CHAPTER - I

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
(1) Significance of Language and Literature :

(a) Language :

Language is a method of exchanging ideas and expressions among a group of people or between two individuals with the help of sounds and gestures. It is used for communicating each others feelings with the help of sounds understood by each other. The animals and other creatures are also capable of producing sounds of different types to express their feelings to some extent. But other creatures do not have the same extent of intellect like human being for communicating their feelings among themselves. As such, human being is supposed to be the noblest creature in the world.

Naturally, man is a social being and lives in a society, where language is only medium of communication to interact between each other. It is held either by spoken or written form, while the latter is an attempt to represent the former by visual symbols. To exchange human ideas, language depends upon three elements namely message, source or sender and receiver. Here sender and receiver are commonly human individuals. In regard to language, Crystal says: Language is a “vocal system of human communication.”

It has been observed that different linguists have defined language in different ways as regards their self-mode of expressions and a few definitions have been undertaken here to mention as follows:

1) Henry Sweet, an English phonetician and distinguished linguist says: “Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds
combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts.”  

2) The U.S. linguists, Bornard Bloch and George L. Trager formulated out line of language in such a way: “A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group co-operates.” In this definition, two things like thought and arbitration have been emphasized in view of communicating each other among a homogeneous group of people.  

3) A.S. Diamond states: “Language is an embodiment of all the advances in thought, of all our human ancestors and a diary of their day to day thoughts.”  

4) M. Schlanch speaks of language that it is “a fundamental means of preserving, transmitting and continuously enriching the achievements of human culture.”  

5) A comprehensive definition has been given in the Standard Dictionary of English Language that language is “the expression and communication of emotions or ideas between human beings by means of speech and hearing, the sounds spoken or heard being systematized and confirmed by usage among a group of people over a period of time.”  

6) Dr. A. Haqq, a distinguished scholar defines the term language (al-lugha) in Arabic: "اللغة وسيلة الاتصال بين افراد البشر في شكل اصوات ومنظمة، وهي الاسم الفردية التي يتميز بها الجنس البشري عن الحيوانات الأخرى فيوصف بها الإنسان بأنه حيوان ناطق." (Language is a medium of communication among human individuals in a form of arranged sounds and this unique characteristic of language distinguishes human beings from other animals. So, man is called as rational being.)  

7) The term al-lugha (language) has been defined by M.R. al-Hasani, a distinguished scholar of Indian lores, in such a way:

ا تطلق كلمة اللغة على مفردات الألفاظ والكلمات ويفترض علمهما على معانيها المفردة ومبانيها المتغيرة -
The word 'language' is considered over the terms of words and speeches while individual meanings and different forms are restricted by its usage.

8) George A. Mullar states: "A language is a set of symbolic conventions, adopted by a social group for the purpose of communicating ideas, expressing emotions, enlisting co-operation and providing entertainment."

From the above mentioned discussion, an inference on language may be drawn as follows:

(i) A language is a set of sequences of words.
(ii) It is the set of skills that enables a person to utter and comprehend the sequences of words.
(iii) It is a set of social conventions for using the skills in uttering the sequences of words in order to attain particular ends.

(b) Literature:

Literature gives a full picture of human society by means of literary elements like prose and poetry, drama and novel, fiction and essays covering all sorts of written documents, which imparts every type of information in various mode of expressions. The socio-cultural scenario of a society or a nation is reflected in the contents of literature. So, literature plays an important role like the back-bone of a nation.

The term literature is called in Arabic "adab" and its usage, as synonym of literature, has been started from AD 9th century. It is significant to note that although the usage of this term was in vogue since Jahiliyya period, but it was used in the meaning other than literature, of which testimony appeared in the verse of Tarafa ibn al-‘Abd (d. 564 A.D.) as follows:

[ In the season of winter i.e. usually a famine time, we invite the people of our tribe in general who are cordially invited for banquet, you would not find (them) ]
As indicated above, the term “adab” linguistically means “an invitation to banquet” (الدعوة إلى الولائم) and this implication has been clarified in a tradition, reported by Ibn Mas‘ud:

[Verily this Qur‘an is an entertainment (i.e. literature) of Allah in the earth, so learn from its festivity.] The term ‘maduba’ is interpreted by some scholars as a meal prepared for invitees and it has been derived from adab (a-d-b). It has been observed that the Arab lexicographer signifies the word ‘Adab’ as culture and refinement and in the course of later times, they entitled all the literary works of prose and poetry, accepted by hearts and deemed to be delicate and aesthetic, as ‘Adab’.8

The term ‘adab’ lexically means “habit, hereditary norm of conduct and custom” and its plural âdâb is supposed to be formed from dab (د أب). In this connection, Professor Nallino opines that the term ‘Adab’ has been derived from dab (in singular number) means ‘habit’. According to major usage, dab keeps plural as âdâb (آد اب) but the Arab used to apply Adab (آد اب) against the sense of literature and âdâb as its plural, since they are said to have been forgotten its earlier origin singular term dab.9

Literature consists of human insight and art of speech. It is the combination of words made by poets, orators and writers who contain minute imaginations as well as discreet meanings in their literary elements of works in view of giving instructions to the human souls with delicate senses and feelings and to teach them language.

Literature grows directly out of life under some impulses which give birth to various forms of literary expression. Generally it expresses the thoughts and feelings of writer dealing with the great drama of human life and action. As such, William Henry Hudson defines language as “it is a vital record
of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those for all of us.\textsuperscript{10}

From the point of verbal expressions, literature has been divided into two kinds: (i) imaginative, or fictional works having demands of artistic value, and (ii) certain non-fictional works of exalted artistic quality. Generally literature is supposed in written documents, but in some specific sense, it may be oral.

Looking at the aforementioned discussion, we can assume that imaginative literature comprises poetry, legends and folk-tales, drama, short stories and novels. Literary non-fictional may include almost any writing except the strictly technical. Religious scriptures - such as the Qur'\textsuperscript{an}, the Bible and the Vedas are of traditional genus of literature. In addition to these, many essays, biographies, histories, scientific works and philosophical writings have artistic qualities that they come to be known as literary genre.

Therefore, it reveals from the definitions developed by different authors, writers and distinguished scholars that literature should carry the following four components:

1) It should provide the readers with entertainment.
2) It should be free from dull environment or in other words, it should have some moral or spiritual values, which may be expressed or implied in nature.
3) It should possess the capacity to acquaint the readers with social forces which motivate men.
4) It should systematise human experiences imparting aesthetic pleasure to the readers thereby.

\textbf{Semitic Language:}

It is known from a narration of Torah that the German linguist A. L. Schlozer firstly gave name to the languages, spoken by most of the descendants of Shem or Sam ibn Noah as Semitic in 1781 A.D. They were living
in Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine, where, from they spread into Ethiopia and later into Egypt and Northern Africa from the time of the 1st millennium B.C. Generally the descendants of Shem were known as Semite, but this term was firstly used by Johann Gottfried Eichhorn in 1787 A.D. This name is now applied primarily to a group of people - past and present, speaking closely related languages. It is assumed that these languages were from an autonomous linguistic family, but all the scholars are of the opinion that they are only one of the two branches constituting the Semitic-Hamitic linguistic family. The Semitic languages go back to a "Proto-Semitic" language, the general structure of which can be derived from the historically attested features of the various Semitic languages. In all probability, proto-Semitic was at no time a unified language, but had dialectal variants. No single Semitic language can be said to be the representative of the proto-Semitic type. In phonology one language may come the closest to the proto-Semitic type whereas for certain morphological features other languages may be considered representatives of it. 

Since the Semitic languages go back to a common origin the question of the location of the speakers of this proto-Semitic language is of importance. Various origines have been so considered as Kurdistan, Mesopotamia, Northern Syria, Arabia and Africa. No definite answer can be given to this question. The likeliest regions are those of Arabia and Mesopotamia. Originally Semitic language was confined to the Near East but gradually spread to Africa and then throughout North Africa. It belongs to two other major groups and keeps many smaller affinity among all other groups. It is significant to note that the Semitic languages have been embraced by the cultured prominent people of ancient times along with the people of the Bible and latter on, they have not lagged behind to accept the modern Arabic and Hebrew. 

The position of Semitic languages have been determined to be the best developed and the best known languages after the Indo-European. In ancient
days the Semitic family was the most important one in the linguistic families of the world, because the people with the greatest political power in those days were the speakers of Semitic languages. It appears that the various Semitic languages have developed religious literatures of profound significance in the history of the world. Another significant credit is that the Semitic languages have given the alphabet and the art of writing to most of the people of the world.

Classification of Semitic Languages:

The Semitic languages have been primarily classified as the North Semitic and the South Semitic. Again the North Semitic is divided into North-East Semitic with Akkadian as its only representative and North-West Semitic which includes Canaanite (Hebrew, Moabite, Phoenecian), Ugaritic, Amorite and Aramaic. South Semitic is divided into South-East Semitic including South Arabia and Ethiopic and into South-West Semitic with Arabia as its representative. Of these languages, Arabic, Modern South Arabic, Hebrew, Ethiopic and Aramaic are spoken to specific ones. It is to be mentioned here that nearly all the Semitic languages continued to be employed as literary languages long after they had ceased to be spoken.

According to some distinguished scholars, the Semitic languages have been divided into five main groups, as Akkadian, Canaanite, Aramaic, Arabic and Abyssinian. Their interrelations are found so close that no one can be regarded as the parent language. To some extent, Arabic seems to represent the purest Semitic as it is less affected by foreign elements. But, it appears that the traces of Hebrew and Assyrian forms were fallen in Arabic.

To acquaint with the five main groups of the Semitic languages, an attempt has been made here to discuss each of them briefly as follows.

(1) Akkadian:

The Eastern branch of Semitic languages includes Akkadian, the language of the Assyro-Babylonians that was spoken in Mesopotamia.
from 3000 BC to 400 BC. There were two more dialects named Babylonian and Assyrian, while the former was used as a literary language under the Persian and Greek rulers of Babylonia and the later, as a spoken dialect, appeared through inscriptions from about 1800 BC to shortly before the fall of Ninevah in 606 BC. It is further reported that Akkadians were contemporaries of the Sumerians, but in later period, the former overpowered the latter.

