**COURSE
GUIDE**

COURSE CODE: ARA323

COURSE TITLE: ARABIC NOVEL

الرواية العربية

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NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

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Introduction

Welcome to ARA323**: ARABIC NOVEL**

This course is a 3-Credit unit course in Arabic. It gives you an overview of the course. It also provides you with information on the organization and requirements of the course.

Course Aims

The overall aim of this course is to:

- Introduce you to the concept and significance of the 'Novel' in Arabic Literature.
- Acquaint you with the major concepts on the Novel in Arabic literature.

Course Objectives

To achieve the aims set out above, **ARA323 – Arabic Novel,** has overall objectives. Each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are at the beginning of each unit. I advise that you read them before you start working through the unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of the unit to check your progress.

Here are the wider objectives for the course as a whole. By meeting the objectives, you count yourself as having met the aims of the course. On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Define and explain the concept and significance of Arabic Novel.

- State, define, explain and apply the major concepts in Arabic Novel.

- Give examples of the major concepts in Arabic Novel and show how they are applied in writing.

Working through this Course

To complete this course, you are required to read the study units and other related materials. You will also need to undertake practical exercises included in this course. The exercises are to aid you in understanding the study being presented. At the end of each unit, you will be required to submit written assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, you will write a final examination.

Course Materials

The major materials you will need for this course are:

(i)   Course Guide
(ii)   Study Units
(iii)   Assignments File
(iv)   Relevant books including the ones listed under each unit.
(v)   You may also need to visit the Internet to browse through some relevant websites including the ones listed under each unit.

Study Units

There are 13 units (of three modules) in this course. They are listed below:

Module 1: Introduction/The Background - *Nahdah* **(Renaissance) in Arabic Literature**	
Unit 1	The Ottoman Period and The French Campaign

Unit 2	- The Rise of Muhammad Ali
	- Modernization of Education:
	  Arabic Printing Press, Birth of Translation Movement
	  and Journalism

Unit 3	The Development of Modern Arabic Literature - Age of Translations, Adaptations and Neo-classicism

Unit 4	The Development of Modern Arabic Literature - The Periods of Romanticism and Nationalism, and Retreat from Romanticism in Arabic Literature
Module 2: The Beginnings of the Arabic Novel	
Unit 1	Fiction (Novels and Novellas)
Unit 2	Syria and Lebanon
Unit 3	Egypt
Unit 4	The Historical Novel: Jurji Zaydan
Unit 5	Between Education and Entertainment
Unit 6	The Status of Zaynab by Muhammad Husayn Haykal
Module Three: The Mature Arabic Novel Outside Egypt	
Unit 1	The Emergence of the Novel: Political And Social Concerns
Unit 2	Prominent Themes of the Arabic Novel in Recent Decades
Unit 3	*Zaynab* of Muhammad Husayn Haykal: Content Analysis

Textbooks and References

Certain books and websites addresses have been recommended in the course. You may wish to purchase the books and visit the website for further reading.

Assessment File

An assessment file and a marking scheme will be made available to you. In the assessment file, you will find details of the works you must submit to your tutor for marking. There are two aspects of the assessment of this course: the tutor marked

and the written examination. The marks you obtain in these two areas will make up your final marks. The assignment must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadline stated in the presentation schedule and the Assignment file. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total score.

Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs)

Every unit in this course has a tutor-marked assignment (TMA). You are required to attempt all the questions and you will be assessed on all of them but the best four performances from the TMAs will be used for your 30% grading. When you have completed each assignment, send it, together with a TMA (tutor-marked assignment) form, to your tutor. Make sure each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline for submission. If for any reason, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor for a discussion on the possibility of an extension. Extensions will not be granted after the due date unless under exceptional circumstances.

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination will be a test of three hours. All areas of the course will be examined. Find time to revise the units before your examination. The final examination will represent 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the kinds of self-assessment exercises and TMA (tutor-marked assignment) you have previously encountered. All aspects of the course will be assessed in the examination. You should use the time between completing the last unit and taking the examination to revise the entire course.

Course Marking Scheme

The following table shows how the actual course mark allocation is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignments 1-4 (the best four of all the assignments submitted)	Four assignments, marked out of 10% totaling 30%

Final Examination	70% of overall course score
Total	100% of course score

Presentation Schedule

The dates for submission of all assignments will be communicated to you. You will also be told about the date of completing the study units and dates for examinations.

