CHAPTER- II

CONTRIBUTION OF TAWFIQ AL-HAKIM TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARABIC DRAMA

2.1. Development of Arabic Drama

We are aware of the fact that the history of Arabic literature is about two thousand years old. It started from the pre-Islamic period; made a considerable progress during the Umayyad period and it reached the golden age when it was during the Abbasid period (750 – 1258). There began a period of decay in Arabic literature with the downfall of Baghdad in 1258 A.D; as and when the Turks overwhelmed the Arab lands. Again the later years from 1517 – 1800 denote one of the most bleak periods in Arab history when Arabic literature ceased to be creative in productions.

The modern period in Arabic literature is supposed to be begun with the expedition of Napoleon Bonaparte who conquered Egypt in 1798. During the reign of Muhammad Ali modern approach in Arabic literature started with Arab awakening. When Napoleon’s army retreated, Muhammad Ali emerged as a ruler of Egypt, who took initiatives to modernize Egypt’s army and navy and extended his rule over the Arabian Peninsula and the Sudan. Furthermore, he made an extension of his rule even in Syria through forces under the command of his son, Ibrahim Pasha.

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42 Maqsood Ahmed, The Beginnings and Development of Drama in Arabic, New Delhi, 2006, p. 51
44 Ibid., p. 2
It is imperative to know that Muhammad Ali who reigned in Egypt over the periods from May 17, 1805 to March 2, 1848, and took sincere initiatives for the development of modern Arabic literature. In view of coping up the needs found for his army, he took advantage of previous efforts, reprinting twenty of the technical translations made in Turkey from about 1780 onwards, and attracting to his service at least one of the Syrian Christian translators who had worked for the French, Father Rufa’il Zakhur Rahib (d. 1831). But with the characteristic energy and single-mindedness, he was to carry the movement a great deal further forward. The lessons taught by foreign experts in his schools were translated on the spot, and some after revision were translated for wider diffusion. He demanded of students sent abroad that they translate the texts they used. Between 1809 and 1816 he had an agent scouring Italy and France for more books. And in 1835, he founded a school of languages that improved the quality of the work produced and ensured its continuity and extension, government initiatives never ceasing to play an important part in the movement.\(^{45}\)

It has been indicated earlier that the starting-point for an account of modern Arabic literature has traditionally been regarded as 1798, the date of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt. The 19th century saw much of the Middle East being systematically exposed to European ideas and influence on a large scale for the first time, and the resulting re-examination of traditional Islamic society had major implications for most areas of Arab life—political, economic, social and educational. Associated with these developments were changes of major importance for the development of modern Arabic literature, including the growth of a new reading public, the rise of indigenous journalism, and the development of a new, simpler Arabic prose style. In both poetry and

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prose, authors were re-examining traditional Arabic literary conventions, while at the same time the growth of translation from western languages was making European literary forms known to a newly literate public. The resulting literary and cultural renaissance (nahda in Arabic) reached its high point in the last third of the 19th century and was effectively complete by the time of World War I; by then, poetry had seen the flourishing of a vigorous ‘neoclassical’ movement, while in prose traditional Arabic literary forms had been all but replaced by the western novel, short story, and drama.46

In matters of modern Arabic drama, we have 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. 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, and reached fruition with Tawfiq al-Hakim, who dominated the Egyptian theatre from the 1930s until well after the Free Officers’ Revolution in 1952.47

It has been noticed that the experience of an indigenous dramatic tradition in the Arab world, and the implications that this may have for an account of the development of Arabic drama during nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has been the subject of considerable

46 http://www.answers.com/topic/modern-arabic-literature
47 http://www.answers.com/topic/modern-arabic-literature#ixzz 26 eeQysBp
controversy in recent years. Even then, it is impossible to deny the existence of numerous dramatic elements in Muslim culture and Arabic literature, it is equally clear that until the mid-nineteenth century the Arab world had not been home to a theatrical tradition of the type found.

It is indicated by M. M. Badawi that modern Arabic drama is ‘an importation from the West. In fact, it is not solely an importation from the West, and some understanding of the local historical antecedents is essential. The ethos of the local tradition can be found in the work of even the most serious dramatists like Tawfiq al-Hakim up to the present day. Although most Islamic scholars considered the theatre unworthy of scholarly attention, but the eastern, Shi‘ite (شیعیّة), Islamic world had had a tradition of the ‘passion play’ (تعرّیّة) from at least the eighteenth century, and probably considerably earlier. Still older and more widespread was the phenomenon of the ‘shadow-play’ (خیال الظلل), an importation from the Far East, mainly China and India, which was carried westward by Muslim merchants and reached as far as Muslim Spain.

It is imperative to know that the earliest accounts of the shadow play date from the eleventh century AD, and the three shadow plays composed by the oculist Ibn Daniyal (d. 1310) in the particular have excited much scholarly interest. In fact, the idea of the drama may be supposed to come in Arabic literature from composed in a blend of classical and colloquial Arabic and a mixture of verse and rhymed prose that suggests a development from the maqama (مقامة) form. It is aware of the fact that the ‘shadow play’ performances in Cairo lasted well into the twentieth century, when the local cinema industry began to constitute a rival attraction.

Apart from the shadow play, live performances also existed in medieval Islam. We find an example in the fourteenth century of the North African writer Ibn al-Hajj (d. 1336) describing a performance in
which an actor painted his face, stuck on a fur beard, and dressed himself in a red or yellow dress and conical cap, before riding through the streets on a donkey. Furthermore, we find latter accounts by European travelers in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suggest that these techniques had developed little over the preceding five centuries. In 1780, Carsten Niebuhr witnessed a farce in the courtyard of a Cairo house, and in 1815 G. Belzoni saw two farces, one of them apparently focusing on an Arab couple who deceive a European into believing they are rich. In fact, such type of performances had their equivalents in most other parts of the Arab world, continued well after the introduction of Western-based theatrical forms in Egypt and Syria towards the middle of the nineteenth century.

It is imperative to know that an Arabic play published in Algiers in 1847, entitled Nazahat al-mushtaq wa-ghuṣat al-ushshaq fi madinat tiryaq fi al-‘Iraq (نزهات المشتاق و غصن العشاق في مدينة ترياق في العراق), the play is written in a mixture of prose and verse. And based on largely on material from the *Thousand and One Nights* and Ibn Ghanim al-Muqaddasi’s Kitab Kashf al-Asrar ‘an Ḥikam al-Ḥuyur wa-al-Azhar (كتاب الكشف الأسرار عن حكم الحور والأزهر).

