CHAPTER – V

AL- SULTAN AL- HA'IR: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

5.1. Introduction

In fact, the Drama *al-sulṭan al-ḥa'ir* (السلطان الحائر) consists of three acts play. The central point of this drama is that a Mamluk slave soldier ascended to the rank of sultan; he came to know that he was not manumitted by the former Sultan, his master who died without manumitting him, since the matter was left out in his carelessness. In fact, the earlier Sultan had no real heir of his own. Twenty five years back he purchased one boy slave finding him very much intelligent. It made him thinking to let the slave 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 the demise of the Sultan, the minister of the state and the chief justice made the slave seated on the throne of Sultan. 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 of the concerned state; and it was their demand – the present Sultan should be manumitted for the benefit of the state exchequer. Under such circumstances, the sultan was fallen in dilemma how to subdue the people of his state exercising his power as it was insisted by his minister. In this connection, the chief justice suggested that the Sultan should display a public auction sale before general people, so that someone may purchase the slave Sultan and manumit him accordingly. 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.

Description

As the Sultan accepted the proposal of his manumission, he was bound to comply with the state law and accordingly declared that he chose the law (*al-qanun*) in stead of the use of sword (*al-ṣaif*). The minister and the chief justice came to know the desire of the Sultan through conversation they had. As a result of which, an Auction Sale was held publicly, where he was purchased by a lady who had also bad reputation in the city, in fact, she was the highest bidder with thirty thousand Dinars. Accordingly the lady agreed to purchase the slave Sultan and to manumit him at the time, when the muezzin would give call to the dawn prayer, so she invited the Sultan at her residence, between them dialogue continued, by which their personality came to light; the slave Sultan disclosed that the lady is free from the charge of whore, she is the woman of culture and art lover, in return of that the lady was pleased to express that the Sultan belonged to pious character, good conduct and amicable behavior.

In the course of their sweet dialogue and reciprocal conversation, the Sultan came to know the reality of the rich lady, while she also inquired of his life history. The Sultan honestly admitted that her life was better than his life considering the position that he faced. In that case, the lady was hopeful that he would remain as the Sultan of the state; moreover the lady tried to know whether he placed someone as special beloved in his soul. But the Sultan gave no any room for his love affair saying no time to consider about that due to severe engagement in the duties of the state administration. She also tried to know about her

position to him whether, at least, her memory would remain in his mind or not. In reply he let her know that her memory could not be erased from his heart that the vicinity brought them together. It was till midnight and their discussion continued, but all of a sudden the muezzin gave call to the dawn prayer before its proper time; so both of them became surprise at the prayer call (*adhan*) and came to know that it was the plan managed by the chief justice who was the law bearer. It was the belief of the chief justice that the manumission would be completed only at the time of the muezzin's call to the dawn prayer, whether it was the proper time of the prayer call or not he ignored thinking only the manumission of the Sultan. Under such circumstances, Sultan passed his voice that he made rejection thereof and also preferred to remain at the vicinity of the lady until and unless the arrival of the dawn prayer time. But the lady, when she saw that the trickery was out the love of the Chief Justice for the Sultan, said to him: "You are now free, your majesty!"[122] In fact, it was due to her love for him, while she could not see him in earlier position, although the dawn prayer call was given earlier. In return of the lady's generosity, the Sultan gifted her with ruby taking from his turban and said: "I shall never forget that I was a slave of you for a night."[123]

Summary of the First Act

In the first act of the play, we find many characters like a condemned man, executioner, wine merchant, maid servant, lady, muezzin, minister, sultan, and Qadi (i.e. chief justice). The dialogue started with a condemned man who was given for death punishment before his trial by the minister. The crime of the condemned was nothing except the utterance that the present sultan did not have manumission,

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[123]Tawfiq al-Hakim (1985), *al-sulṭân al-ḥâ'ir*, Beirut Lebanon p. 213

since a title tattle ran in mouth of common people in the market places. On the other hand, this condemned man was a slave trader. He also sold the present sultan to the earlier sultan with one thousand dinars at his tender age. As and when he leaked the matter in market place, he was given to the executioner for his beheading at the moment of dawn prayer invocation usually made by muezzin. Under such circumstances, the condemned man started talking to the executioner in different ways turning his attention to the action of execution. The executioner answered to his question accordingly letting him wait only for the dawn break and sought to have drunk together and managed the wine merchant to serve two glasses of wine. All along the condemned man made a proposal to him to remain and make fun with a beautiful whore who lived in the house opposite, but it was not accepted except remaining together and drinking wine. As soon as they drank wine and the condemned man paid money from his purse; the executioner started treating him as a hearty fellow and asked him to soothe his heart with singing a song. So that he might be away from his depression in mind. The condemned man was mentally tormented, so he could not share as the executioner desired. Seeing the situation the executioner told him that he was not of executioners, but a gardener. As soon as the window of the beautiful lady's house was opened, her maid servant came out with an objection that her mistress was affected of headache and wished to sleep undisturbed. Then executioner made a cross question to the maid and expressed words of negligence; the maid reciprocally gave counter to the executioner's dishonor. Meanwhile the lady appeared there and warned him to behave with respect and along with her maid disappeared. After a while the maid came out with an old shoe and pointed to the executioner in return of his humiliating criticism done to women. At her severe approach the drunken insanity of his head removed. As the situation arose

there, the executioner was bound to ask apology to the lady and accordingly she accepted his apology. Furthermore, the executioner sought a return that removed intoxication from his head due to the behavior of her maid servant. In this connection, the lady gave a green signal to the executioner that he might drink as much he has capacity to fill his head with her expense from the wine merchant. In fact, the condemned man was her earlier visitor, so she knew him and asked about his crime. Expressed that he did not commit any wrong except the utterance that he made relating to matter of the slave sultan; before his proper trial he was given to the executioner for beheading at the moment when the call to dawn prayer would be given. Then the lady showed her astonishment before the condemned man because of the dawn was about to break; while the executioner was waiting for the muezzin's call to dawn prayer. As soon as muezzin appeared there the executioner asked him to hurry up in calling to dawn prayer. At that moment the lady led the muezzin to her house for serving him a glass of hot drink in view of making his voice aright that affected by the night cold. The muezzin accepted her invitation and said to the executioner that "there is no harm in just a little time and just a small cup." The lady entered her house with the muezzin. The condemned man tried to console the executioner with his idea – inviting him towards singing song saying "come along – sing! I am listening to you with my very being." The executioner was in a position of restlessness due to his failure of duty. Meanwhile the minister appeared there along with his guards and found the condemned man without executed and shouted at the executioner for not having carry out the order. The executioner informed that he was waiting for the call of muezzin to the dawn prayer, but he did not perform the same. As soon as the minister inquired of the muezzin who came out drunk in front of the door of the house and tried to hide himself behind the lady and her maid.

But the minister asked the guards to bring the muezzin before him and interrogated him about the matter whether the call to the dawn prayer was given or not. The muezzin said to him that the call to the dawn prayer was given positively and it was witnessed by the lady and her maid. Then the minister apprehended the executioner due to his failure in carrying out the order that was imposed on him. Of course, he tried to divert the attention of the minister, but he could not succeed and his tongue was tied with bewilderment.

At this juncture, the condemned man found a chance to place his prayer to the notice of the minister asking him whether his complain reached the sultan or nor. In response to his question, the minister let him know that his matter was considered by the sultan who ordered to have management of his trial by the chief justice accompanied by sultan himself. In this connection sultan said to the condemned man: “you shall be given a fair trial in accordance with your wish, and the Chief Qadi shall be in charge of your trial in our presence.” As the trial went, the condemned man informed that he did not commit any wrong except the utterance of the word which was actually known by everyone; then the vizier added that the condemned man claimed that he was the slave trader who undertook the sale of our Sultan in his youth to the former Sultan with a price of only a thousand dinars before twenty years back. In this connection the condemned man added that the sultan in his youth was found very intelligent, his parents were killed by the Mongols and at his present stage having proper wisdom and sound judgment. Vizier said to the Sultan: “Your Majesty, this man claims that you have not yet been manumitted that you are still a slave and that a person bearing such a stigma is not entitled to rule over a free people.” To such allegation, the condemned man said that he did not say alike that, but the people in the market place always enjoyed such gossip and tittle-tattle. At this point of

embarrassments, the sultan strived to conceal the matter along with the bond of the vizier, but the chief Justice did not have recognition in the matter of their plotting and was tenacious for the manumission of the sultan. During the course of discussion the trial of the condemned man was postponed and the vizier, by a sign, ordered everyone to leave off except himself, the sultan and the chief Justice on the stage. There they continued dialogue on the question of sultan's manumission. The Sultan had to take decision on whether he would put down people's agitation with sword or accept law. As the chief justice was adherent to rule of the state, the sultan was bound to think of *qanun* "law" and consider the chief justice's voice "the sword which imposes and yet exposes you, and between the law which threatens and yet protects you." Thinking a while the sultan declared: "The law! I have chosen the law!"[124]

Summary of the Second Act

This Act has been endowed with the characters namely Wine Merchant, First man, Second man, Child, Mother, Attendant, Executioner, Muezzin, Slave Trader, Chief Justice, Rich woman, Unknown man, Minister, General Mob etc.

The manumission process was made in a platform, around which people gathered in row. The wine merchant closed his shop for enjoying the scenario; but the shoemaker was seen to open his shop thinking that people would engross and his business would run good. There groups of men, women and children gathered together and started chatting among themselves. The wine merchant reminded the executioner about the incident that he failed to behead the condemned man waiting for the call of muezzin, being angry at thereupon he informed that the condemned man is pardoned, but he is still in enigma while he was

[124] Ibid, pp. 5 – 90

awaken with a little drunken. The muezzin told him that the matter of the dawn passed away and the condemned man is pardoned, so it should not be further reminded. Then the retinue with the SULTAN at its head appeared, followed by the chief justice, the vizier, and the condemned slave trader. They walked toward the dais, where the sultan seated himself in the middle chair with all around him, and the slave trader stood beside him to face the people.[125]

The slave trader capping his hands announced that he has been charged with carrying out this sale by public auction for the benefit of the exchequer. He added that the Chief Justice would open these proceedings with a word explaining the conditions of this sale. As such, the Chief Justice addressed the people saying that this sale must be accompanied by another contract, a contract of manumission whereby the person who would be highest bidder at the auction might not retain what he bought but must proceed with the manumission at the same session as the contract of sale and he further added that the Vizier would now speak to you about the patriotic character of these proceedings.[126] Following his word, the Vizier addressed people to be serious to deem the occasion one of the most important matters recordable in history. The sultan has chosen to submit to the law seeking his freedom by the method of manumission. In this connection, "whoever of you wishes to redeem the freedom of his beloved Sultan, let him come forward to this auction, and whoever of you pays the highest price will have done a goodly act for his homeland and will be remembered for time immemorial."[127] In fact, the amount of noble deed would be spent on the poor and those in need, in fine, the vizier indicating the slave trader made declaration to have the auction sale begun.

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[125] Ibid, pp. 91 – 105
[126] Ibid, pp. 105 – 106
[127] Ibid, p. 109

It has been observed that the slave trader started the process of auction sale with ten thousand dinars; he was increasing the amount time to time, in this course the shoemaker, unknown man and the leading citizen I, II, and III came out for bidding the tender. At last, it rose to thirty thousand dinars by the unknown man, and then no any bidder came to higher its sum. As a result, the tender went to the hand of unknown man. The Vizier congratulated him and said: "This sublime deed of yours will be inscribed for evermore in the pages of the history of this noble people."[128]

The slave trader asked the unknown man whether the sum of the sale was ready or not; in response the unknown man said: "Certainly – the sacks of gold are but a few paces away." Hearing this word the slave trader became satisfied at him. Then the Chief Justice forwarded to him the contract of sale for signing the document and the unknown man signed thereupon without hesitation, but as and when the Deed of Manumission was placed before him for putting signature, he said: "I have not given permission, having been empowered only in respect of the bidding and the contract of sale. Outside this sphere I have no authorization."[129] The unknown man was only an agent of rich women, but he was in no position of expressing her name. Finding no alternative the vizier commanded the guard to take him away and torture him severely until and unless he reveals the name of the person who appointed him. As and when he was about to punish the door of the lady's house was opened. She appeared and approached the dais, followed by her maid and slave-girls carrying sacks.[130] The lady admitted that she was the person who authorized this man to take part in the auction on her account and in this connection, she might have right same to others; further she

[128] Ibid, p. 117
[129] Ibid, p. 120
[130] Ibid, p. 126

was given to know that along with this sale another deed attached for manumission. At this she was reluctant to manumit. Finding no alternative the vizier tried to make her comply with the condition of the sale, otherwise the sale would be null and void. She was given to understand the matter of manumission as per the law of the state and the condition of the sale. Even then the lady started arguing on the point of purchase through auction sale, so the goods should be handed over to her for possession. She further adds "I refused to be robbed of thing I bought."[131] "A sale is a sale. Possession is possession. Take your due and hand me over what is mine."[132] For such argument of the woman, the chief justice was tired of, desired retirement from that insistence, and admitted his failure to the SULTAN saying in such a way: "Punish me, Your Majesty. I deserve the most terrible punishment for my bad advice and lack of foresight. Order that my head be cut off!"

