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My study of the history of Islam revealed that much has been written about the political, social, educational and cultural events from the advent of Islam to the later period of the Abbasid rule. The history of the overall developments during this period is recorded in all its details but to my disappointment less is found regarding the Arabic prose in general and the literary prose in particular. The information that has come down to us is scanty and there is much scope for further investigation. Fortunately, for me the occasion arose when I had to select my subject of study at the research level for the degree of Ph.D in Arabic. Encouraged by my teachers, I chose to offer this study for the said purpose. My field of study is restricted to the development of Arabic literary prose during the first two hundred years of the Abbasid rule when Arabic Literary prose gained momentum. The conditions for this purpose were very favourable since the support cut across the lines, religious, ethnic, tribal Muslims and non-Muslims, Shiaites and Sunnies who were all lovers of Arabic language and literature. As a result of that Arabic language in such a short time gained new heights of its perfection. I need not analyse here all the factors that were instrumental in this process. However, it is evident that it had very much to do with the shifting of the Abbasid capital to Baghdad. This created the need for the development of Arabic prose as state language. It was the need of the society, the administration and the elite. This period of overall expansion of Islamic sciences in which Arabic prose flourished along with the Greco-Arabic translation movement is, no doubt, an epoch-making era.
in the course of human history. This is recognised and embedded in our historical consciousness.

As pointed out above, my study is concerned with the development of the Arabic literary prose and therefore we have to examine the Social, Political, and ideological factors that occasioned the unprecedented growth of Arabic prose during the relevant period, which covers about two hundred years from 132 A.H. to 300 A.H. of the Abbasid rule, in which revolutionary developments, literary as well as cultural, took place. With the advent of the Abbasid rule, literary movement was also initiated in all earnest in which different cultures were involved. They were all assimilated with a single culture. The zeal and enthusiasm was such that the movement produced prose works in Arabic on almost all literary and scientific topics by the end of the tenth century of the Christian era. So far as my work is concerned it is restricted to the literary aspect of Arabic prose during the period. However, to begin with, I have initiated my investigation from the pre-Islamic days with a view to trace the origin of the Arabic language and its gradual development in order to establish a link between the past and the later periods of its development.

My interest in Arabic prose had its roots in my interest in the study of the origin and development of Arabic language from the linguistic point of view. I have always been asking myself a question: "How these nomadic people, cut off from the outside world and without knowing the art of reading and writing, could develop their language to the height of its excellence?" No doubt Arabian people are known for possessing wonderful memory, who could easily store all their literature and events of their social life in their memories. But this alone is not sufficient to preserve one's language and literature. The Arabic language which is spoken from the
days of Prophet Noah (peace be on him) and which was also spoken by the Prophet Hud (peace be on him) was handed down to the coming generations orally, passing through the many stages of its development. The answer to this question has not been found satisfactorily in my investigation on the basis of historical evidences. However, the scientific nature of Arabic language has guided me to understand the problem.

In order to appreciate the historical and social phenomenon which is considered the classical heritage of Islam it is necessary to study the history of the period which contributed most to the development of Arabic prose. It was after the elimination of the Umayyed dynasty that a new regime came into being. They were Abbasids who proved their worth after occupying the office of the Caliphate of Islam. They were the most enlightened rulers who gave a new social and cultural outlook to the world. This is called the golden period of Islam. The period of Al Mansoor, Al Mehdi, Haroon al Rashid, Al Mamun and others of this dynasty will always be remembered as the period of culture and civilization. The Umayyad period can be rightly called the period of conquests while the Abbasids established their reputation as torch-bearers of Islamic sciences and culture. They were the people who involved different cultures to be assimilated into one bringing the non-Arabs also in their fold. Justice Amir Ali pays tribute to the dynasty in the following words:

No doubt the first nine rulers of this house with one exception were men of extraordinary ability. They were all politicians of a superior type who were denoted to the advancement of the public welfare.

This period is the golden period of Islam in which Muslim Empire reached its height of glory in respect of its wealth, culture, civilization and
sovereignty and many Islamic sciences were developed and many other sciences of foreign origin made their entry into Arabic.

Al Saffah was the first ruler of the dynasty but the real founder was his brother Abu Jafar Al Mansoor who ruled for twenty two years and laid the foundation of this great empire. He patronised men of letters and sciences. It was during his reign that translation work from Persian, Greek, Sanskrit and Suryani languages into Arabic had started. Hroon Al Rashid who was himself an accomplished scholar and man of sciences gave new impetus to the promotion of learning in a big way and his worthy son Caliph Mamoon Al Rashid did not leave any stone unturned in advancing the cause of sciences. Apart from the science of Hadith and Fiqh which flourished during this period in particular other secular sciences were also not neglected. Arabic language became popular even among the people whose mother tongue was other than Arabic, Baghdad, Basra, Ra, Kufa, Qaurwan, Maru, Bukhara developed into great centres of learning. This is the period in which the work of collection of the Hadith was undertaken in all its seriousness. The following are the learned scholar of Hadith whose great contribution to this science has been recognised by all. They are Imam Shafi, Imam Bukhara, Imam Muslim, Abu Dawood, Iba Maja.

