CONCLUSION

After a thorough study of the previous chapters on the present work entitled “al Sultan al-Ha’ir”: A Critical and Analytical Study, we are now to a stage to draw the conclusion by assessing all the aspects of Arabic drama produced by Tawfiq al-Hakim in general, and the drama al - Sultan al-Ha’ir, a masterpiece work has been considered by the critics as one of the excellent dramas of Tawfiq al-Hakim.

Modern Arabic drama thrived under the western influences with the gradual substitution of the novel and short story that appeared in the traditional Arabic prose narrative forms. In fact, modern Arabic Drama finds its first experiment in Beirut in 1847; but for most of the 19th and early 20th centuries productions were largely confined to farce and melodrama, together with free adaptations of western plays. Such initiatives brought a movement towards the establishment of a serious Egyptian theatre started with the efforts of Muhammad Taymur, Antun Yazbak, and Ibrahim Ramzi around the time of World War I, and reached fruition with Tawfīq al-Hakim, who dominated the Egyptian theatre from the 1930s until well after the Free Officers’ Revolution in 1952.

It reveals from this research work that Tawfīq al-Hakim is one of the major figures in modern Arabic literature. In the domain of Arabic drama, his efforts are considered as an important legacy of Arabic literature from the ground of literary genre that evolved in his expressive techniques and mode of language as well. In fact, al-Hakim bears an overarching role in the foundation of an entire literary tradition of Arabic drama. He deals inherently with the objectives related to politics and social affairs in the contemporary Egypt that he lived.
We are aware of the fact that Tawfiq al-Hakim is identified as one of the major pioneer figures in modern Arabic literature. Especially his contribution to modern Arabic drama has given a fillip to the development of Arabic theatre and play; most of his plays have been brought to stage in Egypt and thereby he achieved a good name and fame in the Arab world. In this connection, every art loving individual is bound to remind the credit of Tawfiq al-Hakim for his excellent contributions in the field of modern Arabic drama.

It is imperative to know that the drama entitled “Sultan al-Ha’ir is one of the drama contributions of Tawfiq al-Hakim at par excellence, by which he tried to draw the attention of people towards an international aspect in the contemporary world of supper power. In fact, the play explores in a most effective manner the issue of the legitimating of power. As a drama it plays an important role in the domain of socio-political aspects particularly in Egypt. Here mention may be made that it was designed by Tawfiq al-Hakim while staying in Paris; he was equipped with the knowledge of western drama literature of his contemporaries including the pioneers of the Arab’s dramatists as well. Factually the drama has a linkage with the international struggle of hardship that fell between the executive law in the United Nations and the power exercise with the nuclear and hydrogen bombs. The feature of the drama connects with the estimation of Tawfiq al-Hakim who made his struggle against the destruction and shortcomings related to maladministration.

Tawfiq al-Hakim took his early education from his native place, Alexandria and joined the Law College in Cairo. But Cairo’s artistic milieu fascinated the young student and he leant towards arts and literature leaving his main subject Law. When the famous lawyer ‘Abd al-Rahman Rushdi quit law to start acting and Muhammad Taymur
moved out of his father’s aristocratic circle to live among actors and artists, Tawfiq al-Hakim formed his own troupe and staged amateur plays. Later on, under the spur of his passion he improvised a theatre. During the 1919 revolution he joined student demonstrations and composed national hymns and anthems to inspire the Egyptian nation. In fact, al-Hakim appears to have developed a passion for the theatre from an early age, and used to attend performances by Jurji Abyad and other troupes whenever he could, he began improvising plays with friends and soon started writing plays himself.

In 1921 Tawfiq al-Hakim studied law at the Sultaniya Law School, and was graduated in 1924 and during this period the Azhar University was a ground for the earlier generation. Afterwards Tawfiq al-Hakîm went to Paris for pursuing higher judiciary studies in 1924 where he got a chance to live freely. There he immersed himself totally in acquiring the knowledge of classical and modern European literature in general and that of the French stage in particular. In fact, he was negligent towards his main subject of law education. Tawfiq al-Hakîm stayed for some years in France, but he could not complete his doctorate degree in law due to his deep involvement in theatrical activities; finally he came back to Egypt from France in 1928.