Then the Vizier tried to solve the matter with his sword, but the SULTAN went in negative and expressed it in beautiful terms: "The Sultan has chosen to submit to the law just like the lowliest individual amongst his subjects."[133] Having been submission to Sultan, and taking his due permission, the Vizier tried to take opinion of people who were present beforehand and accordingly they gave signal to the Vizier for death punishment, but some of them voiced not to kill her; at this the Sultan found no justification for killing the woman. As and when the woman made a blockade to the position of manumission, the Sultan commanded her to approach him for some interrogations and they both reciprocally asked and answered that led to the course of friendly attachment. The woman said to the Sultan: "I don't want to let you go. I don't want to give you up. You belong to me. You are mine – mine." In

[131] Ibid, p.134
[132] Ibid, p. 136
[133] Ibid, p. 139

response to the lady, the Sultan said: “I belong to you and to all the rest of the people.”[134] At this position, the woman demanded the Sultan should be herself only, reversely the Sultan made advocacy only belonging to people in matters of administration as a ruler; if he remains as a ruler, that is not possible to be of her self. When the Sultan expressed giving all cards in her hand, she displayed her pleasure to keep the Sultan in power and added: “A word from my mouth can change your destiny and channel your life either to slavery and bondage, or to freedom and sovereignty.”[135] In fact, the woman expected the sultan “not to give up the rule, not to relinquish the throne.” She wanted him to remain as a Sultan. There found her affirmative to sign the “Deed of Manumission”. As such, the chief justice presented the deed before her. But the lady made a request to the Sultan: “You give me this night to me, Your Majesty – a single night. Honor me by accepting my invitation and be my guest until daybreak. And when the Muezzin gives the call to dawn prayers from this minaret here, I shall sign the deed of manumission and Your Majesty will be free.”[136] In response to her invitation the Sultan benignly accepted. While her authenticity was questioned by the Vizier and chief justice, the lady made a swear triple oath by Almighty God in view of signing the deed of manumission at the moment of muezzin’s call to dawn prayer from on top of that very minaret. With the witness of the chief justice, the Sultan followed the lady into her house with great pleasure.

Summary of the Third Act

As and when the crowds were waiting there for observing the matter of Sultan in the middle of the night, the Vizier ordered the guards to make them away for their homes. The shoemaker and wine

[134] Ibid, p. 150
[135] Ibid, p. 152
[136] Ibid, p. 154

merchant were also along with the crowds; and they refused to depart from there, because the shop of the shoemaker was there and the tavern of the wine merchant was also there. Finally they were brought before the Vizier and interrogated accordingly. They informed him that they can not sleep at all while their Sultan was in the balance position of capricious whims. The woman was supposed to break her promise and there upon we have made a bet. At this the Vizier expressed his pleasure as it was fine; then they added that they are not alone in this matter of bet, because the muezzin and the executioner also have made a bet. Knowing this the Vizier summoned the executioner by his guards, so they brought him before the Vizier.

The Vizier tried to know from the executioner how the woman is; replied to him that she is a liar, a cheater, and a swindler. If she is so, what will her punishment? He deemed her death punishment. As such, he was told to get ready for her execution at the dawn, when the muezzin would give a call to prayer. Then Vizier thought that it is not a crime that merits death. There must be some terrible and serious crime which this woman will not be able to defend herself against – a crime that will earn her the universal bad reputation of the whole people -- as a spy working for the Mongols. Then the people consensually demand her head. Such a planning was made ready for her punishment by the Vizier and the executioner.

Meanwhile they came to see a part of the room in the lady's house, which was lit up, and the lady appeared and moved toward the sofa followed by the Sultan. As soon as the Sultan took a seat there, found all the furniture of the house well magnificent and came to know that her husband was a wealthy merchant having a passion of poetry and singing. The lady sitting at his feet informed that she was bought by the merchant at her age of sixteen years, who then gave her freedom and

married several years before his death. Sultan said, “Your luck was better than mine.” She said in response: “My real good luck is your having honored my house with your presence tonight.” “There is nothing more than that. Earlier I said to you that at my house there is more joy than at yours. I have beautiful slave-girls who excel at dancing and singing and playing on every musical instrument. Be assured, you will not be bored here tonight.”[137] They started talking and the lady asked the Sultan to say about his life story. At that moment Sultan expressed displaying himself to be like the position of *Shahrazad* who had to tell stories throughout the whole night, waiting for the dawn that would decide her fate. Then the lady laughed saying herself as Shahriyar. After such a joking the lady told him that she will gladden him more than *Shahrazad*; she started clapping and soothing music issues forth from behind the screens. Furthermore she rose and danced for the delightfulness of the Sultan and said that after her manumission and marriage did not dance except before the Sultan tonight. On other nights it is the slave-girls who do the dancing and singing. Sultan thought that the lady earned all the wealth by her demand of high fees for her dance. The lady expressed to this sentiment that she has inherited her wealth only from her husband and she enjoyed dancing only for continuity of art. She added further that she used to enjoy the company of men for their souls, not for their bodies; for which people took her in other way. The actual story is that “when I was a young slave-girl, my master brought me up to love poetry and singing and playing on musical instruments. He used to make me attend banquets and converse with his guests, who were poets and singers; they also included intellectuals and men of wit and charm. We would spend the night reciting poetry, singing and playing music and conversing, quoting and capping quotations from the masterpieces of literature, and laughing from

[137] Ibid, pp. 168 - 69

the depths of our hearts. Those were wonderfully enjoyable nights, but they were also innocent and chaste. Please believe that. My master was a good man and knew no pleasure in life other than these nights – a pleasure without sin, without vulgarity. In this way did he bring me up and educate me. And when I latter became his wife he did not wish to deprive me of the pleasure of those nights which used so to enchant me; he therefore allowed me to continue to attend, though from behind silken curtains."[138] As such, she was unable to give up this practice after the death of her husband; she continued to invite her husband's guests. For this business people of the district began spreading gossip at seeing men nightly entering the house of a woman with no husband, she was bound to ponder over people's pronouncing her guilty and judge her own behavior. Still she was in no position to change her life and habits. So she was intentionally insolent to the Sultan, and deliberately vulgar and impudent before the masses of people. As per intention she had continued her talking with Sultan and expressed how she was impressed by him since his decision renouncing the use of the sword. The Sultan advocates that the real victory is in solving the problem by sleight of hand. The lady was bound to praise him saying: "You have composure, self-confidence, control over your actions, the ability to do what you want with meticulous precision and resoluteness. You are far from being weak or wily – you're frank, natural, and courageous."[139] Alongside the lady sought permission from the Sultan to ask about his personal matter pointing to his love for a woman which he finds special among all other women. In response to that Sultan told her that he has no time to look into the matter of love due to shouldering heavy burden of the governance. Then the lady put him another question that relates to her. That's after your manumission at

[138] Ibid, pp. 174 – 75
[139] Ibid, p. 183

dawn you will return to your palace, but what memory will you keep alive for me? The Sultan admitted to retain a pleasant memory which could not be erased altogether. Again the lady asked him: "Is this night our last night together?"[140] The Sultan found the question difficult one to answer.

At the climax of their talking the maid-servant appeared and informed about the menu ready for dinner. She led him into another room to the accompaniment of music. The light in the house was extinguished and a dim light came on in the square. There about the lady and Sultan many fanciful fallacies were made by the shoemaker and the wine merchant who reached at the cross decision – either the agreement was complete or not related to manumission of the Sultan. On this question the whole city was staying up in that night.

The matter of the Sultan and the lady was observed by the Vizier and the executioner as well; while the executioner had a suspicion on the lady to be a whore, but the Vizier was observing the opinion of the executioner who placed the information as a reporter. In fact, the Vizier defended the case of Sultan saying: "Their talk does not deal with the profound reason, the exalted meaning of all that has happened."[141]

Meanwhile the Chief Justice appeared there, because he could not sleep in that night. The Vizier said that the whole of the rest of the city has not slept tonight. And both of them were in doubt as people were in gossip; the worst possible things. The point of interest and excitement for the people was the scandalous side of the affair. To get rid of that the Chief Justice made a plan to call the muezzin and give the call to the dawn prayer earlier even in the midnight. Firstly the muezzin was reluctant, but finding the cause of saving the manumission of the Sultan

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[140] Ibid, p. 188
[141] Ibid, p. 195

earlier he admitted to accord the matter. He went as swift as the winds; praying to God to make his tricks successful this time. He started giving the call to dawn prayer as God is great! God is great! Come to prayers! Come to prayers! Come to salvation! Come to salvation! The crowd made their appearance in a state of agitation, astonishment, protest, and anger. According to the order of the Vizier guards made clear the square and every one out of the square. The light went on in the lady's room. She appeared at the window followed by the Sultan. At that moment she expressed in strange, but Qadi and Vizier called the lady to come down. As such, she and the Sultan left the room coming out of the house. Looking at the sky the Sultan remarked that "this is truly extraordinary"[142] The Chief Justice said: "We have all heard the Muezzin give the call to dawn prayers;[143] while the Lady also heard the call to the dawn prayer since she admitted it." He added more: "Here is the deed of manumission – you have only to sign."[144] The Lady said: "This is not honest! It is sheer trickery!" Then the Vizier said: "Trickery matched by trickery! You began it – and he who begins is the greater offender. You are the last person to object and protest." Reacting to his comment the Sultan shouted and said: "She shall not sign and I absolutely refuse that she should sign this way."[145] As a matter of fact, the Sultan was disappointed with the trickery of the Chief Justice who wanted to make him free in this manner; and disallowed him to explain further and said to him:"Go now! It is better for you to go home and betake yourself to bed until the morning. As for me I shall respect this lady's situation – in the true sense in which we all understand it."[146] Then the lady said: "No, your Chief Qadi wanted to rescue you, and I do not want to be any less

[142] Ibid, p. 207
[143] Ibid, p. 207
[144]Ibid, p. 208
[145] Ibid, p. 210
[146] Ibid, p. 212

loyal than him toward you. You are now free, Your Majesty."[147] And she requested to bring the deed of manumission, and when it was made available before her, she put her signature on the same. In such a way the Sultan was manumitted. As a result of which, the Sultan declared her to be the outstanding of women and the people of the city must respect her. That is an order 'O Vizier'! And he praised her generosity and asked to return her money with an order passed to the Vizier for payment from his private purse the amount which she has lost. The Lady was negative to accept the amount; but she requested the Sultan only to retain her memory. In this connection, the Sultan took the enormous ruby from his turban to present her as a token of memory in view of keeping the memento of it and added: "This is a petty thing in comparison with your goodness." Responding to the comment of the Sultan the lady expressed that she was not deserved and worthy of it. In fine, the Sultan and the lady exchanged their farewell words with goodbye, but the Lady was shedding tears and the Sultan asked her whether she was crying – she nodded: "It is for joy." Furthermore, the Sultan uttered: "I shall never forget that I was your slave for a night." She lowered her head to hide her tears and said: "For the sake of principles and the law, Your Majesty!"[148]

In such a way, the three acts drama came to end with a philosophy that prevailed in the society of the contemporary Egypt and outside of the world. In fact, the dramatist Tawfiq al-Hakim excellently dealt the political aspects with in-depth introspection as he designed thereof.