**Arabic Drama in Lebanon**

Looking at the overall picture of modern Arabic drama we find that in Lebanon, Arabic dramas were brought by the Christian missionary works of Americans and Jesuits who came to this important zone of the Arab world. It is aware of the fact that the modern drama was brought to written as and when European journeys and stories were translated into Arabic that inspired the Lebanese getting facility to learn at foreign schools. In this connection we firstly find Marun Ilyas Mikha’il

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48 Paul Starkey, Modern Arabic Literature, Edinburgh, 2006, pp. 163 – 164
al-Naqqash (1817 – 1855) who wrote and accordingly staged an Arabic drama *al-Bakhil* (The Miser) in 1847. He produced his second play entitled Abu al-Ḥasan al-Mughaffal aw Haran al-Rashid on 13 January, 1850. Both these dramas were heartily accepted by people in Lebanon. His third and last play al-Ḥasud al-Salihat, or al-Salihat al-Ḥasud was also performed in the newly erected hall in 1851. Again his younger brother Niqula al-Naqqash (1825 – 1894) put on al-Shaykh al-Jahil in 1849, a Farce in 1850, Rabi’a b. (Abi) Zayd al-Mukaddam late in 1850 and a number of free plays in collaboration with the father of Arabic drama. Above all, he encouraged a number of his friends to write plays, who latter became good playwrights namely Ištifan al-Shamali, Antun Qiqanu, Shakir Shuqayr, Antun Shuhaybar and Yusuf al-’Asir. Here mention may be made that Ṭannus al-Ḥurr wrote a social drama al-Shabb al-Jahil al-Sikkir (The Ignorant Young Drunkard) consisting of three act play. Alongside, another playwright by name Khalil al-Yaziji (d.1889) wrote a verse play “Virtue and Faithfulness” which was staged in Beirut in 1878. There arose another playwright ’Adib Ishaq translated Racine’s *Andromaque*, which was first produced in 1875. Apart from these we find more other works of Arabic dramas and in this connection, the contribution of Najib Hubayqah (d. 1906) to the domain of plays is mention-worthy, who also Arabized several plays namely Ibn al-Kha’in, al-Faris-al-’Aswad, Shahid al-Wafa’ etc. Among the most prolific writers was Iskindar Farah (1855 – 1919) was one of the prolific writers and he wrote four plays. In fine, we may mention Butrus al-Bustani (1819 – 1883) who also published a drama Dawud al-Malik in the year of 1906. It is a matter of fact that this was a religious play taken from the story of Samuel I of the Torah.49

49 Maqsood Ahmed, Op., Cit, 2006, pp. 68 – 76
Arabic Drama in Syria

Aḥmad Abu Khalil al-Qabbani (1833 – 1902) was the first one to pay a particular attention to Arabic drama in Syria. In fact, the history of full-fledged Arabic drama actually began with him. But in some missionary schools the students would perform Arabic plays at the end of the educational sessions. These plays were for religious and cultural purposes. In fact, Aḥmad Abu Khalil al-Qabbani is regarded as the father of the Syrian theatre. His first play Nakir al-Jamil (The Ungrateful Man) was one of the influential plays. He performed this play successfully in the house of his grandfather. He went to Alexandria in 1884 and began to produce his plays at the Zizinia theatre and Danube Café. He also had the privilege to act in Cairo and at the Opera House. He continued to be active until 1900 when, after the burning of his own theatre, he returned to Damascus where he retired on a state pension. Altogether he performed thirty one plays, of which fifteen were his own work. Iskandar Farah had also a keen interest in Arabic drama and he produced his first play in a public garden in Damascus. Under his initiative, a large number of plays were produced; because he formed his own troupe The Egyptian Arabic Troupe.50

Arabic drama in Egypt

The position of modern drama in Egypt came with the bold initiative of Napoleon Bonaparte who managed to stage the theatre called Masrah al-Jumhuriyyah wa’l-Funun and also asked the General Kleberg (1753 – 1800) to pay due heed to the development of drama and theatre. A few plays and theatres were staged in Egypt by the Europeans that led to the way of drama development there with a suitable manner. It was Ya‘qub Ṣannu‘ (1839 – 1912), a Jewish born Egyptian who made

50 Ibid, pp. 88 - 90
presentation of the first Arabic theatre. In 1870 he set up a theatre in which he presented more than thirty plays. In fact, he was known as the father of modern Egyptian drama. He also translated some European dramas and staged al-Bakhil and Tarufee by Moliere on the stage of his theatre.

It has been noticed that a sizable number of prominent Syrians connected with the stage immigrated to Egypt during the period of the seventies of the nineteenth century. The most eminent among them were two playwrights namely Salim al-Naqqash and Adib Ishāq. The troupe of Salim al-Naqqash consisting of twelve actors and four actresses first presented Abu al-Ḥasan al-Mughaffal written by Marun on the stage of Zizinya theatre. On December 27, 1876, he staged another drama of Marun, al-Ḥasud al-Saliṭ. Salim al-Naqqash adapted Ghislanzoni’s libertts for ‘Āida and, then, wrote a five act drama entitled Tyrant in literary Arabic prose and verse. After Salim al-Naqqash and Adib Ishāq, their task was carried on by an able Syrian actor, Yusuf al-Khayyat, who presented on 2 November, 1877, Ṣun‘ al-Jamissl. In 1881, he again came to Cairo where he reproduced Abu al-Ḥasan al-Mughaffal.

Sulayman Qurdaḫi (d. 1909) formed his own troupe in Alexandria in 1882 from Yusuf’s troupe. In fact, he was the first man in Egypt, to introduce women on the stage (first his wife and then a gifted Jewess, Layla). He along with Salamah and the actress, Ḥunaynah, performed Telelmaque which was seen by the Khedive himself and consuls of different states. Then he presented Fursan al-‘Arab (فرسان العرب), Zifaf ‘Antarah (زفاف عائرة) etc. In this connection, Qurdaḫi continued his trial on his own, touring the rural provinces of Egypt. He determined to suit the character of both plot and acting to the taste of his audiences, instead of trying to mould their artistic appreciation. In addition, he made stress on musical plays and comedies that drew the
attention of the crowd at large scale; his hiring and training of some professional singers became his mainstay of the Egyptian musical theatre. He made survey over the upper and lower Egypt like Assiyut, Mansura and Tanta, Zagazig and Mahalla al-Kubra; he extended his troupe to North Africa like Tunisia, Algeria, and in Tunisia and thereby he made the foundation of the Arabic Theatre.

