INTRODUCTION

The work at hand is based on the topic "Themes and Techniques in 'Misr al-Qadima' of Najib Mahfouz". It faces a widened scope in modern Arabic literature as it is an important and feasible research topic in present day research scenario.

Arabic, belonging to the Semitic group of languages, came into existence from the early part of the 6th Century A.D. The whole Muslim World considers it as the most sacred language because it is the language of the Holy Quran. It goes without saying that wherever the Muslim goes the Arabic Language follows.

In modern Arabic literature the close interaction between literature and socio-political issues makes it difficult to isolate one from the other. The importance of the socio-cultural dimension is particularly relevant in dealing with narrative forms, because narrative mediates human experience and derives its significance from probing it. As the modern Arabic literature developed in the full glare of Western literary influences, a constant reference to Western literature is essential to the understanding of present-day writing as it is acquainted with classical Arabic terminology. The reign of Muhammad Ali marks the beginning of the Arab awakening. Muhammad Ali emerged as the ruler of Egypt with the retreat of Napoleon's army. He modernized Egypt's army and navy and extended his rule over the Arabian Peninsula and the Sudan and even endeavored it the annexation of Syria through forces under the command of his son, Ibrahim Pasha.

The beginning of the 19th century saw the emergence of a host of writers, thinkers, scientists, journalists, poets, printers and translators, which led the Arabic literature to a specific development. French occupation on the Egyptian soil in 1798 is also an important factor for the development of modern Arabic literature which results the close contract of the Arab people with European culture and literature. The Egyptians were impressed greatly by the European culture which stimulated learning and their desire for knowledge.

The printing press introduced by Napoleon and the Arabic journalism played a pivotal role in the development of Arabic literature. In 1828, Muhammad Ali initiated the official organ al-Waqai' al-Misriyya, which printed three times a week and edited by Rifa' al-Tahtawi and published the governmental problems and prospects. As al-Waqai' al-Misriyya was the official organ it did not reflect the public opinion. So the thinkers looked towards some public journals and as a result there came a number of monthlies and dailies. Among the Abu Nazara, Hadiqatul Akhbar, Nafir Suriyya, al-Janna are mentionable in respect of the development of Arabic literature.

The Arab literary establishment of modern period immediately preceding the nineteenth century had reached such stability in social status, such homogeneity in education, and such unanimity in cultural values that it was no longer searching for innovative ideas, and of its men of letters-poets and prose writers alike-it expected not originality but consummate skill in the use of words. The prose that it favoured was not only rhymed, but laden with tropes, especially those developed in the branch of Rhetoric known as badi', which concerns itself not so much with imagery paronomasia.

It conveys the greeting of love strongly based and loftily erected, and the stimuli of yearnings give tongue to deeds of praise and eulogy; the affirmations of affection describe what is hidden in the inner core of consciousness: true love, the wholeness of which is immune from fragmentation. Thus the modern prose lifted up an invocation based upon insight and an encomium set upon praise, and having communicated a yearning the inspirer of which is exalted and an unceasing desire the stimulation of which is never nullified in modern prose. But the point of the piece is that it is studded with words that double as technical terms of grammar, so that-with little more tortuousness than in the original-it may be rendered. Its inchoative greeting enunciates a love strongly backed and loftily indeclinable, and the operatives of yearning inflect the verbs of praise and eulogy; emphatic expressions of affection qualify what is covert within the pronoun: of manifestations of true love, the plurality of which is sound.

As a result of the eruption of Western European powers, the Arab world was soon to undergo far-reaching political, economic, and social changes that were sure to transform cultural values as well-but not at the same pace. At least through the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, the aesthetic priorities of the preceding age continued to be proclaimed and to a somewhat lesser extent applied. Literary reputations continued to be made by displays of linguistic dexterity and familiarity with an antiquated lexicon, as in imitations of the maqama of al-Hariri. In one of the stock situations in which the anti-hero's youthful accomplice solicits the judge's sympathy and bounty by complaining of his treatment at the hands of his master. The wonders of Western science were readily accepted, but their recognition in literature was first

