some fabricated stories. He always uses power with softness and freshness in forced passion as well as creates artificial feelings through exaggeration and assurances in moulding the speech and
description of a problem. After this, we see how he forwards the story by such a style of feeling that is continuing within it to get the subject-matter and its issues. Al-Manfalûti also adapted a considerable number of French romantic 19\textsuperscript{th} century works, distorting them beyond recognition, probably because he was unversed in foreign languages and received his materials from second hand sources.

It is known from above discussion that al-Mâzini finds out some microscopic faults in the stories of “al-‘Abarât” in general and ‘al-Yatim’ in particular written by al-Manfalûti. We have already said that he uses absolute objectives (المفعول المطلق) repeatedly here in this book and thus the beauty of language has been diminished in the stories. He has also to face criticism due to excessive description of effeminacy about all his stories of “al-‘Abarât”. Moreover, al-Manfalûti borrowed ideological conception from French literature, which is chiefly objected to by his opponents.

Al-Manfalûti was criticized not only for the cause of adaptation of French literature, but also for the reason of the system of translation. His adaptation of Coppée’s ‘Pour la Couronne’ repeatedly subordinates the story to long, and to the modern readers, boring orations in praise of patriotic devotion to one’s country and concern for one’s fellows. In the second chapter, for instance, the protagonist, Constantine, explains to his stepmother the necessity of caring for women, children and those too weak to care for themselves.

Matti Moosa, the author of ‘The Origins of Modern Arabic Fiction’ severely criticizes the method of his writing in the following words: “Because of his didactic aim, al-Manfalûti often forgets time, place and even his characters to confront his audience in the manner of a religious preacher. His moralizing becomes a harangue and any discerning
reader quickly finds that he has become distracted from the main theme of the work. Coppée’s work was essentially an attempt to propel the Balkan countries into a revolt against the Ottomans. However, the straightforward and martial French drama is, in the translation, weighted down by al-Manfalüti’s leaden moral exhortations.” Worse, al-Manfalüti distorts the dialogue by interpolating Quranic verses, forgetting that the speaker, to whom he assigns them, is a Christian defending his country against the Muslim Turks. As al-Manfalüti presents the matter, the chief issue is not the struggle of a vigorous nation for its freedom and independence, but the submissiveness of defeated people blaming their tragic domination by their enemy on their arrogance. Furthermore, the issue as al-Manfalüti presents, is the confidence of the defeated people upon themselves rather than God and the contempt of the rich and strong among them for the poor and weak. In many ways, his attitude is curiously reminiscent of the early medieval Christian apologists, who forced pagan writers of the Pre-Christian period to become posthumous defenders of the Gospel. He was doing for Islam what St. Augustine, especially, had done for Christianity.

H.A.R. Gibb also criticizes Mustafâ Lutfi al-Manfalüti in the following lines: “Al-Manfalüti’s versions lack the quality of Uthmân Jalâl’s work “Paul et Virginie”. Both of them have translated this book “Paul et Virginie” into Arabic. But at the same time, Gibb adorns him as the creator of brilliant style. It is found that the similarity and imitations of other writer’s style have been often seen in the works of al-Manfalüti. Although the literature is a means to express someone’s self-thinking, emotions, love, social problems, etc. through its manifestation. Therefore, literature should be kept aloof from total imitation and similarity with the literatures of other authors. Some critics comment that the characters of the stories and the themes of the tales are quite same in the
writings of al-Manfalūti. Therefore, in the absence of pure and fair literature, the weight of al-Manfalūti’s writings is somewhat less in comparison with other authors.

Moreover, some columnists have severely criticized al-Manfalūti for entitling one of the stories from “al-‘Abarāt” as ‘The Martyr’ (“Al-Shuhadā’”). According to them, the title of the story is contradictory one because the woman, the chief character of the story, who has committed suicide, cannot be a martyr. Therefore, Ahmad Muhammad ‘Abd al-Hādi has commented as the following:

Annotation: “I think that the translation of the title as ‘Martyr’ is a blunder. (Committed by Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūti) Because one who commits suicide cannot be a martyr. It would have been excellent, had he given the title as ‘Catastrophe of a family’ or Ending of a wretched family.”