Another playwright, Khalil al-Qabbani (1833 – 1902) staged at the Ziziniya theatre several dramas including ‘Iffat al-Muhibbin (عفّة المحبين) ‘Antar (عنتّر) and Nakir al-Jamil (ناذر الجميل) which were written by him. Besides, he produced some new dramas such as Lubab al-Ghuram (ليبّم الغرام), and made adaptation of some other’s dramas. He also established in the street of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz a theatre where he performed some of his plays in 1889 and 1890. He was the first to introduce Oprette to Arabic drama.

A Syrian dramatist, Iskandar Farah, who was educated in Damascus at a Jesuit school, was the director of al-Qabbani’s troupe. Having been seceded, he formed his own troupe in 1891 and produced at the theatre erected in the street of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz several plays such as Multaqa al-Khalifatayn, ‘Aida, Abu al-Hasan al-Mughaffal and al-Amir Abu al-‘Ala. Thereafter, he established his troupe anew with modern facilities. At this theatre he staged the story Maṭāmi‘ al-Nisa (مطاّمّع النساء). Apart from these dramas, he produced and staged many other dramas that brought a good name to his credit.

Salamah Hijazi (1852 – 1917) formed a new troupe that comprised of most skilled actors. He undertook various travels to Arab countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Tunis etc. and finally in 1914, he associated himself with Jurj ‘Abyad (1880 – 1959) with whose help he formed a new company called Abyaḍ Hijazi Troupe. His credit goes with his introduction of musical elements in Arabic drama. In this connection,
the plays, which were performed by him, are Shuhada’ al-Ghuram (شهداء الغرام), al-Raja’ ba’d al-Ya’s (الرجاء بعد اليأس), al-Amir Hasan (الأمير حسن), al-żalum (الظلم),Ṣalaḥ al-Din (صلاح الدين), al-Sirr al-Maknun (السر المكنون) etc.

Egyptian National Troupe was founded by Sulayman al-Ḥaddad in 1887 and this troupe found the great importance in the realm of Arabic drama. A company of literary drama was established by Salim and Amin Aṭa’ Allah in 1896. The New Syrian Troupe was founded by Yūsuf Shukri in 1897. In addition, a society of modern drama was established by George Tanus in 1904. It presented Athrat al-Amal or al-Naṣr al-Ṣaghir, al-Ḥubb al-Sharif, Shahid al-‘Arsh and al-Sha‘b wa’l-Qayṣar.

Here it is imperative to know that at the beginning of the twentieth century the Egyptian theatre became a political force. Its significance can be gauged by the fact that some plays dealing with recent political events which were banned by the censor. They include ‘Urabi Pasha (1900) and Dinshaway (1906). As for the political play is concerned, Fi Sabil al-Istiqlal (For the Sake of Independence) was written by Ibrahim Salim al-Najjar. In fact, it was intercepted for a period due to the portrayal of Muḥammad ‘Ali. Apart from these plays, some other plays were allowed although they still dealt with contemporary events; in this connection, we cite examples of Patriotism (1900), The Heroes of Freedom (1908) and Mustafa Kamil (1908).51

In fine, it may be noted that a good number of Arabic dramas came of the playwrights, who took a lot of pains for keeping the realm of Arabic drama to bring forth in the societies of the Arab world. In fact, the concept of modern Arabic drama came to Arabic literature through European literature. The Arab playwrights tried their level best to have

51 Ibid, pp. 97 – 106
adaptation of some foreign dramas as well. Needless to say that some playwrights made contributions of good number of Arabic dramas that led to the development of Arabic literature. 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. In this connection, an attempt has been made to show his contributions to the field of Arabic dramas in conformity with the methodology of this research work.

2.2. Tawfiq al-Hakim’s Contributions to Arabic Drama

Tawfiq al-Hakim must be considered as one of the most significant figures in twentieth century of Arabic literature. The triumphs and failures that are represented by the reception of his enormous output of plays are emblematic of the issues that have confronted the drama genre as it has endeavored to adapt its complex modes of communication to the societies of the Arab world. It is known that Tawfiq went to Paris in 1925 in view of completing his doctorate in law, but he chose instead 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 a law degree, but filled with ideas for literary projects, some of them already in draft form.

The cause of ‘serious’ drama, at least in its textual form, was in the process of being given a boost by one of the Arab world's greatest litterateurs, Ahmad Shawqi, 'the prince of the poets', who during his latter years penned a number of verse dramas with themes culled from Egyptian and Islamic history; these included Masra `Kliyubatra (The Death of Cleopatra, 1929), Majnun Layla (the name of a famous ghazal poet, 1931), Amirat al-Andalus (The Spanish Princess, 1932), and ‘Ali Bey al-kabir (a ruler of Egypt during the eighteenth century), a play
originally written in 1893 and later revised. However, between the popular traditions of farcical comedy and melodrama and the performance of translated versions of European dramatic masterpieces, there still remained a void within which an indigenous tradition of serious drama could develop. Al-Hakim's desire to replicate the European tradition was thus timely in the extreme, and it is for that reason that the publication and performance of his play, *Ahl al-Kahf* (The People of the Cave, 1933) is such a significant event in Egyptian drama.

The story of 'the people of the cave' is to be found in the eighteenth surah of the Quran as well as in other sources. It concerns the tale of the seven sleepers of Ephesus who, in order to escape the Roman persecution of Christians, take refuge in a cave. They sleep for three hundred years, and wake up in a completely different era - without realizing it, of course. In its use of overarching themes - rebirth into a new world and a predilection for returning to the past - al-Hakim's play obviously touches upon some of the broad cultural topics that were of major concern to intellectuals at the time, and, because of the play's obvious seriousness of purpose, most critics have chosen to emphasize such features.

Within a year al-Hakim produced another major work, *Shahrizad* (Scheherazade, 1934). While the title character is, of course, the famous narrator of the *Thousand and One Nights* collection, the scenario for this play is set after all the tales has been told. Now cured of his vicious anger against the female sex by the story-telling virtuosity of the woman who is now his wife, King Shahriyar abandons his previous ways and embarks on a journey in quest of knowledge, only to discover himself caught in a dilemma whose focus is *Shahrazad* herself; through a linkage to the ancient goddess, Isis, Shahrazad emerges as the ultimate mystery, the source of life and knowledge.
When the National Theatre Troupe was formed in Egypt in 1935, the first production that it mounted was *The People of the Cave*. The performances were not a success; for one thing, audiences seemed unimpressed by a performance in which the action on stage was so limited in comparison with the more popular types of drama. It was such problems in the realm of both production and reception that seem to have led al-Hakim to use some of his play-prefaces in order to develop the notion of his plays as 'theatre des idees', works for reading rather than performance. However, in spite of such critical controversies, he continued to write plays with philosophical themes culled 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).

