CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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Introduction

The research work is based on the topic entitled **"Reflection of social reality in the novels of Taha Husain:A study with special reference to *Al- Ayyam & Dua al- Karwan*"** is a comprehensive study. It is basically projected on the Arabic novels, life and works of Taha Husain and the reflection of social reality in his novels, specially in *Al- Ayyam & Dua al- Karwan.*

In Chapter No I, entitled "Introduction", I have discussed about the novel, its concepts and definition, how it is originated and then how it developed etc. I have also describes in this chapter about the different types of Arabic novels like as historical, philosophical and social novels etc. Then I describes about the life and works of Taha Husain, his criticism and his philosophical thought.

1.1. Definition of the novel

There are so many definitions of novel given by famous novelists. Among them I have mentioned some important definitions of novel. According to Professor Warren, "A novel is a fictious narrative which contains a plot", is dogmatic and seems officiously to ignore the general assumption that the novel has to be a portrait of human being. According to Stevension, "The novel is not a transcript of life, to be judged by its exactitude, but a simplification of some or point of life, to stand or fall by its significant simplicity.[1]

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[1] Philip James, Memories and portraits. England 5th edition 1939, p-297

1.2. Origin, growth and development of the Arabic novel

The Arabic novel began in the second half of the nineteenth century with transactions from European languages chiefly French and English, specially in Egypt and Lebanon. Later originally novels were written specially in Syria and Egypt. Many novels appeared in serial form in magazines mainly England and France. At that time, the writers were mainly used in their writings the colloquial Arabic, specially in dialogue. Unfortunately, the spoken language diverges widely between one area and another area. In this way, a Baghdadi and a Cariene might find mutual intelligibility difficult. They resorted to a sort of halfway house between the colloquial and classical Arabic. Sometime, in wishful thinking, it is called "Standard Arabic."

The Arabic novel first flourished in Syria. Thirteen or more novelists were active from 1865 A.D. to 1914 A.D. Most of them were Christians. They travelled to Britain, France, Russia, America or Egypt. They knew foreign languages. Their stories were social, ethical or educational aims. Sometimes it was called *Qissa* (Story) on the title page. The first original novelist was Anton al-Saqqal who wrote many novels. Among them, best novel which was known as *Arrows of Fire* (Al-Ashaumal-Nariyya). During that time another famous novelist was Francis Fathullah Marrash (1836-1873). His novel *Dural Sadat Gharaib al Sadat* was written in 1870 A.D. But it was published in 1872 A.D. It takes the form of a number of stories with a frame story form, somewhat in the manner of the *Thousand and one nights.* This novel starts with the writers miserable feelings at the news of Dance's reverses in the 1870 A.D. war with Prussia.

Influence by Western literary themes and models, some Egyptian writer gradually become individual independent and developed as well as

crafted native Arabic Egyptian novel.[2] Actually, the Egyptian Arabic novel started during the first and second World Wars (1914-1945), a period of significant, intellectual, political and social changes. The beginning of the Arabic novel in Egypt and other countries started about patriotism and nationalism. The Arabic novel generally began in the second half of the nineteenth century with transactions from European languages chiefly French and English, specially in Egypt and Lebanon. Therefore, the modern Egyptian novels were born out of the dynamic conflict between Eastern and Western countries. The novelists gradually attempted themes, styles and techniques in the European works of fictions.

In Chapter No II, entitled "Arabic novel and Taha Husain", I have discussed about the origin of the novels, life and works of Taha Husain.

The greatest scholar, famous prose writer and well-known critic, Taha Husain was born in 1889 A.D. in Upper Egypt. He grew up in the midst of a large family. He was the seventh of the thirteen children of his father and the fifth out of the eleven children of his father's second wife. He was very high ambition for higher study. This giant hero of modern Arabic literature had a surprising quality of merit and multi-dimensional personality though he was blind. He could memories what ever had been read before him. He was a student of Sheikh Muhammad Abduhu. The principle, ideology and valuable works of Taha Husain was highly inspired and influenced by great freedom lover, high esteemed scholar Jamal Uddin Afghani. In his later part of his life he became the minister of Education of Egypt in 1950 A.D. and then he could do all the

[2] Motti Moosa. The origins of Modern Arabic fiction, Lynne Rienner, London. 2nd edn. 1997, p-253

prospective that he dreamt of. Taha Husain uttered saying- "The education is necessary for every persons of nation like the necessity of food, water and air."

