CHAPTER- 5

Critical study of “Al-Sitt Huda” and “Al-Bakhila”.

Ahmad Shawqi must be reckoned one of the most significant figures in twentieth century Arabic literature. The triumphs and failures that are represented by the reception of his enormous output of plays are emblematic of the issues that have confronted the drama genre as it has endeavored to adapt its complex modes of communication to the societies of the Arab world.

Artistic consideration in playwriting requires selection and arrangement. Art is skill acquired by experience, study, and clear observations. Playwrights must consciously set about making choices with a competent plan and creative imagination. Only then than we consider the playwrights work as a viable start to the theatrical process. Before anyone begins to write a play it is important to understand the medium for which you intend on writing. Writing for the stage demands an understanding of two fundamentals: the essence of drama and the nature of theatre.

Ahmad Shawqi, 'the prince of the poets', who during his latter years penned a number of verse dramas with themes culled from Egyptian and Islamic history; these included *Masra `Kliyubatra* (The Death of Cleopatra, 1929), *Majnun Layla* (the name of a famous ghazal poet, 1931),*Amirat al-Andalus* (The Spanish Princess, 1932), and *`Ali Bey al-kabir* (a ruler of Egypt during the eighteenth century), a play originally written in 1893 and later revised. However, between the popular traditions of farcical comedy and melodrama and the performance of translated versions of Egyptian dramatic

masterpieces, there still remained a void within which an indigenous tradition of serious drama could develop. Shawqi desire to replicate the Egyptian tradition was thus timely in the extreme, and it is for that reason that the publication and performance of his plays *Al-Sitt Huda* and *Al-Bakhila*, are such a significant event in Egyptian drama.

Egyptian drama that addressed itself to a serious contemporary subject, namely the modes of interaction between people from a variety of professions and classes, all of whom inhabit a single building owned by *Al-Bakhila*. The play is written in a colloquial dialect that allows for a good deal of verbal repartee while retaining the authenticity of the social functions that each character represents. With the deft use of a comedy that has been liberated from the more physical stage actions associated with popular farce, Shawqi managed to present his audiences with a play in which they could recognize the problems and foibles of their neighbors and themselves.

Satire and Romance :

Satire and romance, rather than dramatizing the dominant patterns of human experience, embody the essential qualities and potentialities of human nature. Shawqi's drama *al-Sitt Huda* bears witness to what humanity can be at its best, satire to what it can be at its worst. Romance offers us an idealize vision of human potentiality, satire a spectacle of inferior human conduct.

Satire and romance are intended ultimately to produce clear-cut images of good or evil, virtue or vice, wisdom or folly; and those images may be embodied most vividly in characters that are boldly outlined rather than finely

detailed. Such qualities may also be highlighted through contrast. Thus, the plots of satire and romance often bring together characters from both extremes, using their interaction to create emphatic contrasts. We can best understand these elements by looking first at satire, then at romance.

Satiric drama always expresses a critical attitude toward a particular aspect of human conduct and affairs. The satire may focus on morality, society, politics, or some other dimension of human nature and culture. Our first purpose in reading a satiric play should thus be to identify the focus of its criticism, as we can do by examining the characters themselves to see what particular types of behavior predominate among them. In Shawqi's play *al-Sitt Huda*, most of the characters is motivated by social ambitiousness. Huda married nine times but each of her husbands not loves her purely or truly. They married her due to her plenty of money and social statues. The world of these characters thus strikes us as a false and shallow society.

Once we have identified the dominant vices of the characters, we should explore the consequences of their behavior, and we can do so by examining the incidents of the plot. In *al-Sitt Huda*, for example the greed of the characters (husbands) is shown to threaten the ethical and legal foundations of their society. Thus in this play the plot is designed to dramatize not only the vice but also its moral or social implications. Satiric plots incorporate discovery scenes as well, and the discoveries of satire inevitably bring about the public exposure of the principal characters. After the death of Huda the real characters of her husbands comes out.

As those discovery scenes indicate, satiric drama does not necessarily offer us a completely pessimistic spectacle of human affairs. Indeed, we will usually find that a satire incorporates at least a few virtuous characters. Zainab, khadeza, Iqbal, Asma are completely generous and trusting individuals, so she made a will in which she disposed of all her possessions, leaving them either to female friends or to charity. These characters, by representing the virtuous potentiality of human nature, not only highlight the ugliness surrounding them in the satiric world but also remind us in the end that humanity is not- and need not be- depraved. In other words, satire offers us an intensified but not completely negative view of human imperfection.