Some of al-Hakim's frustrations with the performance aspect were diverted by an invitation in 1945 to write a series of short plays for publication in newspaper article form. 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.

In fact, the response of Tawfiq al-Hakim to the social transformations brought about by the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 was the play *Al-Aydi al-na`imah* (Soft Hands, 1954). The 'soft hands' of the title refer 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*. The play explores in an amusing, yet rather obviously didactic, fashion, the ways in which these two apparently useless individuals set about identifying roles for themselves in the new socialist context. While this play may be somewhat lacking in subtlety, it clearly illustrates in the context of al-Hakim's development as a playwright the way in which he had developed his technique in order to broach topics of contemporary interest, not least through a closer linkage between the pacing of dialogue and actions on stage. In 1960 al-Hakim was to provide further illustration of this development in technique with another play set in an earlier period of Egyptian history, *al-Sultan al-hair* (The Sultan Perplexed). The play explores in a most effective manner the issue of the legitimation of power. A Mamluk sultan at the height of his power is suddenly faced with the fact that he has never been manumitted and that he is thus ineligible to be ruler. By 1960 when this play was published, some of the initial euphoria and hope engendered by the Revolution itself, given expression in *al-Aydi al-na`imah*, had begun to fade somewhat. The Egyptian people found it confronting some unsavory realities: the use of the secret police to squelch the public expression of opinion, for example, and the personality cult surrounding the figure of ‘Abd al-Nasir (Nasser). In such a historical context al-Hakim's play can be seen as a somewhat courageous statement of the need for even the mightiest to adhere to the laws of the land and specifically a plea to the ruling military regime to eschew the use of violence and instead seek legitimacy through application of the law.

It must be admitted that Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote all earlier plays in the literary language. He shared his experiences with different levels of dramatic language. In the play, *al-Safqah* (The Deal, 1956), for example - with its themes of land ownership and the exploitation of poor
peasant farmers - he couched the dialogue in something he termed 'a third language', one that could be read as a text in the standard written language of literature, but that could also be performed on stage in a way which, while not exactly the idiom of the colloquial dialect, was certainly comprehensible to a larger population than the literate elite of the city. There is perhaps an irony in the fact that another of al-Hakim's plays of 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 to write 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 short, looking into the volumes of Tawfiq’s works, we must reckon him as one of the major pioneer figures in modern Arabic literature. In the realm of Arabic drama, he fulfils an overarching role as the sole founder of an entire literary tradition, 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.\(^52\)

2.3. **Theme of al-Hakim’s writing**

The theme of writing on anything is a matter of concern in the domain of any literature. Here we need to look into the theme of the writings of Tawfiq al-Hakim’s Arabic dramas and plays. In fact, Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote his dramas and plays keeping in mind a literary trend that exposed in Arabic literature and he followed the model of the European

\(^{52}\) Roger Allen, *An Introduction to Arabic Literature*, Cambridge, 2000, pp. 201 – 204
literary drama and Greek type of dramas. In fact, he made a long introduction for his drama ‘al-Malik Oudib’ that illustrates his process of innovation in Arabic drama literature and gave portraiture of the norm which he chose for creating an innovation in drama literature. His addition of novel exposure to Arabic drama came from the study of Greek drama literature that helped in fact to establish the basis of Arabic drama literature. In support of this opinion, we may refer to the transformation of Greek philosophy to the foundation of Arabic or Islamic philosophy. In the peripheral confluence of Greek subject and Arabic thoughts Tawfiq al-Hakim could discover his wonderful philosophical drama. From this point of view, we may draw an inference on that Tawfiq al-Hakim inserted the Greek themes in the Arabic drama that led to the development of modern Arabic drama literature.

Here it may be mentioned that Tawfiq al-Hakim also has drawn the themes from the old Arabic and Islamic literature as well as from the legendary of Oman and Egypt. In writing the genre of Arabic drama he was factually inspired by the dramas of Lugnepoë of France, and in this connection we find his assertion that he mentioned in the introduction of Pygmalion. Apart from this, he was also inspired by other European dramatists that he brought about in his different plays and dramas.

If we look into the contexts of his different plays, it appears that 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 clergyman 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-folk 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”.  

It appears that sometimes Tawfiq al-Hakim conveyed more than one theme for his dramas but he successfully managed to weave them together into tighter work, which has proved to be one of his most notable stage successes as he wrote his play *al-Sultan al-Ha‘ir*.

It is imperative to know that in most of the plays, Tawfiq al-Hakim picked up the theme from the classical from the literature like the Holy Qur’an, Arabian Night, and Christian legend etc. as we found in Ahl al-Kahf, Shaharzad, Pygmalion, and al-Malik Oudib etc.

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 himself as he wrote his plays like *al-Da‘if al-Thaqil* and ‘Praxa’.

It is worth-mentioning that the search of knowledge is one of the main themes in Tawfiq al-Hakim’s drama. In Shaharzad he makes the king adopt various means of gaining knowledge renunciation of heart and feeling, the deification of the human mind and magic, are all tested for possible source of knowledge. He has to come back to the same drama in *Yâ Tali al-Shajarah*, where he direct questioning, mystical revolutions, magic and ritual are successively used to gain knowledge.  

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53 M. M. Badawi, Modern Arabic Drama in Egypt, Cambridge, 1987 , p. 22
54 Ibid, p. 370
2.4. Tawfiq al-Hakim’s writing Style

In fact, writing style of any genre is a matter of consideration for any literature. Here it is necessary to look into the literary style of Tawfiq al-Hakim. Throughout the dramatic career Tawfiq al-Hakim has attempted to bring together the two elements of thought and entertainment on his plays. In this content we may cite the example of Ahl al-Kahf, Shaharzad, Praxa and Pygmalion. The first two depicted on thought and the last two depicted on entertainment. If we mention his play al-Malik Oudib he has given the all concerns to hide ideas behind action and preserve the full dramatic and theatrical force of the myth. In this play he concentrated on the prestige and traditions of Arabic literature. He also bears keen sense of humour, but this quality finds absence in his play ‘The Suicide’s Secret’.