(2) Canaanite:

In ancient time, Palestine, Phoenicia and part of Syria were called as Canaan and there appeared a few offshoots of Semitic languages namely Hebrew, Phoenician, Punic, Moabite and Ugaritic, so all those languages were known together as Canaanite. From 10th century BC to the present, Hebrew has been attested to be the language of Judaism and Old Testament Bible. Israel and nearby regions were the original domain of the language of Hebrew. It has been further reported that Hebrew language was originally spoken in Palestine from 13th century BC to the 2nd century AD and later spread all over the world as a written language. Moabite was the language of Biblical Hebrew, but it died out long ago. Ugaritic, a dead language, was in vogue in the city of Ugaritic up to the 14th century BC. Phoenician cum Punic was spoken in Phoenicia, Mediterranean islands and North Africa from the 2nd millennium BC to the 1st millennium AD.

(3) Aramaic:

Aramaic belongs to the northern central Semitic languages. Originally it was the dialect of those Semitic invaders of Palestine and Syria, who had gone further north and domiciled in the Aram or highlands. As a matter of fact, they had been the Pre-Israelite immigrants who were pressed northwards by the later comers. After the decline of Akkadian, Aramaic become the native tongue of Jesus Christ and the language of Jewish Talmud. As one of the eastern branches
of Aramaic, Syriac language was used to transmit early Christian culture up to the 13th century. It is worth mentioning that the eastern Aramaic is still spoken by those Jacobite and Nestorian Christians as well as by those Jews from the same region who have immigrated to Israel. Mandic, a language of the gnostic sect, is still spoken in the region.20

In fact, the existence of Old Aramaic found in Syria and Mesopotamia from the 14th century BC up to the middle of the 15th century AD. Most of the Aramaic dialects gave way to Arabic beginning with the 7th century AD. The new stage of Northern Central Semitic, is represented by New West Aramaic, or Ma'lula in Syria, with small number of speakers and New Syriac or "Assyrian" in Iraq, Turkey, Iran, the Soviet Union and the United States, with about 200,000 speakers.21

4) Abyssinian:

The southern Semitic branch includes Abyssinian, properly known as Ethiopic, the ancient language of Abyssinia. In fact, Ethiopian language comprises of northern and southern branches. The northern group comprises of Geez, Tigrinya and Tigre. Particularly Geez was the language of civilization centering on Aksum. First attested in inscriptions from the 4th century AD., it died out as a spoken language in the 9th century but continued to be used as a literary and liturgical language. Tigrinya and Tigre are the modern spoken dialects. The south Ethiopian group comprises of Amharic, Harari and Gurage. Harari, the language of the Muslim city of Harar and East Gurage, is found to be nearly extinct. The Gurage cluster of languages appears in south and east of Addis Ababa. Amharic is found today as the standard literary dialect. It has been the language of the ruling classes in Abyssinia since 1270 AD. It has influenced all other dialects of Abyssinia.22

5) Arabic:

Arabic, originally spoken in Arabia, belongs to the Semitic group
of languages. Classical or literary, Arabic is now found from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean and has been attested from the 5th century BC to the present time. Modern Arabic dialects are spoken all over northern Africa, in the Arabian peninsula, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq and some districts of Turkey, Iran and the Soviet Union.  

It is worth mentioning that under Arabic may be included ancient or Classical Arabic, its descendant, modern Arabic and southern Arabic, often improperly called Hymiaritic, comprising the closely related dialects of Sabaean and Minaean. It has been observed that printed modern Arabic is substantially the same wherever found and does not differ greatly from the classical language or the language of the Qur’an. The spoken language is divided into many dialects, of which the most important are those of Syria, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Tunis, Malta, and Oman and Zanzibar. Sabaean and Minaean are found in inscriptions, chiefly in southern Arabia. The Mahri and the Socotri are known with a little mark among the Modern representatives of Arabic dialects. 

As a literary language, Arabic dates back to the 7th century AD and it was adopted by most of the peoples conquered and converted by Muslim Arabs. It appears from the contemporary world of languages that a modernized version of Classical Arabic as well as modern literary Arabic, is used in education, literature and mass communication with an international ranking.  

**Arabic as one of the Semitic Language:**  

It is an established fact that Arabic is one of the branches of the Semitic language and it is pertinent here to investigate into the origin of Semitic language and other languages of this family along with an indepth study of Arabic language including its origin, growth and development at different periods and its present position in the world. 

It appears from the comparative philological study that Arabic belongs to the Semitic family of languages and also keeps a wider relation with
Hamitic language family. Specifically Arabic belongs to the South Semitic or South-west Semitic branch and it includes two more sub-groups namely (a) South Arabians (comprising ancient Sabaean, Minaean, Qatabanian, Hadramitic etc. in Yaman and southern Hadramawt and the language of island of Sokotra) and (b) Ethiopian (comprising ancient Ethiopic or Ge'ez, modern Tigre, Tigrinya, Amharic, Harari, Gurage etc.).

It is worth mentioning that Arabic shares with North West Semitic (Hebrew, Ugaritic, Aramaic) certain traits not found in South Arabic and Ethiopic. It has been further observed that some forms of Arabic had closer connection with North West Semitic. Old Arabic had, like Hebrew, a definite article ħa with doubling of the following consonant. Among the early dialects, the Tayyi relative pronoun ɗhū ( đu) corresponds to poetical Hebrew zū, which the ɗhi ( đu) of the western dialects has its equivalent in older Aramaic; the western dialects also sounded long ā as ū, like Canaanite and western Syriac and changed iya to ā, like Hebrew. Apart from such variations in Semitic dialects it appears that the Eastern dialects had i-prefixes with the a-imperfect, like Canaanite and western Syriac.

Looking at the existence of Arabic in the realm of Semitic dialects, it may be mentioned that Arabic as a whole stands between south Semitic and North West Semitic having contacts with both of them. There existed perhaps dialects intermediate between North West Semitic and Arabic.

Arabic is the richest in Semitic form and its knowledge is essential for Semitic philology. When the Arabs spread over the whole peninsula, they came in contact with different people and acquainted with their different dialects. Thus, Arabic language split up into various modern dialects. In the long run, Arabic came in contact with other culture of the Semitic family. On the other hand, to look at the overall picture of the Semitic languages, a table has been arranged in the following page with their geographical locations and places.
### Semitic Languages

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<td>Old Hebrew - Literary Hebrew (Hakim) Modern Hebrew</td>
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<td>West Aramaic Palmyrene Galilean Nabatean Jewish Aramaic Modern Aramaic (Ma'ālūla) Palestinian Samaritan</td>
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hand, with entrance of foreign culture, Greek culture also came to the Arabs through Syria and Iranian culture through Mesopotamia and Yaman. In spite of intercourse of foreign cultures with Arabian people and their language, Arabic was found preserved along with its essential Semitic purity and richness. Because, the Holy Qur’an made a great influence over the Arabic language to preserve its purity intact. Under such circumstances, Arabic was less affected by foreign influences than any other branches of Semitic language.27

As one of the branches of the Semitic language, Arabic shares the common characteristics of the family and they are as follows:

1) The preponderance of roots composed of three consonants.
2) Adaptation of roots of two or four consonants to the triconsonantal structure.
3) The use of inner vowel changes to distinguish nominal and verbal stems and forms.
4) A great similarity of Arabic language lies with other Semitic languages in their construction.
5) The division of the verb into two main tenses or ‘aspects’, expressing primarily completed and incomplete action.
6) The uniformity of pronominal suffixes attached to nouns and verbs.
7) Arabic and other Semitic group of languages bear large number of common elements in vocabularies.

Above all, it is a striking point that among all the features of common characteristics of Semitic group of languages, Arabic has followed independent lines of development, partly by preserving and emphasizing primitive Semitic structure, but more specially by expanding and multiplying forms by processes of analogy and by the elaboration of grammatical and syntactical refinements.28

Apart from foregoing discussion, it may be stated here that Arabic bears some distinctive features which give sufficient evidences of its Semitic
origin and they are mentioned below:

(a) **Phonetics:**

Among Semitic languages, Arabic together with old South Arabian, preserved the phonetic system of the Semitic language with its varieties of guttural, velars, dentals and sibilants. In addition to this, Arabic also preservesthe primitive vocalic system in a relatively pure state.

(b) **Morphology:**

In matters of morphology, Arabic bears the same characteristics as Semitic belonged. In common also with South Arabian, Arabic shows a considerable expansion of the triliteral verbal and nominal structure. In the verbs, besides the common simple, intensive and causative stems, it evolved a conative by means of an infixed a (qātala), gave to each a regular middle or reflexive form by means of a prefixed or infixed 't' (c). Furthermore, it had a special conjugation for verbs denoting colours and the like. In the noun, its outstanding characteristics is the ‘broken plural’, originally a collective form by internal vowel-change (e.g. *malik*, ‘king’, plural *mulūk*). Classical Arabic indeed developed broken plurals in such luxuriant superfluity that many nouns boast half a dozen or more. It also introduced new vocalic refinements, such as the formation of proper passives for each verbal stem by vocalic changes. More important still was the invention or systematization of vocalic inflexion, both in the verb and in the noun, permitting in the former the distinction of subjunctive and indicative, and in the latter that of nominative, accusative and genitive.

(c) **Syntax:**

This differentiation of case and mood made it possible for Arabic to attain to a much more flexible and delicate mechanism of expression than is found in the other Semitic languages. In place of staccato co-ordination of short phrases there is a modulated flow of speech, precisely and organically graded with such capacity for expressing shades of meaning as fitted Arabic later to
become a medium of philosophical thought. To this there contributed also
the logical arrangement of words in the sentence and another morphological
invention, the formation of abstract nouns (gerunds) from verbal roots, which
permitted the condensation and generalization of thought and gave a
remarkable power of compression in rhetoric and poetry.