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[147] Ibid, p. 213
[148] Ibid, p. 216

5.2. Theme of the Drama

In fact, the author was inspired with the thought related to this drama as soon as he achieved knowledge during his stay in Paris about the international struggle of hardship that fell between the executive law in the United Nations and the power execution in matters of the nuclear and hydrogen bombs. The feature of the drama has been combined with the philosophy of a common author although it was written by Tawfiq al-Hakim. The sole thought of the plan which connects with his literary production, it is the estimation of his struggle against destruction and shortcomings of age and period.

It is certain that the Sultan was in dilemma between power and law. As he was in the capacity of Sultan had the privilege to refuse the problem of his sale in the public auction and make the tongue silent with the sharp of the sword, but he perceived that the committing wrong would bring heavy loss and soon it would be inherited by the latter generations, because they would make way to jump into the throne of power for those who sought to rule; and the Sultan might be the first victim of that year. Although the Sultan made clear of the sound of law and that would be example for everyone who would come after him. Thereby the Sultan would be successful to protect himself and his power as well. In fact, in such a way the Sultan was inspired by the chief justice.[149]

Subsequently the process of manumission started and when the "Deed of Manumission" was placed before her, she was firstly reluctant to put her signature on it with an argument – she cannot loss her property in any way; but she wanted the Sultan to remain in his capacity.

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[149] Dr Husain Ali Muhammad: *qirâ' fi masrahiya al-sulṭân al-ḥâ'ir li tawfîq al-Hakim*, conference for literary particles of book on the contemporary Egyptian literature, held on 5th January, 2007 (preserved under http://magra.montadamoslim.com/t712-topic)

As and when her latter desire gave an affirmative signal, “Deed of Manumission” was placed before her by the chief justice. On that occasion the lady made a request to the Sultan: “You give me this night to me, Your Majesty – a single night. Honor me by accepting my invitation and be my guest until daybreak. And when the Muezzin gives the call to dawn prayers from this minaret here, I shall sign the deed of manumission and Your Majesty will be free.”[150] In response to that the Sultan benignly accepted her invitation. It was with the witness of the chief justice, the Sultan followed the lady into her house with great pleasure.

Here mention may be made that the Sultan found an amicable atmosphere at her residence during the night. As the lady received him with a great interest which she needed as a part of her culture. They had a talk reciprocally. Thereby the Sultan came to know that the lady used to chat with the guests of her beloved husband who made her familiar with the robust culture of the modern society. Her husband was fond of art, songs, poetry and playing musical instruments. At her age of sixteen years only she was bought by a rich merchant who used to go to the party of poetry recitation, songs, cultural programs in view of making her educated and cultured; who then gave her freedom and married several years before his death. Even after his demise, she continued the culture, for which she faced the ill reputation in the city, although she took everything with chaste and honor. In fine, the lady had to leave all these arts, because she was a woman without husband, if she received her known guests as usual, had to face a lot of tittle-tattle and gossips. Still she was in no position to change her life and habits. So, she was intentionally insolent to the Sultan, and deliberately vulgar and

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[150] Tawfiq al-Hakim , *al-sulṭan al-ḥa’ir*, Beirut Lebanon,1985, p. 154

impudent before the masses of people. As per intention she had continued her talking with the Sultan and expressed how she was impressed by him since his decision renouncing the use of the sword. The Sultan advocated that the real victory lies in the solution of the problem by sleight of hand. The lady was bound to praise him saying: "You have composure, self-confidence, control over your actions, the ability to do what you want with meticulous precision and resoluteness. You are far from being weak or wily – you're frank, natural, and courageous."[151]

Thus the lady went ahead in conversation and sought permission from the Sultan to know whether he had special love for someone and what would be her position after his manumission. In this connection, the Sultan expressed that it is not possible to erase her memory from his heart and mind. All of a sudden the muezzin gave a call to the dawn prayer, although it was midnight. Then they had to stop their talking and came out of the house. The chief justice told her to sign the "Deed of Manumission". There upon the Sultan was furious for taking the means of trickery with the prayer call in early time and made rejection of the demand of the chief justice; and desired to pass the rest time of the night. Then the lady said: "No, your Chief Justice wanted to rescue you, and I do not want to be any less loyal than him toward you. You are now free, Your Majesty."[152] And she requested to bring the deed of manumission, and when it was made available before her, she put her signature on the same. In such a way the Sultan was manumitted. As a result of which, the Sultan declared her as an outstanding woman and the people of the city must respect her.

Here an attempt has been made to show the situation that prevailed in Egypt, for which the playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim had to

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[151] Ibid, p. 183
[152] Ibid, p. 213

draw attention of people with his drama *al-Sultan al-Ha'ir* (السلطان الحائر). In this connection, we find information as follows:

المغزى الحقيقي للمسرحية "هو أن القوي من يحتمي بالقانون والحق ، وليس هو من يحتمي بالسيف ، وأن الخضوع للعدالة مجد ورفعة وقوة، ونكتشف أن حاجات المجتمع إلى سيادة القانون ـ على النحو الصحيح تماماً ـ أشد من حاجتها إلى أي شيء آخر، ويظهر لنا بوضوح أن دور السلطان في حماية القانون هو دور جوهري وأصيل، بل هو الدور الأول، إذا فقده أو حاد عنه فقد كل شيء، وندرك أيضا أن حاجة الأمة إلى القاضي الأمين العادل تُساوي تماماً حاجتها إلى الجيش القوي الظافر، فالجيش يدفع البغي عن الأوطان، والقاضي يدفع البغي عن الحقوق التي بدونها يُصبح الأفراد هملاً وضياعاً، بل لا يمكن لأفراد تضيع عدالة القانون بينهم أن يصنعوا من أنفسهم جيشاً منتصراً، أو أمة ذات قيمة.

ولعل مؤلف المسرحية أراد أن ينبِّه إلى غياب الديمقراطية بعد قيام ثورة يوليو 1956 م ، "وذلك عندما غابت شمس الملكية في مصر، وتطلّع المصريون إلى حكم أفضل، وجاءت الوعود الكثيرة بتحقيق آمال الديمقراطية من خلال مؤسسات اشتراكية ، ولكن تبدّد سراب تلك الوعود، وظهر أن شمس الديمقراطية لم تشرق بمصر، بل ساد ظلام دامس سرت فيه المفاسد، وكان الحكم للسيف ، وانزوى القانون في غياهب الظلام.[153]

(The real significance of the drama goes as – the power is of the protection of law and right; and it cannot be defended by the sword. The submission to the justice is a matter of glory, elevation and power. We have discovered that the society needs the leadership of the law in the mode of perfectness, which is more and more necessary thing than any other matter. It clearly appears to us that the role of the Sultan is in the assistance of law. It may be considered as the minute and original role,

[153] http:// www.ar.wikipedia.org (المغزي من المسرحية)

but it is of the prime thing, if it is lost or turned away from it, then everything is lost. We also come to know that the nation needs the justice and trustworthy Judgment; it perfectly makes equal to the necessity of successful strong army, because the army defends the motherland from any rebellious movements and the Judge defends rebellion from having no rights that the individuals become aggressive and destructive ones. But it is not possible for any individuals to loss the justice of law to make army victorious for them or the nation possesses value among them.

Perhaps the playwright has intended to awaken people from the absence of democracy after the movement taken place on the July, 1956 A.D. That was the period that the sun set in Egypt and the Egyptians were waiting for good governance. Many apprehensions came with the investigation of democratic hopes during the period of socialist movements. But the mirage of that apprehension dispersed and appeared that the Sun of the democracy would not rise in Egypt. The deep darkness encircled and the commotion continued therein. There was the governance of the sword and the law was concealed in the dark night.)

Analysis of the Drama

In matters of analysis of this drama, here an attempt has been made to shade light on there upon considering it as a theatrical play. In fact, the idea of struggle between power and law was the source that created the drama *al-sulṭan al-ḥa'ir*. How the idea came to the mind of the playwright it is referred to in the statement as follows: "This drama was written in autumn, 1959, when the author was in Paris, with a passage of period he noticed there what happened in the world of today, and the spirit of that question that today's world placed before him in dilemma: the ongoing problems that appeared in the world, whether they might be solved by the rule of the sword or the law? ….. by the

supplication to power or principle?" In fact, this information is available in the drama (السلطان الحائر) as follows:

"هذه المسرحية كتبت في خريف 1950 م ، عندما كان المؤلف في باريس ، يقضي فترة يشهد فيها ما يجري في عالم اليوم. و وحيها ذلك السؤال الذي يقف عالمنا اليوم أمامه حائرا: هل حل مشكلات العالم هو في الاحتكام إلى السيف أو إلى القانون ؟ ..... في الالتجاء إلى القوة أو إلى المبدأ ؟ "[154]

The drama *al-Sultan al-Ha'ir* is one of the masterpieces of Tawfiq al-Hakim without any doubt. It consists of linguistics text, modern idea, and beauty of the purpose, which bears ethos of satirical comedy. This play is comprised of three acts speaking about a conflict that the whole absolute power whether remains in the hands of the ruler, or the force of law, or in other words. It is a reply to the solution on the surface of the earth. It is not that we should resort to the power or the principle of our unfaithful problems.

We find that Tawfiq al-Hakim, who wrote this drama in the city of Paris, he reacts to what has passed through the world in Autumn 1959, the superpower like the United States of America having largest nuclear force to end the Second World War, rather than to invoke the laws of the Security Council and the United Nations, which represents the "principle" in the international political conflict.

Returning to the play, we find that al-Hakim took advantage of satirical comedy scene; a man about to die at the hands of his executioner, for some reason cannot convict him of the statement vowed executioner lowered the sword on his neck, although it is known because of his shrewdness. We remain throughout the first chapter of the play we follow with the anticipating eyes knowing cause of order for this old man,

[154] Tawfiq al-Hakim , Op. cit.1985, p. 3

and read with joy that funny satirical dialogue between the old "slave trader" and the executioner, who waits on pins until the invocation of the dawn prayer for execution of the judgment. The careful reader may see some sort of irony in the presence of these two characters in the same place, and the slave trade had the concealment of his duty in the purchase of human beings as slaves, and the executioner who implements the provisions of the law without looking into the reality of the issue or even know if the convict had received a fair trial. In this connection, we find text of the drama as follows:

الجلاد : صه ! ..... صه ! . . . أغلق فمك لقد أمرت بقطع رقبتك في الحال لو نبست بحرف عن جريمتك ! . . .

المحكوم عليه : لا تنزعج ! . . . أغلقت فمي ! . . .

الجلاد : هذا خير ما تفعل ! . . . أن تغلق فمك و أن تتركني أهنأ بنومي ! . . . إنه من مصلحتك أن أستمتع بنوم هادئ هنئ ! . . .

المحكوم عليه : من مصلحتي ؟ !

الجلاد : بالتاكيد . . . من مصلحتك أن أكون في راحة تامة و صحة جيدة، جسما و نفسا ، لأني حين أكون متبا ضيق الصدر متوتر الأعصاب . فإن يدي تصاب بالرعشة ، و عند ما تصاب بالرعشة فإني أؤدي عملي أداء سيئا . . .

المحكوم عليه : و ما شأني بعملك ؟ ! . . .

الجلاد : يا أحمق ! . . . عملي متصل برقبتك ! . . . إن سوء الأداء معناه أن رقبتك لن تقطع قطعا حسنا . . . لأن القطع الحسن يحتاج إلى يد ثابتة و نفس هادئة ، حتى يطاح الرأس بضربة واحدة ، لا تدع لك وقتا للإحساس بالألم . . . فهمت الآن ؟ ! . . .

المحكوم عليه : حقا . . . هذا صحيح ! . . .[155]

[155] Ibid, pp. 7 – 8

Executioner : Quiet! Quiet! Shut your mouth – I have been ordered to cut off your head right away if you utter a word about your crime.

Condemned Man: Don't be upset. I shall shut my mouth.

Executioner : You have done well to shut your mouth and leave me to enjoy my sleep. It is in your interest that I should enjoy a quiet and peaceful sleep.

Condemned Man: In my interest?

Executioner : Certainly, it is in your interest that I should be completely rested and in excellent health, both in body and mind; because when I am tired, depressed, and strung up, my hand shakes, and when it shakes I perform my work badly.