enshrined in time-hallowed formula. A more genuinely literary treatment of some of the marvels of the new technology comes from the pen of Abd Allah al-Nadim (1845-96). On the model of traditional pieces of fine writing in which comparisons spring and summer flowers were cast in the form of a debate, he has a train and a steamboat out boasting each other. In the finely balanced vesicles of rhymed 'Al-Maqama al-Misriyyah in Majma al-Bahrayn was found in this period. And yet, almost unheralded, a new style of writing was coming into being. Much credit for the popularization of simpler forms of self-expression has been given to Syrian Christian journalists who, as Syed Mustafa Lutfi al-Manfaluti (1876-1924) put it, preferred that the ignorant should learn from them than that the pedants should approve of them. Some attention to the career of Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq (1804-87) shows that there was more to it than that. He was indeed born a Lebanese Christian and he did eventually found, in 1861, the very popular and influential journal al-Jawa'ib; but even before Arab journalism had taken wing, he had made his mark as a highly individualistic writer of insatiable curiosity and of irrepressible verse, even if sometimes erratic and inconsistent. He lived and worked in European countries for many years; but although remarkably open-minded about many practices and institutions at variance with those he had known in his formative years, he was not overawed by European literary norms, and specifically crowed over the fact that none could vie with the Arabs in the 'miracle' of rhymed prose. A look at his discursive, lively, often Rabelaisian fictionalized autobiography shows that he could indeed hold his own against any contemporary in ornate writing and since his greatest

expertise was in lexicography, he particularly delighted in stringing together-not without humour-dozens, sometimes even hundreds, of synonyms.

Our purpose here is to weave our narrative in a form acceptable to any reader. Let him who wishes to hear discourse that is rhymed throughout, interspersed with metaphors and decorated with metonymies, betake himself to the maqamah of al-Hariri or the Nawabigh of al-Zamakhshari. What we have here is neither a condemnation of ornate writing, nor an imitation of Western practice. Least of all is it a concession to half-educated readers. It is rather that, unlike his immediate predecessors, the writer now had something novel to say, and the very nature of the exercise imposed upon him a functional style. It is not surprising either to find that the great Islamic reformist Muhammad Abduhu (d.1905) who, although not primarily a man of letters, did much to infuse a purposeful spirit in his contemporaries, was among the first to abandon rhymed prose-at the suggestion, it is reported, of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. The new direction was inevitable, for a new reading public had appeared: no longer a coterie of people who shared the same formation and the same devotion to inherited values, but men operating in a variety of occupations where new techniques originating in the West were being tried out, who were eager to learn more about the sources of the new wisdom, and who believed that the greatest good lay in its propagation.

It is no wonder that the cord that was most insistently struck in Arab hearts was therefore a romantic one. Initially, the feature of Romanticism that most impressed the Arabs is indicated by an observation made by Muhammad Hussein Haykal (1888-1956) in the early 1920s, in the course of a study on Rousseau. The demands of style were not

forgotten, but the effects now sought were not ornamental but emotional. Prose is nothing but poetry that escapes from the strict rules of meter. Even so, it is not satisfying unless it subjects itself to the rules of composition which include balance of sentences, musicality of diction, and expression of thought systematically and simply.

The public asserts that its desire to sample women's writings does not bespeak admiration for these writings or acknowledgement of the truth of their perceptions, but arise from the fact that in their writings is some manifestation of the feminine essence in general. This is a worthy step towards the honouring of feminine literature, but it is not without some injustice and some denial of rights. Some thinkers have gone beyond the score in isolating women from the human species, which they have all but restricted to the man. The fact is that every passion that moves a woman derives from the all-inclusive human spirit, and every product of her acumen is an aspect of general human thought.