(d) Vocabulary:

The result of all these developments was to endow Arabic with
a vocabulary of exceptional richness. Although synonyms abound, the variety
of verbal and nominal forms permitted an almost infinite degree of discrimi-
nation and power of expansion to express new concepts. A further remarkable
feature of the vocabulary is that, with all its richness, it remained relatively
free from admixture. The recognizable loan words in classical Arabic are
restricted to certain limited categories, although no doubt many foreign
words were incorporated and adjusted to Arabic structure from the earliest
times, as happened again in the middle ages and still goes on.\textsuperscript{29}

In addition to foregoing discussion, it may be concluded here
that Arabic, although its literature has been attested since the 5th century
A.D., is closest to original Semitic amongst all other Semitic languages. In
this regard, most of the scholars, after doing a comparative study on the
Semitic languages, are of the opinion that Arabic has preserved the major
chief characteristics of the Semitic languages.

Division of Arabic Language:

As a written language, Arabic has been classified into two
categories: Classical Arabic and Modern Arabic. Here an attempt has been made
to focus on both the divisions of Arabic language as follows:

(a) Classical Arabic:

It is the language of the Holy Qur’\(\text{\textacuted}'\)\(\text{\textacuted}n\) and Classical literature
The classical Arabic is regarded as an ideal and standard language anywhere
in the Arab world. Because, well educated persons use this class of prestigious language in all formal occasions for better and common understanding in the Arab world. It bears common application of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. It differs from the Modern Standard Arabic in style and vocabulary and in some archaic morphemes of the later.

It is acknowledged by some scholars that the appearance of Classical Arabic has been noticed first since the 3rd century AD and the good picture of its development has been evolved since the 6th century AD. It has been developed by some basic sources of Arabic language and its elements have been mentioned below:

1. Poetry (pre-Islamic and early Islamic)
2. The Holy Qur’ân
3. The Prpophetic Traditions (al-Hadith including Sirah and maghazi literature)
4. Ayyâm al-’Arab
5. Papyri (ancient writing material / manuscript written on it).

The inception of Arabic literature took place with Classical Arabic. Since a century and a half before the rise of Islam, it has been used by Arabic writing peoples for all their literary productions. Its originality has been viewed in the poetical composition of the Arabian tribes in the pre-Islamic days including the Quraysh to which Muhammad (PBUH) belonged. But it was standardized by the literary merits of the Holy Qur’ân. Because, the Holy Qur’ân was the first, and has ever remained, the model prose work in Arabic. Its composition acquired sanctity and became unrivalled in the realm of Arabic language and literature. This character of the Qur’ân was only the miracle (i’jâz) claimed by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It has been observed that every Arabic writer even today strives to imitate the flowery and rhetorical language of the Holy Qur’ân. As a matter of fact, its rhymed prose has set the standard and established the norm for the language
of Classical Arabic and it has been accepted whole heartedly by the people of the Arab world. Therefore, nobody has difficulty in understanding the written language of Classical Arabic. But the spoken dialects of Arabic language appeared to differ from regions to regions.\textsuperscript{31}

Furthermore, it has been observed that Classical Arabic has reached its extreme point of development with its grammar, syntax, vocabulary and literary usages after carrying out a systematic research. The relevance of Classical Arabic is unique one in the realm of Arabic language and literature for its continuous and uninterrupted existence from the beginning and down to the present time.\textsuperscript{32}

The Classical Arabic is not only the literary form used by all Arabic writing peoples, but also the religious language of all Muslims no matter what their native tongue may be. It is the language in which the Tatar of Russia, the Turkoman of central Asia, the Muslim of India or China, the Turk of the Balkans, the Albanian, the Moro of the Philippines, says his prayer five times a day, chants the Holy \textit{Qur'an} and listens to the muezzin's call to prayer. Apart from serving as a medium for expressing and transmitting Islamic culture, Classical Arabic served for centuries in the Middle Ages as a universal culture carrier. It received and passed on the main treasurers of Greek science, philosophy and lore, as well as some of the best Indian and Persian thought, to later generations in the East and the West.\textsuperscript{33}

(b) \textbf{Modern Arabic}:

Modern Standard Arabic is adapted form of Classical Arabic. It is the Universal language of the Arabic speaking world which is understood by all Arabic speakers. It is the language of the vast majority of written material and of films, TV shows, lectures etc. In fact, Modern literary Arabic has been developed by press, radio and modern subjects in general. Although its grammatical structure is that of the Classical Arabic.
its syntax occasionally shows variations. Its vocabularies have been expanded to meet the modern needs and they are developed in two ways: (a) by the use of Arabic roots and (b) by borrowing words from other languages e.g. the word (فيلم) ‘film’ has been borrowed and given its plural as (أفلام) ‘afilm’.34

To speak clearly, Modern Arabic marks with the intrusion of Europe into the range of vision of the Arab world which began with Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt in 1798. During the reign of Muhammad Ali, the ruler of Egypt, innumerable elements of Western civilization were adopted which had a far reaching affects on Arabic written language. Because he had a reformatory programme to take over the western achievement and it was focused on France that remained as a model everywhere until after the first World War. As a result, there appeared an atmosphere to send student missions to study in France, established schools in the European lines and set up an Arabic press, and, above all, numerous European books were translated into Arabic with a view to experiencing foreign thoughts, and ideas. In brief, all the socio-educational measures were undertaken first in Egypt, which paved the way to the development of Modern Arabic language.35

It is a notable factor that from the early part of the 19th century, new needs and problems forced a sharp re-adjustment on Arabic language to create a conducive atmosphere for its common approach and easy understanding. Beginning with a revival of Classical studies, especially in Lebanon, and the production of more convenient text books and dictionaries to meet the expanding range of education, the modern Arabic renaissance moved steadily towards the creation of a new koine, based upon the Classical tongue yet adapted to the new purposes and instruments of modern life. Its impirical medium was the periodical press which began to be developed in the 1860s and 1870s. It has been observed that the political
connexion with the Ottoman empire assisted the movement, since Turkish writers too, faced with the same problems, drew greatly upon Arabic roots. to coin new terms and thses were taken over into Arabic as well. It appears from the earlier stage of Modern Arabic that the new literary dialect was an impoverished representation of classical usages heavily hampered with imported words; turned their backs on the unpalatable mixture and experimented with literary composition in the colloquial speech. But they found little support, and by the beginning of the 20th century modern literary Arabic was not only acquiring flexibility and ease, but regaining some of the elegance of classical style. The school of Eyptian writers has done much to promote these tendencies; and the wide circulation of their books and magazines in every part of Arabic world. It has been observed that the modern journalist has followed the medieval philologist and tried to preserve the substantial identity of the written language in all Arab countries. But the mission of philologist is not ended but only changed. The high standard classical language is irrecoverable; but the new literary tongue still abounds in westernisms. To establish uniform systems of technical terminology and guide the adaptation of classical usage to modern needs is one of the most urgent problems with which Arabic writers and educationalists had to face. To serve these purposes an International Arabic Academy was set up at Cairo in 1934 by journalists, men of letters, teachers and philologists respectively 30.

It appears from the practical usage of Arabic language that Modern Arabic could not be escaped from the influence of European phraseology. Because the infiltration of English and French phraseology appeared being translated into Arabic in the language of daily communication (press and radio) and of writers with little. This development is an inevitable
In the grammatical aspect of Modern Arabic, the written language has remained untouched by the sound change, and the Morphology (‘ilm al-sarf) has remained constant from the earliest times till the present day. Likewise, the same condition is also found in the case of the Syntax (‘ilm al-nahw) at least in its basic features.

In vocabulary, a considerable basic stock has remained alive since the earliest times. The words created after Classical Arabic including those from the later Middle Ages, have made a further element of the Modern vocabulary.37

We find a little difference between Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic. The former was developed in medieval period and the latter in the last part of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, it has been observed that the popularity of Modern Arabic language has been enriched with the process of Arabicism that has incorporated a large number phraseologies into Arabic vocabulary from other languages. As and when the Arab philologists find no comprehensive terms against some modern terminologies, they take the opportunity of ta‘rib to incorporate such vocabularies which are familiar with major usage of people.

**Arabic Language:**

Arabic (عربي, an adjective singular masculine and عربي singular faminine and عرب plural) is the language of Arabs and lexically known as al-lughatu l-‘arabiyya (اللغة العربية); lisānu l-‘arab (اللغة العربية); lughatu l-‘arab (لغة العرب) etc. means the language of the ancient Arabs as well as the Classical language, developed by the Holy Qur‘án, Hadith and other literary genres.
Arabic is widely spoken in two continents, from North Africa to the Arabian Peninsula, by about 221 million people in Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Cyprus, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Palestinian West Bank & Gaza, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, UAE, Uzbekistan and Yemen. It is the official language of twenty countries and its position lies in the top ten languages of the world in number of speakers. The numerical, political, cultural, and religious status of the language was formally recognized by the United Nations in 1973 when Arabic was made the sixth official language of that body (the others are Chinese, English, Russian, French, and Spanish).

The Arabic language was developed in what is today Yemen and Saudi Arabia far before the birth of Christ (there is no evidence available as to how far back the development of any of the Semitic languages began). Pre-Islamic Arab poets had developed a language of incredible richness and flexibility despite the fact that many were desert Bedouins with little or no formal education.

In addition to this, with the spreading of Islam, Arabic has become the sole written language and the prevailing speech in all Africa and for a time in Southern Spain in Malta and in Sicily. It is still used as a learned and sacred language, international communications and business affairs. So, it has occupied a vital importance in the linguistic scenario of the present world. Moreover, it has become the heart-touched language of the second largest Muslim population of the world by virtue of its being the language of the Holy Qur'ân and prayer of Islam. In matters of culture and creed, it has wide spreading influence throughout the Arab and Muslim world.