Condemned Man: And what is your work to me!

Executioner : Fool! My work has to do with your neck. Poor performance means your neck will not be cleanly cut, because a clean cut requires a steady hand and calm mind so that the hand may fly off at a single blow, allowing you no time to feel any sensation of pain. Do you understand now?

Condemned Man: Of course, that is quite right.

In the above mentioned text, we find a condemned man; he was actually a slave trader, who knew about the reality of the present Sultan as a slave of the earlier Sultan. To keep his tongue silent, he was condemned for execution without proper trial. It was the diplomatic policy of the minister in the drama. In fact, the playwright has tried to demonstrate the matter putting in comical exposition. Furthermore, the playwright did not leave to mention how appease an official and distract him from his real duty and go for means of corruption, of which testimony appears in the following text of the drama:

الجلاد : اسمح لي أن أتقدم أنا عنه ، ((يتقدم و يأخذ من كيس المحكوم عليه نقودا و يدفع للخمّار)) خذ حقك ! و قد زدناه ، لتعلم أننا كرماء !

المحكوم عليه : ((قلقا)) : و الآن . . .

الجلاد : الآن نشرع في الغناء و الطرب ! هل تدري يا عزيزي المحكوم عليه أني من المغرمين بالغناء الحسن ، المفتونين برائع النغم ، الكلفين بجيد النظم و الإنشاد ؟ إن هذا يملأ القلب هناءة و حبورا ، و فرحة بالحياة و سرورا ! غن لي شيئا !

المحكوم عليه : أغني ؟ !

الجلاد : نعم ! و لم لا ؟ ما الذي يمنعك ؟ حنجرتك – و لله الحمد – حرة طليقة ، فما عليك إلا أن ترفع عقيرتك بالغناء ، فيخرج النغم الحلو يشنف الآذان ، هيا . . . غن ! . . . أطربني ! . . . [156]

Executioner : Allow me to approach on his behalf. He approaches and takes some money from the Condemned Man's purse and pays the Wine Merchant.

Condemned Man: (Anxiously) I: And now.

Executioner : Now we begin our singing and merrymaking. Do you know, my dear condemned man, that I am very fond of good singing, a pleasant tune, and fine lyrics? It fills the bean with contentment and joy with gladness and a delight in life. Sing me something!

Condemned Man: I? Sing?

Executioner : Yes. Why not? What's to stop you? Your larynx – thanks are to God – is perfectly free. All you have to do is raise your voice in song and out will come a lovely tune to delight the ear. Come on. Sing! Entertain me!

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[156] Ibid, pp. 18 – 19

It is a matter of fact that the playwright has successfully placed a female character *al-ghaniya* who saved the life of the slave trader from execution by her trickery of speech as follows:

الجلاد : بادر أيّها المؤذن إلى عملك حتى أقوم بعملي ! . . .

الغانية : و فيما العجلة أيها الجلاد اللطيف ؟ ! . . . صوت المؤذن قد أثّر فيه برد الليل ، و هو محتاج إلى شراب ساخن . . . اصعد إلى داري أيها المؤذن ! . . سأعد لك ما يصلح صوتك . . .

الجلاد : و الفجر ؟ . . .

الغانية : الفجر بخير ، و المؤذن أدرى بوقته .

الجلاد : و عملي ؟ . . .

الغانية : عملك بخير ، ما دام المؤذن لم يؤذن بعد للفجر ! . . .

الجلاد : أ توافق أيها المؤذن ؟ . . .

الغانية : إنه موافق على دعوتي الصغيرة لوقت قصير ، فهو من خيرة معارفي في الحى ![157]

Executioner : O Muezzin, hasten to your work so that I may do mine.

Lady : And what is the hurry, kind executioner? The Muezzin's voice has been affected by the night cold and he is in need of a hot drink. Come into my house, oh the Muezzin! I shall prepare something for you which will put your voice to right.

Executioner : And the dawn?

Lady : The dawn is in no danger and the Muezzin knows best as to its time.

Executioner : And my work?

Lady : Your work is in no danger – so ling as the Muezzin has not yet called for the dawn prayers.

Executioner : Do you agree, oh Muezzin?

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[157] Ibid, pp. 40 – 41

Lady : He agrees to accept my little invitation for a short while, for he is among my best friends in the quarter.

If we read more closely, we can have the knowledge whatever Tawfiq al-Hakim conveyed to us the symbolism of the characters. In fact, the slave trader was dealing in "slavery" and the executioner was executing the commands of "law", and the muezzin in the play was for “religion" and the lady who appears in the same chapter as the "moral degradation”. If we put these figures in the right place, we can understand what Tawfiq al-Hakim tries to say. The slave trader was possibly dropped from the execution due to the call of the dawn prayer of the muezzin in his time, but the muezzin followed the desires and entered the house of the lady, leaving the ears without being lifted, and therefore executioner could not fulfill the sentence. In dropping scene on this fact, we find that slavery was possible to end the law, however, if the debt is strictly implemented, which will ensure the law is undoubtedly the ability to implement its provisions and to end slavery completely from the face of the earth. It is obvious to any sane person that slavery, in spite of the expiration of the era of slavery, are more subtle, either social or be political in the modern world. Humanity is still suffering from slavery political dependency of poor countries to rich countries and work on human well-being rich at the expense of the suffering of poor people and depriving them of the most basic civil rights of food and clothing.

In fact, the Sultan came to know about his childhood condition from the slave trader – how he was sold by which price. But the matter was brought by the minister to blue book. That is why; the slave trader was condemned for execution in view of concealing the matter of the Sultan, but the Sultan, in fine, came to know from the slave trader, of which testimony finds in the following text:

الوزير : قال إن مولانا السلطان النبيل العظيم إن هو إلا عبد رقيق . . .

المحكوم عليه : كل الناس يعلم هذا . . . وما هو بالأمر الخافي . . .

الوزير : لا تقاطعني . . . و زعم أنه هو النخاس الذي تولى بيع سلطاننا في صباه إلى السلطان الراحل ! . . .

المحكوم عليه : هذا صحيح . و أقسم بالأيمان المغلظة ، و إنه لوثيقة فخار لي أعتز بها أبد الدهر .

السلطان : ((للمحكوم عليه)): أنت ؟ ! . . . بعتني إلى السلطان الراحل ؟ !

المحكوم عليه : نعم ! . . .

السلطان : متى كان ذلك ؟ . . .

المحكوم عليه : منذ خمس و عشرين سنة خلت يا مولاي: كنت صبيا صغيرا في السادسة و ضالا متروكا في قرية شركسية دهمها المغول . و كنت غاية في الذكاء و الحكمة أكثر مما ينبغي لسنك . ففرحت بك و حملتك إلى سلطان هذه البلاد ، فنفحني ثمنا لك ألف دينار .[158]

VIZIER : He said that His Majesty, the great and noble Sultan, is a mere slave.

CONDEMNED MAN: Everyone knows this – it is common knowledge.

VIZIER : Don’t interrupt me – and he claimed that he was the slave trader who undertook the sale of our Sultan in his youth to the former Sultan.

CONDEMNED MAN: That’s true. I swear by a sacred oath – and it is a matter of pride to me which I shall treasure for all time.

SULTAN : (to the Condemned Man) You? You sold me to the late Sultan?

CONDEMNED MAN: Yes.

SULTAN : When was that?

[158] Ibid, pp. 51 – 52

CONDEMNED MAN: Twenty five years ago. Your Majesty, You were a small boy of six, lost and abandoned in Circassian village raided by the Mongols. You were extremely intelligent and wise for one of your tender years. I rejoiced in you and carried you oil to the Sultan of this country. As the price for you he made me a present of one thousand dinars.

As and when the Sultan came to know from the slave trader about his slavery and his nourishment in a palace of the former Sultan, he (the present Sultan) considers the case of condemned man in such a way as follows:

السلطان : أ هذا مما يستحق الموت أن تأتي بي إلى هذه البلاد ؟ . . . إني أرى الأمر على النقيض . . . [159]

SULTAN : Is it this that merits your death – bringing me to this country? I see the matter quite differently.

As soon as the Sultan was acquainted with the reality of his life, he was thoughtful and turned down his opinion in view of keeping the matter concealed from the masses of people as he says:

السلطان: أنت أو غيرك . لم يعد هذا يهم . . . المهم الآن هو أن يعلم الناس جميعا في كل مكان أن تلك محض أكذوبة . . . أ ليس الأمر كذلك يا قاضي القضاة ؟ . . [160].

SULTAN : You or someone else – it no longer matters. The important thing now is that all the people everywhere know that it is all sheer lies – isn’t that so, Chief Cadi?

In fact, in the last part of the first act, the Chief Justice tried to get the Sultan understand the crucial matter of choice whether he

[159] Ibid, p. 52
[160] Ibid, pp. 56 – 57

would take the assistance of the sword to put down the rumour about his slavery or go through the process of law for his manumission. In fine, the Chief Justice made him thought provoking with the following statement:

السلطان : ما ذا تعني ؟ . . .

القاضي: أعني أن لك الخيار يا مولاي السلطان ، لك أن تجعله للعمل ، و لك أن تجعله للزينة . . . إني معترف بما للسيف من قوة أكيدة ، و من فعل سريع و أثر حاسم . و لكن السيف يعطي الحق للأقوى ، و من يدري غدا من يكون الأقوى؟ . . . فقد يبرز من الأقوياء من ترجع كفته عليك ! . . . أما القانون فهو يحمي حقوقك من كل عدوان ، لأنه لا يعترف بالأقوى . . . إنه يعترف بالأحق ! . . . و الآن ، فما عليك يا مولاى سوى الاختيار : بين السيف الذي يفرضك ولكنه يعرّضك ، و بين القانون الذي يتحداك ولكنه يحميك ! . . .[161]

SULTAN : What do you mean?

CADI : I mean that you have a choice, Your Majesty. You can employ it for action, or you can employ it for decoration. I recognize the undoubted strength possessed by the sword, its swift action and decisive effect. But the sword gives right to the strongest, and who knows who will be the strongest tomorrow? There may appear some strong person who will tilt the balance of power against you. As for the law, it protects your rights from every aggression, because it does not recognize the strongest – it recognizes right. And now there's nothing for you to do, Your Majesty, but choose: between the sword which imposes and yet exposes you, and between the law which threatens and yet protects you.

السلطان : لا مفر إذن من أن أقرر بنفسي ! . . .

[161] Ibid, pp. 85 – 86

الوزير : هو ذلك .

السلطان : السيف أم القانون ؟ ! . . . القانون أم السيف ؟ ! . . . ((يفكر لحظة، ثم يرفع رأسه بقوة)) حسن . . . لقد قررت . . .

الوزير : أوامرك يا مولاى ! . . .

السلطان : قررت أن أختار . . . أن أختار . . .

الوزير : ماذا يا مولاى؟ . . .

السلطان : ((صائحا في عزة)) : القانون ! . . . اختارت القانون ! . . . [162]

SULTAN : There is, therefore, no getting away from deciding all by myself?

VIZIER : That's so.

SULTAN : The sword or the law? The law or the sword? [He thinks for a while, and then raises his head sharply.] Good – I have decided.

VIZIER : Let us have your orders, your Majesty.

SULTAN : I have decided to choose, to choose …

VIZIER : What, Your Majesty?

SULTAN : [shouting decisively]: The law! I have chosen the law!

It appears from the above mentioned statement that the charge of the slave trader was okay, and that is why it was discussed at the city market that the Sultan was a slave of the former Sultan who purchased a six years boy from the slave trader who has been shown as a condemned man in the drama. As such, it was found in gossiping that the present Sultan has not been manumitted. Therefore the law does not allow him to remain in the office of Sultan; because he is the property of the exchequer (بيت المال), that is to say he is something of things. No people knew his will. After that Sultan was shocked at it, the minister

[162] Ibid, p. 90

acknowledged his mistake. In fact, the practical struggle of Tawfiq al-Hakim's theatre started. It appears to us that the struggle was between the power of sword and power of the state law. The power of the sword was represented by the minister, who was insisting on the Sultan to offer death sentence to the slave trader in view stopping the tongues of the people. On the other hand, the law was represented by the judge, who faced the Sultan and insisted that he must submit to the law. In spite of everything, after remission of the movement under the Sultan and his rule by wisdom, he decided to uphold the law.