We find another important writing skill of Tawfiq al-Hakim that he used to represent high class urban Egyptian life. In this connection, we may mention his play ‘A Bullet in the Heart’ which is an artificial comedy written in Egyptian colloquial language.\(^{55}\)

Moreover, most of his plays are styled by the mastery of the mature techniques of narration which is abundantly clear. His narratives flow swiftly, smoothly and spontaneously within a few pages. He also succeeds admirably in his dramatic handling of dialogue which he utilizes to acquaint the reader with his characters, their physical features, their temperaments, their stations in life.

His Mode of Language

The literary strategy of Tawfiq al-Hakim was enabled him to introduce drama as a form of serious literature in Arabic when it was not

\(^{55}\) Ibid, 19
even considered on a part with poetry or even the newly introduced prose genres such as the novel or the essay.

Starting from a near vacuum, Tawfiq al-Hakim first developed the art of dialogue in a manner as to make its reading accepted as a part of thought-provoking literature. He then went a step further by employing dialogue in a broader sense than that required by the restraints of the stage not as a dramatic means but as an end in itself, which he demonstrates with remarkable flair in Muhammad, the biography of the Prophet of Islam.\textsuperscript{56}

Sometimes Tawfiq al-Hakim used the language and dialogue according to his desire of writing the drama for stage or for the reading only as he wrote Ahl al-Kahf, Shahrazad and Pygmalion only for reading only not for staging. In this connection, he mentions in the preface of Pygmalion as follows:

\begin{quote}
“I have been writing for theatre for twenty years aiming to create what is called the coup de theatre, all the time ignoring the existence of the printing press \textit{al-Maṭba’a}. Now I am presenting my plays for the intellect. I transform the actors into ideas moving in the absolute, dressed in nothing but symbols. Although I still retain the spirit of the coup de theatre, this comes about not so much through actions by ideas. So the gap between me and the screen has widened and I do not find a way to take my works to the audience except by way of print. When I wrote \textit{Ahl al-Kahf, Shahrazad} and \textit{Pygmalion}, I got them printed and not staged and did not even call them plays. I kept them intentionally apart from the collection of plays meant to be staged.”\textsuperscript{57}
\end{quote}

As a social dramatist, Tawfiq al-Hakim sometimes used elegant languages in his early plays but later on, seeing the segment of the

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid, pp. 128 – 12
community, he chose the ordinary language because he believed that ordinary language is suitable in processing the story in the theatres as he did his play ‘Audat al-Shabab’ (عودة الشباب).

Sometimes Tawfiq al-Hakim used to write his dramatic dialogue in classical Arabic, flows very smoothly and the language seems to express the speakers’ characters without much difficulty as we found his play ‘The Suicide’s Secret’.

**A Glimpse of characteristic of his Drama**

As a successful dramatist he always concentrated on its dramatic quality. So, we found many characteristics in his plays.

Tawfiq al-Hakim was against the idea of producing his intellectual plays on the stage. He had the distinction of being the first Arab dramatist to get his plays printed before producing them on the stage. There is no denying the fact that by doing so he created a reading public for drama, independent of and not necessarily linked to stage and the precedent set in his case made it possible for dramatists to serialize or publish entire plays before their performances.58

The artistic dramas and plays of Tawfiq al-Hakim is touched the apprehension around the freedom and liberty of women. His controversial play *al-Mar’a al-Jadidah* was more of evidences of the growing movement spread headed by great feminist Qasim Amin. He got popularity as the enemy of women but throughout his life he tried to undo this agony he got. Al-Hakim had been an everlasting revered, beloved and persona in the whole Arab World. His far reaching influence on Arabic drama is felt to this day.

The conflicts of man versus time are remarkable characteristics of Tawfiq al-Hakim’s drama as we have seen in his play

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'Audat al-Shabāb where he discusses the problems aroused from the society as everybody wants to go back to the youth which is quite impossible, so in ‘Audat al-Shabab the hero prefers go back to his old age and retain his place in the group finally.

Moreover, we find that Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote whatever plays, they deal with the concepts of truth and this matter is especially seen in respect of his play entitled al-Malik al-Oudib, in which he gave emphatically the importance on the truth and finally the king compel to accept the reality.59

The inner conflict is also an important characteristic of Tawfiq al-Hakim’s plays, as we found in his play Pygmalion. He generally used this valuable feature to furnish the contemporary issues which has found in the Egyptian society.

2.5. Tawfiq al-Hakim’s Important Dramas

Here an attempt has been made to acquaint the important dramas of Tawfiq al-Hakim with the scholars and readers related to Arabic literature, and it is known to all the scholars of Arabic literature that Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote a good deal of Arabic Dramas, they are highlighted as follows:

‘Ali Baba (علي بابا)

‘Ali Baba is one of the greatest plays written by Tawfiq al-Hakim; he began to write it as his sixth play in 1925. In fact, Tawfiq al-Hakim completed it in France in 1926.60 In the same year it was published during his sojourn in Paris. This play was produced on the stage by the Ukasha Brothers in the same year, while he was in Paris.

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60 Ibid, p. 9
Although this play deals with well known Arabian Nights, but it was not derived from Arabian Heritage in the manner we have seen in the work of other dramatists, such as Marun al-Naqqash and al-Qubbani. In fact, it is said to have based on a French Opera Comique by Albert Vanloo and William Busnach entitled Ali Baba et les quarante voleurs.\(^61\)

**Ahl al-Kahf** (أهل الكهف)

It is a full length, four act play based on the Quranic legend of seven Christians who fled into a cave from fear of being persecuted and were resurrected after three hundred years. They died soon after they became aware of their miracle. This play published in 1933.\(^62\) In fact, the play deals with the theme of death and resurrection; which relates man’s flight against the time and period. In this connection, al-Hakim portrays the conflict of three persons awakening to life after a three hundred years’ sleep in a cave. In the darkness of the cave, Yamlikha and the two ministers Marnush and Mishliniya, whom he had conducted there for shelter, wake up after their slumber. Yamlikha ventures forth to buy some food and discovers that three centuries have elapsed since he and his companions had gone off to sleep. His strange attire and the unfamiliar coins that he tries to use cause suspicion and the populace follows him to the cave with torches and the scene ends in a blaze of light. The tragedy of the situation dawns on Yamlikha with the realization that though the sun is high up, it wends away from the cave and sends no light or heat into the cave.

If we look into the character of the shepherd Yamlikha, his temperament finds simplicity, which is more sensitive to the change than

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\(^{61}\) Maqsood Ahmed, Op., Cit,2006, p. 131

\(^{62}\) Ibid, p. 134
the others. In this connection, he realizes that their world has been dead for centuries and thus encompasses the tragedy.