Although Arabic speaking people, as a whole, are known as Arabs they include many millions who are coming by descent from distinct races, such
as the Copts in Egypt and the Berbers in the North-West Africa. While Arabic speaking people are found to use their own dialect which varies country to country and district to district, so it is sometimes, difficult for Arabs of different countries to understand each other. Despite the variation of different dialects of Arabic, there is one common written language which is identical in all countries from Morocco to Baghdad. It is worthy of elucidation that the common written language of Arabic is based on Classical Arabic and it was the universal language of the near and Middle Ages.³⁸

Since Arabic had two principal dialects, i.e. (1) the South Arabic and (2) the North Arabic, these two homogeneous dialects differentiated in matters of grammar, vocabulary and script. The South Arabic is known today only through inscriptions, because it has become a dead language while the Himyarite Empire was over-thrown by the Abyssinians in the 6th century A.D. From that time onwards the North Arabic got the supremacy and appeared as the extant Arabic language.³⁹

In addition to foregoing discussion, it is necessary to highlight the present situation of Arabic dialect and speakers that each Arabic speaking country or region has its own variety of colloquial or spoken Arabic. These colloquial varieties of Arabic appear in written form in some poetry, cartoons and comics, plays and personal letters. In this context, 30 (thirty) different varieties of colloquial Arabic speakers are found in the Arab World which have been shown in the following geographical regions along with their approximate numbers:

1) **Egyptian** is spoken by about 46 million people in Egypt and perhaps the most widely understood variety. It has much popularity in Egyptian made films and TV shows.

2) **Algerian** is spoken by about 22 million people in Algeria.

3) **Maghrebi** is spoken in Morocco by about 19.5 million people.
4) **Sudanese** is spoken in Sudan by about 19 million people.

5) **Saidi** is spoken by about 19 million people in Egypt.

6) **North Levantine** is spoken in Lebanon and Syria by about 15 million people.

7) **Mesopotamian** is spoken by about 14 million people in Iraq, Iran and Syria.

8) **Najdi** is spoken in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan and Syria by about 10 million people.

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**Arabic Script** (الخط العربي):

The Arabic script descended from the Aramaic through the Nabataean and the neo-Sinaitic alphabets. After the Latin script, it is the most widely used form of alphabetic writing in the modern world. It has been used since the 4th century AD, but the earliest document, a trilingual inscription in Arabic, Syriac and Greek, dates from 512 AD. It has been observed that the Arabic script consists of 28 (twenty eight) consonantal letters, but their 22 (twenty two) letters have been taken from the Aramaic-Nabataean branch of the North Semitic alphabet and other 6 (six) letters have been added to its alphabets. In fact, new Arabic letters, from 7th century AD, were created by adding dots to existing letters in order to avoid ambiguities. Further diacritical marks indicating short vowels were introduced. From the Arabic alphabets - *alif*, *waw*, and *yād* are also used as long vowels. Arabic scripts used in a word are written in horizontal lines from right to left and their alphabetic shapes change form depending on whether they appear at the beginning, middle or end of a word, or on their own. Arabic letters that can be joined are also joined in both hand-written and printed materials. The only exceptions to this rule are crossword puzzles and signs in which the script is written vertically. Another notable feature is that short vowels are used in the text books only because of avoiding ambiguity. Sometimes the diacritical marks are used for decorative purposes like in book titles, letterheads.
sign-boards, nameplates and so on.

It may be mentioned here that before the use of raqsh (dot) the Arabic script was very defective. In this connection, the foremost credit goes to the Prophet (PBUH) who initiated to distinguish between letters having similar shapes. As such, he appointed Abdullah bin Sayyid bin ‘As to teach the art of caligraphy with a view to writing down the divine message or the Holy Qur’ân. carried out partly in his life time. But the full compilation of the Qur’ân was made after two years later of his death.43

Due to the influence of Islam, the Arabic script has been one of the most widespread writing system in the world, found in large parts of Africa and Western and Central Asia as well as in homogeneous communities in East Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

It is worthmentioning that there are two types of Arabic script, namely Kufic and Naskhi. Generally the Kufic script is angular, used on hard surfaces like wood or stone and this type of script was created in the town of Kufa, the then religious and intellectual centre of the Arab world. On the other hand, the Naskhi script is much more round and cursive. Both the types were conspicuous from 7th century AD. The Kufic script is older than the Naskhi since it was common in the early history of Islam, and used for the earliest copies of the Qur’ân as well as in the letters of the Prophet (PBUH) written to the Kings and heads of States with a view to propagating Islam. While people found difficulty in the perusal of letters and other writings and felt the Arabic script as handicap to understand, the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abdu’l-Malik (685 - 705 AD) gave an order to the Governor of Iraq, Hajjaj b. Yusuf (d. 714 AD) to remove the obscurity and modify the script. Then he took an initiative for getting script dotted in similar letters and promoting the use of vowel points with the help of some scholars like Nasr b. Hakim, Khalil b. Ahmad and so on. From the 11th (eleventh) century AD the Naskhi script took the place of the Kufic script and
became more popular in usage even for copying the Holy Qur'an as well as secular and personal writings. As such, the Naskhi script has been used at large scale in the composition of Modern Arabic language with a developed alphabetic style and shape.\textsuperscript{44}

The Arabic script is a highly sophisticated discipline for writing system among the earliest and most wide spread of Islamic decorative motifs. Since the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's teachings were committed to writing in Arabic script, Muslims regard it heartily with due reverence.

Undoubtedly, an utmost credit goes to the Arabic script, since it has been adopted by other groups to write their own languages, such as Persian. Pastho, Urdu and so on.

To give a clear idea of the growth and development of Arabic script, two tables have been arranged here separately in accordance with the views of Arabs and French scholars \textsuperscript{45} as follows:

1) According to Arabian scholar

- Phoenician
  - Aramaic
    - al-Musnad
      - al-Safawî, al-Thamûdî al-Lihyânî, al-Himyari
        - al-Kindî
          - Nabataean
            - al-Himyari / al-Anbâri
              - al-Naskhul-Hijâzî
                - al-Kufî

2) According to French scholar

- Phoenician
  - Aramaic
    - al-Musnad
      - Syriac
        - Himyaritic
          - al-Satr-najili

**Linguistic aspect of Arabic:**

Like other languages, Arabic has two types of language, namely (a) spoken or colloquial and (b) Classical language. The Arabic spoken language is called \textit{al-lugha al-‘āmmiya} (اللّغة الّعامة) "the popular language" or \textit{al-}
"lughja al-dārija" (اللغة الدارجة) “the colloquial language” and the Classical Arabic for written purposes is called "al-lughja al-fusḥa" (اللغة الفصحى) “the eloquent language”.

Colloquial Arabic dialects differ from Classical Arabic especially in vocabulary and in the elimination of such grammatical features as the use of certain case endings and the dual forms of verbs and objectives. Generally colloquial Arabic comprises many spoken dialects, some of which are mutually unintelligible. It is known that Classical Arabic is based on the language of the Holy Qur’ān, the Prophetic Traditions, pre-Islamic poetry, grammatical studies made by Arab scholars and so on.\textsuperscript{46} It appears from every corner of the Arabic language that the Classical Arabic has played as the arbiter of correct form of language (العربية الفصحى) for all later generations.

Although the Classical Arabic is relatively uniform throughout the Arab world, it visualizes only minor differences in vocabulary and Syntax of different regional dialects with considerable divergences in sound, grammar and vocabulay. With the spread of literacy in the Arab world, the Classical Arabic is becoming widely known day by day to the greater extent, for which all the Arab thinkers and leaders hope that the Classical or the middle language (اللغة الوسطى), will be eventually a common spoken language of Arab, keeping the essential feature of the Classical in tact with some changes introduced from the colloquial morphame.\textsuperscript{47}

Some distinctive characteristics of Arabic language have been evolved in the field of its linguistic background, which may be depicted to elucidate their features as follows:

**Phonology:**

Arabic is radically different in its structure from English and European languages. Its sound system includes six “throat” consonants (‘- h - kh - ‘ - gh - h) of particular difficulty for speakers of
English and a series of "emphatic" consonants (ش، ض، ط، ظ) which influence strongly the pronunciation of the surrounding vowels. It belongs to three short vowels and three long vowels (أ، إ، ي). Arabic words start with a single consonant followed by a vowel, but long vowels are rarely followed by more than a single consonant. Another specific characteristic is that alphabetic clusters containing more than two consonants do not occur in the words of Arabic language.

In the case of pharyngeal consonants like ح and خ the alteration of consonants and vowels and the "emphatic" features of pronunciation give Arabic a highly characteristic sound which sets it apart from other languages.

Morphology:

It deals with the system of Arabic language which discusses the formation of words, is based on the root and pattern structure. Arabic words have a stem which consists of two parts fitted together: (1) the root which generally consists of three consonants and provide the basic lexical meaning of the words, and (2) the pattern which generally consists of vowels interlocked with the root consonants and gives the more specific grammatical meaning of the words. For instance, the word كتاب (كتاب) consists of the root (ط، ط، ب) which has to do with writing and the pattern، ي، identifies the active participle. The word كتاب (كتاب) means approximately “one who writes” especially often “a clerk”. In addition to the primary words, the stem of which consists only of root plus pattern (e.g. كتاب “a clerk”, كتاب، “a book”, كتب، “write”, تكتب، “they corresponded” كتاب، “desk, office”, كتب، “books” كتب، “clerks”, مكتاب، “correspondent” مكتوب، “letter” etc.)

There are derivative words, the stem of which contain an additional element such as a doubling of the second root consonant (شرب، shirrib, “one who drinks to excess”) or an infix ‘ت’ (ت) after the first root consonant (فشك، “he thought”). The Arabic language also makes usage of prefixes and suffixes.
which make as subject markers, pronouns, prepositions, and the definite article.