Course Overview and Presentation Schedule

Units	Title of Work	Weeks Activity	Assessment
Module 1 – Introduction /The Background - *Nahdah* (Renaissance) in Arabic Literature			
Unit 1	The Ottoman Period and The French Campaign	Week 1	Assignment 1
Unit 2	- The rise of Muhammad Ali - Modernization of Education Arabic Printing Press, Birth of Translation Movement and Journalism	Week 2	Assignment 2
Unit 3	The Development of Modern Arabic Literature - Age of Translations, Adaptations and Neo-classicism	Week 3	Assignment 3
Unit 4	The Development of Modern Arabic Literature - The Periods of Romanticism and Nationalism, and Retreat from Romanticism in Arabic Literature	Week 4	Assignment 4
Module 2 : The Beginnings of the Arabic Novel			

Unit 1	Fiction (Novels and Novellas)	Week 5	Assignment 5
Unit 2	Syria and Lebanon	Week 6	Assignment 6
Unit 3	Egypt	Week 7	Assignment 7
Unit 4	The Historical Novel: Jurji Zaydan	Week 8	Assignment 8
Unit 5	Between Education and Entertainment	Week 9	Assignment 9
Unit 6	The Status of Zaynab by Muhammad Husayn Haykal	Week 10	Assignment 10
Module 3: The Mature Arabic Novel Outside Egypt			
Unit 1	The Emergence of the Novel: Political And Social Concerns	Week 11	Assignment 11
Unit 2	Prominent Themes of the Arabic Novel in Recent Decades	Week 12	Assignment 12
Unit 3	*Zaynab* of Muhammad Husayn Haykal: A Content Analysis	Week 13	Assignment 13
	Examination	Week 14	
	Total	**14 Weeks**	

How to Get the Most from This Course

You will be required to study the units on your own. However, you may arrange to meet with your tutor for tutorials on an optional basis at the study center. Also, you can organize interactive sessions with your course mates.

Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials

Information relating to the tutorials will be provided at the appropriate time. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter during the course. You must

submit your TMAs (tutor marked assignments) to the Study Centre well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor if you need help. Contact your tutor if:

- you do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings;
- you have difficulty with the exercises; or
- you have a question or problem with an assignment or with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussion actively.

Summary (there appears to be an overlap from other course material here. Please recheck the underlined)

This Course Guide gives you an overview of what to expect in the course of this study. The course exposes you to the concept and significance of <u>Creative Writing and also the major rubrics of Creative Writing in the Qur'an recitation with illustrations from verses of the Qur'an.</u>

We wish you success in the course and hope that you will find it interesting and useful.

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الرّواية العربية

MAIN COURSE CONTENT

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Module One – *Nahdah* (Renaissance) in Arabic Literature

Unit One – The Ottoman Period and the French Campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte

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2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Ottoman Period and the French Campaign of Napoleon

Bonaparte

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

While Classical Arabic literature, according to Muhammad Mustafa Badawi, can without harm be regarded as basically a continuum, Modern literature represents in some respects a completely new departure. That 'new' departure could be seen in the huge impacts of Europe and European writers on the early works of Arab literary writers. Such was evident in the adoption of European artistic forms such such as drama and the novel. The contacts between the Arabs and European literary writings later came to be known in the Arab world as the *Nahdah*: a fertile meeting of two forces: the indigenous tradition, and the imported western forms.

Moreover, the transformation from the past was a very slow and gradual process. However, because of the great influence exerted by western (European) literature on the *Nahdah,* it seems more natural to divide its treatment into chapters on poetry, the novel, short story, drama and literary criticism, much as one might do in a traditional survey of a western literature. But it would be wrong not to see the

continuities in Arabic literature, Classical and Modern: continuities that have determined the manner of the Arabs' anxiety and therefore adaptation of the imported genres.

By modern Arabic literature, is meant literature written completely in the Arabic language. Modern Arabic literature is apparently the literature of the modern Arab world, and this is generally assumed to begin with the French campaign in Egypt in 1798. The date is important because it marks the dramatic opening of the Arab world to the west. The Arab world was part of the Ottoman Empire, and its opening to the west, was ultimately with momentous consequences for its political, economic, social and cultural development. For numerous reasons the modern renaissance of Arabic literature began to be known in Egypt and Syria (and Lebanon, then inclusive), from where it spread gradually to the rest of the Arab world.