The writer who best articulated the taste of the first quarter of the twentieth century, however, was Syed Mustafa Lutfi a1-Manfaluti. Apart from Arabisizing, without any knowledge of a European language, four French romantic novels, he delighted the public of the day with short prose pieces which were always emotional, high-minded and elegantly worded, and which have been published and republished in two collections appropriately titled Views (al-Nazaraat) and Tears (al-Abaraat), for they often depicted some harrowing scene from which some lofty moral was to be derived. One of them depicts a rich man lying on his death-bed, his sufferings compounded by the knowledge that, instead of attending to him, his wife is out enjoying herself; but

then the servant approached him and said, Do you not recall those long nights which you used to spend away from home, pursuing some appetite, draining a cup, dragging your coattails in some place of entertainment, wasting your money in dance halls-and leaving your wife in this very room, on this very bed, sighing in her loneliness, weeping in her solitude, writing on what was hotter than live embers in her yearning for you and her sorrow over you? Yet you would not return to her until the raven of the night had turned white with age and the eagle of morn was on the wing. You robbed her of those past nights, and thus did you become her debtor. Now she is claiming these nights back from you, one after another, down to the very last one. An issue that generated a great deal of heat then was the extent to which Arabic needed to evolve in order to meet the needs of modern life. He maintained that the language had reached perfection and needed no tampering; but by the middle of the 1920s these had been not so much silenced as by-passed by the modernists, who by precept or practice had recognized the necessity and established the right to coin new words. However, most of the writers who had risen to prominence by then and were to dominate the next generation were wary of disrupting the structure of the language, and in fact perpetuated al-Nadim's formula of combining simple diction with strict respect of classical grammar. This concern for correctness was shared by a conservative like Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafewi (1880-1937), Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad (1889-1964) and Muhammad Hussein Haykal (1888-1956) and Salma Musa (1887-1958), who in their zeal to reach the people decried all past Arabic literature as' regal . Prodigiously productive and versatile, they demonstrated how impeccably and with what suppleness Arabic could be made to deal

with the most modern and most elaborate of subjects. Of these, the most celebrated as a stylist, Taha Hussein (1889-1973), was also one of the most purist. His idea was to combine the beauty of classical Arabic as it was used by writers of the first four centuries of Islam. Foreign words for which no equivalent could be coined from an Arabic root are rare in his writings, and the colloquial he could tolerate only in small doses, at times arguing that true democracy consisted of raising the common people to the level at which they could appreciate fine literature. He was as aristocratic in matters of language as he was democratic in his political philosophy. Even when reporting a conversation between the narrator, a casually educated woman, and a countryside character encountered in a village guest house, he allowed himself only one colloquialism which he placed between quotation marks, and for the rest had to use his considerable ingenuity to suggest the tanginess of their expressions. The use of the colloquial has implications that extend far beyond the concerns of literature, and there are still those who fulminate against it as a corruption, divisive of the Arabs, its advocacy ascribed to a strange alliance between imperialists, Zionists, and communists. Nevertheless, the colloquial has established itself as a virtual necessity of comic dialogue from the time that Marun al-Naqqash (1818-1855) put on his first play in 1847, and its use in the dialogue of novels and short stories, although far from universal, has long ceased to raise eyebrows. That the practice is due to genuinely artistic considerations is shown by the fact that the stage directions of plays-even, in unpublished scripts intended only for the performers-are invariably in the literary language. In the last twenty-five years or so, the colloquial has made some inroads into

poetry, but these are not under consideration here. One may also note that in 1956 Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote a play which, partly by taking advantage of the ambiguities of the Arabic script, may be read as either in the classical or in the colloquial; that another established playwright, Rashad Rushdi, turned to the colloquial in writing his melodrama, al-Fardsha and that the novelist Fathi Ghanim (b. 1924) achieved much the same purpose by greatly extending the dialogue in his al-Mutallaqa, so that it reads rather like a film script. But there is here no harbinger of a significant breach of the walls of the literary establishment. If there has been a shift of emphasis in the present generation, it has been towards a measure of acceptance that fidelity to the strictest rules of classical morphology and syntax is not necessarily the supreme criterion of literary writing.