**Conjugation:**

The Arabic verb is the most important part of the grammatical system and it has many derivational and inflexional forms; if any complexity arises, then that is matched by the regularity and symmetry of the forms In matters of conjugation, verbs in Arabic are regular and having two tenses: the Perfect, formed by the addition of suffixes, is often used to mean the Past tense; and the Imperfect, formed by the addition of prefixes and sometimes containing suffixes indicating number and gender, is often used for expressing present and future time. In addition to the two tenses, there are imperative forms, an active participle, a passive participle, and a verbal noun. Arabic verbs are inflected for three persons, three numbers i.e. singular, dual, and plural, and two genders (i.e. masculine and feminine only). Classical Arabic shows that there is no dual form and no gender differentiation in the first person and the modern Arabic dialects have lost all dual forms. The Classical language also has forms for the passive voice.

There are three cases (i.e. nominative, accusative and genitive) in the declensional system of Classical Arabic nouns, nouns are no longer declined in the modern dialects. Pronouns occur both as suffixes and as independent words.50

**Syntax:**

In the Arabic grammar, Syntax is known as علم النحو (‘ilm al-nahw) or علم الإعراب (‘ilm al-i’rāb) and it deals with the proper mode of composing single words into sentences and appropriating to them the proper vowel points (إعراب) as case ending marks.

This differentiation of case and mood made it possible for Arabic to attain to a much more flexible and delicate mechanism of expression than is found in the other Semitic languages. In place of staccato co-ordination of
short phrases, there is a modulated flow of speech, exactly and organically graded, with such capacity for expressing shades of meaning as fitted Arabic later to become a medium of philosophical thought. To this there contributed also the logical arrangement of words in the sentence and another morphological invention, the formation of abstract nouns (gerunds) from verbal roots, which permitted the condensation and generalization of thought and gave a remarkable power of compression in rhetoric and poetry.

**Richness of Arabic vocabularies:**

Concerning the total amount of Arabic vocabularies, some linguists are of the opinion that not less than 5,06,59,400 vocabularies have been added to the store-house of Arabic language, of which 5,06,20,000 have come in usage in its literature.* In the linguistic scenario of the world, Arabic vocabularies have extraordinary richness because of its numerous synonyms and antonyms against each noun, variety of verbal and nominal forms. As such, Arabic phonology, morphology, and syntax have remained relatively unchanged from earliest times.

In the middle Ages, it was the leading language of the world and occupied an international position similar to that of English at the present time. Peoples of different nationalities spoke or write in Arabic in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Mediterranean. It was the language of politics, culture and that of a vast literature, like history, biography, medicine, economics, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, music, chemistry, physics, botany, optics, and other secular literature. Above all, the Holy Qur'án, Hadith, and other religious and legal sciences of Islam are in Arabic language, and the population of Muslims has been the second largest in the world; so, the Arabic language along with its boundless literary works has given a fillip to the modern civilization and its scientific advancement. The overall development of the Arabic language and literature has naturally increased its amount of vocabularies and led to its

* *Muqaddama al-Munjid (Arabic to Urdu), by Mufti Muhammad Shafî, p. 13*
extraordinary richness. In support of this statement, Professor Nicholson says that “During the early Middle Ages it was spoken and written by all cultivated Moslems, of whatever nationality they might be, from the Indus to Atlantic, it was the language of the court and the church, of law and commerce, of Diplomacy and Literature and Science.”

To bring the modern phenomena of Arabic vocabularies into account, it is worthwhile mentioning that under the increasing influence of the western civilization, Arab writers and journalists have had to deal with a host of new concepts and ideas, previously alien to the Arab way of life, has resulted especially in the field of science and technology and simply to adopt foreign words from the European languages as well as local terminology, particularly for many public institutions, offices, titles and administrative affairs. It has developed the linguistic scenario of Arabic vocabularies in the several Arab countries. In recent decades, innumerable new vocabularies have been suggested to incorporate into Arabic by various periodicals and special publications.

In fine, it is a notable factor that the system of ‘Arabicism’ is not only a phenomenon of the modern period, but also it has relatively antiquity, since multifarious foreign vocabularies of Persian, Greek, Ethiopic, Coptic, Sanskrit etc have been imported to Arabic language and accordingly arabicized, and its testimony lies in the poetry of pre-Islamic period and even in the Holy Quran (sura, 18:31). Afterwards, in the Umayyad period, a movement began to translate the books and scientific works of foreign countries into Arabic. Later on, the same spirit continued in the Abbasid period and the Arabic translators paid a great attention to translate the scientific works of Greek, Persian, Indian, Egyptian, etc. into Arabic language. While undertaking these works for translation, they endeavoured to incorporate foreign scientific terminologies into Arabic through the means of ta‘rīb with its pure nature, failing which they also accepted some words with their same features and transmitted them without major
change in conformity with Arabic measures and forms.\textsuperscript{54}

**Arabic Literature:**

Arabic literature (الأدب العربي) brings into its consistency all sort of literary works written in the Arabic language. Specifically the Arabic term ‘*adab*’ signifies belles-lettres, produced as the didactic literature in the Middle Ages. It includes particularly poetry, the art of oratory, historical and tribal traditions, grammar, lexicography and other faculties. The great body of Arabic literature includes works produced by Arabic speaking Turks, Persians, Syrians, Egyptians, Indians, Jews, and other Africans and Asians, as well as the Arabs themselves. As such, Arabic literature happens to comprise of Iranian epic, gnomic and narrative material, Indian fables, and the philosophy, ethics and economic knowledge of Greece. Following the advent of Islam in 622 AD., it touched the pinnacle position in the Golden Age and it is still ranking as developed literature in the domain of world literature. In fact, it has played a progressive role in the development of both the Islamic and the secular literary productions.

In pursuance of the period of urbanization (632 - 750 AD.) and the gradual increase of secular composition under Persian, a more specialized application of the term literature gained acceptance. When the Qur’an, Hadîth and Jurisprudence were treated as science, belles-lettres, skill in sports and games were recognized as part of literary art (adab). It appears that the curriculum of the Arab schools include course of literary criticism and history in addition to the old subjects of grammar, calligraphy, lexicography, poetic rhetoric, theory of literary styles of Arabic literature.\textsuperscript{55}

In general, Arabic literature is divided into two main periods, namely (1) classical and (2) modern. The classical literature starts with the proverbs and poetry of the nomadic northern Arabs of its desert lands. Their preservation was made by oral transmission from the early 6th century or before, firstly recorded in the 7th and 8th centuries. The period of the classical Arabic literature has been
determined to continue up to 16th century. But the years 1517-1800 AD. denote one of the most bleak periods in Arab history when Arabic literature was faced with stagnation due to the conquest of most of the Arab-speaking world.

The modern period, beginning with the 19th century literary renaissance in Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, and Iraq, drew some of its impetus from contact with the West and some from renewed interest in the great classical literature. From the expedition of Napoleon to Egypt in 1798 AD, the modern period of Arabic literature has been evolved as soon as the Arab had begun contact with West and Europe. The freer environment of Egypt led many Syrian and Lebanese writers to emigrate there, and Egypt thus became the centre of the renaissance. Basically literary productions in Egypt ushered other productivities in Modern Arabic Literature.

**Classification of Arabic Literature:**

Arabic literature starts with 6th century AD. and it may be classified into the following periods as appears from its overall development in literary fields. They are (1) The pre-Islamic period, (2) Early Islamic period, (3) The Umayyad period, (4) The Abbasid and after, and (5) The Modern period.

**The Pre-Islamic period:**

It appears from the investigation into the sphere of Arabic literature that the Jahiliyya or pre-Islamic period covers scarcely more than a century from about 500 AD to the year of Muhammad’s Flight to Madina 622 AD. and this period has been determined as the ‘Heroic Age’ by some scholars. Moreover, during that period, only a spoken literature was produced and preserved by oral transmission. As far as the record of existing Arabic literature is concerned, the pre-Islamic period was endowed with poetry of classical origin. The poetical metres and rhymes were strictly followed in the poetry like Qasida as thrived in that of the period. Looking at the poetry of then period, it has been observed that some distinguished
characteristics run through the poems.

Poetry:

Before the appearance of the present Arabic script, whether literary compositions were written down or not, has been a matter of controversy. But in any event, the pre-Islamic verses were preserved by the rawis (rhapsodists) whom the poets employed to recite their poems. The pre-Islamic poetry literature, produced during more than a century (500 - 622 AD), was committed to writing by the Muslim scholars between 750 - 900 AD. It is certain that the language of their poetry was one and same.58

In form and content, the poems of the pre-Islamic period fall into two groups: on one hand, there are the occasional poems of form 2 to 20 lines called out principally by the emotion of war or revenge, praise of his own tribe and satire of the enemies were really the original functions of the primitive poets. Another important position goes to the elegies, composed by the famous poets or poetesses like al-Khansa and others. Distinct from these poems is the elaborate Qasîda, ‘Ode’ of form 60 to 100 lines. In the opening verses of these Qasîdas the poet is supposed to be on a journey. He halts at the deserted camping ground whose ruined relics recall the memory of an ancient position and tells of his love and the sorrows of his parting. In course of his journey, he compares his riding beasts with some wild animals of the desert. The natural account of the chase introduced in this connection, form the most attractive part of the poem. The journey of the poet leads to the occasion of the poem which may be a praise of his tribe or of his own gallantry, description of camp or desert life or panegyric of some patron in whose honour the poem has been composed and from whom the poet expects a reward.59

It has been observed that the earliest known Arabic literature is only poetry. Before Islam, a distinct type of poetry was cultivated and developed to a great extent. In this connection, poetical contests were held and prizes awarded
for the best pieces, and such type of poems are known as *mu'allaqat* (suspended odes). A collection was made consisting of seven *mu'allaqat* by seven authors, known as *sab' mu'allaqat*. Their *mu'allaqat* were collected in the anthology of Hammad al-Rawiya (d. 772 AD.), a famous rhapsodist who flourished in the later days of the Umayyad dynasty, related to seven *qasidas* (long odes) or *al-sab' al-tiwal* "The Seven Long Poems", said to have been composed by "Poet-warriors" of the Jahiliyya (the period of the "ignorance" before Islam). They are Imru’l-Qais (d. 540 AD.), Zuhair b. Abi Sulma (d. 607 AD.), Tarafa b. al-'Abd (d. 564 AD.), Labid b. Rabi'a (d. 661 AD.), 'Antara b. Shaddâd (d. 615 AD.), 'Amar b. Kultûm (d. 600 AD.), and al-Harith b. Hilliza. This nomenclature has been widely accepted by Ibn al-Anbari (d. 939 AD.) and al-Zauzani (d. 1093 AD.), two famous commentators on the *Mu'allaqat*. But the author of the *jamharat ash'ar al-'arab*, Abu Zaid al-Qurashi, one of the earliest Arabic anthologies, fixes the number of the *Mu'allaqat* Poets at eight, including al-Nabigha of Dhubyan (d. 604 AD.) and al-A'shâ to the above list and excluding al-Harith b. Hilliza from it. It appears from another source that the number of *Mu'allaqat* are fixed at ten by a later commentator who adds 'Abid b. al-Abras (d. 555 AD.) to the original list of seven, plus the addition of Abu Zaid al-Qurashi. Each of the odes of *Mu'allaqat* was awarded the year's prizes at the 'Fair of Ukas' and was inscribed in golden letters and suspended on the walls of the Ka'ba.