The character Marnush finds in falling nostalgia that his attitude is that of home loving; and he was not so easily convinced. In his view, life is the dominant factor and the passage of time immaterial. Undaunted, he goes forth to learn that his son has dead for two hundred years. Life takes on a new dimension. Devoid of the past, devoid of tie or reason, it ceases to have substance and delinked from time and age, it fades away.

The other character entitled Mishliniya resists the submission to fatality. His live for Pariska, his own time persecutor’s daughter, is now directed to her descendant, whose name and resemblance she bears the governor’s daughter. He now conforms to the changed way of living and is blissfully aware only of the waking moments and not of the long and weary sleep.

It is a matter of fact that Mishliniya too despairs of life when Pariska does not express her love for him and prefers to get back to the cave. When Pariska finally makes up her mind that she loves him and joins him, it is too late. But her lover Mishliniya was seen to remain without food for a month long, although he could bear the pang of hunger in heart, but it was not possible for his body that was want of strength in fact.

In fact, the playwright, Tawfiq al-Hakim dealt with the theme of the play putting to superb use the interplay of light and darkness, signifying as it were hope and futility, life and death. The dialogues are uniformly good and in certain situations, as in the wooing
of Pariska by Mishliniya. It is admitted that the play is literary masterful and praiseworthy in point of criticism.

Shahrazad

Shahrazad is the second full-length play by Tawfiq al-Hakim. It was published in 1934 just one year later of *Ahl al-Kahf*’s publication, of which theme is supposed to be based on the Arabian Night. In this play the dramatist raises the question whether it is possible for man to live only for the sake of reason and intellect and dedicate his life to the search of knowledge, having been away from the call of the heart and body.

The play begins with the last stage of Shahriyar’s cure. The heroine Shahrazad, with her tales lasting a thousand and one nights, has wrought a miracle by wearing Shahriyar away from his obsession of fresh and blood to the stance of Sufism which makes him seek knowledge to unravel the secrets of the unknown. In this connection, we find his version as follows:

“I am fed up with bodies, fed up with them.”
“I do not want to feel, I want to know.”

The central theme goes in the play in such a way that Shahriyar the king is seen to give order for a virgin to be slain, although such slayings were practiced earlier in view satisfying his lust and pleasure. He professes disdain for the warmth and love of the human flesh and seek knowledge and wisdom, either it may be gone through a magician or an escape from his surroundings. Having been affected with a situation of confusion and bewilderment, he remained unable to soar with his fancies, suspended between the earth and the sky, the ethereal and the real, jealousy and tolerance, rejection and acceptance. In fact, he

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had to cry out in anguish; of which testimony may be noticed in the following text:

 دائما هذه الأرض! لا شيء غير الأرض! هذا السجن الذي يدور، إنّما لا نسير، لا نتقدم ولا نتأخر، لا نرفع ولا نخفض، إنّما نحن ندور، كل شيء يدور.

“Always this earth (is deemed to be) nothing but (it is deemed to be) the earth. In this prison which rotates, we do not go forward, do not progress or go back, neither rise nor fall. We only go round. Everything goes round.”

In the play, Shahriyar had to learn many things about knowledge and wisdom that she displayed her attitudes through her techniques of story telling; keeping passion of the goal he had to prove his superiority over her black lover with his sensuality or his vizier Qamr. It is a matter of fact that Shahrazad is the heroine of the play that bears her name and is supposed to play in it the most significant role. According to the demand of the occasion she shocks, mocks, loves and tantalizes but hardly ever surrenders. She personifies to each one of her lovers a reflection of her own attributes, the sensual, the generous and the wise.

In fact, Shahriyar took active part as professed in the play reflecting his unhappiness and again representing the pure and abstract intellect; sometimes a body wants to caress and a heart wanting a niche. In the final stage of the play, it shows the failure of Shahriyar who left his human susceptibilities seeing Shahrazad in the arms of the black lover he wonders if she still loves him. He, however, has become wiser; he notices that the pure exterior of Shahriyar’s eye is a deception and hides a hard
core. Shahriyar’s mental conflict ends in the victory of life over knowledge and perception.64

**Muhammad** (محمد)

Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote another important play entitled *Muhammad* which was published in 1936 A.D. According to the nature of the play, it finds as a dramatization of the Prophet’s (PBUH) life. In fact, the play is comprised of more than ninety scenes; all of which were written for readers’ reading, not to be acted at all. It is entirely full of dialogues; and from this point of view, the critics are of the opinion that it cannot be considered as a drama by a proper literary assessment. In this play, Tawfiq al-Hakim has tried to project events as they happened free from the interpretation of the biographers and commentators and decided upon the direct method of dialogue so that the readers could visualize the events as if they were taking place in their presence without letting any gap, not even the gap of time, to come between them and the event. He, therefore, lets the historical events speak for themselves.65

**Pygmalion**

The play *Pygmalion* is one of the important plays of Tawfiq al-Hakim, in which he portrayed the inner conflicts. In 1942 he wrote this play having full of experience that he found in years past; yet it was not prepared to admit that he needed a sympathetic and understanding companion. In fact, his antagonism to women was publicized so much that he probably preferred to continue the anti-women stance. In the name of art and the need of executing it away from the woes of martial ties, Tawfiq al-Hakim could not tolerate their presence in close proximity.

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64 Ibid, pp. 132 – 135
65 Maqsood Ahmed, Op., Cit, 2006, p.135
According to Greek legend, Pygmalion was a sculptor who created a beautiful statue of a woman namely Galathea and fell in love with her beauty. He asked the God to breathe life into the statue. God granted the desire of Pygmalion, and he could marry Galathea.

In the consistence of the play, Tawfiq al-Hakim has added two characters with the original Greek play namely Narcissus and Ismin both from Greek mythology. The play gives information that Narcissus is a conceited youth, forever admiring the reflection of his own beauty in the waters of the pool, eventually to be punished for his vanity by being consigned as a flower which can even now be seen by the water-sides. The other character Ismin is a young woman and her reputation spread far and wide due to her noble virtue that she cherished in her all aspects of life.

It appears in the play of Pygmalion that the character Pygmalion marries Galatea and as an artist he reasserts in him about the call that he draws eclipses as a love for his wife. In fact, his devotion to art, to the exclusion of all else, including his wife, that may come in the way of his full realization, causes him to neglect Galatea who then falls in love with Narcissus and runs away with him.