2.0 Objectives

In this unit we shall examine the background of renaissance in Arabic literature. We shall also read history backwards to the Ottoman period and the French campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte in Egypt, which is significant in the renaissance of Arabic literature.

3.0 Main Contents: Background - *Nahdah* (Renaissance) in Arabic Literature

The Ottoman Period

The Arabs had started their steady decline early in the sixteenth century with the rise to power of the Ottoman Turks who imposed their rule over almost the whole of the Arab world: the Turks conquered Syria in 1516, Egypt in 1517,

Algiers in 1516, Tripoli in 1555, Tunis in 1574, and established their rule in Iraq in 1639 and subsequently in Yemen and Hejaz. Only Central Arabia (Nejd) and Morocco remained independent of the Ottomans. Apart from North Africa, the conquered Arab territories continued to be governed, even though in some cases nominally, by the Ottomans until early in the twentieth (20th) century.

Arab territories were divided into provinces, each governed by an Ottoman *Pasha*, a ruler, who was responsible directly to the Sultan in Constantinople, with the help of officials, tax collectors and *Shariah* judges. These officials of the state were usually appointed by the Sultan in Constantinople for one year only in order to ensure their obedience. Local elements such as the *Ulamā* or notables were also made use of and gradually these often assumed considerable power, as in the case of Egypt where the Mamluks regained effective control, with the Ottoman *Pasha* acting as the nominal governor.

During the early modern period in the Arab world, a huge majority of the Arabs were illiterate farmers who were bound to their village communities and families and wer engaged in subsistence agriculture. Despite that, they still had to pay the heavy taxes imposed upon them by the tax farmers. The rest of the Arabs, who lived in urban centers and enjoyed greater prestige and privileges, were largely craftsmen roughly organized and often affiliated to mystical orders of brotherhood together with merchants and ulamā. Equally in town and in country an Arab then belonged to a unified body from which he seemed to derive some security. The phenomena of the landless peasant and the urban borne public which provided the themes of much twentieth-century Arabic literature were clearly not known before modern times.

With the dwindling of the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century, the poor and the downtrodden suffered from heavy burden of taxation, oppression by

corrupt officials and tax farmers. Insecurity caused by the local rulers' bloody struggles for power as well as periodic raids by Bedouin tribesmen combined together to make life difficult for them. Yet they continued to form an integrated society with commonly held views and assumptions about this world and the hereafter.

Moreover, though the poor and the members of the lower classes may have disliked much of the ill-treatment they received at the hands of their Turkish rulers and the greedy and blood-thirsty warring Mamluk Beys, they still felt some allegiance to their rulers; they saw their leaders as Muslims to whom they must relate in peace. In other words, in the days before nationalism, the Arabs felt strongly that together with the Ottomans, they all constituted the Muslim *Ummah,* the Community of Believers, and that as defenders of the sacred law of *Shariah* the Ottoman rulers had the right to be obeyed. Thus majority of the Arabs during the period lived in seemingly total cultural isolation from the west; they were , complacent and convinced of the superiority of the Muslim civilization.

The *Ulamā,* the guardians of the faith, were held in respect by the Ottoman rulers. However because Turkish was the official language of the Empire, Arabic culture generally suffered for lack of sufficient patronage. In fact, the Ottoman period marked the decline of Arabic literature. Although historians of literature may have exaggerated the decline, there is no doubt that the period was characterized by the absence of creativity and loss of vigor. It is usually described as the age of commentaries and compendia because a considerable portion of the output of writers and scholars consisted of commentaries on texts, and even commentaries on commentaries.

By the eighteenth century, prose writers and poets had become equally captivated by an excessively ornate, artificial type of style in which more attention

is given to manner than matter. Their work generally lacked seriousness, while those who cared for the content of their writing tended to employ an undistinguished prose which was devoid of literary merit. In creative writing the themes were conventional: *maqamah* — like prose epistles, pious verses in praise of the Prophet, popular sufī or ascetic poems, empty panegyrics addressed to local notables, celebrations of trivial social occasions and numerous lifeless and passionless love poems. With very few exceptions, such as the Egyptian Hasan Badri al-Hijazī (d. 1718) and the Syrian 'Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi (d. 1731), the imagery poets used was stock in trade and the language cliché ridden: in short, it was a literature of an exhausted, inward-looking culture, though a perfectly self-satisfied one.

