

Review

A Critical analysis of “Assembly of justice “

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Three new forms, (Drama, Novel and Short Stories) have been introduced in Arabic literature during 18th and 19th century due to western influence. The first literary drama has been written in 1988 by Maron Naqash entitled “Al-bakheel”. Due to the rapid change and development in these modern literary trends socio-political issues have been raised in Arabic drama by Tawfeeq al Hakeem who is one of the renowned Arabic Dramatist. Particularly in his most renowned drama “Majlis al Adal” (Assembly of justice) highlights the scene of the social issues prevailing during 20th century. The same trend still exists in our society, it is why an attempt has been made to translate its objectives with the help of text into English so as to aware people about the root cause of such issues. Moreover it will become a message to the influenced sector of the society to understand their value, duty and responsibility. It will also help non speaking Arabic natives to understand the style, culture and overall contribution of New Arabic literary form (drama).

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INTRODUCTION

One of the famous Arabic fiction writers “Tawfeeq al Hakeem” has written this drama entitled “Assembly of Justice” published by MaktabaMisr, raising the issue of corruption which is still a big challenge for the contemporary society. The writer has formed its narrations in a satire form. The writer criticized in this drama the influential people of the society, well educated people, bureaucrats and especially the court which is last hope of a lay man and middle class citizens.

Tawfeeq has written this drama keeping in view the socio-political situation of the Egypt .He has divided it into five main sessions .Every session speaks about the corrupted judge who had taken dinner with the baker who was his close friend and dinner has been served with Goose and owner of that Goose was the third person who actually brought it to the baker to fry it. The Goose is the main issue due to which four more episodes have

been discussed.

1st session of the drama

The first Session is about baker and owner of the Goose .when owner came to the baker and said: Have you fried my Goose? The baker replied, your Goose has flown when I tried to fry it .The owner of the goose got angry and submitted his case in the court. The judge was friend of baker who actually told baker to tell him that your goose has flown , so the judge made his all efforts to side line the owner and solve the case logically .The dialogue between owner and judge in the court is as under:

Judge to owner: what is your problem?

Owner: sir, this baker has put my Goose in the pan and started to fry it but now he is speaking non sense?

Judge: what nonsense? Explain it and don't try to be a philosopher in the court.

Owner: he says it has flown, is it possible and can we believe it?

Judge replied: Do you not believe it?

Owner: Of course not.

Judge: Do you believe on Allah?

Owner: Yes, of course.

Judge: Do you believe on his competence and ability?

Owner: yes I do.

Judge: then you should believe that Allah can fly your goose from pan.

Owner: he will but.....

Judge: listen to me and answer me in one word can a goose fly ,if Allah wishes or not?

Owner: yes, it can fly.

Judge: then understand it happened because of Allah ,not because of the baker.

Owner: but my respected judge who will pay me the amount which I spent to buy this goose ?Is it possible that Allah will make me and my whole family hungry by flying my goose from pan ?

Judge: that is your problem with your Allah and that is not problem of baker?

Owner: but baker is responsible because I have handed over it to him so he has to pay its price?

Judge: O Man! Be a logical person and try to understand the things. Who has flown your Goose, Allah or this baker?

Owner: Allah

Judge: Then how can you blame baker and how can he (baker) pay for that which Happened by Allah not by baker.

Owner: With some suspicious condition, I don't know.

Judge: listen carefully, court will reconsider your case due to your psychological problem and will take final decision against you after that.

Owner: Final decision!

Judge: Didn't you abuse baker as you blamed him that he is a thief.

Owner: This is because.....

Judge: court has charged you one Egyptian dollar as fine due to the same.

Owner: I have been fined and what about baker?

Judge: He is acquitted.

Owner: See people: what happens in the court, this man has stolen and has eaten my goose but the fine has been charged to me not to him.

Baker: Respected judge he again blames me that I have stolen his goose. (Tawfeeq al Hakeem, 1973, 10-13)

Second session

The second session is about "blind folded person" and baker .He appealed before court that one of my eye has been lost due to the baker who was fighting with owner of the Goose. Always walking on the road to go to home, this baker kicked my eye and I lost my eye sight so I want justice by the court. The judge has discussed with the wrapped person which is as under to shield his friend baker:

The blind person (Masoub) came forward and said: I was walking when this baker.....