Romance, by analogy, offers us an intensified but not completely idealized vision of human excellence. The heroes of romance, for example, are typically shown in conflict with characters representing aspects of human imperfection or depravity.

Tragedy, comedy, satire, and romance- each of those primary modes embodies its own unique pattern of dramatic experience. As we have seen, each incorporates distinctly different kinds of plots and characters, distinctly different kinds of conflicts and discovery scenes, and each achieves a distinctly different view of human existence thus, when we read or witness a tragedy or comedy, a satire or romance, e undergo an experience that is more or less clear-cut. We feel sorrow or joy, scorn or admiration. We know, in short, exactly how we feel, exactly what we think.

Ahmad Shawqi's writing style :

Shawqi's writing style is descriptive with easy language, he avoid all the ambiguous and complex construction. Though he had a vast vocabulary, he always uses simple but exact vocabulary and conveys in short sentence detailed sketches of natural scenes. His comedy dramas *Al-Sitt Huda* and *Al-Bakhila,* both are the example of this context.

The comedy play *Al-Sitt Huda* is one of the unique beauties of Shawqi. For the sake of literary analysis or speaking extensively we are not speaking or prolonging it, rather we forward some of the words, by which intending the honorable reader to understand and study the play better and to pick up what the play gives importance on, revive his philosophy and forward its prospects.

In this play Huda married nine times but not got children from them. That means as a woman she never be a mother up to her death. This is the grief which Shawqi explain with his comic elements.

This play is about Harim on the way of unhands during the periods of struggles, and the services were oriental from the activity of good leaders of them from men and women, even the servicemen with husbands. So the play is nothing but a followed strong taken from the men as plays by which they amuse a key of her passions and a tool for its profits. The men to her play of *Al-Sitt Huda* as the general folk say!

Finally she dies and registers all her wealth for her servants and the daughters of servants. She stood dominant of the men in neither graveyard nor being sorry of it, and whoever remained in the confinement of life swayed in the wind. The accounts the cut of disappointment from the grazing and decidedness

of women, it is recognized as a laughter at one, not weeping for it, and here its ignorance gets it, some sort of shamefulness and owner of hour of shamefulness.

The play is a manipulation from the fruitful manipulations of the poetry of Shawqi, fruit of mansions and what is behind mansions. It is evidence on the prolific literature, capable of interpreting from lucid criticism with pictures that is rare and fruitfulness. Shawqi introduce Egypt through Huda, the main character of this play. By his different kind of play Shawqi occupied the high position in modern Arabic verse drama. Shawq's contribution to the Arabic literature through this play is highly appreciated.

Act I open with a conversation with a female neighbor and friend, Zaynab, during which she tells her (and the audience) about her nine husbands, giving a gallery of vivid thumbnail character scratches of men of different trades and dispositions, all the while revealing her own character: a tough, worldly- wise, rather vain women, who despite her advance years is careful to hide her true age, pretending half seriously that she is only twenty years old.

الست هدى : كيف يا اخت انت ؟

زينب : نحن برغد

كلنا ما بقيت انت

الست هدى : انت يا)زينب (الوفية بالعهد

زينب : ولم لا افى و خير ك عندى ؟

نحن من اربين عاما عاى

جير جوار بين اثنتين وود

الست هدى : لا ,بل العهد لا يزيد عاى ال

عشرين

زينب : خلى حسابه ,لا تعدى !

الست هدى : اسمعى ,اسمعى يا صديقى

لك هتّا الد بوس

زينب : لى انا

است هدى : بعدى

أنا أعطيت كل صا حبة شيا

وأنصفت فى الو صية جهدى

عنى ؟ (زينب)ما يقو ل الجير ان

زينب : اتر كيهم ,لا تحفى بما قالوا

است هدى : يقو لون فى أ مرى الكشير وشغلهم

حديث زوا جى أو حديث طالاقى

يقولون انى قد تزو جت تسعة

وانى واريت التر اب رفا قى

وما أ نا)عزريل (وليس بما لهم

تزوجت ,لكن كان ذاك بما لى

وتلك فدادينى اثلاثو ن كلما

تولى رجال جننى بر جال

Lady Huda is a very soft hearted and rich woman. But her luck not favor in her life. Generally we think that if a young lady who is also wealthy, she is

really very lucky one. Shawqi's opinion is not like this. Here Shawqi used the beauty of Huda as like a comic element. She married nine times. But no satisfaction in his life at once. Because nobody married her due to her glamour or beauty but only due to her wealth or property. For example here –

عبد المنعم : انى لم أخطبك يا هدى لفرط حسنك

ولا تزوجتك يا صغير تى لسنك

ولا وقعت فى البلا ء لسواد عينك

الست هدى : اذن لطينى بى تزوجت ؟

عبد المنعم : أجل لطينك ..!