According to Islamic tenet, the act of committing suicide is unlawful activity and it is a serious sin. Anyone who commits suicide would be placed in hell. Mustafā Lutfī al-Manfalūti has forgotten such strict decree of Islam at the time of writing the story.

4.5 (a) POOR COMMAND OVER FOREIGN LANGUAGE:

One of the most important features of al-Manfalūti is the lack of competence in any European language. Therefore, the critics of Arab World have commented about him as such: “He is a writer devoid of culture because he has no sufficient knowledge over anything except the memory of Holy Qurʻān, some traditions of prophet Muhammad(sm.), his study on some original Arabic books and Diwāns of some classical poets. We have already stated that he had no familiarity with any foreign
language. Rather, it was possible for him only to translate some written works of other authors with the help of others etc." So these are the criticisms of his critics.

But we think that the lack of competence in foreign language is not a factor for him since he translated a lot of books from European literatures by his own uninterrupted efforts in the field of romanticism and also wrote several original stories. Hence, he is quite successful as a writer.

4.5 (b) GRAMMATICAL WEAKNESS:

Several columnists of modern Arabic literature criticize al-Manfalūti due to the grammatical errors committed in his works. They have found out many grammatical errors in the articles of al-Manfalūti. Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyāt, a renowned scholar, has detected some such errors from his works. He has noted that al-Manfalūti applied some words in inappropriate places or gathered some sentences, which should not be used. According to him, it is really a shocking matter. For example, he uses the following term in "al-Ghad":

"عَمَدُ مِنَ الْأَعْدَامُ" This term means “Nothing is from non-entities.” Actually, its more correct form should be "عَمَدُ تام" whose meaning is “complete nothing”. Nevertheless, he has contributed many valuable compositions to modern Arabic literature, though he committed some grammatical mistakes in his scripts. Now, more instances of such grammatical errors, which were pointed out by Ahmad Muhammad Abdul Hādī, in his book “Al-Manfalūti: Hayātuhū wa Mu‘allafātuhū” are mentioned in the following table:
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<td>يجلس أمام مائدة حافلة بصنف الطعام قديده وشواءه</td>
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Furthermore, Ahmad Muhammad Abdul Hādi, has taken out some other serious grammatical errors from the writings of al-Manfalūtī as noted below:

 Annotation: “I have observed some grammatical mistakes committed by the author of ‘al-Nazarāt’ which are unusual. He has used ‘Kasrah’ with ‘Hamzah’ in the midst of a sentence as he says: ‘Hattā innaka’ in place of its correct form “Hattā annaka”.”

Moreover, he finds fault with some sentences of al-Manfalūtī. He puts ‘Nasab’ on feminine regular plural (جمع المؤنث السالم) presuming it as the Irregular Plural. As he writes down in the following:
In the above mentioned sentence, al-Manfalūti has noted as "صفاتا" in place of "صفات". It, therefore, surprises me that al-Manfalūti is an exceptional one in committing such mistakes in the essays. There are so many grammatical and linguistic errors in the stories of al-Manfalūti, which have been detected in the study. We have already mentioned some mistakes committed by him that are very uncommon in any story of any author. For instance, he writes in an essay “al-Arba’una” as in the following:

"كنا نمرح في ظلالها ، مرح الظباء العفف...."

Here, in the aforementioned sentence, if the author would have applied the word "العنبراء" instead of "العفر"، then it would have been appropriate one. In another article "عجائز بويشنج"، al-Manfalūti gives affirmative answer to a negative question, which is completely wrong in the point of view of Arabic Grammar. The question is:

"لا ترى هؤلاء النساء الجميلات المشرفات عليك من نواذ قصورهن؟ قال : نعم أراهـ...."