It is possible for us to interpret the speech of the chief judge that it will be illustrated that the principle is a power which, without any doubt, protects law and the right, but it can not be protected by the sword. To submit to justice is glory, high rank, and power. Hereby we may discover that the society needs the domination of law and accordingly it is perfectly correct and it is more and more needed for any thing. It clearly appears to us that the role of the Sultan is for the protection of law, which is jewels and original. But it should be the first role, if it is lost, everything is lost. Likewise we come to know that the nation needs a just and faithful judge which is perfectly similar to the successful strong army, while the army defends rebellion from the motherlands. The Judge dislodges injustice from the right, without which individuals become neglected and loss, but it is not possible for individuals to loss justice of the law among them to make themselves victorious army, cannot be members of the lost justice law, or nation having value.

As soon as the Sultan made recognition to submit to the law instead of power of swords, an Auction Sale was arranged in dais, where the Sultan took the chair in the middle, and Chief Justice and Minister sat

around him, while the Slave Trader stood to face the people. Meanwhile, the Chief Justice addressed the gathering as follows:

القاضي : أيّها الناس ! . . . إن البيع المطروح أمامكم ليس ككل بيع. إن له صفة خاصة ، و قد سبق أن أعلن ذلك إليكم . فهذا البيع يجب أن يقترن به عقد آخر ، هو عقد العتق ، بمعنى أن المشتري الذي يرسو عليه المزاد لا يجوز له الاحتفاظ بما اشترى . إنما عليه إجراء العتق في مجلس العقد . . . أى مجلسنا هذا ، و لا حاجة بي أن أذكركم بنص القانون الذي يمنع موظفي الدولة و رجالها من الاشتراك في بيع ما للدولة . . . أما و قد قلت لكم هذا فإن الكلمة الآن للوزير كى يحدثكم عن الطابع القومي لهذا الإجراء . [163]

The Justice : O people! The sale to be held before you is not like any other sale: it is of a special kind and this fact has been previously announced to you. This sale must be accompanied by another contract, a contract of manumission whereby the person who is the highest bidder at the auction may not retain what he has bought but must proceed with the manumission at the same session as the contract of sale, that is to say at this present session of ours. There is no need for me to remind you of the law's provision which prevents State employees from participating in any sale by the State. Having said this I leave the Vizier to speak to you about the patriotic character of these proceedings.

Here it is imperative to know that the Minister also tried to get the people understand the condition of the auction sale of the Sultan in front of huge gathering and he says as follows:

الوزير : أيها القوم الأعزاء! . . . إنكم تحضرون اليوم حدثا فذا ضخما ، من أخطر الأحداث في تاريخها : سلطان حجيد يطلب حريته ، فيلجأ إلى شعبه بدلا من

[163] Ibid, pp. 106 – 107

أن يلجأ إلى سيفه ، هذا السيف البتار الجبار الذي انتصر به في معارك المغول ، كان يستطيع أن ينتصر به أيضا في نيل حريته و تحرير رقبته ، ولكن سلطاننا المظفر العادل قد اختار أن يخضع للقانون ، طما يخضع له أضعف فرد في رعيته . وها هو ذا يلتمس حريته بالطريق الذي نص عليه القانون . فمن شاء منكم أن يفتدي حريته سلطانه المحبوب فليتقدم إلى هذا المزاد ، و من دفع منكم أغلى ثمن فقد عمل عملا صالحا للوطن، سيذكر له على مدى الأيام و مر الزمن ! . . .[164]

VIZIER : Honorable people! You are today present at a great and unique occasion, one of the most important in our history: a glorious Sultan asks for his freedom and has recourse to his people instead of to his sword – that sharp and mighty sword by which he was victorious in battles against the Mongols and with which he could also have been victorious in gaining his freedom and liberating himself from slavery. But our just and triumphant Sultan has chosen to submit to the law like the lowliest individual amongst his subjects. Here he is seeking his freedom by the method laid down by law. Whoever of you wishes to redeem the freedom of his beloved Sultan, let him come forward to this auction, and whoever of you pays the highest price will have done a goodly act for his homeland and will be remembered for time immemorial.

With the process of the auction sale, the slave trader started shouting for its amount from ten thousand Dinar only; in the presence of a lady one an unknown person was accelerating the amount time to time along with the slave trader’s shouting of amount. In fine, its amount

[164]Ibid, pp. 107 – 108

reached “Thirty Thousand Dinar” only. Then the slave trader and the Minister expressed congratulation to the highest bidder as the playwright made demonstration their dialogues as follows:

النخّاس : تقدم أيها الفائز ! . . . و تقبل التهنئة على حظك السعيد ! . . .

الوزير : أهنئك أيها المواطن الصالح و أحييك . . . [165]

SLAVE TRADER : Come forward the winner! Accept congratulations for your good luck!

VIZIER : I congratulate you, good citizen, and salute you.

The Vizier saluted all the people gathered there for the enjoyment of auction sale of the Sultan saying to them that in the name of the fatherland and in the name of this loyal and upright people from whom they have their origins, for buying and ransoming the freedom of the great Sultan. In fact, this sublime deed of auction and manumission will be inscribed for ever more in the pages of the history of the noble people. Then the Chief Justice announced that the judgment of the law has been carried out. He called upon the person who touched the lot of auction sale as a highest bidder in view of signing the “Deed of Sale and Deed of Manumission” together. The unknown person put his signature on the document of “Sale Contract”. But he was reluctant to sign the second deed of manumission saying that he has no right to do sign it, and no permission received from the appropriate authority. In this connection, the playwright made demonstration of dialogue as follows:

المجهول : مع الأسف الشديد لست أملك هذا . . . إن هذا فوق إمكاني ، و خارج حدود صفتي ! . . .

الوزير : ماذا يقول هذا الرجل ؟ ! . . .

القاضي : لست أفهم . . .

الوزير : ((للمجهول)) : لماذا ترفض التوقيع على حجة العتق ؟ ! . . .

[165] Ibid, p. 117

المجهول : لأنه لم يؤذن لي في ذلك ! . . . ssss [166]

UNKNOWN MAN: I much regret that I am in no position to do this. This is beyond me, is outside the limits of my authority.

VIZIER : What's this man saying?

CIEF JUSTICE: I don't understand.

VIZIER : (to the unknown man): Why do you refuse to sign the deed of manumission?

UNKNOWN MAN: Because I have not been given permission to do so.

Then the unknown man was forced to sign the "Deed of Manumission" but he was in no position of signing the same. So, he informed them that he was commissioned to sign only the contract of sale. As the unknown man was not disclosing the name of the actual bidder, he was given to the guards to take him off and torture him till he reveals the name of the person who appointed him. Then the Lady opened the door of her house and appeared before the dais, followed by her maid and slave-girls carrying the sacks of dinar. In fact, the Lady dared to say to them for leaving the unknown man, because she appointed him to the do the contract and gave the sacks of gold – full thirty thousand dinars in cash. The crowds were making noise on the issue of the contract by the lady who known to them as a whore. Under such circumstances, the Lady made a protest to their unexpected exposition in the following manner:

الغانية : ولم لا ؟ . . . ألست مواطنة و معي نقود ؟ ! . . . فلم لا يكون لي عين الحق الذي للآخرين ! . . .

القاضي : نعم . . . لك هذا الحق . . . إن القانون يسري على الجميع . على أنه يجب عليك أن تكوني على علم بشروط هذا البيع . . .

الغانية : هذا طبيعي . إني أعلم أنه بيع .

[166] Ibid, p. 120

القاضي : بيع له صفة خاصة .[167]

LADY : And why not? Am I not a citizen and do I not have money? Why then should I not have exactly the same rights as others?

THE JUSTICE : Yes, you have this right. The law applies to all. You must also, however, make yourself acquainted with the conditions of this sale.

LADY : That's natural. I know it's a sale.

THE JUSTICE: A sale with a particular characteristic.

Here it is imperative to know that the playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim made an endeavor to emancipate the fare-sex from the harassment the man-folk in public. The dramatist sees that the Islamic countries are of male dominant to the society. With the pace of European countries' culture, he wants to make the female acquainted with the milieu of the present world.

At this juncture, the playwright made a lengthy dialogue between the lady and the vizier in which the lady was firstly not in a position to sign the "Deed of Manumission", then the vizier showed her the apprehension of sword; but the Sultan said: "the time of resorting to the sword has passed". Being forced time and again the lady informed that she yield to the law, which is not in pursuance of the law that she has signed the contract of the sale with the State. In this connection, the Judge made an advocacy against her view that the contract of the sale is of conditional one; and without the "Manumission" the sale contract is null and void. The Lady continued argument with the Justice saying that she is not joking with these sacks of gold. She is paying in order to buy and possess the same, because the law has given her the right and to possess the sale, having been the highest bidder at the auction – in public, in front

[167] Ibid, pp. 127 – 128

of everyone. Here is the required price and all that remains for the Judge to do are to hand over to her the goods purchased. As the counter argument continued from the side of the Lady, the vizier took permission from the people that why she should not be punished. In this connection, the people have given their verdict as to the desire of the vizier. In this connection, the Lady expressed her reaction as follows:

الغانية : ((متجهة إلى الشعب)) : الموت لي ؟ ! . لماذا أيها الناس تحكمون عليّ بالموت ؟ ! . . . أي ذنب جنيت ؟ . . . هل الشراء إهانة و جريمة ؟ ... هل أنا سارقة لهذا المال ؟ ! . . . إنه مذخري طول حياتي ! . . . هل أنا ناهبة خاطفة لهذا المعروض للبيع ؟ . . . إني اشتريته بحر مالي في مزاد علني أمام أعينكم . . . ما هي جريمتي إذن ؟ . . . تكلموا ؟ . . . بأي ذنب تطلبون سفك دماء امرأة ضعيفة اشترت شيئا في مزاد ! . . . [168]

LADY : [*turning to the people*]: Death for me? Why, O people, do you condemn me to death? What offence have I committed? Is buying an affront and a crime? Have I stolen this money? It is my life's savings. Am I grabbing and making off by force with the thing offered for sale? I have bought it with my own money at a public auction before your very eyes. For what offence do you seek to spill the blood of a weak woman who has bought something at an auction?

Among the people two groups were created, one group supported the death of the lady, and other sought 'no death to her'. Then Sultan had an interaction with the woman and put a few questions to her. She gave answer to all of his questions straightly and admitted that the Sultan's job is to rule the State, but you should be handed over to me. As a Sultan Your Majesty is permitted to do work during the whole day and in the evening you will return to my house. Even more, during night you

[168] Ibid, pp. 140 – 141

can work with your men of State in a quiet secluded room and thereby you will get experience greater joy in life. In fact, the lady was very much desirous of getting the Sultan near to her as friend and share views; then their dialogue continued for a while, in which she expressed as follows:

الغانية : إنه لمؤلم أن أتركك تذهب . . . أن أفقدك إلى الأبد ! . . . ولكنه مؤلم أيضا أن أراك تفقد عرشك ! . . . لأن بلادنا لن يتاح لها أبدا سلطان في مثل عدلك و شجاعتك . . . لا . . . لا تترك الحكم ، ولا تعتزل العرش ! . . . أريد أن تبقى سلطانا . . .[169]

LADY : It is painful to let you to go, to lose you for ever; but it is also painful to see you lose your throne, for our country has never had the good fortune to have a Sultan with such courage and sense of justice. No, do not give up the rule, do not relinquish the throne! I want you to remain a Sultan.

In the last part of the act two, the lady sought the Sultan to remain one night with her friendly and then the Sultan will be free from the slavery; with an extent that she will sign the “deed of Manumission” at the time when the muezzin gives the call to dawn prayer from on top of the minaret of mosque. In this connect, we find the dialogue of the lady as follows:

الغانية : أن تمنحني يا مولاي هذه الليلة . . . ليلة واحدة . . . شرفني بقبول دعوتي ، و كن ضيفي حتى مطلع الفجر ! . . . فإذا أذّن المؤذّن لصلاة الفجر من فوق مئذنته هذه ، فإني أوقع حجة العتق ، و يصبح مولاي السلطان حرا طليقا ! . . .[170]

LADY : That you give this night to me, Your Majesty – a single night. Honor me by accepting my invitation and be my guest until daybreak. And when the Muezzin gives the call to

[169] Ibid, p. 153
[170] Ibid, p. 154

dawn prayers from this minaret here, I shall sign the deed of manumission and Your Majesty will be free.