Since then onwards, Tawfiq al-Hakim held a succession of posts in the legal service in different parts of the country. In 1951 he became Director of the national Library *Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyah* and in 1956 he became a member of the Superior Arts Council. Moreover, he worked some time as the Egyptian representative with UNESCO in Paris in 1959. He was awarded the first State Prize in literature in 1961. A Theatre entitled *Masrah al-Hakim* was also formed in Cairo in 1963 and the same was named after him which opened with the performance of his
own play ‘Pygmalion’; it is considered one the greatest achievements and honours in his artistic life.

As one of the outstanding dramatists, Tawfiq al-Hakim started writing different plays; firstly we may mention his first play al-Daif al-Thaqil (The Unwelcome Guest) and in collaboration with his friends he composed four other plays namely Aminusa (1922), al-Mar’a al-Jadidah (1923), al-‘Aris (1924) and Khatim Sulaiman (1924) and in 1925 he completed his sixth play ‘Ali Baba in France. He composed the play Rassasa fil-Qalb especially for the society in lieu of the promotion of acting but unfortunately that society did not survive long enough to put it on the stage.

In fact, the playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim was involved in different issues of socio-political aspects; for which he dared to write more other plays one after another. They are namely Khuruj min al-Jannah (Expulsion from the Paradise), 1928; Ba’d al-Mawt (After the death); Sirr al-Muntahirah (The Suicide Girl’s Secret), 1929; Hayat Tahattamat (A Bullet in the Heart), 1931; and al-Zammar (The Piper, 1932. After these he concentrated on Ahl al-kahf (The Sleepers in the Cave) published in 1933; then he continued writing dramas and he wrote Shaharzad, published in 1934; Muhammad in 1936; Pygmalion in 1942; al-Malik Oudib in 1949; Izis in 1955; Sultan al-Ḥa’ir in 1959 etc. and so many dramas he composed, for which he earned a great success that led to the development of Modern Arabic Literature. Evaluating on Tawfiq al-Hakim’s dramatic skill M.M. Badawi writes as follows:

In many respects al-Hakim seemed to follow in the footsteps of his distinguished predecessor, Muhammad Taymur (1891 – 1921). Like Taymur, he fell under the spell of the theatre while still a student in Egypt. They each went later to France to pursue higher studies, but instead of law they devoted most of their energy to the study of the
French stage. In France their interest in drama was further developed, their taste refined, their ideas sharpened their views of what Egyptian drama should be like formed. Of course, al-Hakim was much more intelligent and much more widely read man. Nevertheless, in their different ways, after their return to Egypt they were both intent on writing serious specifically Egyptian drama which rose above the level of the popular theatre.

As such, we can boldly say that Tawfiq al-Hakim is a prolific Arab dramatist, who left more than eighty plays and earned climax position in the domain of Arabic literature. Tawfiq al-Hakim died in July, 1987.

It has been noticed that the western influences led to the gradual substitution of the novel and short story for traditional Arabic prose narrative forms also bore fruit in the establishment of western-style drama in the Middle East. The first experiments along these lines took place in Beirut in 1847; but for most of the 19th and early 20th centuries productions were largely confined to farce and melodrama, together with free adaptations of western plays. Needless to say that some playwrights made contributions with good number of Arabic dramas that led to the development of Arabic literature. Moves towards the establishment of a serious Egyptian theatre started with the efforts of Muhammad Taymur, Antun Yazbak, and Ibrahim Ramzi around the time of World War I. When Tawfiq al-Hakim came to the scenario of Arabic plays and dramas with his valuable works, they gave an incomparable development of Arabic drama. Precisely speaking, he dominated the Egyptian theatre from the 1930s until well after the Free Officers’ Revolution in 1952.