In the middle of the nineteenth century the Arabs were influenced by the European literature. At the early time the novel was written on Maqama form. Muhammad Muwailihi's book *Isa Ibn Hisham* considered as the beginning of the modern Arabic novel. Then Haykal's *Zaynab* (1912 A.D.) is the finest vintage of the mature and full fledged modern Egyptian novel. Zaynab was republished in 1929 A.D. Haykal respected by political leaders. The novel was greater popularity among the people. In the same year it was adopted for Cinema and made into a motion picture.[3]

Al-Muwailihi's work *Hadith Isa Ibn Hisham* is a significant contribution to the development of Modern Arabic novel. It was first published as a series of articles in *Misbah al-Sharq* which was his father's newspaper. The work was immediate success; a second edition appeared in 1912 A.D. and a third in 1923 A.D. It was also mentionable that, it was adopted as Egyptian school text book.

The Arabic novel began in the second half of the nineteenth century. During that time, many novels were appeared in serial form of magazines. The most notable magazine was *al-Jinan* (The Gardens). The magazines were established by Butras al-Bustani in Beirut in January, 1870 A.D. It's scope included social and political matters. Al-Bustani serialized his novel *al-Huyam fi Jinah al-Sham* (Passionate love in the Gardens of al-Sham) in *al-Jinah* in 1870 A.D. The novel opens when the

[3] Sakkut Hamdi, Critical introduction to Arabic novel, P-18

author meets the hero, his friend Sulayman Khalid, at the cedars of Lebanon.

Napoleonic occupation of Egypt (1798-1801) was a cause in the development of modern Arabic novel. In 1826 A.D., Muhammad Ali Pasha sent the first large educational mission to France. Rifah al-Tahtawi (1801-1873) was nominated as Imam by Hassan al-Attar to control that mission. They stayed for a period of five years and shortly after his return, he wrote *Takhlis al-ibris Ila Takhlis al-Bariz.* In this book he described about the life of France people, their dresses, food, government, laws and many other topics.

The novel is like a long story intending dramatization of characters, natures and habits in an artistic form as well as in the objective form. It is a portrayal of life in the shape of a story form. In a novel, there should be some plots. In a novel there should be at least a definite and consistent relation to the facts of existence. A novel is not considered as a novel if there are no plots and love interests. The audience can acquired more knowledge by enjoying both of audio and video of a novel because, the people always wants to take their interests to see pictures in the artistic form of their certain facts. A novel based on author's style, point of view, on sensibility or equality of feeling on his ideas. So, these are the main things of a novel to make it as fantastic one. Of course, many people do not read novels at all. On the other hand some people enjoy it for light entertainment.

1.3. Brief Introduction of Taha Husain's works.

Taha Husain was a famous litterateur in modern Arabic literature. A prolific modern Arabic prose writer Taha Husain has a large

contribution in the different fields on modern Arabic language and literature. For the sake of convenience of study, the works of Taha Husain may be divided into four categories. These are - literary works, social works, historical works and fictional works.

Taha Husain was a great literary figure in modern Arabic literature. He has vast contribution on the field of Arabic literature. He selected two of his greatest masters, Abul Ala al-Marri and Ibn Khaldun, for his research topic. In 1914 A.D., Taha Husain completed his thesis and obtained the degree doctor of philosophy for his commendable work. Al-Marri's writing reflection was reflected on Taha Husain.

Taha Husain wrote many books on Abul- Ala al-Marri. Among them famous books are - *Dhikra Abil Ala* in 1915 A.D.; *Tajdid Dhikra Abil Ala* (New Memory of Abil Ala, 1937), *Maa Abil Ala fi Sijnih* (with Abil Ala in his Prison, 1935), and *Sawt Abil Ala* (The voice of Abil Ala, 1944). In all these books Husain describes about the life of al-Marri and his valuable works in a fantastic literary form.[4]

Taha Husain wrote many articles in *al-Jarida* of Lutfi al-Sayyid in 1908 A.D. Then Husain began to publish poems and articles ranging over a wide variety of subjects: current affairs, social and educational reform, moral and religious issues, literary criticism and literary history. The young man received his main training as a writer from two men, Lutfi al-Sayyid and Abd al-Aziz Jawish (1876-1929).

In the field of historical works, he wrote many books. Among them *Fitnat al-Kubra* is a famous book. In this book Taha Husain focused about the outlook of melancholic period of Hazrat Uthman (R. A.). This book consists of two volumes. The first volume deals with the periodical

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[4] Ismat Mahdi, Modern Arabic Literature, Hydarabad, 1983, P-107

situation of Hazrat Uthman (R.A.). And in the second volume, Husain describes about the Caliph Hazrat Ali (R.A.) and his son. Husain portrayed about the conditions of their social sympathy in a good manner in this book very clearly. His other book *Qadat al-Fiqr* (Living Think,1925), where he described about the stages of the development in the Western thought and culture.