Among many other poets of whom only a few pieces survive to robber poets and outlaws like Shanfâra and Ta'abbata Sharr are particularly celebrated and the poems attributed to them breath in magnificent language courage and hardihood scarcely equaled in any literature.

Despite these two Sa'âlik (brigand, Vagabond) poets, another poet, Arwat b. al-Warud by name, has been counted as brigand poet, but found humanism in him. In view of his generosity Hazrat Muwabiva
praised him saying that Ibn al-Warud helped the oppressed, supported the poor and refrained himself from oppressing the weaker sections. 

A later but equally remarkable compilation was made by Abu Tammam Habib b. Aus (d. 844 AD.) who selected the choicest passages of old qasidas of pre-Islamic and Islamic poetry and treasured them in his anthology named Diwân al-Hamasa “fortitude”. The compilation of *mufaddaliyyat* of Mufaddal Dabbi (d.786 AD.) consists of 128 odes, is regarded as a rich stock of Arabic literature in pre-Islamic Age.

**Early Islamic Period:**

Since the Prophet of Islam launched a literary drive on his migration to Madina in 622 AD., the rise of Islam shook the social structure and ethos on which even the poetry and poet’s personal status had not been lagging behind to be based. Even the earliest verse, found by the date of Hijra, indicates that the poetic art, practised by both men and women, was well established. Poetesses excelled in the *marthiya*, “elegy” while men generally preferred the *qasida* (generally a panegyric) or the *hija*, “satire”. Most common was the *qasida*, the form of which was strictly prescribed. It was a lengthy composition in which every line rhymed with the first and the theme proceeded on the fiction that the poet was a warrior who, traversing the desert with two companions, came upon the remains of an encampment where once dwelt a beloved mistress. Halting, he portrayed her elegance and virtues and the woes of disappointed love; next he described the devoted beast which had borne him through ‘most disastrous chances’ in the wildness, and then finally he attached his real theme, praise, of a patron or whatever else it might be. The formula has persisted until today, despite the revolt of each successive generation of poets.

In matters of prose literature, the Holy *Qur ‘ân* laid down a new direction to the Arabic literature. It is, undoubtedly the first and foremost authentic piece of Arabic literature and has given a fillip to the prospective
theologian, lawyers, scientists and philologists who accordingly imitate its style and follow its contents for their religio-literary new productions. As such, it set the pattern of Arabic literature. A lot of commentaries on the Qur’ān and studies based on it or connected with it constituted the bulk of Arabic prose. In fact, linguistic, lexical, philological, and legal sciences as well as historical and geographical studies owed their origin and rise to the Qur’ān and it has been the basis of classical Arabic literature.65

The Prophet (PBUH) and his four successors did not keep any hostility towards poetry except the part which had inciting, glorifying, hyperbolic or satirical contents. As such, poetical productions were scanty in the early Islamic period due to the restriction made by the Qur’ān: “The misguided follow the poets”(al-Shu‘arā’ : 224).66 “And We did‘nt teach him (the Prophet) poetry nor he should practise it.”(Ya‘ Sīn : 69) Likewise the prophetic tradition has not shown sincere encouragement towards poetry composition as it says: “If the belly of you one is filled up with vomiting matter, even it is considered better than he fills his mouth with poetry.”67 In spite of such prevailing indications in the Qur’ān and the Hadith, about a dozen poets who were attached to the Prophet, championed the credit of Islam and sometimes also praised him in simple and unexaggerated manner. Of them two, namely Hassan b. Thabit and Ka‘b b. Malik were said to have been replying in the same strain to the lampoons of the opponents who condemned the Prophet (PBUH), his mission and his party at the time of upholding their own traditions and ways of life. Abdullah b. Rawāha, one of the prophet’s followers was especially engaged in condemning the opponents for their idolatory and superstitions and tried his level best to commend the beliefs and principles professed by Muhammad (PBUH). Of course, it is known that Hassan b. Thabit (d.673 AD.) was the best versifier of his age, while
his contemporary Ka‘b b. Zuhair owed his reputation almost entirely to a famous panegyric on the Prophet. Furthermore, Abbas b. Mirdas and al-Nabigha al-Ja‘di were also celebrated poets of the early Islamic period, who versified on the victories of Islam and the Prophet, the defeats of the Quraish and their allies and pointed to the moral and material benefits of Islam. Indeed, both prose and poetry thrived during the forty years beginning with the Prophet’s flight to al-Madina and the assassination of Ali in 660 AD. Although the literature of this period was influenced by the holy Qur’ân, the poetic style clung to the characteristics of ‘Jahiliyya’ period. In the poetry of early Islamic period as cultivated by the celebrated poets like Hassan b. Thabit, Ka‘b b. Malik, Abdullah b. Rawâha etc., it has been observed that the poetic style of this period was totally similar to that of Jahiliyya, because they spoke of the merits of assault and idolaters, lampoon the opponents in the earlier old model, glorify the pedigree and boast of the leadership and any honour. In addition to these characteristics, they also endeavoured in their verses to portray the qualities of Islam for its defence.

Undoubtedly, both prose and poetry thrived during the forty years beginning with the Prophet’s flight to al-Madina and the assassination of Ali in 660 AD. Although the literature of this period was influenced by the holy Qur’ân, the poetic style clung to the characteristics of ‘Jahiliyya’ period. In the poetry of early Islamic period as cultivated by the celebrated poets like Hassan b. Thabit, Ka‘b b. Malik, Abdullah b. Rawâha etc., it has been observed that the poetic style of this period was totally similar to that of Jahiliyya, because they spoke of the merits of assault and idolaters, lampoon the opponents in the earlier old model, glorify the pedigree and boast of the leadership and any honour. In addition to these characteristics, they also endeavoured in their verses to portray the qualities of Islam for its defence.

From the above mentioned discussion, it has been clear to us that the early Islamic period saw a comprehensive development in Arabic prose and poetry and the literary point of view was not better than Jahiliya in matters of poetical themes. But in some literary works, it has been acclaimed to be endowed with Islamic inspiration and its objectives either in poetry or prose that prevailed in the early Islamic period.

The Umayyad Period (661 - 750 AD.):

During this period, a considerable number of the Islamic sciences, including prose and poetry came down to us in black and white. So far as the study of the Qur’ân and the Hadith is concerned, both the corpora provided the foundation of Islamic sciences including fiqh, tafsir, and târikh. In this connection, other elements like speeches, letters, grammars, adab (belles
lettres) etc. have been added to the components of Arabic literature. It has been observed that the literary prose style and diction of the Umayyad period deserves to be placed at the highest standard of excellence of the Classical Arabic literature. In fact, it is robust in expression, compact in texture and commands a high degree of grammatical precision giving together with a natural flow of Arabic language.

The poetry literature of this period also flourished even in the adverse situations of warfares and rivalries among the different tribes being stimulated by victory and spread of Islam. The function of poetry in this period remained same as it had prevailed in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic period. Because the poet held a place of honour in the tribe. He was the repository of its annals, sang of its splendid past, stirred it to battle and flung scorn on its enemies. Most of his productions were transitory, however, and yielded in repute to those of the laureates at the court of the Umayyads at Damascus. As a matter of fact, the poetry of this period served two objectives: (1) to relieve excitements and to express likes, dislikes and reactions and (2) to earn livelihood. Under some circumstances, the literatos, philologists and traditionists essentially studied the Umayyad poetry to comprehend the Qur’ān and the Hadith correctly and to supply evidential support to the rules of the newly founded sciences of grammar. It is worthmentioning that an attempt was made by ‘Ajjaj and his son Rub‘ba to bring a change in the earlier qasīda in the freest metre like the iambic rajaz. But they failed in their experiments, because the rajaz metre was only retained for impromptus and long descriptive poems.