It reveals from the flight of Galatea with Narcissus that she seeks to establish that a woman loves a man and not just the artist whose only concern is his art. However, she returns to the life of the artist as an adoring wife, but fails to move him. She has shed her frivolity and has come to love the artist in her husband. He symbolizes for her not merely the creator. In fact, God creates unblemished and eternal beings of perfect beauty. This adulation and love bore the artist.

As nature goes with a family, Galatea performs her domestic duties with a view to conform her desire. The artist in Pygmalion is enraged with the matter that he sees his beloved sweeping the house, for
which he feels his romantic concept shattered. He needs the perfection of the image and not the reality of a living being. In his disappointment, he beseeches the gods to make Galatea a statute again. As and when he is not content with this, he has to shatter the statue and to his sadistic satisfaction with the very broom that brought about his rage. In such a way, Tawfiq al-Hakim underlines the victory of art over life and the dispensability of all the distraction.\footnote{Ibid, pp. 136 – 137}

**Suleiman al-Hakim**

It is a philosophical play written by Tawfiq al-Hakim, published in 1943 A.D. The consistence of the play *Suleiman al-Hakim* (Solomon the Wise) shows that Suleiman for all his wisdom and wealth cannot win the love of the Queen of Sheba, Bilqis, even though he calls the extra-terrestrial Jinn to help.\footnote{Ismat Mahdi , Op. cit, 1983, p. 130}

It has been observed that Tawfiq al-Hakim brought the theme of the play, *Suleiman al-Hakim* (Solomon the Wise) from the “Old Testament, the Qur’an and the Arabian Nights: its immediate theme is Solomon’s unrequited love for the Queen of Sheba, but the ultimate significance is twofold: first the impotence of power in capturing the heart and second the corrupting influence of absolute power. The first is illustrated both by the failure of the all-powerful and wise Solomon to win the love of the Queen of Sheba, and the Queen’s even more tragic failure to gain the love of her captive prince, Mundhir, who has already lost his heart to her maid.”\footnote{M. M. Badawi, Op. cit, p. 47}

It reveals from the theme of the play that Solomon the Wise suffers from a loose dramatic structure, and a certain inconsistency in the characterization of the Queen of Sheba. In fact, she bears forceful
personality having dominance over her court; but she endures her suffering at the hands of Solomon without any compromise with her dignity, which is seen throughout the play. On the other hand, Solomon fails to force the Queen to love him. In fine, Solomon serves no useful purpose as far as the theme of the play is concerned.\(^69\)

**Al-Malik Oudib**

*Al-Malik Oudib* is a play based on the classical literature of ancient Greece by Tawfiq al-Hakim published in 1949, deals with the concepts of truth and actuality. It is the story of a king wanted to kill his son out of fear and superstition, but the son eventually kills the father and marries his mother in ignorance of the relationship. The truth is overbearing and when the son finds out, he is compelled by remorse to inflict blindness upon himself, sight having failed to help discern the truth but still wishes to continue with her in exile because of his blind love for her. At last, he puts out his sight in despair when sees that she has killed herself. By making him monstrously wish to ignore his discovery of the truth and to continue to live as husband and wife with his mother. In this connection, the playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim expresses his favorite ideas, namely the opposition of what he calls fact and truth; here it is the king Oedipus who loves for Jocasta as his wife. But the truth comes to light at the end of the play as that of Jocasta is his mother.\(^70\)

**Al-Safqah**

*Al-Safqah* (The Deal) is a great play written by the greatest playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim; it was published in 1956 A.D. As it was staged, found greater acceptance of the viewers. In fact, it is not based on

\(^{69}\) Ibid, pp. 47 – 48

ancient myth, which proved to be more a distracting hindrance than a help. In this drama Tawfiq al-Hakim tried to portraits the problems of the society that brought dominating depression to the socio-political environment of the countryside of Egypt before the 1952 Revolution.\footnote{M. M. Badawi, Op. cit., 1999, p. 65}

As the theme goes in the drama, we find that a Belgian company plans to sell by auction some of its landholding in a village and according the persuasion of the cashier Shinūda, the manager agrees to sell it instead directly to the local peasants, on condition that they pay a quarter of the asking price in cash and the rest in installments covering a period of twenty years. As scenes go in the drama, the peasants anxious to celebrate the conclusion of the deal by which they will cease to be exploited labourers and become landowners for the first time in their lives. The manager Hamid Bey rushes off to the assembled peasants who came for land purchase in the process of auction, and in this connection, the peasants appeased him with a certain amount in return for his giving up his intention to bid for the land himself. They also received him with a VIP treatment. As and when he thanked profusely by them and finds one of them slipping into his pocket a huge sum of money. At this situation, he thinks they have gone mad, but he changes his attitude and decides at once to buy the land himself. He deviates from his intention, since his bailiff discouraged him. Against their bribery approach he wants more compensation money but he insists that the attractive young woman, Mabruka, for whom he has developed an uncontrollable lust, accompany him to Cairo, supposedly as a nanny to his son. In favour of the peasants Mabruka agrees to accompany him, in order to save the land deal. In Cairo she tricks him by pretending to be suffering from cholera, with the result that she is whisked off to hospital while he and his family are kept in quarantine for the crucial period of time necessary for the peasants to
sign and seal their deal with the Belgian company. Mabruka is brought back to the village in triumph by her fiancé, Maḥrus, and the entire village celebrates their victory for his misdeeds by making a gift of the money he has lent to the villagers and even by agreeing to finance the wedding of Mabruka and Maḥrus, while their parents have spent on the ‘deal’ all the money they have been carefully saving for their children’s marriage ceremony.

In fact, the drama al-Ṣafqah (The Deal) is an exciting story, in which our interest is not allowed to flag because of excessively long speeches or abstract discussions. Actually we do not find a happy conclusion at the near completion of the beginning of this play until the end of the same. According to the success of other play, it also maintains suspense in its consistence. There is a trickery of the peasants who want to appease the manager Hamid Bey as a reception of celebrity, and they wait for Shinuda to check the accounts; then they are interrupted by the screams of Tuhami’s grandmother who discovers that her grandson has stolen her life–savings which she kept for her funeral expenses, in order to pay his contribution to the purchase of the land. Immediately the rich undertaker has been prevailed upon to lend Tuhami the necessary amount, the peasants run into the major obstacle: the threat posed by the arrival of the big landowner.