It is worth-mentioning that the first part of the third act is full of comical dialogues that ran by Wine Merchant and Shoemaker; both of them were in bets in the point that the lady will break her promise or she will honor the noble deed of manumission for the Sultan. It is informed that the Muezzin and the Executioner are also in bets along with other people. In fact, people were curious in the point of how the lady approaches to the Sultan in hospitality. Other people had a bed notion about the lady, while she was of culture fondling woman. In this connection, we may cite the dialogue of the Executioner and Vizier as follows:

الجلاد : لأنها كاذبة . . . مخادعة . . . محتالة . . .

الوزير : أ تعرفها ؟ ! . . .

الجلاد : عرفت بعض حيلها ، عندما كنت هنا ذلك اليوم ، في انتظار الفجر لأنفذ حكم الأعدام في النخاس . . .[171]

EXECUTIONER : Your order must be obeyed, my lord – in truth I have no trust in this woman.

VIZIER : Why?

EXECUTIONER : Because she's a liar, a cheat, and a swindler!

The Vizier, being excited by the comment of the Executioner, thought of punishment for the Lady and sought opinion from the executioner, who made opinion as to give her death punishment. But the Vizier wanted to put serious blame like a spy of Mongols on her that the people in their entirety will rise up and demand her head. For which witness must be ready.[172]

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[171] Ibid, pp. 163 – 164

[172] Ibid, pp. 164 – 166

As soon as a part of the room in the Lady's house is lit up; the Vizier and the Executioner moved away a little. In fact, in her house, the square became dark; the Lady appeared and moved towards the sofa followed by the Sultan. The Sultan taking his seat expressed that her room is magnificent and its furniture are of costly; and they started talking as follows:

الغانية : . . . إن زوجي كان من أثرياء التجار ، و كان له ذوق ، و كان له ولع
بالشعر و الغناء ! . . .

السلطان : كنت من جواريه ؟ ! . . .

الغانية : نعم . اشتراني ولي من العمر ستة عشر عاما . . . ثم أعتقني و تزوجني
قبل موته ببضع سنوات . . .

السلطان : إن حظك خير من حظي . فأنت لم ينس أحد أن يعتقك في الوقت المناسب ! . . .

الغانية : إن حظي السعيد حقا هو في تشريفك بيتي هذه الليلة ! . . . [173]

LADY : …… My husband was a wealthy merchant who had taste and a passion for poetry and singing.

SULTAN : Were you one of his slave-girl?

LADY : Yes, he bought me when I was sixteen years of age, then gave me my freedom and married me several years before his death.

SULTAN : Your luck was better than mine. With you no one forgot to free you at the proper time.

LADY : My real good luck is your having honored my house with your presence tonight.

[173] Ibid, pp. 167 – 168

The Lady assured the Sultan that he will find more joy and relax in her house without any boredom at all. She asks nothing of him except to converse, to take food, and to listen to singing. In their reciprocal conversation they wanted to know each other story of life. In fact, the Sultan had a bad notion about her life, but she was not interested to clarify saying that “she is not in the habit of defending herself against other people’s assumptions.” In this connection, the Lady adds more that she enjoys the company of men only for their souls, not for their bodies, and this point of philosophy was elucidated by her as follows:

الغانية : سأفصح ، عندما كنت جارية صغيرة في عمر من عندي الآن من الجواري نشأني سيدي على حب الشعر و الغناء و العزف ، و كان يجعلني أحضر ولائمه و أحادث ضيوفه ، و كانوا من الشعراء و المغنين، كما كانوا من أصحاب الظرف و الروح و الفكر ، و كنا نسهر الليالي ننشد الشعر و نغني و نطرب و نتجاذب الحديث ، و نتراشق بالروائع و اللوامع من فنون الكلام ، و نضحك من أعماق قلوبنا ، كانت تلك الليالي رائعة فاخرة ، كما كانت بريئة طاهرة ، و أرجو أن تصدق ذلك ، فسيدي كان رجلا فاضلا ، و لم تكن له من متعة في الحياة إلا هذه الليالي ، متعة بلا خطيئة و بلا تبذل ، على هذا نشأني و رباني ، فلما صرت زوجته فيما بعد لم يرد أن يحرمني متعة هذه الليالي التي كانت تخلب لبى ، فسمح لي بالاستمرار في حضورها ، ولكن من خلف أستار من الحرير ، تلك هي كل القصة .

السلطان : و بعد وفاته ؟ . . .

الغانية : بعد وفاته لم أستطع التخلي عن هذه العادة ، فأستأنفت دعوتي لضيوف زوجي ، كنت أستقبلهم بادىء الأمر و أنا متحجبة خلف أستار الحرير ، لكن عندما أخذ أهل الحي في اللغط حولي و إطلاق الشائعات عني لمرآى الرجال الداخلين كل ليلة بيت امرأة لا بعل لها ،

لم أجد معني للمضي في الاحتجاب خلف الأستار ، و قلت : ما دام حكم الناس قد أدانني ، فلأجعل من نفسي قاضيا على تصرفاتي ! . . .
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LADY : I shall elucidate. When I was a young slave-girl of the same age as the slave-girls I have with me now, my master brought me up to love poetry and singing and playing on musical instruments. He used to make me attend his banquets and converse with his guests, who were poets and singers; they also included intellectuals and men of wit and charm. We would spend the night reciting poetry, singing and playing music and conversing, quoting and capping quotations from the masterpieces of literature, and laughing from the depths of our hearts. Those were wonderfully enjoyable nights, but they were also innocent and chaste. Please believe that. My master was a good man and knew no pleasure in life other than these nights – a pleasure without sin, without vulgarity. In this way did he bring me up and educate me. And when I later became his wife he did not wish to deprive me of the pleasure of those nights which used so to enchant me; he therefore allowed me to continue to attend, though from behind silken curtains. That's the whole story.

SULTAN : And after his death?

LADY : After his death I was unable to give up this practice, so I continued to invite my husband's guests. At first I would receive them screened behind the silken curtains, but when the people of the district began spreading gossip at seeing

[174] Ibid, pp. 174 – 176

men nightly entering the house of a woman with no husband I found it pointless to continue to be screened behind the curtains. I said to myself: seeing that the people's verdict has pronounced me guilty let me make myself the judge of my own behavior.

In the course of their conversation, the Lady considers the Sultan as one of wondrous and splendid personalities; she found pleasant behavior from his end at the moment when the Vizier was cruel to her argument. In fact, she was overcome by a certain bewilderment and confusion. The Sultan informs her that his pleasant approach wants sympathy from the end of the Lady in case of obtaining signature on the "Deed of Manumission". Their course of discussion reveals that both of them were doubtful in the goal; but the position of doubt was being clear with their reciprocal statements. In fact, the Lady gives assurance to offer manumission of the Sultan and on the other hand, the Sultan says that it has never happened that he has taken a step backwards – not even in the field of battle. The Lady praises the Sultan for getting his composure, self-confidence, control over his actions, the ability to do what he wants with meticulous precision and resoluteness. Then the Lady goes ahead to ask about his personal life, whether he was fallen in love of a beautiful woman or not. In this connection the Sultan expresses as follows:

السلطان : مشاكل الحكم ! . و هذه إحداها ! . تلك التي هبطت على رأسي اليوم . على غير انتظار . وأوقعتني في هذه الورطة ! . أترين مشكلة كهذه يمكن أن يصفو معها المزاج للحب ! .

الغانية : ((تضحك)): حقا . . .

السلطان : تضحكين ! . . .

الغانية : سؤال آخر . . . هو الأخير ! . . . ثق من ذلك ! . . . سؤال جدا هذه المرة ؛ لأنه يتعلق بي . . .

السلطان : بك ؟ !

الغانية : نعم . فلنفرض أنك أعتقت عند الفجر . ستعود إلى قصرك ! . ..

السلطان : طبعا . . . لدي أعمالي هناك تنتظرني . . .

الغانية : و أنا ؟ ! . . .

السلطان : و أنت ماذا ؟ ! . . .

الغانية : ألن تفكر في بعد ذلك ! . . .

السلطان : لست أفهم . . .[175]

SULTAN : The problems of government. And this is one of them – this problem that has descended upon my head today so unexpectedly and put me in this fix. Do you consider that such a problem allows one to be in the mood for love?

LADY : [laughing] You are right!

SULTAN : You laugh!

LADY : Another question – the last, be sure of that! A very serious question this time, because it relates to me.

SULTAN : To you?

LADY : Yes. Let us assume that I have manumitted you at dawn – you will of course return to your palace.

SULTAN : Of course, I have business awaiting me there.

LADY : And I?

SULTAN : And what about you?

LADY : Will you not think about me after that?

SULTAN : I don’t understand.

In response to the issue raised by the lady concerning love affairs, the Sultan said that the language of woman is too subtle for him. Then the lady explained her words: whether he will forget her altogether and erase the memory that created in their contact and conversation. Here

[175] Ibid, pp. 186 – 187

the Sultan thinks impossible to erase her memory. Furthermore, the Lady wants to know from the Sultan that whether this night will be last to pass together or not. In this connection, Sultan finds difficult to answer. In the mean time, the maidservant appears to inform them that dinner is served. In fact, Sultan said to the lady that she is a model of kindness and hospitality. The Lady leads him into another room to the accompaniment of music. The light in the house is extinguished and a dim light comes on in the square.

Here it may be noted that the gossiping continued about the activities of the woman between the shoemaker and wine merchant who were in bet together in respect of the “deed of manumission”. On the other hand, the Vizier took information from the Guard – saying that it was impossible to quell the people and force them to go to bed tonight. The crowds are still standing or squatting in the lanes and alleyways and all are whispering together and gossiping. Here the Vizier has noticed that people are forgetting the noble purport, the lofty aim, the sublime concept, the patriotic objective, and gossiping goes like that the Sultan is spending the night in a brothel house. It is the real catastrophe!

After a while the Judge appeared and had a talk with the Vizier for getting knowledge about the matter that goes around the house of the woman. The Chief Justice wants to make a plan for anticipating the Sultan from the woman. His discussion with the Vizier leads to the search of the Muezzin in view of doing a quick decision for emancipating the Sultan with the “Deed of his Manumission”. As the Muezzin appeared there, the Chief Justice wanted him to carry out whatever he hints to do. The Muezzin was asked to go and climb up into the minaret and give the call to the dawn prayer. He was astonished at such a command that he found at midnight to call to the dawn prayer. In this connection, the Muezzin expressed as follows:

المؤذن : أ ليس هذا . . . متقدما عن موعده قليلا ؟ ! . . .

القاضي : لا ! . . .

المؤذن : ((هامسا لنفسه)) : لقد احترت مع هذا الفجر . . . مرة يطلب منى تأخيره ، و مرة يطلب منى تقديمه ! . . .

القاضي : ماذا تقول ؟ . . .

المؤذن : لا شيء يا مولاي القاضي . . . سأذهب فورا لأنفذ أمرك ! . [176]

MUEZZIN : Is not this just a little ….. premature?

CHIEF JUSTICE : No.

MUEZZIN : (*whispering to himself*) I am at a loss about this dawn – sometimes I am asked to put it back and sometimes I am asked to bring it forward.

CHIEF JUSTICE : What are you saying?

MUEZZIN : Nothing, my lord chief justice, I shall go at once to carry out your order.

With the command of the Chief Justice the Muezzin feared punishment for exposing himself to the ridicule of the masses, but the Chief Justice gave him word to control everything from his end and told him further that your giving call to the dawn prayer will emancipate the Sultan from the house of the woman as a free man. The Muezzin was ready to respond to do the Chief Justice's order adding that he previously told the Chief Justice a small falsehood of this sort in order to save the head of someone who had been condemned to death; so this time he is also ever ready to commit a similar falsehood in order to gain the freedom of the beloved Sultan. Along with this conspiracy, he was sought to shut his mouth at every cost.