In the Umayyad period, the caliphal capital was shifted from Medina to Damascus and the fervor of religious enthusiasm abated. Refinement and luxury started on their upward career and poetry regained it former prestige. Chief among the poets was Farazdaq (d. 728 AD.) the court poet
of 'Abd al-Malik, whose whose reputation was largely due to the corrosive satires that he exchanged with his rival, Jarîr. Jarîr's fame was a satirist stood so high that to be worsted by him, was reckoned a greater distinction than to overcome any one else. A third party to their conflict was the Christian al-Akhtal (d. 710 AD.), known independently as a panegyrist, who supported first Jarîr (d. 729 AD.) and then Farazdaq. His pride that any maiden might recite his satires without shame could scarcely have been maintained by the others. Al-Akhtal was, undoubtedly, patronized by Yazid b. Mu‘awiya and after his demise, 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwân (R. 684 - 705 AD.) who chose him as his chief court poet. Furthermore it has been informed that the poet, Dhu'kr-Rumma captured Arab taste with his rich vocabulary and the fertility of his similes, and the poetess Layla al-Akhyaliya won the palm for her elegies.73

In Hijaz, meanwhile, a different spirit reigned from that prevalent in the northern regions newly won for Islam. The luxurious arts were cultivated and in poetry the erotic prelude of the qasîda developed into the love lyric, which is more particularly associated with the name of 'Umar Ibn 'Abi Rabi'a (d. 719 AD.) of Makkah and his fellow country man Jamil b. Maḥmar of the Udhra tribe who loved his cousin Buthayna, Qays b. Dharih who loved Lubnâ and Majnûn (Qays b. Mulawwa) who sought to marry Layla, are famous in the poetic literature of the Umayyad period. In the Umayyad poetry literature, the love fact of Majnûn and Layla is akin to the Platonic love, because both of them were infatuated with ardent love and affection. Another distinction has been inspected in the royal family of the Umayyad dynasty, since the Caliphs, Yazid I (R. 680 - 683 AD.) and al-Walid II (R. 743 - 744 AD.) composed poems and they were precursors of the wine songs and hunting poems of the next period. 74

**Prose Literature:**

The prose literature contained the same secular spirit as prevailed in the poetry literature under the Umayyad dynasty. In this regard.
‘Abid b. Sharya made a distinguished business to dress up the old legends and purveyed them in a readable form to the public and Wanab b. Munabbin was responsible for a great deal of the fabulous lore belonging to the domain of Awâ’il (origins) which Muslim chroniclers commonly prefixed to their historical works. The *Maghazi* (holy wars) of Musa b. ‘Uqba (d. 758 AD), ‘Biography of the Prophet’ of Ibn Ishaq (d. 767 AD.) and “Kitab al-Zuhad of Azad b. Musa (d. 749 AD.) are the valuable store house of Arabic prose literature. The most renowned traditionist of the same period is Muhammad b. Muslim b. Shihâb al-Zuhri (d. 742 AD.).

In addition to the aforementioned works, a method of scientific study of Arabic language and grammar began with a view to fulfilment of linguistic needs for the new converts to Islam, as and when they wanted to read the *Qur’ân*. In this field of knowledge, Abu’l-Aswad al-Du‘ali (d. 688 AD) of Basra who founded Arabic grammar, was an important personality. He was followed by Khalil b. Ahmad (d. 791/792 AD.), a native of Basra, compiled an Arabic Dictionary named Kitâb al-Ayan. He is generally regarded as the founder of Arabic prosody (‘ilm al-‘arûd). His Persian pupil Sibawayhi (d. 793 AD) composed the first basic text-book on Arabic grammar called *al-kitâb*. Basra produced some more scholars like Malik b. Anas (d. 845 AD.), a traditionist. Muhammad Ibn Shirîn (d. 110 AH.) and so on during the Umayyad period. Kufa did not lag back in producing scholars like Abdullan ibn Mas‘ud (d. 653 AD) and his disciples like al-Qamah, al-Aswad, Ubayd, al-Harith Ibn Qayas and so on. Furthermore, Amir Ibn al-Sharahbil al-Sha‘bi (d. 728 AD.) and Abu Hanifa (d. 769 AD.) were distinguished scholars of this period.

**The Abbasids (750 - 1258 AD):**

The Abbasid caliphs, successors to the Umayyads, established themselves at Baghdad and were less concerned with purely Arab standards. They looked to Persia for power and filled their courts with Persians skilful
in state craft and arts. Eagerly acquiring Arabic, these converted Muslims infused into its literature something of their own lively and ironical spirit. Baghdad developed a philological school surpassing the older ones of Basra and Kufa, at the latter of which the laws of Arabic grammar had been worked out and all the quantitative metres of Arabic verses reduced to system. The metres are traditionally ascribed to the grammarian Khalil Ibn Ahmad, master of Sibawayhi of Persia compiled the first comprehensive Arabic grammar.77

The intellectual milieu of the ‘Abbasids encouraged the creation of new verse-forms and the treatment of themes more familiar to the growing number of city dwellers than those of the romantic desert formula. Bashar Ibn Burd (d. 783 AD.) of Basra, blind son of a Persian slave, excelled in popular erotic ballads. That he also indulged in satire which brought him to ruin is indication only of the versatility of his kind. Of Persian stock also was Abu Nuwas (d. 810 AD.), known from the Arabian Nights as boon companion of Harun al-Rashid, who entertained his royal patron not only with songs of women and wine but also with rhymes about the more reprehensible indulgences of the Abbasid court. His old age brought repentance which he expressed in his ‘Poems of Renunciation’, but he lives by the wine-songs of his Diwan (collected verses). His contemporary Abu’l-‘Atahiya early gained livelihood by selling earthen ware pots who composed poems in simple bazaar language urging the blessedness of virtue and the glory of poverty.78

It has been observed that some princes were also poets. In this connection, mention may be made that Ibn al-Mu’tazz (d. 908 AD.), once Caliph for a day, composed verses and also works of criticism in which he pressed the claims of new themes and styles. He, notwithstanding, managed by his own poetry to hold the approval of the conservative school on the ground that the depicting of the wild desert scenes in uncouth, if virile, language
was incompatible with the polished environment of palace.\textsuperscript{79}

In the field of prose literature, it has been observed that long before Islam there must have existed tales of battle and adventure of which some survived into Islamic times and were cited by Abul Faraj al-Ispahani (d. 967 AD.) in his great book of songs, by commentators on old \textit{Qasida} and by historians such as Ibn al-Athir. The art of story telling was not lost with Islam and it received encouragement from the early Abbasids, under whom great activity was shown by non-Arab converts not only in the translation of outstanding works from foreign languages into Arabic but also in the composition of original work in Arabic, both prose and poetry. On the scientific side came translations from the Greek and in the realm of belles-lettres from the Persian.\textsuperscript{80}

Ibn al-Muqaffa\textquoteright showed his utmost excellence in the domain of early literary translations, because he rendered from Pahlavi into Arabic the Indian fables of Bidpai and other works. To an anonymous translator of that time also we owe the framework of the tales, the Arabian Nights' Entertainment.

In the scientific literary works, a good number of litterateurs flourished in the Golden Age. Of them, the Syrian Christian Hunain Ibn Ishaq (d. 877 AD.) rendered services to Muslim culture by putting into Arabic through the intermediary of Syriac - the medical treatises of Galen and the \textit{Materia Medica} of Dioscorides. His contemporary, Qusta Ibn Luqa of Ba\textsupercircumflex{}labek, provided text books in most braches of science, while the Sabian Thabit Ibn Qurrah (d. 901 AD.) proved himself a brilliant mathematician and astronomer. Indian as well as Greek influences are apparent in the work
of the Khivan algebraist al-Khwarizmi, through whom the ‘algorism’, the so-called Arabic numeral notation, was introduced to the west famous name of the period in that sphere is that of a pure Arab, al-Kindi (d.850 AD), who was a native of Kufa. The numerous treatises attributed to him covered all branches of theoretical knowledge from music to astrology. About a century later the Turkish savant al-Farabi got fame as an exponent of Aristotelianism, though he also concerned himself with political ideals in the Platonic tradition. His great successor, Avicenna born in Bukhara, was one of the fathers of medicine but was a philosopher then physician. Chronologically mid-way between the two came the faithful brotheren of Basra who covered the whole field of contemporary knowledge.\textsuperscript{81}

It has been observed that in history and general literature much original work came from men of Persian origin. Thus Ibn Qutaiban (d. 889 AD) wrote a guide to correct Arabic works of literary criticism, histories and essays for which he was praised as one of the last representatives of the classical tradition. His contemporary, al-Jahiz of Basra, combined a vivid realism with his learning, while his exuberance of diction had its effect in the gradual replacement of the old, simple terseness by a turgid floweriness.

In fact, the ‘Muslim Sciences’ were inextricably bound up with history and general literature and they were best fruitful sources of prose literature. They included commentaries on the Holy Qur’an, collections of Hadith, jurisprudence and theology. In spite of their importance for the other branches, the Traditions were not codified until the 19th century, when six standard collections were made, of which those by Bukhārī (d. 870 AD) and Muslim (d. 875 AD) are the most authoritative. The search for authenticity demanded investigation into the lives of the transmitters of Traditions, whence arose numerous collections of biographies as well as general histories.\textsuperscript{82}

Largely on the basis of the Prophetic Traditions, al-Waqidi (d. 823)
recorded Muhammad’s holy wars (*al-Maghazi*) and Ibn Sa’d (d. 845 AD) compiled a work on the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and of numerous of his ‘companions’. The best written and most popular life, valuable also for its picture of pre-Muslim Arabia, is that of Ibn Ishaq, which has reached us only in the recension of Ibn Hisham (d. 834 AD). The study of theology had received an early impetus from Christianity, but differences of view within the community arose, when orthodoxy contended with Mu’tazilism and theosophic sufism that led to great activity, resulted in the formulation of doctrine. The great protagonist of orthodoxy was Abul Hasan al-Ash’ari (d.933 AD.) of Basra, while the names of Junaid (d. 910 AD.) and Hallaj (d.921 AD.) stand out in sufism. They were eclipsed in later times by the Persian Ghazzali (d. 1111AD.), who, after delving deep into Muslim law and theology, found that truth lay only in mysticism, and by the Andalusian theosophist Ibn al-Arabi.

The events which won the Muslim empire found their Chroniclers at a comparatively late date. Al-Ya’kubî (d. after 891 AD.) said something of them in his compendious history of the peoples of the world. In this regard, an Abbasid courtier of Persian origin Baladhuri (d. 892 AD.) gave accounts with more informations. His work achieved great reputation and was esteemed as conforming to the best classical standards. In that respect he shared honours with a fellow countryman, al-Tabari (Muhammad Ibn Jarir, d. 923 AD.). Tabari’s work entitled ‘annals’ is said to have been composed with the unsifted materials containing the history of the contemporary Islamic world from legendary times down to 914 AD. His commentary on the Qur’an has achieved the same popularity to that of his all other productions of literary works.