Taha Husain has vast contributions on the field of fictional works also. He wrote many novels and only one short story. Among his novels *Al-Ayyam* (The Days, 1927) is an autobiographical novel. His other famous novels are - *Ahlam Shoharzad* (Dreams of Shaharzad, 1934), *Dua al Karwan"*(The Call of the Curlew, 1934), *Al-Adib*, (A Literary man, 1935), and *Shajarat al-Bu's* (The true of Misery, 1944), *Al-Muadhabuna fi al-Ard (* Tormented of the Earth) a collection of Husain's only short stories which was published after the Second World War.

Taha Husain has great contributions on the field of society. He wrote many books for the society. His most important social book is *Ma wara al-Nahr* where he portrays a clear picture of Egyptian society during that time. He also says about the ill nature which born the fertility in the land of Egypt. Husain clearly says in this book that the social character reflects upon some affairs and he focused it through some collections of social pictures in a novelistic style. Husain portrayed the poverty and its bad influenced upon the individual of the society. The writer portrayed the true love between Naim and Khadija in a good style.

Husain's another social book *Al Waid al-Haqq* (The True Promise) where he clearly drew a pen picture of enlightenment of the Islam and calling upon the nation to its socialism model in the early life. His other social book is *Bayn Bayn* (Between Between). It is the book on thought in the life and the society.

Taha Husain was a famous critic in modern Arabic literature. Among his critical works, the more famous are: *Hadith al-Arbaa* (Wednesday Charts), essays in four volumes, on Arabic poetry, *Maal-Mutanabbi* (A study of al-Mutanabbi in two volumes, 1936 and 1937), *Hafiz wa Shawqi* (A Study on Hafiz and Shawqi, 1933) ,*Min Hadith al-Shir wa al-Nathr* (Lecures from the poet and the prose, 1936), *Al-Qasr al-Mashur* (The Enchanted Castle), and a collection of articles written with Tawfiq al-Hakim. He was the first Egyptian or Arab critic to apply modern Western methods to the study of Arabic literature. His criticism suffers from several shortcomings.

Taha Husain was a great philosopher also among the entire Arab world. From the very beginning in his life, he was philosophical mind. He acquired his philosophical knowledge from Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spencer, Heine etc. and Husain utilizes it in the field of Arabic literature.

In Chapter No III, entitled "Themes and techniques of Taha Husain's novels", I have describes about the themes and techniques of different novels written by Taha Husain. He wrote five novels and one collection of short stories. Among his novels *Al-Ayyam* is an autobiographical novel. His other novels are- *Ahlam Shaharzad* (1934), *Dua al-Karwan* (1934), *Al-Adib* (1935), *Shajarat al-Bu's* (1944) and his only collections of short stories is *Al-Muddhabuna fi al-Ard* which was published after the second world war. Now I have given a brief introduction of his novels and different types of techniques which are used by Taha Husain in his novels.

Firstly, I have given a brief description of his autobiographical novel *Al-Ayyam*. Then I should try my level best to find out what types of techniques he uses in this novel. Taha Husain wrote story of *Al-Ayyam* in the third person. This book *Al-Ayyam* is divided into three parts. The first

part of *Al-Ayyam* covers Husain's life up to the age of thirteen years in Upper Egypt. Taha Husain says in this part about his early life, till he was sent by his father to study the religious institution at al-Azhar University. This part contains a detailed the portrayal of the life and the society of the author in Izbat al-Kilo, near the small town of Maghagha, in Upper Egypt where he was born in 1889 A.D. He grew up in the midst of a large family. He was the seventh of the thirteen children of his father and the fifth of the eleven children of his father's second wife. He became blind at the age of three years. But he was very high ambition for higher study. After taking primary education, he went to Al-Azhar University at the age of only thirteen years. This giant hero of modern Arabic literature had a surprising quality of merit and multi dimensional personality though he was blind.

The second part of *Al-Ayyam* covers the period from 1902 A.D. to 1921 A.D. Dr. Taha Husain describes in this part about his student life at al-Azhar., the traditional mode of teaching and the relationship between the students and teachers. In the very beginning of this book Taha Husain says about his student life in al-Azhar University. He gave entrance examination for admission at al-Azhar University. One examiner said to Taha Husain, "You may go now, blind one. May God Grant Your eye sight.