For the non-Arabs to read the Quran correctly rules of Arabic language were made known and schools of grammar came into being of which Kufa school and Basera school were recognised as the supreme authority on the subject. Khalil bin Ahmad gave a lead in this direction and others followed him. I have also to mention Abul Abbas al Mubarrad here whose authority as a grammarian has been recognised by all.

Regarding the science of Islamic jurisprudence it goes to the credit of this period only that the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence had been
firmly established. Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Imam Shafee, Imam Hambal are four pillars of Islamic jurisprudence on which this edifice stands to this day even after about twelve hundred years of this period. They are the shining stars of learning who guide the followers of Islam to this day. Regarding the science of history only the beginning was made in this direction but it remained restricted to selected themes. The most prominent biographer of this period is Ibn Sad who is the author of Tabaqat in which he recorded the events of the life of the Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H), his companions (may God be pleased with them) and those who followed them.

Ibn Ishaq, waqidi, Kalbi are the prominent historians of this period whose contribution to the science of history is most valuable. However, the prominent amongst them is Muhammad Bin Jarir Tabari. Other great historian who followed them immediately like Baladari and Masoodi do not belong to this period. Regarding the study of the Quran during this period, Ijaz al Quran of Muhammad Yazid Al Wasti is a valuable addition. Muhammad Bin Musa Khawarzmi is also a renowned mathematician and astronomer whose contribution to these sciences is very valuable. Jabir Bin Hayyan is another personality of the period who wrote many books on the science of chemistry. In medicine Muhammad Bin Zakaria Razi occupies very high place in the history of Islam. He wrote a number of books on the science which are translated into many European languages.

The Abbasid state was no doubt Islamic but music was patronised by many and the art of photography which may be called the art of portraiture or painting the picture was also popular among one section of the society.
This is, in fact, a brief account of the contribution of this period to different sciences which produced enormous prose literature with all the technical terms required for the purpose. During this period Arabic Language was adopted by not only the elite section of the society but by the majority of the people living in the Muslim world. What has been described above, pertains to the general literature embracing every phase of human intellect. The fertility of the Muslim mind of this period will be better judged in their literary prose which they have contributed and for which a separate chapter has been devoted. Here we have only mentioned some of the prominent such prose writers who will ever remain the shining stars of this art of writing They are:

1. Abdullah Bin Al Muqaffa
2. Jahiz
3. Abn Qutaibah
4. Sahl Bin Haroon
5. Fadl Bin sahl
6. Ahmad Bin Yusuf
7. Amar Bin Masadah

Abdullah Abn Al Muqaffah belongs to the early period of Abbasid rule. A prose writer he has his own place. He is both, a translater and a literary prose writer but in his translation also he assumes the role of an original writer with simple sentences and natural style of expression. His book Kalila Wa Dima is a living prove of his intellectual excellence and the fertility of his mind. His work reflects his inner character also with a high sense of moral values. His love for humanity is exhibited in many of his acts of generosity.
In spite of his many good qualities he is accused of being irreligious by some of his enemies. No doubt there are others who admire him for his moral values. Examining the arguments of both the sides with an open mind one comes to the conclusion that he was the victim of jealousy, or political rivalry. It is unfortunate that the literary world should lose such a towering personality who had no equal in his very high intellectual attainments. His assassination was nothing but an act of cruelty.

The prose works of Ibn Al Muqaffa are divided into two parts. One part is concerned with his translation works some of which are mentioned below:

1. **Kalika Wa Dimna**
   - It is a translation from Persian into Arabic. It is said that the original book was Panch Tatar of India which was translated into Persian (Palvi) during the reign of Kisra Naw Sherwan.
   - In fact the Persian version of the book contained additions by the translator which were not found in the original book. Same is the case with Kalika Wa Dimna in which some portions have been written by Ibn Al Muqaffa himself.

2. **Siyara Al Maluk** is also his translation work into Arabic which is the history of non-Arab kings.

3. **Kitaba Al Rasum** is the Arabic version of the Persian book which describes the political, social and cultural traditions and laws of governing the society.

4. **Kitabu -Al-Taj fi Serati Nawsherwan** is the biography of Nawsherwan.

5. **Kitabu - Bikar** contains historical stories.
The following is the list of his original works in Arabic:

1. Al- Adaba Al - Saghire.
2. Al - Adabu - Al - Kabir fi Taati - I- Muluk
3. Rasail
4. Rislatu - Al - Sahaba
5. Hikamul Muqaffah


Al - Jahiz. is another name in the history of the development of Arabic literary prose who gave a lead in using the Arabic prose for literary purpose also instead of confining it official correspondence and letter writing. He belongs to that group of talented literary prose writers whose fertility of mind provided new height of excellence to literary Arabic prose and gave new beauty to the art of writing in this particular field.