In act II we see him eating and drinking at breakfast time and trying, with the help of his clerk, to persuade his wife to give him a considerable sum of money to help him re-establish his practice. When he fails he threatens to beat her, but he is out witted by her, is beaten up by her female friends and is forced to divorce her.

الست هدهى : زينب تلك صخرهة بغير حس فاضربى

أسما خديجة اضربا رضوان أ دب أ دب

هذا هو الفول فكل هذا الزبيب فاشرب

خذ من يدى الز بر جدا خذ من يدى الز مردا

وخذ ان اسطعت اليدا

عبدالمنعم : حسبى هدى ,كفى كفانى ضربا

قد كان هذا اليوم لى مخبا

سلمت رايتى فكفى الحر با

الست هدى : ان أ نا خلصتك ماذا تصنع ؟

عبد المنعم : أذهب !

الست هدى : ثم ؟

عبد المنعم : أبدا لا أرجع ...!

الست هدى : اخرج اذن ول القفا يا لكع

قف يا محا مى لى اسمع واسمعن يا من ههنا

النذل قد رد الطلاق لمشيتى أنا

)تخر ج عقد زواجها (

عصمتى منك فى يدى شهدت لى الو ثا بق

امض يا نذل لا تعد انك اليو طالق !

Shawqi wants to show the real picture of women when she dominated by his own one he may be her husband, father, brother and some one else… In that period Egyptian women were suppressed by men. They lost their freedom. Shawqi introduced Huda with different colors of life in his play to better understand for his audience or common people.

Act III takes place after her death we meet her last husband, who is gleefully thinking of what he believes he has inherited from his rich wife and is visited by a horde of envious friends. But he is in for a shock, as he soon learns that she made a will in which she disposed of all her possessions, leaving them either to female friends or to charity.

Shawqi also shows that every man have a suspicious character. Due to this maximum divorced is done in our society.

الست هدى : رأى غباراعا لقا بجبهتى

ولم أ كن أعلم من أين اتى ؟

فقال هذا الترب من نافذة

من كنت منها تنظر ين يا ترى ؟...

وها ج حتى خفت أن يقتلنى

وشمر لذيل وجرد العصا

وجاء بالنجار من سا عته

سد الشبا بيك وسمر الكوى

فقلت يهوانى وتلك غيرة

يا حبذا الزوج الغيور حبذا !

وقبله لم أر من غار ولا

من ظن فى قلبى لغيره هوى

ير حمهالله لقد مات على

سحرى ونحرى بعد ما صلى الضحى

ماتولم يرقذ له جنب ولا

بدت عليه علة ولا اشتكى

رحمة الله عليه لم يكن

فمه يذ كر)أبعا ديتى (

واذا ما جاءنى أو جته

لم يقلب عينه فى)صيغتى (

لكنه منذ كنا ما حل عقدة كيسه

يفضل الا كل من غير ماله وفلوسه

كان الاز هر المعموربيتى

هنا ك)جراية (وهنا)جرايه(

خلف الشيخ من ال

ـاو لاد ما يملا حاره !

قسمت ثروته علي

هم فنال الطفل باره !

عشت مع الشيخ نصف عام

وكان عمرى عشرين عا

ومات فاختارنى سواه

من ذا يرى فعلتى حراما ؟ !

Through this comedy poetic drama Shawqi gave us the massage that the understanding is the back bond of a family. Only understanding united a family together.

In that period women were suppressed by men. They could not express their inner qualities. Shawqi always tried to encourage those women by his dramas, and also tried a permanent respect for them. He was presented not only positive aspects but negative character also be enclosed in it. To some extent Shawqi succeeded in his work through these comedies. So we can say that Shawqi gave modern Arabic literature a new direction by his verse dramas and thus started a new era in the field of modern Arabic literature.

Huda was married nine times, but among them, nobody married her due to her beauty, glamour and her heart. They married her only because her wealth. Shawqi focused that kind of men who always used women only for their personal efforts. Like

Unlike Shawqi's other verse dramas, due to the simple language and very short meters, with the result that the dialogues of *Al-Sitt Huda* moves very fast and is more dramatic in nature- apart from act I which, despite its lively character is more of a narrative account of the earlier husbands. Besides, the unexpected turn of events gives the play a pleasing ironic end. That, together with the amusing, lively portrayed of the widow, makes Lady Huda despite its rather simple episodic structure, a striking example of the use of verse drama to express contemporary Egyptian social reality. Among the contemporaries Aziz Abaza always followed him closely.