Taha Husain stayed in Cairo for two weeks not knowing of his affairs. So, he transferred to the capital to stay long time as a seeker of knowledge frequenting to the class room in Al-Azhar University. He divided his each day into three phases. These three phases are (a) at home, (b) on the way to al-Azhar University, and (c) at the University itself which he imagines.

Taha Husain published *Mudhakkirat Taha Husain* (The Memories of Taha Husain) in 1967 A.D. and this book is considered as the third part of *Al-Ayyam*. In this part he describes about his life and society till to his last part of life, after returning from Sorbonne to Egypt. He includes every memorable incident in his third part of *Al-Ayyam* very nicely, from Sorbonne to Egypt. In the last chapter of the Mudhakkirat reveals Husain's attitudes towards the 1919 Egyptian revolution led by Sad Zaghlul. He espoused its objectives, but also felt that educated Egyptians like himself had a great responsibility for its eventual success.

Taha Husain uses different types of techniques in his autobiographical novel *Al-Ayyam*. He wrote the whole story in the third person. Raymond Francis reports, that he "merely substituted the pronoun "he" for the pronoun "I" which he presented to us. Taha Husain called himself as al-Fata (The Child) in the third person narrative. Husain reveal in an original and exquisite style of his childhood.

The novel *Al-Ayyam* is factual enough. This book deals with fulfilled aspiration, thinking Cairo, via Alexandria, with Paris via Marseillers. It is the link between the Arab World of Egypt and the Mediterranean world of the West. In Taha Husain's philosophy, it is a vital factor in the whole nature of Egyptian identity. This occidental direction in his thinking often brought him into suspicion and reproach on the part of more or dent nationalist in the Egyptian political and cultural scene.

Dua al-Karwan (The Call of the Curlew) was his first non-autobiographical novel which was published in 1934 A.D. In this novel, Husain describes about the misfortunes of a family which was killed during one of his pleasurable ceremony. The mother Zahra and her two young daughters, Amina and Hanadi moved from one place to another

place for work. And finally they find work as maid-servants. Hanadi works in the house of an engineer. The engineer seduces her and her uncle Nasir kills her. Amina wants to work by taking a new name, Suad. The engineer did not know her identity, tries to seduce her. But she successfully opposes his advances. At last the engineer proposes to marry and than she accepts it.

Taha Husain uses his different types of techniques in this novel very clearly. The point I am trying to make it that his interest in both refinement and culture shows in some of his imagined characters, and situations, particularly in *Dua al-Karwan.* The heroine in this novel is a Bedouin girl who works for an urban family. Husain uses the method of narration in this novel.

Taha Husain published his other novel *Ahlam Shaharzad* (The Dreams of Shaharzad) in 1934 A.D. In this novel Taha Husain spread out the ancient culture of human being and tried to develop the people in every sphere of life. So, it is a historical novel. In this novel he wrote some nature of human being with the fantastic art and technique. Though he was taken the help of some earlier nature of the people, but he portrayed it by modern styles. Because he has some extra ordinary writing style which he creates this novel in an artistic narrative and dialogue styles. He wanted to finish the classification among the people by this novel.

Adib (Man of Letters) is another novel written by Taha Husain which was published in 1935 A.D. In this novel, he describes about his friend Jalal Shuayb. Jalal Shuayb was a close friend of Taha Husain whom he knew from at the Egyptian University and late at the Sorbonne. Husain sets forth the whole story of Shuayb in a technical way. Shuayb had planned differently in the novel which Husain portrays in a good

style. Actually, Taha Husain he himself is played the main role in the whole story of the novel *Adib* in case of Shuayb. So, it is a party autobiographical and partly analytical novel.

Taha Husain's novel *Shajarat al-Bus* (The Tree of Misery) is a fantastic novel which was published in 1944 A.D. The writer Husain describes in this novel about the detailing life and misfortunes of an Egyptian family in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The main theme of this novel is Bu's which permeates the whole novel ad affects the lives of the character. Husain describes in this novel that Abdur Rahman and Ali, were two close traders. They followed one Sheikh who was religious leader. The author uses a good technique which is done by the character of Sheikh. Perhaps it is the most successful work of fiction. The writer wants to social changes, tries to capture in reports through images or events by this novel. It seems that the plot was beyond on Taha Husain's technical capacity as a novelist.