Judge: why you have chosen that road to walk?

Blind: It is my usual routine to walk on that road what is wrong in it?

Judge: ok continue

Blind: Baker was fighting with owner and they were kicking, boxing each other when I reached near them and tried to escape them, but at the same time baker kicked my eye and I lost my eye sight.

Judge: why you did childish activities and got indulged in their personal matter?

Masoub (Blind): I tried to protect them, but this baker kicked me deliberately due to which I lost my eye sight.

Judge: Is it totally damaged?

Masoub: Yes

Judge: Now you have no eye then.

Masoub: Yes I have now no eye

Judge: How you see then?

Masoub: By my another eye.

Judge: Means you have now only one eye

Masoub: yes I have now only one eye

Judge: Then your one eye does not exist

Masoub: yes does not exist

Judge: Then we will take final decision on the basis of your one eye by which you are able to see

Masoub: Yes of course

Judge: There is judiciary rules that eye will be taken in place of eye and ear in place of ear and so on. According to this rule you will rip baker's one eye and he will rip your one eye.

Masoub: which eye, I have already lost my one eye

Judge: But you have only one eye that eye may not be considered because that does not exist according to the law.

Masoub: Oh! That may not be considered.

Judge: Didn't you accept that you have only one eye by which you see and another eye doesn't exist? So how can we take decision on that which does not exist?

Masoub: But respected judge.....

Judge: Have you any doubt on judiciary?

Masoub: No I don't have but.....

Judge: Then what do you mean by word "but" .these are rules that eye will be pulled out in place of eye and ear in place of ear and so on. And these are rules of justice. We

have given you your right according to judiciary rules.
 Masoub: Yes sir, but I will loss my eyesight and will become become completely blind.
 Judge: But you will get your right.
 Masoub: Is it my right? I will loss my eye.
 Judge:but it is the way that you can rip the eye of baker too.
 Masoub: He will see by another eye but how can I see?
 Judge: He has two eyes.
 Masoub: I was also possessing two eyes
 Judge:You are creating confusion
 Masoub: Then I withdraw my case
 Judge: What? Do you refuse to accept the court decision?
 Masoub: This decision that we will rip each other's eye.
 Judge: oh you are denying the court order?
 Masoub: Court has provided me justice but I am not interested in that so I withdraw this case.
 Judge: it will be considered a contempt of court. For such an action, you are fined one thousand Egyptian dollars.
 (Tawfeeq al Hakeem, 1973, 24-30)

Third Session of the drama

The third session is about the woman and baker. The baker was fighting with the owner of goose and he kicked the pregnant woman and she got abortion .Against this crime her husband went to court and registered case against baker which has been discussed as under:

Husband: Respected judge, my wife and me were walking on road via baker's shop...
 Judge: Oh! you too....
 Husband: My wife was pregnant
 Judge: What is the connection of pregnancy with this baker and its shop?
 Husband: No connection
 Judge: OK, continue
 Husband: We have watched that baker and owner of Goose were fighting with each other
 Judge: I told you to avoid the matter of goose
 Husband: I didn't interfere in their personal matter but I told them to be care full due to my wife being pregnant since two months and I was waiting for my child which was dream come true form because I have no child who will become my successor after my death.
 Judge: Ok you didn't interfere and ignored both of them then why you came here in my court. Have you come to inform me about this good news and in reciprocal we will congratulate you.
 Husband: No, not because of that but unfortunately there will be no child now, so there is no joy or happiness for us.
 Judge: Oh! What is the reason?