The famous historian and geographer of Baghdad, al-Mas’udi (d.956 AD.) wrote a famous work entitled *Muruq al-Dhahab* (The Golden Meadows) for providing the universal history and other materials as well
covering the beliefs and political institutions of various peoples outside the orbit of Islam. In content and nature, it is like an epitome of a work. It is reported that the work has been lost.\textsuperscript{86}

In poetry literature, Abbasid period is marked with a remarkable position. Towards its decline and at the Hamdanid court at Aleppo, the famous Arab poet, al-Mutanabbi (d. 965 AD.) made his great reputation. He clung to the old standards so-closely that he was accused of plagiarism, yet he was a virtuoso in the invention of new rhymes and similes. In externals he influenced the gloomy and ascetic Syrian Abul ‘Ala al-Ma‘arri (d. 1057 AD.), whose poetry comes as near to the introspective and philosophical as Arabic verse ever does. Unlike Mutanabbi he really indulged in praise for gain, his aim rather being to castigate the ignorance and folly of mankind.\textsuperscript{87}

After Abul ‘Ala al-Ma‘arri no great name appears in the poetry of the eastern caliphate, though the anthologies contain verse in plenty, seeing that every provincial ruler encouraged versifiers in the hope of fame. But two qasidas deserve mention, one of the 12th century and the other of the late 13th. The first is Tughra’i’s \textit{Lamiya al-‘Ajam}, a lament for the time, composed in 1111 AD., and the second is the \textit{Qasida al-Burda} (Mantle Ode), a panegyric on the Prophet (PBUH) composed by the Egyptian al-Busiri (d. 1294 AD.) which is regarded by Muslims almost as a sacred text.

In Spain, the classical forms were finding rivals in new styles adopted by a number of composers of whom ‘Abd al-Majid Ibn ‘Abdun (d. 1134 AD.) is best known, while verse in dialect was being popularized by Ibn Quzman (d. 1160 AD.) and others.\textsuperscript{88}

It is interesting to note that an increase in literary artifice marked the prose style of the later ‘Abbasid writers. It reached its full florescence in the Maqâmât (standing addresses) of Harîrî (d. 1122 AD.) os Basra ; this purported to narrate the adventures of a rogue called Abu Zaid in search
of victims, but it is the language which captures the attention, being rhymed prose embroidered with assonance and verbal jugglery of every kind and diversified by poetic citations. 89

Towards the final decline of the 'Abbasids, the writing of biography and history developed under the rulers of 'succession' states. Just as Mahmud of Ghazni had had his exploits celebrated by the historian 'Utbi (d. 1036 AD.), so the history of Saladin's campaigns was compiled by Emad al-Din Ispahani (d.1201 AD.) and a more general account of his life by Baha al-Din (d.1234 AD.). The most celebrated biographer was Ibn Khalikan (d. 1282 AD.) of Irbil who inclined celebrities of all kinds in his universally admired biographical dictionary of Arabic literature. After the historian al-Tabari, his countryman Miskawaih (d.1030 AD.), followed him with a very different critical standard. On the other hand, Al-Tabari's materials were extensively copied by the Arab Ibn al-Athir (d.1234 AD.), but he also provided from independent sources accounts of the pre-Muhammadan wars of the Arab tribes and other annals, as well as a firsthand account of incidents in the crusades when he served under Salah al-Din. His history was epitomized by the Copt al-Makin (d.1273 AD.) and by the Syrian prince, Abdul Fida (d.1331 AD.). Another universal history, Times' Mirror by Sabit Ibn al-Jauzi (d.1257 AD.) son of a Turkish slave, abounds in lively detail concerning Baghdad of the author's day.90

In the year of 1301AD, another famous historian, Ibn Tiqtaqa wrote a work of history about caliphs and their viziers of a special kind and this work was composed by al-Tiqtaqa for Fakhar al-Din, prince of Mosul after whom it was commonly entitled al-Fakhri. It deals with the history of Muslim from the standpoint of the Shi'a, for whom the only legitimate Caliphs to the Prophet (PBUH) are his descendants.91

The history of Egypt was interestingly recounted by the Cairene
Maqrisi (d.1442 AD.) who included in his work an account of the geography of the country together with descriptions of the moments and topography of the Capital.92

In one respect the work of the North African historian, Ibn Khaldun (d.1406 AD.) stands alone. Although his universal history follows the annalistic plan, its famous introduction formulates the laws followed in the rise and decline of peoples in the environment known to him. It is worth mentioning that it was he who showed the way to a philosophy of history.93

It has been observed that both history and geography went on together in every aspect of their literary development. The needs of government officials, pilgrims and other travellers had led first to the compilation of itineraries and then, in the 9th century, to the writing of special books of geography. Masʿudi gave the subject a literary bias; his later commentary, al-Maqdisi of Jerusalem, in 985 AD produced a factual survey of every Mohammedan land except Spain, while in the following century the Persian al-Biruni produced treatises which entitle him to be regarded as a pioneer in the realm of scientific geography. A century afterwards the Moroccan Idrisi (d.1154 AD.) made valuable contributions to the subject, whereas the learned Spanish pilgrim Ibn Jubair (d.1217 AD.) wrote rather as a traveller, giving others the benefit of his experiences about those who were adventuring on the road to the holy cities.94

The Persian Kazvinī (d.1283 AD.) wrote about his wonders of Created Things and brought the whole universe into the contents of his valuable work and described not only the earth and its denizens but the heavens and the super-terrestrial beings also. Manuscripts of his work are numerous, some being finally illuminated with attempts to depict the author’s imaginings. Al-Yaqūt of Greek enriched Arabic literature with a large
dictionary of geography and another of biographies of learned men. But the best and longest descriptive geography in Arabic is the account of his travels given by Ibn Batuta (d.1377 AD.) a native of Tangier who visited most of the lands inhabited by his fellow Muslims.

From the 13th century the post classical period saw the development of narrative prose like the full version of the Arabian Nights dates from Mamluk Cairo. The ‘darkness’ of these centuries should not be exaggerated; the stream of culture and literature continued; particularly in Egypt whose predominance remained in the Arab hegemony starting from the fall of Baghdad (1258 AD.). The 19th century revival in some ways picked up where Ibn Khaldun left off a methodology and ontology of history. It was a clear work having expository manner of a ‘modern’ type.

Modern Period:

The destruction of the Arab caliphate in 1258 AD. and the subsequent invasion of the Mongols culminating in the subjugation of the Arabs by the Ottoman Turks in the early 16th century resulted in the political as well as intellectual decay for the entire Arab world. The Ottoman conquest appears to have induced in Arab lands an intellectual hibernation which was not ended until Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt (1798 AD.). Under its influence Muhammad Ali there founded schools and established a periodical press; at the same time translations from European tongues stirred the Arab mind to an awakening. The classical tradition made for resistance to any change, because much cultivation of Arabic literature was bound up with Islamic lore. But extraneous influences prevailed, the pioneers in the 19th century being Syrian Christains such as the novelist and historian Jurji Zaydan (d.1914 AD.). Yet it was an Egyptian theologian, Mohammad Abduh (d.1905AD.), who compelled recognition of modern ways of thought and opened a road for such Muslim innovators in literature as Dr. Taha Husayn.
(d. 1973 AD.) did. Prose rather than verse was affected, for the poetry composed by an outstanding modern like Ahmad Shouqi (d. 1932 AD), is directly in the classical tradition. It has been observed that these are of the Egyptian scholars and, indeed, Egypt is regarded as being in the van of Arabic letters, even though the writing of fiction, history, essays, and verse flourished wherever Arabic is spoken, in America as well as in the eastern countries.  

In the 19th century, the rise of modern Arabic literature was preluded by a sustained movement for the revival of classical Arabic and an output of literary work directly or indirectly inspired by classical models. The first object of the leaders of this movement was to rescue the Arabic language from its degeneration in the preceding centuries and to restore the heritage of classical literary art; in its purest form it is represented by Nasif al-Yazizi (1800 - 1871) among the Syrians, by Naṣr al-Ḥurinī (d. 1874 AD) and Ali Pasha Mubarak in Egypt and by Mahmud Shukri al-Alusi (1857 - 1923 AD) in Iraq. All of these and many others were consciously ambitious to revive the classical traditions, both in their original productions, e.g. al-Yazizi’s maqāmāt (Majmaʿ al-Bahrayn) in the manner of Harīrī, Ali Pasha’s al-Khitat al-Tawfiqīyya in continuation of al-Maqrīzī, and al-Alusi’s adab collection bulugh al-ʿArab.  

The activity in translation played a vital role in the development of modern Arabic literature. Because, translations from English and French became the order of the day as translations from Greek were the order of the day in the 19th century. Muhammad Yusuf Najm lists seventy French novels and short stories as examples of translated works published in Egypt from 1870 to 1914. Rifaʿat al-Tahtawi’s mawāqiʿ al-aflāk fi waqā‘ī telemāk, Muhammad ʿUthmān al-Jalal (1829 - 1898) whose al-Shaykh Matlūf and al-Manfaluti’s al-fādila are remarkable in this regard.
In the movement of literary translations, the subject matter of adaptation included oriental tales, historical fiction, love stories, social novels, picaresques and detective novels, as a result of which they gave to the birth and development of modern Arabic literature.\(^{101}\)

In the 20th century the Syrian and Lebanese immigrants in the United States produced a school of literary men untrammeled by old conventions and headed by Khalil Gibran (1883 - 1931) and Amin Rihani (d.1940 AD.), whose works in both English and Arabic have a wide vogue.\(^{112}\)

As a matter of fact, the religious and nationalist revivals aided the revival of prose and poetry. The Lebanese dispersal, despite in the United States, has produced a flourishing precious literature also in the South America.

In fine, it is worthmentioning that in the domain of Arabic literature, a new turning point has been evolved out of the renaissance of the 19th and 20th centuries and it marks with didactic and shows a search for balance between traditional and European values.

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