In Chapter No IV entitled "social reality reflected in *Al-Ayyam Dua al-Karwan*", I have discussed firstly about the emergence of the novel on political and social concerns. Then I have summarized the social realism in the Egyptian novels written by the different novelists. After it I have discussed about the social realities which were reflected particular in *Al-Ayyam* and *Dua al-Karwan.*

In the autobiographical novel of Taha Husain's *Al-Ayyam* shows a good reflection of society during those days of Egyptian people. Husain focused the culture of the society by this novel. He published it hopping to scope the realities of the present by contemplating the past. Husain offers a true portrait of the mentality of country people in Upper Egypt. He relates that Peddlers roamed the country side, peddling religious wares and books of magic. Women huge split pieces of onion in the

doorways of their drive away afani or demons. In this way Husain portraits the clear pen- picture of the society during those days in Egypt very clearly.

On the other hand, the novel *Dua al-Karwan* is a social novel. In this novel, Husain describes about the misfortunes of a rural Egyptian family. He says, after the death of the father, the Bedouin mother Zahra and her two young daughters, Amina and Hanadi were moved from one place to another place for work. And at last they settled in a small town as maid-servants. Taha Husain portraits a clear pen picture by this novel during those days in Egypt.

In my Chapter No V entitled "*Al-Ayyam and Dua al-Karwan: A stylistic study*", I have discussed about the writing style of Taha Husain. Then I have given a brief describes about his styles which he uses in the novels *Al-Ayyam and Dua al-Karwan.*

Taha Husain's autobiographical novel *Al-Ayyam* he is a fantastic novel in three volumes. The writing style of the writer in this novel is a very good. His writing in this novel is most appropriately entitled as "the method of picturisation." Because, the writer mainly used its writing by simple words and sentences. He represents the successive of the move in a very easy manner. He portrays a clear pen-picture of Egyptian people during his days by his autobiographical novel *Al-Ayyam.*

Taha Husain wrote this novel by using short and easy sentences with the stylistic techniques. The language of this novel is very simple, but it is very difficult to understand it, because Husain uses some techniques of parallelism in this novel. Many sentences of this novel are composed of two or more parallel parts which are higher synonymous, complementary or contrasting. In this novel, some of the words are

repetition by same other supporter words which makes more powerful meaning of the sentences. It is a good writing style which we see many times in his novel *Al-Ayyam.* He wrote this novel in an artistic style that he art his imagination perfectively.

His style of *al-Ayyam* is characterized by an undulating and melodious prose. He hardly resorts of a dialogue in this novel. Sometimes, he used various descriptive sentences in this novel with his separate writings style. But there is no difference between the narration and the dialogue.

There are some stylistic tools of Taha Husain which has seen in his novel *Al-Ayyam*. His important tools which were used in this novel are given below:

He dependence short sentences and their appropriate used in it. He repeated same word in the same sentences which we have seen in this novel many times. Husain expressed his writing style by portraying a picture using his extra ordinary words. In this way Husain exhibits the picture of the novel very nicely. He also multiplies his successions in this novel which provides the human life. The most significant aspect of Taha Husain's method in the novel *Al-Ayyam* is the use of succession with the help of different tools. He picturising a distant physical pictures in an artistic style.

Taha Husain wrote *Dua al-Karwan* in a good style. In *Dua al-Karwan* he shows in some modern devices. It is the author's largely dramatic novel. The story is that of a Bedouin mother and her daughters who were driven out from their home by their tribe after their father's death. Eventually, they settled in a small town where they earn their living as servants to different households and usually meet only the

weekends. And the author Husain depicted the clear pen-picture of Egyptian society during those days in a good style.

In Chapter No VI entitled "Conclusion", which provides the summery and the findings of the study and suggestions for the further researchers. This research work has already prepared from various sources, directly or indirectly. The Arabic novels were developed between the 19th 20th centuries. The Arabic novel literature developed gradually by some prolific hands. In the modern period the Arabic novel becomes so much popular among the people.

1.4. Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:-

1. To throw the light on Arabic novel.
2. To highlight Taha Husain's contribution to the development of Arabic novel.
3. To highlight the themes and techniques of Taha Husain's novels.
4. To focus on his social reality in the novels of Taha Husain especially in *Al-Ayyam* and *Dua al-Karwan.*
5. To focus the writing style in *Al-Ayyam* and *Dua al-Karwan.*

1.5. Hypotheses of the study

All chapters I have studied in descriptive methods for my research work. I tested mainly through the descriptive methods and to find out how the Arabic novels were influenced by the novels of Western literatures. The Egyptian novel writer followed their style in the writings of western writers.

1.6 .Data and methodology of the study

For this research work, I have analyzed both the primary and secondary sources in English and Arabic languages that I have collected from Assam University, Gauhati University and the other Indian Universities.