In the first act of *Al-Bakhila* there is talk about the misery lady Nazifah, Al-Bakhila, itself, and how that she had become proverbial in a sense, has been denied her grandson Jamal to marry a maid servant Hosna, and even thinking that marriage should take place with, "Zainab," a girl of a rich family, which yearns beauty and prestige in the society. In another dialogue between the "Aziz", the brother of Zainab, and "Rashid Broker" greatly exaggerates the second as rich man that has a place and high lineage. Aziz approached Jamal to discuss about the marriage with his sister Zainab.

In the second act shows Al- Bakhilah, on the stage and in the dialogue between her and maid "Hosna" which highlights miserness extremely, that

make them reluctant to use basic foodstuffs for the cause of prices such as meat, rice, oil, flour, honey, and only to use old cakes and exotic.

This is followed by another dialogue between Jamal and Hosna, it shows that there is an understanding excited between them and that to help the miser lady, so that the Jamal wonders in his interview with Hosna – whether she would pray to God or grandmother for money! Then the talk was going on between them about the need for the money. The misery is the constitution of life of her grandmother, which guided her in the conducts of its affairs, when Jamal express his desire to marry Hosna, she vehemently opposed it as she was a poor girl, but Jamal loved Hosna and intended to marry her. He, therefore, nominated a man immediately to give his information and to meet maid Hosna which even costs dowry and marriage expenses as usual.

حسنى : أ نا مولاتى فداك

والان هل اخذ خرج النهار

نظيفة : امضى خذيه انه فى)الكرار(

حسنى : هياته سيدتى ؟

نظيفة : أجل

حسنى : وما أخر جت لى ؟

نظيفة : راس من اثوم وخمس من صغار البصل

حسنى : والسمن مولاتى ترى ؟

نظيفة : كمس لم أقلل

أوقية

حسنى : والارز ؟

نظيفة : لا لا يدخلن منز لى

لقد غلا سعرا ولا يعجبنى السعر الغلى

حسنى : ليتك بالز يتافتكر توالدقيق والعسل

نظيفة : ولم يا حسنى أرا ك اليوم عادك الخبل ؟

نسيت أن ها هنا وتحت هذى الكنبه

العشرات من قديم الكعك والغر يبه ؟

The third and final act of this wonderful comedy, it is divided into two principles, the first offers to the viewers or reader about the quality of Al-Bakhila which is struggling with the disease on mattresses in the hall of her home, and around Hosna, a group of neighbors had come to question her. Secondly, this opens a dramatic scene which targets social hypocrisy, and when one of the visitors proceeds to flatter the Al- Bakhila, claiming that her hand was a close affair for the poor and the rich. At end of the play, Jamal got married to maid Hosna although she was a girl from a poor family.

حسنى : اخفضى الصوت ..أمسكى يا خاله

الزالرة : ما اها ؟ ما بها ؟ عفا الله عنها

حسنى : هى من ليلتن فى شر حاله

زالرة : أم الا فندى عوفيت من قلبها تجنى

ما كان أندى يدها على الفقير والغنى

شفا ها الله للبيت وللجر وللجاره

حرى ا حسنها كالسيل حتى أغرق الحاره

قدوقعت عينى عليها مرةفى

Al-Bakhila shows a glimpse of a dramatic new dimension in modern Arabic literature and it makes them a natural extension and a benign development of drama with social criticism in the early stages of the work of the prince of poets Shawqi. It projects a marriage that is not between Jamal and Zainab, which was based on lies and false hood and materialism, wealth and took place the marriage between Jamal and Hosna which was based on love and sacrifice from both sides. Indeed, the money was not prevailed here. It also shows the upcoming happy married life between Hosna and Jamal in the absence of plenty of wealth. The play *Al- Bakhila* celebrates love as saviour and love is miracle, love is here to fit in the life and it spoils avarice.

The poetic medium or particular the full tradition Arabic verse with its specific meters and monarchy's in presence it is more like a narrative in dialogue. The whole design made Shawqi's works disproportional large lyric component which were away the dramatic quality. The medium lends itself easily to re-historical flourish and public declamation, but hardly allows subtle nature of character or the half- uttered intimate thoughts, the fleeting tings of emotion which mark complex dramatic experience. Further more it makes it extremely difficult for the characters not to sound alike. Infect the surviving manuscripts of his plays shows that Shawqi often wrote the verse dialogue originally from his poems and then divided it into different characters, a practice which emphasizes the essentially unromantic quality of his verses.