The play al-Safaqah (The Deal) consists of three acts, has been suitable for taking place in the open air – the village public square, without any further specified scenery – is significant. In fact, thereby Tawfiq al-Hakim attempted to offer an ‘experimental’ solution to four main problems that continue to beset the Arabic theatre: (1) language, (2) theatre, (3) the public and folklore, and (4) realistic acting. Because of diglossia of modern Arabic, al-Hakim here chose to write not in either the classical or the modern language, but in what has been described as a
third language, namely, a language that at first sight looks as if it were the colloquial but in fact follows the rules of classical Arabic ‘as far as possible’ on the stage. The play al-Ṣafqa is concerned with the matter of linguistic affairs leading to the experiments of Tawfiq al-Hakim; he tackled it by making it possible to perform anywhere of the Arab world. In the consistence of this drama he tried to write for an appeal to a wide audience of different intellectual standards, by introducing as integral parts of the structure folkloric elements such as the peasants’ festivities and the procession of mourning women.\(^{72}\)

`Audat al-Shabab` (عودة الشباب)

`Audat al-Shabab (rejuvenation)` is a social drama by Tawfiq al-Hakim. It deals with the conflict of man versus time. In this play Tawfiq al-Hakim furnishes the story in a scientific way that an old man is given his youth with the help of man an injection discovered by the modern science. Then the dramatist discussed thoroughly the possible consequences for this return to the youth and the old man at the end prefers to return to his old age and to stand in the line of the people suitable for him.

It is a matter of that `Audat al-Shabab (rejuvenation)` is an ‘intellectual’ play in the sense that it engages our mind more than our emotions. As the fact goes in the drama, we find that an aged Pacha hears from his doctor, who has been treating him for a heart condition, that he has just made a breakthrough in his rejuvenation experiments on animals, so he tries to persuade the doctor to use this miraculous medicine on him. When they came out of the bedroom, where the doctor has been giving him his injection, the Pacha looks totally transformed: he is now a handsome, twenty five year old man, so young looking that no one, not

\(^{72}\) Ibid, pp. 65 – 69
even his own wife and daughter, could recognize him. He becomes the object of attention of young women, but he soon meets with insuperable difficulties. For example, he is unable to get his bank to accept his signature, now no longer shaky, on his cheques and he is regarded as too young for the premiership which he has been hoping to achieve. As a way out, he has to proclaim his old self dead and even arranges his own faked funeral. In the meantime the doctor, who has been interviewed by the police in connection with the Pacha’s disappearance, begins to doubt if he is the same patient, gradually becomes mentally confused and is consigned to a mental hospital. However, the Pacha promises to get him out if the doctor can give him an antidote to bring him back to his proper age – which he does. By a surprising turn of events, the Pacha appears in the final scene looking his old self and we are then told that it has all been a dream, lasting no more than a few minutes; the doctor has in fact only given him his usual injection for his heart disease. In fact, we find another surprise at the end of the drama that Pacha having received a telephone call asking him to form a cabinet, suddenly collapsed and died. The main thesis of the play is the futility of man’s flight against time and old age. Before his death the Pacha advises the doctor to confine his wonder treatment to rabbits.  

Briefly speaking, whatever the technique has been played by the dramatist regarding the audience and the blurring of the line of demarcation between dream and reality are strongly reminiscent of the world. Here mention may be made that Tawfiq al-Hakim used in this drama the elegant language, but finally he chose the ordinary language in view of coping up with the perception viewers of the drama and readers of the play as well. In addition to this, the playwright preferred to change

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73 Ibid, pp. 57 – 58
the earlier name *Law ‘araf al-shabab* (If Only the Young Knew) to ‘*Awdat al-Shabab* (Rejuvenation).

**Al-Sultan al-Ha’ir**

*Al-Sultan al-Ha’ir* (The Sultan’s Dilemma) is one of the outstanding works of Tawfiq al-Hakim who wrote it 1959 in Paris. It deals with more than one theme, but it manages to weave them together more skillfully into tighter play that leads to the success on the stage. In fact, while Tawfiq al-Hakim was in Paris, inspired by the great tension in the international situation, the fear and anxiety caused by the inability of world leaders to decide whether the solution to world problems is to be sought in arbitration by the sword or by the law, in resorting to the atom and to hydrogen bombs or to the United Nations. The authorities thereof cannot say which of these alternative courses requires greater courage and which exposes mankind to the graver danger. In fact, Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote this drama to deal with the situations of the contemporary world; although he projected it with theme of historical aspects. The drama was published in 1960.

In the drama *al-Sultan al-Ha’ir* Tawfiq al-Hakim referred to the history of Mamluk period and the action takes place in Cairo. In fact, the play is comprised of three acts; along with a good number of characters like a condemned man (slave trader), executioner, wine seller, muezzin, vizier, chief justice, Sultan, a rich lady and her maid servant.

It is a didactic play and finds a parable about good government. In this drama, Sultan is perceived as only the major character that shows some development. He is the ideal ruler exposed to the civilizing influence of the arts, here clearly represented by the woman
and her artistic environment, and her flouting of the social conversions in pursuit of a higher freedom of the spirit.\textsuperscript{74}

As the methodology goes with this research work, we have discussed the drama al-\textit{Sulṭan al-Ḥa’ir} in the specific chapter in detail and a threadbare study is done on the same in view of reaching at our point of discussion with a proper analysis there upon.

In fine, we have noticed 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. If we look into the consistence of the major plays and drama of Tawfiq al-Hakim, we find him to solve three problems in matters of conveying his message to the readers or audience; in fact he tries to use diglossia of modern Arabic language in the form of classical Arabic and after printed of the play or drama can be understood everywhere in the Arab world. This matter may be termed as third language in the point of view of linguistics. Thereby his technique has been conspicuous to achieve success on the stage. The second problem was dealt by Tawfiq al-Hakim making possible to perform drama anywhere that requires neither stage scenery nor costume. The third problem was solved by him having his play not confined to the Arabic stage; alongside, he addressed even only a small section of the community. No doubt, together with the use of ‘the third language’ he has contributed to the success of his plays on the stage. In fact, the final problem is the difficulty of achieving realism in Arabic acting, since Arabic drama tends to be either farcical or melodramatic. To solve this problem, al-Hakim has chosen as the subject of his play events, situations and characters from every life which can be interpreted on the stage in a realistic manner, without the usual theatrical exaggeration.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid, pp. 69 – 73
Tawfiq al-Hakim concludes his postscript with the remark that there are no final solutions in art or literature and that writers will experiment ceaselessly all their lives.