In fact, Tawfiq al-Hakim was also serious towards philosophical themes of drama that he drew from a variety of cultural sources: *Pygmalion* (1942), an interesting blend of the legends of
Pygmalion and Narcissus; Sulayman al-hakim (Solomon the Wise, 1943), and Al-Malik Udib (King Oedipus, 1949). In addition, he wrote some short plays which he published in newspaper article form and these works were gathered together into two collections, Masrah al-mujtama` (Theatre of Society, 1950) and al-Masrah al-munawwa` (Theatre Miscellany, 1956). The most memorable of these plays is Ughniyyat al-mawt (Death Song), a one-act play that with masterly economy depicts the fraught atmosphere in Upper Egypt as a family awaits the return of the eldest son, a student in Cairo, in order that he may carry out a murder in response to the expectations of a blood feud.

Here it may be mentioned that in response to the social transformations brought about by the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote the play Al-Aydi al-na‘imah (Soft Hands, 1954). It refers to those of a prince of the former royal family who finds himself without a meaningful role in the new society, a position in which he is joined by a young academic who has just finished writing a doctoral thesis on the uses of the Arabic preposition hatta. His play al-Safqah (The Deal, 1956) refers to the theme of land ownership and the exploitation of poor peasant farmers. We find ironical references in the plays of al-Hakim whatever he wrote towards the 1960s, Ya tali’ al-shajarah (1962; The Tree Climber, 1966), was one of his most successful works from this point of view, precisely because its use of the literary language in the dialogue was a major contributor to the non-reality of the atmosphere in this absurdist drama involving extensive passages of non-communication between husband and wife. Al-Hakim continued writing plays during the 1960s, among the most popular of which were Masir sarsar (The Fate of a Cockroach, 1966) and Bank al-qalaq (Anxiety Bank, 1967). In fact, his struggles on behalf of Arabic drama as a literary genre, its techniques, and its language, are coterminous with the
achievement of a central role in contemporary Arab political and social life.

In the thematic context of his dramas, we find him to be inspired by other European dramatists that he brought about in his different plays and dramas. His plays are successful in giving a series of vivid picture of life in the Egyptian countryside; the yawning gulf that separates the rich and the poor, the corruption of men in authority, the hypocrisy of the outwardly pious clergymen who secretly lends money at exorbitant interest, above all the dullness and utter emptiness of village life, which drives the notables and functionaries to spend their evening’s gambling and drinking. He picked up theme for his plays from the glimpse of the way as the women-foek live in the Egyptian society and lack of trust between men and women, husbands and wives, which is revealed in the way wives resort to all manner of tricks, including stealing from their husbands, in order to obtain material gain as we found in his play “A Bullet in the Heart”. In addition, we find him to pick up the theme from the classical from the literature like the Holy Qur’an, Arabian Night, and Christian legends and in this connection, Ahl al-Kahf, Shaharzad, Pygmalion, and al-Malik Oudib are may be exemplified.

As a revolutionary dramatist, Tawfiq al-Hakim also picked up some of his dramatic theme from the society to awaken the Egyptian people. He was thinking mainly of Egypt, its king and its revolution and finally he wrote his plays like al-Daif al-Thaqil and ‘Praxa’.

It is imperative to know that Tawfiq al-Hakim made sincerely an endeavour to represent Arabic dramas and plays as one of the best genre of Arabic literature; and accordingly made his contributions conversant with the people of the Arabs and Arabic readers as well.
Here it is worth-mentioning that the contemporary playwrights of Tawfiq al-Hakim (1898 – 1987) also brought a great development to the field of modern Arabic drama. His slightly elder Contemporary Dramatist Muḥammad Taymur (1894 – 1973) was a novelist and a short story writer, and he turned to play –writing in 1941. He wrote a number of one-act plays in the Egyptian colloquial, concentrating on contemporary Egyptian life. In 1942 Muḥammad Taymur’s three full-length plays namely Suhad, ‘Awali, and al-Munqidha (The Women Saviour) were published. In 1943 Muḥammad Taymur wrote two plays namely Ḥaflat Shay (A Tea Party), and Qanabil (Bombs), of which themes are based on modern Egypt. Subsequently he wrote other two plays namely Kidhb fi Kidhb (A Pack of Lies) and al-Muzayyafun (The False Ones). In fact, both the books were printed in the classical and colloquial Arabic in 1953. His historical dramas were of literary Arabic and they are Ḥawwa’ al-Khalida (Eternal Eve, 1945), al-Yawm Khamr (Wine Today, 1945), Fida’ Ibn Jalā’, Saqr Quraysh and Ashtar min ‘Iblis. In fact, Muḥammad Taymur tried to show them as an imperfection form of human nature.