No doubt his contribution to prose literature is immense but a major portion of his works is not available: Some of his known works which have come down to us are mentioned here:

1. Kitabu - Al - Bayan Wa Al - Tabyeen( ) It is the last of his literary contributions which discusses various literary problems.

2. Kitabu - Al - Haiwan( ) is his another work it was written after Kitabu - Bayan Wa - Al - Tabyeen. In this book he has provided very useful information about the animals. He has discussed other topics also in this book, for example he has provided useful information about many religions of the world including Islam.
Kitabu - Al - Bukhla is his another famous book in which he discusses different kinds of miserly people in the society. In this category he has included the enlightened section of the society also such as philosophers, poets, historians, writers and men of learning. He treats stinginess as a disease which has no cure.

Kitabu - Nazmi - Al - Quran is his another important contribution which is the first book of great merit on the subject. The lead given by Jahiz in presenting the Holy Quran as the miracle of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him) and trying to prove it logically is wonderful. It is an ample proof of his firm belief and faith in the Holy Book as the Book of God.

His book Kitabu - Al - Bayan Wa - Al- Tabyeen is regarded as one of the four basic wants which have no equal in Arabic literary prose book.

In the words of the French Orientalist: "Strictly speaking Aljahiz was the ancestor of that kind of literature which is usually styled as Adab.

Ibn Qutaibah is another name in the history of Arabic literature of conjure with.. He was born in the year 213 A.H. during the reign of Al Mammon. Asmai, Abu Qbaida, Abu Zaid, Abu Hatim and other men of learning are his teachers and he profitted by their lectures appreciably. He established his reputation in the world of learning. For sometimes he worked as Qazi of Dinm and then he shifted to the profession of teaching. He contributed to different sciences like history, criticism and religious branches of learning in a big way.
Ibn Qutaibah was polite in his behaviour and friendly in his manners. He was honest in expressing his thoughts. He supported only what he felt was right. However, there are people who have questioned his honesty as a believer and they have accused him of his inclination towards karamia. But if we examine Ibn Qutaiba's character in the light of his writings and the religious environment of those days and compare him as a man of faith with others of his status we come to the conclusion that he was a man of strong character. For example, Jahiz was a strong supporter of Muatizila which he was a staunch supporter of Ahle - Sunnah. Ibn Qutaiba practised what he professed and all his writings support our opinion about his views and character.

Ibn Qutaibah is the most important personality of the third century Hijri in the field of learning. He was a theologian, a philosopher and a historian. His famous book Adabul Katib (اَدَابُ الْكَتِبِ) is considered as one of the four pillars of Arabic language and literature. This book is divided into four parts, which are:

1. Kitabu - Al - Marifah
2. Kitabu Taqweem Al - Lisen
3. Kitabu Taq Weema - Al Yad
4. Kitabu - Al Abuiyyah

Kitabu - Al Abuiyyah is an important work which is a guide for writers, teachers and men of learning. This book discusses almost all topics about which a writer has to be acquainted. This book is in fact an encyclopaedia for them. The usefulness of this book is not confined to a limited period. It will continue for all time to come.
My work is divided into five chapters excluding the introduction. The first chapter discusses the historical significance of Arab conquests beginning from the days of the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of God be on him) covering the period of the first four caliphs of Islam and the Umaayad rule when new era of Arab conquests begins. With the downfall of Umayyad dynasty and the establishment of the Abbasid rule the emphasis shifted to the expansion of learning and culture. The second chapter is devoted to the history of the development of Arabic literary prose through ages. It also gives a brief account of the prose literature during the pre-Islamic, the early Islamic and the Umayyad periods. The third chapter is concerned with the development of Arabic prose during the early Abbasid rule in respect of different branches of learning. It is revolutionary period with regard to the expansion of learning which is called a golden period of Islam in which the rulers were personally involved. The fourth chapter is a general survey of the development of public literary during the early Abbasid period. It is an indepth study of the literary prose literature with regard to its literary style and other beauties of the language. The fifth chapter is a detailed study of the Arabic literary prose in which almost all prominent literary prose writers of the two centuries of the Abbasid rule have been discussed with critical examination of their works.

A useful bibliography is appended to the work.

I may mention here that I have not included Spain in my study so as to describe its role in the development of Arabic literary prose during this period which may appear as an unjustifiable omission. I admit that this is a deliberate omission because I am conscious of my limitations as a research
scholar in this regard in terms of delicacy of the subject. However, I believe this is in itself an important subject of study and there is scope for someone else to work on it independently. It may not be out of place to mention some of the constraints under which I started my work I waded through a vast material relating to my subject which required hard labour and patience. When I was satisfied that the necessary information has been obtained I shifted the same and sat down to write every chapter carefully so that all important informations so collected are included in the work. This is, indeed, the result of my hard labour. It is, however, for others to judge the merit of my work.