For the sake of truer characterization, fiction writers readily sacrifice such orotund speeches as al-Manfaluti placed on a servant's lips, not least when what they reproduce is 'the stream of consciousness, as is expertly done by Najib Mahfouz (1912-2006) in several novels. Others, like Jamal al-Jitani may want to protect themselves into a different century and adopt its linguistic peculiarities, or heighten the hero's predicament by expounding it in the form of police reports. Yusuf Idris (b. 1927) has long striven to develop a distinctively Egyptian style and he has experimented boldly with unconventional word order, as in this opening of a short story. Of course there is much else that, without jarring convention, makes its point by dint of precise wording and carefully chosen imagery, as in the same Yusuf Idris's masterly description of a journey from one of Cairo's most fashionable quarters to one of its most sordid. The

Arab public of today is well served by prose writers who recognize no limit to their art and are constantly trying out new modes of expression. Nor is the public restricted to the writings of the avant-garde: From al-Manfaluti's onward, the major works of this century are constantly being printed and reprinted.

Like other fictional works of Modern Arabic literature the Arabic novel is also developed with western influence. Through this genre of fiction we can best trace changes, both literary and social, if only because it attracts a wide range of practitioners. During the 1970s it underwent clearly perceptible change of vision, mood and technique and for any social critic; it affords ample material capable of being adduced as evidence of social disruption and widespread alienation.

Among famous contributors of modern Arabic novel, Najib Mahfouz is just outstanding. Now, I want to concentrate on Najib Mahfouz and his famous collection ‘Misr al-Qadima’.

The Nobel Prize winner litterateur Najib Mahfouz is considered to be one of the greatest litterateurs of modern Era. He occupies a unique position among scholars who left no stone unturned for the development of modern Arabic literature. He held the same position in modern Arabic novel as Tawfiq al-Hakim held in modern Arabic drama and Mahmud Taymur in modern Arabic short-story.

Najib Mahfouz was born in 1911 to a low-ranking civil servant at Old Jamaliyya, Cairo and he grew up in his native area, a tradition-rich section of historical Cairo. After completing his elementary education, Najib Mahfouz enrolled in the

Department of Philosophy at Cairo University at age of 19 and by the he was graduated in 1934 this university. Following his graduation, Najib Mahfouz found employment as a clerk in the civil service, where he worked in various governmental departments until his retirement in 1971.

Literary career of Najib Mahfouz began in the late 1930s. His first published book was a translation of James Baikie's concise history of Ancient Egypt (Misr Al-Qadima, 1932), published by the periodical 'Al-Majalah Al-Jadidah' (The New Magazine). His first collection of short story is 'Hams al-Junun' (The Whisper of Madness, 1938). Then he concentrates on his historical trilogy that dramatizes events and characters from ancient Egyptian history. The second and far more crucial phase of his literary career begins with the publication of his novel 'Al-Qahira al-Jadida' (New Cairo) in 1945. As its title suggests, the focus in this novel shifts to contemporary life in modern Egypt. Between 1945 and 1957, Najib Mahfouz published seven more novels, all of which were written in the style of social realism. The crowning achievement of this phase-and perhaps of his career-are the three novels which make up 'The Cairo Trilogy', which Mahfouz wrote before the 1952 Revolution, but did not publish until 1956. And finally he was recognized as the greatest novelist of Arabic literature and his pen stressed on the paper by a huge number of novels including his Nobel Prize winning novel 'Auladu Haratina' (Children of our Alley). In 1988 Najib Mahfouz was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He was the first Arab writer ever to receive the Nobel.

The realistic novels of Najib Mahfouz are concerned with social issues and theme. His fictional characters come largely from the lower-middle-class stratum of Cairene society and many of them bear clear autobiographical marks. In fact, many of the novels themselves bear the names of the quarters of historical Cairo in which Mahfouz grew up. Many of Mahfouz's plots enact a search for upward mobility in a society severely strained by socio-economic stratification. Now, I want to discuss the theme and technique of 'Misr al-Qadima' of Najib Mahfouz.

The book 'Misr al-Qadima' (The Ancient Egypt) of Najib Mahfouz is a collection of some stories written about ancient Egypt, where he has pointed out the land of ancient Egypt its kings and their capitals, their habits, customs, archaeological monuments, education system, literary outputs, military system, scientific discoveries like papyrus and other aspects of then Egypt. The fine description of Thebes, the then capital of Egypt and its ruler Pharaoh, his royal palace are the main attention of this book. Moreover, it includes a description of the children life in those days. The ancient Egyptian books and old temples and tombs are also a core side of this book. He also disclosed the life style of the people lived in the capital city of ancient Egypt. He also added the garment, they produced, was considered as the best quality among the Egypt and entire countries.