The answer of above mentioned interrogative sentence should have been written thus:

"بلى : أراهـ " Sometimes, al-Manfalūti does not notice cautiously the singular form of a plural since he noted down in the story "الأجواء" as such : "توفيت زوج إحدى الدوقات العظام في فرنسا.......". Here, he should have written- "أحد الدوقات" in place of "الدوقات" because the word "الدوقات" is a plural form of "دوق".

In another story ‘al-Bayan’, he has committed an error as mentioned in the following: "وهل يعني المتحدث في حديثه شيء سوي أن يعي عنه الناس ما يقول". In this sentence, al-Manfalūti puts ‘Kasrah’ on the object, which is incorrect according to the rule of Arabic Grammar. Hence, he should have
In the research, it is also found that al-Manfalūtī committed a linguistic mistake in the aforementioned article ‘al-Bayān’ as such:

"ولا العاجزين الذين غلبتهم أحمد اللغات الأعجمية على أمرهم".

The correct formation of the above mentioned sentence has been written as follows:

"ولا العاجزين الذين غلبتهم أحمد اللغات الأعجمية على أمرهم".

In Chapter "كتاب مقاطعة" of the article "رسائل", al-Manfalūtī writes: "فالحمد لله الذي أدلئى متك", but he should have written:

"والحمد لله الذي أدلئى لي". Moreover, a specific style of expression has been noticed in a story of al-Manfalūtī namely "al-Fatat wa al-Bayt" as the following:

"ساحما الله، فقد كان فيما أهديت إليها كتاب النظرات فقد فضلته على كتاب أبيها".

So who reads the above mentioned sentence without knowing about "al-Nazarat" his famous book, would immediately comprehend this particular book through its pronoun "فَقَدْ فَضَلْتِه", because "al-Nazarat" is the nearest noun here. Hence, its meaning would be like thus: "I have preferred the book of "al-Nazarat" over a book of her father."61

Then its meaning would be defective. Therefore, the sentence should be written in the following way:

"ساحما الله، فقد فضلته (الفتاة و البيت) على كتاب أبيها النظرات الذي أهديت إليها من قبل".

Moreover, it has been observed that al-Manfalūtī sometimes does not follow the grammatical rules on the ‘conjugative aorist’ (المضارع المتعطش) since he noted in the story ‘al-Da‘wat’ of Nazarat-Vol-II as in the following pattern:

"لأنهم يحاولون أن يرزؤوا في نواحى نفوسها، ويفجرونها في أعقاب قلوبها".
Here he writes "نفجعونها" instead of "نفجعوها". Because these four particles give "Nasab" to the final letter of aorist and accordingly in the plural form of the aorist, the letter "ن" has to be dropped. He has again committed some grammatical mistakes in the same story as he writes down in the following pattern:

Here, it is not known clearly why al-Manfalûti puts "Nasab" on the word-'Rajulun' because use of 'Dammah' is obligatory in this place since it is predicate for a subject that is a personal pronoun of the proposition-'hum' (i.e. they- ummat- nation).63

The aforementioned table of errors, although it shows incompetence of al-Manfalûti in respect of some Grammatical Knowledge and application of words in appropriate place and others’ criticisms; however, there should not be any doubt that his writing-skill is marvelous. He is quite efficient in applying beautiful words in his writings. The writing style is also lucid and totally free from complexity and ornamentation. Hence, It is commendably mentioned here that there were innumerable readers and fans of al-Manfalûti, who were highly impressed by his literature and works where as there were only a small number of critics including al-Mâjini, who were habituated to find out the neglected area of each writer of his time. It is a fact that the chief cause of al-Mâjini’s criticism was to draw the attention of al-Manfalûti’s readers towards himself. Another secret cause of criticism was the exaggerated descriptions with excessive emotions in the writings of al-Manfalûti. In real sense, al-Manfalûti had a great love for displaying of excellent cultures of Egypt to attract the hearts of readers, which made him one of the most popular...
authors of the Arab world. It has been seen that the basic aspects of the works of al-Manfalūṭī were taken from the experiences of the life and his classical styles brought him closer to his readers. So he achieved such a position amongst the authors and critics that could not be obtained by any other writers or essayists or translators.⁶⁴