[176] Ibid, pp. 189 – 200

The Muezzin hoped to God to make this trickery successful even this time, and gave the call to the dawn prayer at mid-night uttering like – *Allah-u-Akbar! Allah-u-Akbar! Hayya ‘Ala al-Salat! Hayya ‘Ala al-Salat! Hayya ‘Ala al-Falah! Hayya ‘Ala al-Falah!* Then the crowds make their appearance in a state of agitation, astonishment, protest, and anger. The Chief Justice gave order to the guards in order to disperse the crowds and clear square fully. The Guards chase the people away and clear the square, while the Muezzin continues with his call to prayer.

The light goes on in the Lady’s room. She appears at the window followed by the Sultan. At this juncture, both the Lady and the Sultan were astonished at the call of the Muezzin to the dawn prayer at mid-night. Then Vizier and Chief Justice came near to them, and saying to the woman – whether she heard the call of the Muezzin to the dawn prayer. She admitted with a strange mood. As such, the Chief Justice presented her with the “Deed of Manumission” to sign with his argument that it was your promise – you will do sign it when the Muezzin gives the call to dawn prayer. Under such circumstances, the Lady reacts along with the Sultan as follows:

الغانية : ليس هذا من الأمانة ! . . . إنه لمحض تحايل ! . . .

الوزير : تحايل بتحايل ! . . . و أنت البادئة ، و البادى أظلم ! . . . و أنت أخر من يجوز له الاعتراض و الاحتجاج ! . . .

السلطان : ((صائحا)) : يا للعار ! . . . كفى . . . كفى . . . أبطلوا هذا العبث ! . . . كفوا عن هذا الصغار ! . . . إنها لن توقع . . . إني أرفض رفضا باتا أن توقع بهذه الطريقة ! . . . وأنت يا قاضي القضاة ألا تخجل من اللعب هكذا بالقانون ؟ ! . . . [177]

[177] Ibid, pp. 201 – 210

LADY : This is not honest! It's sheer trickery!

VIZIER : Trickery matched by trickery! You began it – and he who begins is the greater offender. You are the last person to object and protest.

SULTAN : (*shouting*) Shame! Enough! Enough! Stop this nonsense! Cease this pettiness! She shall not sign. I absolutely refuse that she should sign this way. And you, Chief Cadi, aren't you ashamed of yourself for fooling around with the law like this?

In fact, the Sultan was disappointed by the action of the Chief Justice to do like this fraud and trickery. To rescue my life one should not accept such methods. With a woman no one should do approach in such a manner. May it was the right of this woman to indulge in trickery – she can not be blamed if she did so; maybe she should be the object of indulgence because of her intelligence and skill. As for the Chief Justice, it is one of his most bounded duties to preserve the law's purity, integrity, and majesty, whatever the price. It was he, who showed me the virtue of the law and the respect it must be shown, and I complied with his argument with due course.

Then the Chief Justice was giving explanation to the Sultan's reaction, but he was not in a position to listen to his speech. Here the Lady requested the Sultan to consider view of the Chief Justice and he should bring the "Deed of Manumission". As it was brought before her, she put her signature and made the Sultan free. For this bounty of the Lady, every one was saying – she is a good woman. Folding up the deed the Chief Justice declared: everything has now been completed and the Sultan is in first class fashion. The Vizier also gave thanks to the courage of the Sultan. In fine, the Sultan expressed as follows:

السلطان : فلنتقدم بالثناء على كرم هذه السيدة النبيلة . . . اسمحي لي يا سيدتي أن أوجه إليك شكري ، و أن أرجو منك أن تقبلي رد مالك إليك ، إذ لم يعد هنالك من سبب يدعو إلى خسارة مالك! أيها الوزير ! . . . فليدفع إليها من مالي الخاص ما يعادل المبلغ الذي خسرته ! .[178]

SULTAN: Let us give praise to the generosity of this noble lady. Allow me, my lady, to address my thanks to you, and I ask that you accept the return of your money to you, for there is no longer any reason why you should lose it. Vizier! Pay her from my private purse the amount which she has lost.

The Lady considered her expense for being bidder of the auction sale of the Sultan with thirty thousand dinars and manumitting him accordingly as a honor for her life. After the manumission of the Sultan, he wants return of her money, but she was not in a position to taking back the same as retaining the sweet memory of the Sultan. Then the Sultan gave her memento of ruby from his turban and adieu goodbye. At the moment of separation, the Lady was found shedding tears from her eyes with for feeling joy in her mind. The last words spoken by the Sultan and returned by the Lady are as follows:

السلطان : لن أنسى أبدا أني كنت عبدك ليلة !

الغانية : في سبيل المبدأ و القانون يا مولاي ![179]

SULTAN : I shall never forget that I was your slave for a night.

LADY : For the sake of principles and the law, Your Majesty!

It is imperative to know that Tawfiq al-Hakim wanted to keep this play on the reality of Egypt in the political dimension, since he found the loss of democracy in terms of fact ran there, for which ‘Abd al-Nasser promised after the revolution of July, 1952, which followed the

[178] Ibid, pp. 210 – 215
[179] Ibid, p. 216

fall of the property and the birth of institutions of socialism which the people saw at the time of real power who can achieve justice and equality, but the sun shines for democracy after this Egypt that continued suffering under the weight of poverty, injustice and contempt representing in the satiated firm power and the people passed in hunger.

It has been observed that this drama represents alive in the historical context for the principle of power having brutal relation against the law of justice that the ruler or the subjects supposed to be unknown. The third act of the play puts us the concept about the framework of a real representation of the neighborhood of Sultan's sale at a public auction attended by the general people, where everyone sought higher bidding to purchase the Sultan; finally the lady who saved the slave trader from the hand of executioner by her trickery approach, appeared another time after her appearance in the first act of the drama, as she was the savior of the slave trader in this act, came forward practically for sale and purchase. But she did not hesitate to bargain and agree to sign the "Manumission Deed of Sultan" in view of rescuing him from the state of bondage.

Tawfiq al-Hakim shed light on the comical picture of the drama especially related to the purchase of the Great Sultan by a woman having reputation in the city. In fact, this very matter of the play indicates a philosophical perspective of a purely symbolism. It has been observed that the symbolism of this woman is a significant issue; although it contradicts to her position in the first act. In the first act of the drama the woman saved the slave trader. Here we find that she is known among the people as a prostitute. Her residence was considered as a brothel house that brought bad reputation to her personality. But in the third act of the drama, we discover her talk with the Sultan in a private home, although she had bad reputation like a prostitute. But after going through the direct approach with the lady it was discovered by the Sultan that she was a

woman of science and literature; but people have misconception about her personality. Because she used to mix up with male partners alone in her home in the evenings to discuss the culture related to literature and poetry, which was enjoyed by herself along with her husband, when he was alive. Here, the readers shocked at a change in the plot of the novel what is known as "twist" in the literature. In this connection, the writer resolved ideas to transform one of the sub-thoughts in the literary work from its course and the heart of its concept is an encouragement in the mind of the readers to think deeper. This change lies in the thought to discover the reader that this prostitute who is free from the moral accusations. She was a woman of pure literature and culture. In fact, we learned from this intelligent opposite roles that Tawfiq al-Hakim deliberated at the end of the play. Significantly this character is deemed to be a confluence of two independent personalities in the employed symbolical existence of a prostitute. Her credit lies in the first act of the drama as a symbolically “prostitute” but she could save the slave trader by dint of her culture and knowledge or the principle of "slavery" from the executioner "by law" corrupting the morals of religious "muezzin". She is known in the third act of the play as a woman possessing of literature and ethics, culture and science; she rescued the Sultan, "a symbol of power" from humiliation and weakness, represented in the symbolical public auction. Tawfiq al-Hakim tried to communicate with the readers at the final debut that it is the power which can not be saved from the humiliation and weakness except the knowledge and culture, open mind and intelligence.[180]

As a matter of fact, the drama has thrown light on the ideas of dialogue in pure Arabic language. It signifies the struggle of power and

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[180] (تحليل-مسرحية-السلطان-الحائر-لتوفيق،عن سلم سعيد.) preserved in the web of www.salemarabic.wordpress.com dated 29 – 04 – 2008

the law with two sub-thoughts, they are loss of freedom when religion gets lost, and the real power makes free from the weakness, although it is supported by knowledge and open mind, necessary for their continuity.

5.3. Chief Characters of the Drama

Al-Sultan (السلطان)

A Mamluk slave soldier ascended to the rank of sultan; he was purchased by a Sultan who had no legal heirs. That's why he took care of his slave with well bred in view of making him an able soldier and commander of his army in future. After his demise, the Mamluk slave soldier was seated on the throne of the Sultan. Later on, he came to know that he was not manumitted by the former Sultan, his master who died without manumitting him. In fact, the matter of his manumission was left out in the carelessness of the former Sultan.

The playwright tried to make the present Mamluk Sultan legal as per the law of the state concerned. As an exchequer of the state treasury, the Mamluk Sultan was to sell to someone and the purchaser would manumit him accordingly.

The matter of his manumission was placed to him, but primarily he was reluctant to do so. With the whims of his minister, the Sultan was in favor of taking the help of sword to put down all gossiping and rumors. In this connection, the Chief Justice of the State gave him hints to come to the points of law and smoothly settle the matter without any chaos and blood shedding. In fine, nodding to the honor of the people of the State the Sultan chose the course of law.

In the contents of the drama, it finds that the Sultan bears the paucity of thoughtfulness, weak intelligence, knowing not minuteness of the situations, and freedom of people. A man was condemned, because he

disclosed the matter of the Sultan's slavery position to people. In the trickery of the muezzin and the Chief Justice, the condemned man was rescued from execution, and the Sultan remained in a position of safety from any unexpected situations as well. In fact, as soon as the Sultan took the course of law and left tyrannical measure, he remained as a king of the people without any tussle and commotion.

The Chief Justice (القاضي)

It is one of the important characters of the drama (السلطان الحائر). The playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim tried to picturesque the position of a judge as usual to the society and a country. In the drama, the personality of the chief justice was put to many questions. First of all, we have seen that he was adherent to his position as a judge nullifying every sort of misuse of law and apprehension. He did not care of his life, if he was put to death due to his noble profession of law.

In fact, the Chief Justice is shown by the playwright as to remain in his noble capacity, although a bit of trickery was played by him for the cause of the honor of the Sultan in matters of his manumission without any harm.

Vizier (الوزير)

The drama (السلطان الحائر) finds an important character, vizier who generally plays vital role in every matter of a king in the monarchial administration. Here in the drama, the vizier showed his personality in favor of people's passion and the Sultan as well. In fact, such an objective helps in reformation of the state situation related to the basis of law discipline. In course of his activities, he did not have any fear to the service of injustice and apprehension. In the content of the drama it appears that he was issuing an order for the execution of a slave trader due to spreading bad rumor of the Sultan without having any trial by a

judge. He was also giving hints to the Sultan for taking service of the sword against the lady loving for cultural nights. He was also trying to have shelter of similar vindication with law putting to the people.

On the other hand, the Minister was looking into the case of the lady who was the legal bidder of the purchase of the Sultan; according to her desire, the Sultan accepted her invitation to be present at her abode as an honorable guest at night. The Sultan was passing the night at her home having enjoyment of songs sung by the lady; she also informed him about her hobby and recreation that she took in leisure time. In fact, the vizier was thoughtful, if the lady would not sign the deed of manumission for the Sultan, he would put her to death with the blame of betrayal and espionage for Mongols, which would be brought to the notice of people. For which people would demand her head to execution.

The Lady (الغانية)

The Lady known as *al-Ghaniya* in the drama (السلطان الحائر) shows transparent humanity since the beginning of the drama to its ending, although a bad rumor was in vogue against her personality. But she did not care for gossip at all. It has been observed that she was compassionate in any adverse situations of the humanity. In this connection, we find that she was very much careful to the fate of the condemned man, and made a trickery to save his life having a connection with the muezzin who came in connection with the lady in matters of invocation of the dawn prayer. She makes delay the muezzin, so that the man may not be executed and the muezzin be rescued together from the wrath of the minister.

The target of the lady (al-Ghaniya) appears rendering strong before the trickery of the Chief Justice and the Vizier. Their version is

this woman is responsible that her resonant expressions are found about the law and her action rescues the logic.