Then we find his slightly younger contemporary dramatist, ‘Ali Aḥmad Bakathir (1910 – 1969), who was born in Indonesia in an Arab family. He was brought up in Haḍramawt, Yemen. He was introduced to Aḥmad Shawqi’s verse drama, which led him to write a play in verse entitled ‘Human’, published in 1934. After his migration to Egypt he learnt English and took graduation from Cairo University. He worked as a school teacher from 1940 to 1955. As and when he got job in the ministry of culture, was honoured with a state prize in literature in 1962. In fact, he wrote more than thirty plays as well as a marathon dramatization under the title al-Malḥama al-Islamiyya al-Kubra. Then he took to writing plays in prose and produced three plays in two years’
time. They are namely al-Fir‘awn al-Maw‘ud (1945), Shayluk al-Jadid (1945), ‘Awdat al-Firdaws (1946). His drama namely Sirr al-Ḥakim bi Amrillah (1947) relates to a historical aspect for the Fatimid ruler of Egypt al-Ḥakim Abu ‘Ali al-Mansur. His next play known as al-Silsila wa‘l-Ghufran (1951) deals with a universal problem. His other plays are namely Ma‘sat Udab (1949), Mismar Juha (1951), Sirr Shahrazad (1953), Uziris (1959), Dar ibn Luqman, Harut and Marut (1962), al-Fallaḥ al-Faṣiḥ (1966), al-Duda wa‘l-Thu‘ban (1967), Dr. Ḥazim, al-Dunya al-Fawḍa, Qitat wa FiraJulfadan Hanim etc. It has been observed that his works were related to social, historical, and political issues, hatred for Zionism, attack on Marxist thinking and passionate commitment to Arab nationalism and Islam are the main characteristics of his dramas.

We see another contemporary dramatist of Tawfiq al-Hakim; his name is Fatḥi Riḍwan who was a lawyer by profession. Riḍwan also employed literary Arabic for his dialogue in most of his works. It is a matter of fact that he paid no attention to historical issues and confined himself to moral, and philosophical ideas as appears in Dumu‘‘Iblis and Shuqqa li‘l-‘Ijar for expressing socio-political problems. His play Akhlaq li‘l-Bay (1957), ‘Ashr Shakhsiyyat yuhakimuna Mu‘allifan (1957) are done for bringing self confidence and showing protest against the way in the society. He contributed more other important dramas namely Ilah Raghma Anfih, Laytahu Mata, al-Mayyit al-Sakhir, al-Muḥallil and al-Jallad wa‘l-Maḥkum ‘Alayhi bi’l- ‘Idam which were published in 1962; on the other hand his drama namely Mumis Tu’allifu Kitanban was published in 1971, alongside his plays namely al-Ḥa’irun, and Ya Badr were published in 1972 for expressing the mood of nationalistic movements. In fact, his works are marked with displaying his broadmindedness, sanity and sympathy with human feeling. Shortly
speaking, his contribution to the field of modern Arabic drama is remarkable in the Arab world.

It has been noticed that there is an exertion of influences of the western drama on the writings of Tawfiq al-Hakim. Most of the modern Arab litterateurs found to go to the western countries for learning the culture thereof. In this connection we also find that Tawfiq al-Hakim went to Paris in 1925 to obtain a doctorate degree in law; he chose to steep himself in Western culture, imbibing the sense of the role and power of the dramatic medium in its Western form and determined to replicate it in the context of his own society. He returned to Cairo in 1928 without law degree, but achieved full of ideas for his literary projects. In fact, he was fascinated by the literary culture of Paris, and thereby became passionate to develop the position of Arabic drama for intellectual and artistic life. Shortly speaking, it was a surprising matter for Tawfiq al-Hakim to turn away from the popular theatre in Paris; he enjoyed there the stage productions of plays by Ibsen, Pirandello, Maeterlink and Shaw including the daring productions of the Russian Georges Pitoeff. Their highly intellectual contents of drama inspired al-Hakim to write what became known later as his theatre of ideas. Al-Hakim’s stay in Paris over a period more than three years provided him with interesting experience, which became a valuable source material for his creative writing. It is aware of the fact that Tawfiq al-Hakim could learn all the trends of European culture from ancient to modern times. The plays of Sophocles, and their modern versions presented by Andre Gide, Pirandello, Bernard Shaw and Ibsen, inspired al-Hakim to introduce abstract plays which became his first major contribution to the Arab theatre.