4.5 (c) SOME DRAWBACKS OF AL-MANFALŪΤĪ:

There are some major drawbacks seen in the writings of al-Manfalūti for which now and then, he is criticised by the critics. One of the drawbacks of al-Manfalūti was such that the theme of his writings was confined to a single subject only and that he never addressed the sentiments of the youths and their burning problems. Therefore, his contemporary distinguished authors never quoted references from the writings of al-Manfalūti in their books and journals. The people of Cairo, at that time, cried for emancipation from exploitations, suppressions, injustice etc. But these issues were ignored by al-Manfalūti in his writings. So the common people were discussing these demerits of al-Manfalūti roughly in various gatherings such as coffee-houses, meeting places, restaurant and salons etc. Moreover, during his time, literary symposia were arranged at different places to discuss the burning issues. These were attended by the learned men and distinguished writers of the time. Sometimes symposium was held in the house of al-Sayyid Taufiq al-Bakrī at Kharnafash, or sometimes in the house of al-Sayyidah Bārī Fāḍīl, sometimes in the house of Ahmad Shawqi, a modern poet, attended by Karamah bin Hānl and versatile writer Dr. Mahjûb Thābit etc. But there is no mention of al-Manfalūti’s participation in these seminars. These great participants also did not mention anything in their discussions about the writings of al-Manfalūti. It is because of two reasons: (a) His legal Prosecution (Hearing) was going on time by time. (b) Govt.’s suppression imposed
upon him continuously. So it was a strategy of the ruler to keep him aloof from these seminars with a view to make him alone in the society.\textsuperscript{65} However, al-Manfalut\text{\textl{\textit{i}}} always sought the vicinity of Im\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{\textm{a\textm{m}}} Shaykh Muhammad Abduh and attended his symposium in his house and in other places. We have already mentioned earlier that he had followed Im\text{\textl{\textm{a\textm{m}}}’s attitudes and studied his books. Moreover, he concentrated his minds in the studies of French literature and used to translate best French stories into the easy Arabic language.

4.6 ESTIMATION ON ‘AL-\text{\textl{\texti{ABAR\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{AR\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{}}}’:

From the above discussion, it is very clear that although many commentators have been critical of the quality of al-Manfalut\text{\textl{\texti{i}}’s ‘translations’ in “al-\text{\textl{\texti{Abar\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{ar\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{}}}” comparing them unfavourably with those of other translators such as Farah Ant\text{\textl{\textu{\textl{\textt{un and Muhammad ‘Uthm\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{an Jal\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{al, their popularity during the 1920s is not only an interesting indication of reader’s tastes at the time, but also, a role model for other writers in the history of Arabic literature.

Ahmad Muhammad Abdul H\text{\textl{\textd{\textl{\texta{\textm{, therefore, could not agree with the comments expressed by Ibr\text{\textl{\texta{\texth{him ‘Abd al-Q\text{\textl{\textd{\textl{\texta{\texth{dir al-M\text{\textl{\texta{\textm{azini in respect of al-Manfalut\text{\textl{\texti{i}}’s work “al-‘Abar\text{\textl{\texta{\textr{at”. He presents the following statements in favour of styles of Al-Manfalut\text{\textl{\texti{i}}:

كأن المنفلوطي أُندى في أوج مجده الأدبي، و كنت أُد أُن أرجى الكلام عن مزاعم صاحبي الديوان، أوبالأصح عن مزاعم المازني عند الأنتهاء - للرد عليه جملة واحدة، ولكن فيما يتعلق بتهكمه من أساليب المنفلوطي أُتيته بالفقرة السابقة من نقده، وافتا بينهما موقف الحكم العدل وربما انقلبت إلى مدافع عن المنفلوطي إذا كان الحق معه - بعد تبرير هذه المزاعم:

1. بلع المازني قد أراد أن يسعى إليه المنفلوطي ليتلقى على يديه، لكي يعرف الطريقة التي يدخل بها على القارئ وهذا أمر عجيب، رجل أدب له من الشهرة ماله يأتي إلى هذا الشاب ليحدد له الطريقة التي يكتب بها، وفي رأيي أن هذا ليس ينتقد نزيه، وإنما هذا أساليب من أساليب الإرهاب.
الفكرى، الذي يسمى القراء حقهم في التدوق، ولا يترك لهم حرية إبداء الرأى، وكان الإرهابيين
وصمداي على الناس حتى في تفكيرهم، وليس التدوق مقصورا على المازني أو على عاملة النقد
في عمره، والشاهد على ذلك كلامه هو حيث يقول: "ما كان الصواب وصحة الإحساس، وحسن التخيل والقدرة على ذلك بمقصورة على الأدباء".

2. هذا النقد غير النزيف مملوء بكلمات التدوق والسباب مثل: "لا بل هديه في احتياله، يقحمه
عليه، وكلمات التلفيق، والتصنع، والكتب، والزروير، والختنة، والطريقة، والراوحة،
والعاتبة المتمثلة، والإحساس المصنع، فهذا أخذ المازني برمى الملفوطى بعبارات وكلمات
أقرب ما تكون إلى السب والتدوق منها إلى النقد النزيف، واضعا في مخيله أنه بهذا الأسلوب سيثبت
أقدامه في الأدب.

3. شك المازني نفسه بامور تافهة للمهجوم على الملفوتي مثل: "هاءههم بالحرف الجليل الذي
طمعت به كتبه، وحسب عدد الصفحات التي تحمل قصة ألبتهيم، وإيجاد عدد المفاعل المطلقة
وتجميع النسبة بينها وبين عدد الصفحات، وبينها وبين عدد الكمات، ولم يقف به الأمر إلى هذا
ال حد، بل أحصى جميع المفاعل المطلقة في كل كتاب الملفوتي، ووجدتها مفعولا مطلقا،
فهل يرى القارى هذا الرجل ناذا نزيها؟ أم يراه إحسانًا أو محاسب تكاليف؟

4. يسم المازني أسلوب الملفوتي بسمات النعومة والأنوثة والتلفيق، وبعض النظر عام تحمله هذه
الكلمات من النزيف والسباب، فإننا نقول له وهو في دار البقاء عند أصحاب الحكامين، يا أسئذ إن رقة
أسلوب الملفوتي الذي وهبه الله تعالى لا يصح أن يقال عنه نعومة، وإذا تناول قصصًا بطلاتها
نساء سواء كانت مترجمة أم موضوعة، فليس من الحق الذي أن يرمى كتبته بالأثواب والتختن
، وهو ... كما قلت أنفا، أدي تناول أدب الحياة، لم يتخصص في موضوع بعينه. فكيف تتخذ
معالجه لقصة شابين، أض이라 في جحيمها، منطقلا لهذا الهجوم؟ وما التلفيق الذي ترميه به أبدا
المازني، ذا أقدامه في كتاباته، فهل إذا تخيل الكاتب قصة بغير من ورائه معالجة مشكلة من
مشكلات الحياة تسمى تلفيقا؟ إذا عرب أخر عن غيره وليس له منها سوى إفقاء صياغتها عربية
فصيحة تسمى ذلك تلفيقا؟ هل هذا يصح ... اعتقد أنه اشتاط في الرأى، ولنا عود إن شاء الله للرد
على هذه المزاعم.

Annotation: "At that time, al-Manfalûti reached the zenith of his literary status. I, therefore, would like to ask a question to al-Mâzînî regarding the allegations against him (al-Manfalûti) or authenticity of the
charges of al-Mâzini in this perspective (i.e. *al-‘Abarât*). In this regard, I am to quote just one sentence but that is also related to his mockery about the style of al-Manfalûti (in *al-‘Abarât*) from his criticism—that is to stop the position of justice and knowledge. Hence, I defended al-Manfalûti while the truth was with him -- and I refuted all these allegations:

1. Perhaps al-Mâzini wanted to lead over al-Manfalûti considering him as a pupil in front of him as if al-Mâzini teaches him that method through which al-Manfalûti could be able to enter the minds of readers.

