INTRODUCTION

The present research work entitled " *Al Sultan al Ha'ir"*: A Critical and Analytical Study" has been undertaken to draw all the aspects of Arabic drama produced by Tawfiq al-Hakim in general, and the drama *al-Sultan al-Ha'ir* in particular. In fact, the drama *al-Sultan al-Ha'ir* is one of the masterpiece works of Tawfiq al-Hakim; which is also considered by the critics and other scholars as one of his excellent dramas.

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

It reveals from this research work that Tawfiq al-Hakim is one of the major figures in modern Arabic literature. In the domain of Arabic drama, his efforts are considered as an important legacy of Arabic literature from the ground of literary genre that evolved in his expressive techniques and mode of language as well. In fact, he bears an overarching role in the foundation of an entire literary tradition of Arabic drama. He

deals inherently with the objectives related to politics and social affairs in the contemporary Egypt that he lived.

As an outstanding dramatist in the domain of Arabic literature, Tawfiq al-Hakim occupied the same eminent place in Arabic drama as Muḥammad Taymur in short story and Najib Maḥfuẓ in novel.

In fact, Tawfiq al-Hakim is identified as one of the major pioneer figures in modern Arabic literature. Especially his contribution to modern Arabic drama has given a fillip to the development of Arabic theatre and play; most of his plays have been brought to stage in Egypt and thereby he achieved a good name and fame in the world of Arabic drama. It is aware of the fact that every individual of art loving fellows is bound to remind the credit of Tawfîq al-Hakim for his excellent contributions in the field of Arabic drama.

The present research work entitled "Al-Sulṭan al-Ḥa'ir (السلطان الحائر): A Critical and Analytical Study" is one of the Drama contributions of Tawfîq al-Hakim, which is considered as one of the masterpiece works. In fact, Tawfîq al-Hakim tried by this drama to draw the attention of people towards an international aspect in the contemporary world of super power. In 1960 Tawfîq al-Hakim was to provide further illustration of this development in technique with the play set in an earlier period of Egyptian history, Al-Sulṭan al-Ḥa'ir (The Sultan Perplexed). The play explores in a most effective manner the issue of the legitimacy of power. A Mamluk Sultan rising to the height of his power suddenly faced with the fact that he was not manumitted from the issue of his slavery of the earlier Sultan, for which he was not supposed to be a legible ruler. By 1960 when this play was published, some of the initial euphoria and hope engendered by the Revolution itself, given expression in ***al-Aydi al-na'imah***, had begun to fade somewhat. The Egyptian people found it confronting some unsavory realities: the use of the secret police

to squelch the public expression of opinion, for example, and the personality cult surrounding the figure of ‘Abd al-Naṣir (Nasser). In such a historical context al-Hakim’s play can be seen as a somewhat courageous statement of the need for even the mightiest to adhere to the laws of the land and specifically a plea to the ruling military regime to eschew the use of violence and instead seek legitimacy through application of the law.

As the methodology goes, this research work has been chalked out with the fifth chapters for carrying out the works of this research and they are as follows:

Chapter – I: Tawfiq al-Hakim: life and works; it has been designed so for introducing the different aspects of Tawfîq al-Hakim’s life and works in an introductory manner.

Chapter – II: Contribution of Tawfiq al-Hakim to the Arabic Drama; it has been designed so for discussing about the contributions of Tawfiq al-Hakim that he made to the field of Modern Arabic Drama.

In this noble research work, we have highlighted on the renowned playwright Tawfiq al-Ḥakim and other dramatists who flourished in his contemporary period; as such, the Chapter – III: has been designed as “Tawfiq al-Ḥakim and his Contemporary Dramatists”.

Chapter – IV: Influence of Western Drama in Tawfîq’s Writing; has been captioned for discussing about an important aspect of the influences that fallen on the writings of Tawfiq al-Ḥakim.

In the fifth chapter, the important drama of Tawfiq al-Ḥakim entitled “al-Sultan al-Ha’ir” (The Confused Sultan) has been discussed in the light of analysis and criticism as well designed as “Al-Sulṭan al-Ḥa’ir: A Critical and Analytical Study”

In the last, but not least, a **conclusion** has been drawn in the **fifth chapter** for discussing overall inferences of my research works on each and every aspect thereof.

In fine, I hope to the Almighty Allah to accept this endeavour of my research works in the way that the knowledge seekers would find a concrete information about the work entitled *Al-Sulṭan al-Ḥa'ir* (The Confused Sultan) of Tawfiq al-Ḥakim and his other works as well.