In the contents of the drama, the lady bears the capacity of forbearance to reach thereby to the limit of acceptance of people, although they have alternative notion about her personality related to her outward exposure; her internal world identifies her nobility and chastity. In fact, it was understood by the Sultan during course of his passing night at her abode, as and when he was an invited guest.

It appears to us that the esteem opinion goes to the common people that the lady is a symbol of blame-worthiness held by people's major votes. But this notion was found adverse by the Sultan that he found directly having been a guest of her approach. At the end of the drama, the Sultan gave a command to his subordinates for regarding the Lady as an honest woman. It is only because of giving right to the Sultan as a legislative character and this major notion naturally becomes the mundane stages in the society; which about people forget.

It agrees to the principal thought that Tawfiq al-Hakim desires to draw about it, but the people never do justice without going deep to the democratic experience and its legislation never supports except the extent held by this source. So the peaceful democratic road-map demonstrates us the humanity of the human-being, as it was discovered by the Sultan about the reality of the lady. Because the human destiny has no possibility to identify the oppression of the sword as the human relations can identify the basis of the real understanding for the legislation of law that aims first at goodness and advantage of the rulers and the subjects as well.

The playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim in the course of his last part of drama leads us to that very lady for giving a comprehensive idea about her personality; while the Sultan understood the reality of human

approach and his going for safety welfare in accordance with the spirit of law. There is a proof for any change about the path that does not bear any tragedy in the contents of the drama.[181]

In addition, we find another five characters namely Condemned Man, Executioner, Shoemaker, Wine Merchant and the Muezzin. All of them have a bit of roles in the drama. In fact, the Condemned Man was the slave trader. As his statement goes in the drama, he purchased a six years boy twenty five years back and sold to the former Sultan, who nourished the boy with an especial care, since he had no any sons to rule the state in future. As the slave boy grew with utmost care, he became commander of the soldiers. After the demise of the former Sultan, the slave soldier-commander was seated on the throne of Sultan. But he was left out from manumission in the carelessness of the former Sultan. Here is the point of the drama that gossip ran against him in a position that a Mamluk Sultan should not administer the state over the people of having freedom. In this gossip the slave trader was condemned by the Vizier to execution.

The role of the Muezzin ran a bit important in the drama. As a religious symbol, he maintained simplicity according to the desire of the rich lady as well as the chief justice, who made him bound to give the call of the dawn prayer at mid-night, and he followed the same, which caused the Sultan to be manumitted at midnight by the lady who signed the "Deed of Manumission" according to her words given earlier.

In fact, the role of the Executioner, Shoemaker and the Wine Merchant ran as side characters to build up the drama in tact. Their exposures helped the drama as a comical one that brought about in the road map of the playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim.[182]

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[181] http:// www.ar.wikipedia.org (المغزي من المسرحية)
[182] Tawfiq al-Hakim , Op. cit1985, pp, 5 – 205

5.4. Critical Analysis of the Drama

In the play, we find many main and sub-characters only. They are, in fact, symbols illustrating the general idea of the play. Muslim ruler represents authority and power that all have this power of the force and effect among the people for possession of the sword, which symbolizes the cutting force that will silence the people urging them to disregard errors and lapses of power. The Minister, it is a motive, or the devil who whispers to the authority of his motivation for the use of force instead of reason and law. We find the minister time and again in the play that he tried hard to manage the Sultan for execution of slave trader, which represents a sight to manifest the reality of the Sultan and his stripping off his authority; to become a slave for sale while he was not manumitted. The judge as a clear symbol does not require clarification that loudly represent for the law; it represents the righteousness of the law in the righteousness of the judge who rejected the measure to conceal the reality of the slavery of the Sultan from the people. As it appeared to the Sultan, he tried to make the people silent and prevented them from learning the truth. However, in the third chapter, we find that the judge tried to use the trick to take out the Sultan from the house of the woman who bought him. It appears to be the same trick used by the woman in the first act of the play when she kept aside the muezzin and prevented him from prayer, but in reverse, the muezzin was given to call of the prayer before appropriate time in view of getting the Sultan out from the house of the woman who insisted him to stay there until the call of dawn prayer. Here we find that it is possible for the law that it may take shelter of the trickery at the moment of inability and this is common in the law. We accept the lawyers in the courts to manipulate the law and find loopholes which enable them to save their clients from the rope of gallows or the cold bars of the prison.

Returning to the other characters, we find that the slave trader represents “slavery” and this sense is clear in comprehension, which may differ our interpretation of this slavery. Thereby Tawfiq al-Hakim whether intended the practical slavery of human being or the socio political slavery that spread in the world after the dominance of the capitalism represented in the United States of America and the decline of Marxist communism calling for equality and taking from the rich to feed the poor. The executioner executes the hand of the blind law; he is a man who does not know that what was sentenced to a fair trial in the judge court, he waits for the dawn to cut the man's head. Looking into the personality of the executioner closely, we find a man who loves song and uproar and drunkenness. In fact, a man of law does not commit to religion and morality. In this connection, there is direct subtraction for the civil law associations like police, since it is the practical hand of law, but it remains aloof away from the necessary understanding for the Philosophy of Law. The rules of power may execute without returning to the justice of law that represents in the courts of justice. This is the matter that took place in the drama in practical, because the executioner found orders from the Minister, not the Chief Justice. That is to say that the executioner received the Minister’s orders from the end of power, not from the side of the law.

As we have mentioned above, the personality of the prostitute is measured from the distant place, while she had two personalities; in one personality, she bears bad character apparent to the eyes; her intelligence disappears from the sight. It appears after this novel character in the third act of the play that the reader discovers that this woman is a notorious but more than in this city with reason and knowledge and wisdom. The power of this woman scintillates knowledge and idea in their struggle for the judge who set the public

auction, but she refused to put her signature on "the Deed of Manumission", its arbitrary judgment for the law and argument made her impossible to be the prostitute as it was known about her. As noted above, the first face of the woman is meant for bad character; while the survey of this personality shows that it was she who emancipated the slave trader – as a symbol of slavery in the first act of the play. On the other hand, another face is meant for wisdom, which saved the power from humiliation and weakness in the last act of the play.[183]

Distinguished Contemporaries' Views

In respect of analysis of the drama, we find some views of the great contemporaries of Tawfiq al-Hakim. In this connection, Taha Husain disagreed to the style of Tawfiq al-Hakim, but he recognized his achievements; and he added as follows:

إن الحكيم يفتح باباً جديداً في الأدب العربى هو باب الأدب المسرحى الذى لم يعرفه العرب من قبل في أي عصر من عصورهم.

(*Tawfiq al-Hakim opens a new chapter in Arabic literature, it is the chapter of Drama Literature which about the Arabs were not known earlier in any period of their past.*)

In stead of that he criticized him (al-Hakim) in regard to the drama *al-Abath wa'l-Aqdar* that in that very play the starring role was played by Yusuf Wahabi of then time. It is quoted from Taha Husain as he says: "Certainly our brother Tawfiq al-Hakim tried to become another character, as French he lived in Paris, had no relation with Cairo, Egypt and Arabic language. Certainly the drama *al-'Abath* to Tawfiq al-Hakim is a heavy blood. It cause laugh; if we laughed, it is with the writer, not with the actors! In France poets are absurd; but their blood is lighter than

[183] http://magra.montadamoslim.com/t712-topic

the shadow. As for Tawfiq al-Hakim is concerned, he is a heavy blood and shadow as well.

The above statement of Taha Husain was brought to response by Tawfiq al-Hakim, he says: naturally I do not respond to every thing, but here I say: I am known who he is – one poor says: 2 + 2 = 4 he says whispering and loudly; it is set to music by Muhammad Abdul Wahhab or sung by Kulthum. But nothing is found in the world with this clearance, nor this logic; leave the world, because the human being himself is a knot of treaty and there is nothing in the human path this self-evident truth, which is not necessary.

Muhammad Husain Haykal took part along with Tawfiq al-Hakim in the work of a magazine *Akhbar al-Yaum* (أخبار اليوم) and he said about him (Tawfiq):

أنا كنـــت مبهـــورا بالأديب و الفـــنان و هـــو كان مبهـــورا بالصحفي.

(*I was breathless with litterateur and artists while he (Tawfiq al-Hakim) was breathless with the journalists*.)

It has been observed that the education minister al-Qabbani made criticism severely against the playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim saying in favor of ‘Abd al-Naser (عبد الناصر) as follows:

"إن الحكيـــم لـيـس إداريا و إنه كســـول و كـــونه أديبا مشهـــورا ليس معناه أنه يصلـــح لإدارة دار الكـــتب."

(*Certainly al-Hakim was not official man, who was lazy, but as a litterateur he was famous; it does not mean that he did administrative reformation for Dâr al-Kutub*.)

In fact, Abd al-Naser sought to discharge him from his post, but Abd al-Naser said: "لا أرضى للثورة أن تضع هذه النقطة في تاريخها." (*I am not content with the movement that you will keep this point in the history*.)

Then al-Qabbani accepted the discharge order under the circumstances that Abd al-Naser made for Tawfiq al-Hakim.[184]

In fine, here it may be concluded with the following discussion that the drama (السلطان الحائر) has been pregnant with the culture and philosophy of the contemporary Egypt and outside as well. The dramatist has designed it with the story of a Sultan who was actually a slave-soldier of Mamluk period, and he ascended to the rank of monarch, known as Sultan. He found criticism of people from the point of his slavery to the earlier Sultan. It led him to the dilemma in view of taking the course that remained between the power and law of the state. In fact, 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 in the drama the chief justice played a vital role in brain-washing of the Sultan. In addition, the lady in the drama termed as *al-ghaniya* means "lady singer" who was well nourished by her master as well as husband who trained her in different ways in respect of art and culture; 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 found her vicinity and attachment personally. Indeed a well-bred, cultured and educated person may be the torch-bearer of a society, who honestly can solve the great problem like that 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 due to his far-sighting caliber and

[184] Ibid

intelligence; while the gossip of the shoemaker and the wine merchant is not applicable to the atmosphere as appeared in the drama. The executioner and the slave trader interacted with various jokes and humor, while the latter was awarded punishment for execution, but the executioner failed to cut off his head as the appointed time at the dawn prayer call was lapsed under trickery. Actually the slave trader was condemned by the minister without proper trial and when he was escaped from the execution, his matter led to the way of the Sultan's manumission, of which testimony we find in the third act of the drama.[185]

In fact, the playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim lived in Egypt and Europe during the period of his past life; being experienced he could throw light on the Arab culture and her different colors perceived beautiful. He hoped that the readers might understand whatever he displayed before them as a one of the renowned Arab litterateurs. In this connection, the history finds him as appeared through his enlightened life and writings according to his passing across duty, literature and dramas that still perpetuate the remembrance of the name of Tawfiq al-Hakim. Indeed, he extended a lot of contributions to the field of drama for upgrading the nation of Egypt with fame thereof and to make them conversant with the nations who went ahead as advanced and civilized ones.

In addition, Tawfiq al-Hakim produced a lot of theatres which made him in the front rank of the Arab playwrights as well as in the top of the pioneers. His position might be understood with his innumerable drama contributions that represented on the stage for people's inspection and enjoyments, and most of his plays were of the kind that might be called "intellectual plays", which were written for perusal of the readers and thereby they might discover the world of signs

[185] Tawfiq al-Hakim , Op. cit.,1985, pp. 3 – 216

and symbols, be practically available to them in easy touch. In fact, his contribution was for providing a critical view of life and society characterized by a great deal of depth of knowledge and awareness in tact. In fact, the purpose to write the drama (السلطان الحائر) in view of addressing the social ills prevalent in his time, in order to reform the Arab nation and bring progress to them as well.[186]

It appears from the analysis of the drama that it is one of the excellent works written by Tawfiq al-Hakim, and it consists of excellent and forceful dialogue, novel idea, and beautiful objective. According to the nature of literature, it may be categorized with comical comedy.[187] The dramatist successfully completed the roadmap of his objective within the three acts of the play. In fact, his choice of the name of the drama is praiseworthy and suitable to the present world, where the executive heads of different countries are conspicuous to be fallen in dilemma either for domination or corruption.

[186] http://magra.montadamoslim.com/t712-topic
[187] salemarabic.wordpress.com/2008/04/29