   This is an amazing matter because he is a scholar having reputation and he comes to this young man to instruct that method in which he (al-Manfalûti) would write. In my opinion, this is not an impartial criticism. Definitely, this is one of the styles of monastical thought that snatched away the rights of interest of readers. He does not leave to them the freedom of self-expression. It appeared as if, monasticism is mandatory on the common people even in their thoughts. On the contrary, there is no restriction of interest of writing on al-Mâzini. It is, also seen that no severe criticism has been done (by anyone) for his works in his lifetime. The witness of his speech is such where he says: ‘The pure and correct feelings, beautiful imagination and impression over these qualities are confined to the authors.’

2. This criticism is based on non-impartial views and filled with false accusation and quite derogation. For example, al-Mâzini says: “No creditable performance would lead him to his achievement and involve him with readers.” It is also filled with the speeches of falsification, artificiality, fabrication, forgery, effeminacy, tenderness, softness, complexed emotion and synthetic feelings etc.

   Thus, al-Mâzini used to attack al-Manfalûti by interpretations and speeches, which are full of insult and a completely false accusation other
than the impartial criticism. Hence, taking this criticism in his mind, he (al-Manfalūtī) established his position in Arabic literature by dint of these styles.

3. Al-Māzīnī was himself busy with such nonsense affairs to attack on al-Manfalūtī as he says: ‘His importance is only with the great letters of the books by which his books were printed, the calculation of numbers of pages in the story of “al-Yatīm” (al-'Ararāt), detection of numbers of absolute objectives (المفعول المطلق), parallely the limited relationship between it and between the numbers of pages, between it and between the numbers of words etc.’ Even he does not halt here in this point. Rather he counts all the ‘absolute objectives’ of all the writings of al-Manfalūtī and thus he found 572 numbers of absolute objectives.

So, would the readers consider this man as an impartial critic? Or whether the readers would consider him as either an accountant or an auditor of the problems?

Hence, one gets the feeling that al-Māzīnī is not an impartial critic. At times, he appears as an accountant or auditor.

4. Al-Māzīnī has branded the styles of al-Manfalūtī as soft, feminine and artificial. He views him with jealousy since his comments are full of false accusations and derogatory remarks.

Now we would like to tell him (Al-Māzīnī) while he is now in the vicinity of Almighty: “Oh, Sir, Almighty Allāh has given such kind of delicacy in the styles of al-Manfalūtī which should not be termed soft. When he intends to write a story, its chief character becomes woman whether that is translated or original work. So he has no literary zeal to select the female characters as well as effeminative features only in his writings. It has already been mentioned that an author may take up
literature for human life. He does not fix a topic to write that has been happening in front of his eyes. How it would be if he takes an art for a story of love affairs between two youths? Would their love-affairs not be a cause of criticism? In regard to artificiality, Oh al-Mâzini, You have only thrown him into that position. But I almost find no such things in his writings. Is it called falsification while the writer imagines a story and wants to focus the problems of human life? On the other hand, al-Manfalûti arabicised some stories from French literature and these are nothing but example of his mastery over the perfect formation of pure and splendid Arabic language. Is it called a fabrication? Is it not true? I strongly believe that he (al-Mâzini) goes to the extreme point in his opinion. Therefore, God willing, we have also full strength to reply on these allegations.