Husband: Reason is this baker
 Judge: Oh! I she again involved, why so?
 Husband: He was fighting on road and was kicking and slapping then I told him: Be careful, my wife is with me and she is pregnant but he ignored my advice and kicked on her abdomen which led her to the abortion.
 Judge: Abortion, means you will be now childless
 Judge: What is your occupation?
 Husband: Cobbler
 Judge: Oh! My cobbler
 Husband: Yes
 Judge: Your successor on your bed
 Husband: no problem whatever He will be, but after all He is my son from my blood and my backbone.
 Judge: Have you seen him?
 Husband: How can I see him, He was still in abdomen
 Judge: You are talking about the thing which you have not seen.
 Husband: Of course, Is it possible to see fetus?
 Judge: then you don't know his gender, whether male or female?
 Husband: I don't know .Allah knows the best
 Judge: How can you say then he was my son and how can you say he will be your successor?
 Husband: That was my hope and idea.
 Judge: So you don't have any sure about that so how can you make your relationships about the thing about which you don't have any surety and you don't know exact position of that?
 Husband: That was my seed
 Judge: Only yours seed
 Husband: Of course
 Judge: Is it not possible that there may be some other seeds mixed with your seed
 Husband: No, never
 Judge: You have not any sure about the fetus so how can you say anything about that surely
 Husband: My wife is pious
 Judge: She is very beautiful and definitely there will be handsome boys in your locality
 Husband: She loves me
 Judge: Is it what she told you?
 Husband: I trust her
 Judge: Good, if deceived husband will not trust on her wife then how can she deceive him?
 Husband to his wife: Do you deceive me? I swear if you will do so I will kill you and will suck your blood
 Wife: Weeping and Crying! Will you drink my blood?
 Husband: What do you expect then? Will I allow you to do that non sense?
 Wife: Hope you will leave me with good

behavior,
 Husband: Oh I will leave you, never
 Wife: Am I wrong?
 Husband: You just accepted it.
 Wife: Have I accepted?
 Husband: Judge is witness
 Judge: Don't indulge me in your personal matters
 Wife: But he would like to kill me and suck my blood
 Husband: Swear that you have not done anything wrong.
 Wife: I swear and have you seen ever anything wrong in my behavior?
 Husband: No, but I go early in the morning for doing business so I don't know what happens in my absence
 Wife: I live with your mother in your absence; if there would be any wrong your mom had informed you?
 Husband: It is true
 Wife: So don't torture me please
 Husband: And son
 Wife: Do you mean our son
 Husband: Yes is he from my blood
 Wife: Is there any doubt in it?
 Husband: Respected judge, have you listened?
 Judge: It is matter of trust if you trust on her you are free.
 Husband: then why you raise such type of quires?
 Judge: I advise you to avoid such cases
 Husband: which case?
 Judge: Case of fetus .because that fetus is property of woman as that fetus was part of her meat so Allow me to talk to your wife directly.
 Judge: towards the woman: have you any complaint?
 Wife: Of course I have a complaint against this baker.
 Judge: What he did?
 Wife: He kicked on my abdomen and I lost my Fetus.
 Judge: So you have only one complaint that you lost your fetus because of baker
 Wife: Yes, he is responsible for that
 Judge: He made your abdomen empty?
 Wife: Yes
 Judge: So you demand for justice and indeed you have need of that and it is your right
 Wife: That is what I expect from your court
 Judge: So, the justice is that the person who has made your abdomen empty will fulfill that
 Wife: What does it mean?
 Judge: It means baker will fulfill your empty abdomen, so go with him to redress the problem.

Husband: crying: will you go with the baker?
 Wife: Never, totally impossible.
 Baker: Listen oh woman; the decision is on the basis of justice.
 Judge: Would you like to refuse the court order?
 Husband: I will never accept it
 Wife: yes, we will never accept it.
 Baker: Respected judge, See how they scorn the court order
 Judge: According to the court law one thousand Egyptian dollar fine to both of you on account of contempt of court. (Tawfeeq al Hakeem, 1973, 30-40)

Fourth Session of the Drama

The fourth session is about the person who was offering pray in mosque .The baker was trying to get shield in Masjid when people were chasing him .the baker fall on his head and he died .His brother appealed to the court and judge discussed with him as under:

Judge: Were you also walking in front of shop?
 Sheikh: No, I have no connection with baker and I don't know where his shop is?
 Judge: Thanks to almighty
 Sheikh: I was in Mosque I was offering prayers.
 Judge: Oh good, have you offered the prayer.
 Sheikh: My elder brother was also offering prayer in the same mosque but somehow far from me
 Judge: Good
 Sheikh: Then we suddenly heard voice of crying, shouting, whistling etc and immediately a group of people who were chasing this Baker entered into the mosque.
 Judge: Ok then
 Sheikh: He entered in the Mosque
 Judge: To offer pray in Mosque
 Sheikh: No, to protect himself from these people, but I have seen that when people reached near him he climbed on the Minaret and they also followed him till he jumped from the Minaret and fall on the neck of my brother and he died.
 Judge: Why your brother has chosen that place to offer pray
 Sheikh: His luck
 Judge: Then it is his own sin and his wrong decision to select the wrong place to offer prayers. So how can you blame any other person for that?
 Sheikh: It is Mosque where no place is wrong, people used to go there to offer prayers.
 Judge: Your brother died there then isn't that a dangerous place.

Sheikh: Can anyone believe that person will climb on minaret and will jump from there on any one's head or neck

Judge: It happened so what do you want now?

Sheikh: I want justice.

Judge: We are here for justice and justice says that neck to neck

Sheikh: May Allah bless you

Judge: The baker has jumped from Minaret and jumped, now you will be in place of baker on Minaret and baker will sit in place of your brother then you will jump upon him so that you can get justice.

Sheikh: If I couldn't succeed to fall on his neck instead got injured before I jump on him then?

Judge: That is up to you and that is your problem

Sheikh: I would not like to take such a risk

Judge: What happened to you? You came here to demand justice but when court issues order you reject that. You are making fun of the court, and wasted our time. Soon contempt of court, the court is charging one thousand Egyptian dollar Fine to you.

Sheikh: Crying, why I have been fined?
(Tawfeeq al Hakeem, 1973, 40-46)

5th Session

The last session is about Ass and farmer who didn't appeal in court but baker appealed against him that he says: I have pulled out the tail of his ass when I was fighting with these people and when they were chasing me. The farmer totally denied and said my ass was born without tail so I have not any complaint against baker but judge used his logic and said oh farmer you are a liar have you seen any ass without tail the farmer replied yes as I have seen the fried goose has flown from the pan .

Judge: Ok understood, then you have no complaint against baker.

Farmer: No, I don't have any complaint.

Judge: Then why you came here?

Farmer: To watch the cases

Judge: Do you think court is a exhibition and it is free of cost. The court will fine you one thousand Egyptian dollars due to this disrespect of court.

Farmer: All received justice thanks and may Allah bless you

Every one left but only judge and baker remained in the court, Judge said to baker: I think session is over

Baker; Yes, of course and thanks to Almighty

Judge: What is your opinion I rescued you today from these people as the hair is pulled out from the floor.

Baker: What about fines?

Judge: I understand, you have share in that don't worry;

Baker: Of course, but keep in view the problems which I faced by these people to get this fine

Judge: Sure, you will get a good amount.
(Tawfeeq al Hakeem, 1973, 47-49)

Critical Analysis

The author has very beautifully portrayed the real picture of Egyptian corrupted society, but he has mentioned the event of the woman in a much uncivilized way and has not been taken care of the readers and civilized society. The judge has fined one hundred Egyptian dollar to every petitioner by blaming them disrespect of court when he failed to prove any case against them and has proved his baseless judgment logically in front of the people to defend his partner (baker) which speaks about the corruption and what are the deficiencies of corruption .when corruption firms its roots deep in to the society, justice is denied. The modern day societies are also facing such a corruption of favoritism .History is witness when favoritism prevails in any society as portrayed in the drama about the corrupt practices of the Egyptian society, the decline of nations start which results in denial of right and greed takes place instead of duty. Actually dramas are mouth pieces of the society activities. It is the easiest way to bring into the notice of public and authorities what is prevailing in the society. The author has designed it in a well scientific order and concluded it very seriously. The author has used Arabic literary language instead of colloquial language which is very appreciable and he has framed this drama in a good systematic form with simple and easy narrations.

CONCLUSION

The author has raised such a big issue in this drama against the judiciary which can said is only his courage; mostly the writers are unable to oppose such influential sector of the society. The same happens in present age but nobody bothers about it. At last but not the least this drama has encouraged me to think about contemporary society and its evils especially about the corruption which is still a big challenge.

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