'Misr al-Qadima' (The Ancient Egypt) is the first major work by Najib Mahfouz which influenced the Egyptian Society in a great extend. After its first publication, the Arab as well as the Egyptian people accepted it with a great deal. People used to think

over the book and they used to compare the Modern Egypt with the Ancient One. As a result, Najib Mahfouz became very popular amongst the people that nobody proclaimed such a huge proclamation among the Arab writers. He remained in the lips of the people from the common man up to the professor level for his valuable work as Najib Mahfouz has long been famous for his adaptation of Modern Standard Arabic to a style that sounds close to colloquial Egyptian dialect. He is also widely admired for his ability to capture virtually every aspect of ordinary life, especially in the poorer districts of Cairo. Yet he does neither of these things in his Pharaohnic stories, most of which were written in the earliest phase of his career. Modern fiction was still a new form in Arabic, so many of his stories of this time have a slightly archaic, even Quranic flavour and it somehow enhances the pleasure of his Pharaohnic works, giving them a lyric quality that is almost hypnotic, full of resonant phrases that are at times reminiscent of the King James Bible. And while he has a tendency to moralize in these tales, he strives to do so by creating truly human characters and facing them with extraordinary and still oddly credible, blows of Fate.

Importance of the Study:

This study, entitled "Themes and Techniques in 'Misr al-Qadima' of Najib Mahfouz", is an important and fruitful one in modern era. Many research works have been done on the growth and development of Modern Arabic novel in various dimensions in India and abroad. But in Assam this important topic has been lacking behind. Nobody has concentrated on this topic yet. The study on 'Misr al-Qadima' of Najib Mahfouz is very important to know and evaluate the works of Najib Mahfouz it is

also beneficial to undertake the place and position of Najib Mahfouz in the field of modern Arabic novel. So, an important tusk has been made to evaluate his place and position clearly.

As a reader of Arabic literature, I studied a lot on the literary history of the Arabs and I came to the conclusion that the contribution of Najib Mahfouz, especially his translate work 'Misr al-Qadima' is really a subject of study. I am highly impressed by the works made by him for the development of Arabic literature. I, therefore, chose this important topic for my ever doctoral research in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Ph.D in the department of Arabic from Assam University, Silchar.

Objective of the Study:

This research shows a tremendous development than any other literary genre in the field of modern Arabic novel. It highlights the growth and development of modern Arabic novel with especial study on 'Misr al-Qadima' and Najib Mahfouz. No research work has been done without an objective because it is the core sight of any research problem. Like other researches this research has also some valuable objectives. The main objectives are:

1. To evaluate the modern Arabic novel with its various connotation
2. To evaluate the place and position of Najib Mahfouz in modern Arabic novel
3. To evaluate the importance of Ancient Egypt in modern day
4. The necessity of Ancient Egypt in modern Arabic literature

Hypothesis of the Study:

In order to perform the above mentioned objectives this study keeps the following hypotheses:

1. The main hypothesis of this study is to look the modern Arabic novel carefully
2. This study highlights the modernization of Arabic novel
3. This study discusses the efforts made by Najib Mahfouz for the development of modern Arabic novel
4. This study concentrates the place and position of Najib Mahfouz among his contemporaries

Methodology of the Study:

The descriptive method of research methodology is adapted for this study. In order to complete this research work the main sources are collected from the literary books, philosophical books, cultural books, religious books, research periodicals, research journals, and research articles. The different libraries of India are consulted.

Chapterization:

Chapter- 1: The Novel: The Genre, it's Growth and Development in Egypt

Chapter- 2: Contribution of Najib Mahfouz to the Development of Arabic Language and Literature

Chapter- 3: Najib Mahfouz as a Novelist

Chapter- 4: ‘Misr al-Qadima’: An Introduction

Chapter- 5: Themes and Techniques in ‘Misr al-Qadima’

Chapter- 6: Influence of ‘Misr al-Qadima’ on Egyptian Society