It is a strange matter why al-Mâzini criticizes some aspects of al-Manfalûti’s book al-‘Abarât so severely because it is a book of fantastic description with peculiar style. It is also a reflection of tragic life of poor people. Of course, there is an impression of French literature. Although al-Manfalûti was ignorant of any European language, yet he tried his level best with the help of some of his friends to import modern European style into Arabic literature. So it may be emphasized that al-Manfalûti was a pioneer of modernism and thus enriched the Arabic language and literature. Prof. Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyât, the Egyptian critic & an outstanding litterateur, as well as the author of famous book “Târîkh al-Adab al-‘Arabi”, therefore, recognizes his credibility and sagacity. Moreover, it is a great achievement for al-Manfalûti to possess a place of admiration in the history of Arabic literature written by this renowned author because it is known that al-Zayyât’s recognition to him is more remarkable than the lack of technical art of Arabic literature. It is worth mentioning here that al-Manfalûti was the first to write short story in modern style in the history of
Arabic literature. The Arab readers had been expecting modernity since long time in literature and he became successful in this regard and reached his destination. Thus, he filled the gaps in modern period with the best part of Arabic literature. The writer intended to inform the society through this splendid book “al-'Abarât” regarding the troubles of mankind, the exploitation of the poor, condition of the woman in the society with constant sequence by nice interpretations in the form of strong words in a pleasant manner. He transformed the psychological thoughts of writings from one sequence to another. We, therefore, can embellish al-Manfalūtī as a unique prose writer like al-Barūdī in poetry. We must have to say that both the writers revived modern styles in two directions of Arabic language and literature and gave a great impetus to its reformations. Thus, al-Manfalūtī served the whole Arab nation through his invaluable contributions tremendously in the field of a new prospect. It is therefore, very clear from the above discussion that the charges of his opponents that the subject matter of al-Manfalūtī’s book “al-'Abarât” is full of absolute objectives, frequent repetitions of the themes and the imitations from other sources, are totally bogus. Al-Manfalūtī, actually liked to write on the basis of Arabian culture, its environment and its society.

Of course, Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyāt, also points out two important demerits of the works of al-Manfalūtī. He mentions them in the following lines:

“أما صفة الخلوذ فيه فيمنع من تحقيقها أمانة ؛ ضعف الأداة و ضعف الثقافة . أما ضعف الأداة فلن المنقولي لم يكن واسع العلم بلغته ولا قوي البصر يدعمها. لذلك نجد في تعبيره الخطأ والفضول ووضع اللظف في غير موضعه. وأما ضعف الثقافة فلا لأنه لم يتتوفر على تحصيل علوم الشرق ؛ ولم يتصل إتصالاً مباشرًا بالعلوم الغرب.”

Annotation: “As regards the quality of permanence in his literature is concerned, two factors would hamper its progress: (a) Weak component, (b) Narrow culture. So far as weak component is concerned, al-Manfalūtī
didn’t have a broad vision through his language and there was not a strong view in his literature. We, therefore, find the common mistake and excess illustrations in his writings. He uses the words in inappropriate places. As far as narrow culture is concerned, he was not experienced sufficiently in acquiring knowledge of the East. Also he was not acquainted with the knowledge of West.”

Here, it is significant that the criticism of al-Zayyāt on al-Manfalūti is, no doubt, impartial and constructive keeping himself away from biasness. He even avoids using any defamatory and derogatory words against al-Manfalūti. So such criticism is expected from the critics. He finds out two main factors from the works of al-Manfalūti - (a) Weak component and (b) Narrow culture. These two aspects are really seen in the other works of al-Manfalūti other than “al-'Abarāt”. It is expected that these two factors have not influenced the themes of “al-'Abarāt”. It is presumed that only these two factors would not make his works permanent, rather there must be stress on human values, social issues, problems of poor, victims of injustice, tragic conditions of widows, oppressed people etc. in the works of the author. We have found almost all the aforementioned issues in his book “al-'Abarāt”. So it is a collective description of different issues related with human beings. Moreover, many subjects play specific role in the literature. Therefore, we can say that the writing-style of al-Manfalūti has shown authenticity of the opinions expressed by Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyāt in this perspective. Hence, the role of al-Manfalūti has been inestimable towards the development of modern Arabic prose. It is found that the language of “al-Abarāt” is full of similes and metaphors and it uses long sentences to explain one obvious truth. This was the suitable language for the people of that age. Hence, we may firmly say that though there are some demerits in the themes of “al-Abarāt”, the
application of beautiful words in appropriate places and the inclusion of many magnificent phrases & idioms, similes make his writings an outstanding masterpiece in the history of modern Arabic Literature.

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