In addition, we find other important influences exerted on Tawfiq al-Hakim from those European personalities like Wilde, Moliere,

It has been observed that the drama *al-Sultan al-Ha’ir* (The Confused Sultan) is a masterpiece work of Tawfiq al-Hakim; by which he made an effort to draw the attention of people towards an international aspect in the contemporary world of supper power. The drama was published in 1960. It consists of three acts only. The central point of this drama is that a Mamluk slave soldier could ascend to the rank of sultan and then he came to know that he was not manumitted by his master, the former Sultan who died without manumitting him, because the matter was left out in his carelessness. The earlier Sultan had no real heir of his own. Twenty five years back he purchased one boy slave finding him very much intelligent. Accordingly he made a plan that the slave might rule over the state in future after his death. As such, the slave was nourished as his own child and brought up with full care and education. After his demise, the minister of the state and the chief justice made the slave seated on the throne of the state. But it was tittle-tattle among the subjects that the present Sultan did not have manumission; so he has no right to rule over the free people, who demanded that the present Sultan should be manumitted for the benefit of the state exchequer. Under such circumstances, the present sultan was fallen in dilemma; whether he would subdue the people of the state with an exercise of his power, for
which he was insisted by his minister. In this connection, the chief justice gave a suggestion to the Sultan that he should display a public auction sale before general people, so that someone may purchase him for manumission in the following period. At the primary level of discussion the present Sultan hesitated to the matter of his manumission, but after a long argument with the minister and the chief justice, he was bound to accept the course of manumission. Subsequently he was manumitted with due process of the state law in vogue.

In fact, the drama is meant for the culture and philosophy of the contemporary Egypt and outside as well. In the drama Sultan found criticism of people from the point of his slavery. It brought him to the dilemma that remained between the power and law of the state. In fine, his choice of law solved his problem without blood-shedding, and this philosophy was actually necessary for the countries in the world that affected with war and hostility. In this connection, the law incumbent officials can solve serious problems as appeared in the drama that the chief justice played a vital role in compliance with the necessity of the Sultan. In addition, the lady in the drama known as al-ghaniya (i.e. the lady singer) who was cultured by her master cum husband who gave her training in different ways of art and culture; in fact, her meeting with artists and scholars in different cultural parties opened her mind with chaste, but it was not understood by the vulgar and common people who critically blamed her as a whore. But her position was perceived by the Sultan as and when he was purchased in public auction sale by her and thereby he found her vicinity and attachment personally. She was indeed a well-bred, cultured and educated lady and became a torch-bearer of the society concerned, who honestly could solve the great problem like that of the manumission of the Sultan in the drama. The lady was successful to save firstly the slave trader from the hand of the executioner and
secondly the life of the slave Sultan who was made free by her wealth and witticism. It appears from the drama that an enlightened man can judge properly with his far-sighting caliber and intelligence; while the gossip of the common men is not applicable to the atmosphere as appeared in the drama. The executioner and the slave trader made interactions with various jokes and humour, while the later was awarded punishment for execution, but the executioner failed to cut off his head as the time of execution was appointed to hold at the dawn prayer call and it was lapsed by trickery. Actually the slave trader was condemned by the minister without a proper trial and when he could escape himself from the execution, and his matter led to the way of the Sultan’s manumission, of which testimony we find in the third act of the drama.

In fine, mention may be made that the drama *al-Sultan al-Ha’ir* bears a historical context with a courageous statement of the need of hour, while there is adherence to the laws and a plea to the ruling military regime for eschewing the use of violence and instead seek legitimacy through application of the law.