The French Campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte

Out of this self-satisfaction Arabic culture was rudely awakened when Bonaparte invaded Egypt in 1798. The extent of the astonishment suffered by the inhabitants can be measured from the way the distinguished Egyptian historian 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti (1756—1825) opened his account of the year of the invasion, which he witnessed, in his chronicle *Ajaib al-athar fil-Tarajim wal-Akhbar:* he regarded it as the year of the ultimate catastrophe, of the disastrous reversal of the natural order of things. Bonaparte, whose expedition to Egypt was an episode in the history of Anglo-French rivalry in imperial expansion which was planned to cut off Britain's route to India, made an announcement to the Egyptian people in which he posed as a champion of Islam and a liberator of Egypt from the tyrannical rule of the Mamluks. Whatever they thought about this false claim, the easy victory achieved by the French forces over the Mamluk army shocked Muslims out of their complacency, bringing home to them the enormous superiority, efficiency and military might of the west.

Bonaparte brought with him a team of French experts, scientists and scholars who undertook a thorough and systematic survey of Egypt and its resources: they conducted scientific experiments in the *Institut de 'Egypte,* founded for that purpose, and published their findings in a newly established French language periodical. Bonaparte invited the chief ulamā and notables, whom he regarded as leaders of the Egyptian people, to form an Administrative Council to participate in the French-controlled government of Egypt and in the promulgation of the legislation necessary for his proposed reforms in land ownership and taxation, amongst other things. He had brought with him from the Vatican, an Arabic language press, the very first Arabic printing press to enter Egypt, for the publication of French proclamations in Arabic.

The response of the Egyptians to the French was reasonably a mixed one. They were admired for their efficiency and organization, and their diligence in the construction of roads and factories. The educated among them, such as al-Jabarti and Hasan al-Attar, the teacher of al-Tahtawi, who had the chance to visit the *Institut,* were impressed by its library and by some of the scientific experiments which they watched in something like perplexed wonder, and they were fascinated by the manners and ways of the French such as their dramatic entertainments. No doubt Egyptians were relieved to be free of the Mamluks who had been thoroughly disgraced by their humiliating defeat at the hands of the French.

But despite all the above, and inspite of the opportunity they gave to them to participate to some extent in governance, Egyptians still felt humiliated at being ruled by the infidel French whose revolutionary doctrines the Ottoman government had thoroughly condemned. They were critical of the behavior of the French forces and what they regarded as the immorality of French women, and were alarmed at the dangerous example they had set to some of their own Muslim women.

Moreover, when in response to the blockade imposed upon them by the Anglo-Ottoman fleets in the Mediterranean the French forces of occupation had to resort to harsh measures of taxation. Egyptians, led by the Azhar, rebelled and the rebellion was cruelly put down by the French troops some of whom committed outrageous atrocities.

Although the French expedition is generally adjudged as a military failure, its significance for Egypt (and the Arab world) cannot be exaggerated, and that is in spite of claims made by some historians. Though, the occupation lasted only three years, the Egyptians' exposure to western learning and science, as well as representative self-government, was too brief to be meaningful, but the campaign brought to an end the isolation of the Arab world from the west. It marked the beginning of a process of western expansion and colonization, which in the course of time resulted in practically the entire Arab world falling under the domination of western powers, notably France and Britain.

France invaded Algeria in 1830, Britain occupied Aden in 1839, France occupied Tunisia in 1881, Britain was in Egypt in 1882, Italy seized Libya in 1911-12, and in 1920 France acquired mandates over Syria and Lebanon, while the mandates for Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq went to Britain. Even Morocco, which had retained its independence for a long time, fell prey to the ambitions of France and Spain which in 1904 concluded a secret agreement that divided Morocco into two spheres of influence between them, and in 1912 Morocco was declared a French protectorate.

Britain imposed her authority over Arab rulers of the small Persian Gulf states by means of treaties which went as far back as the 1820s. The bloody and unequal encounter with the west which varied in cruelty and violence from one Arab country to another and according to whether the colonizer was France,

Britain or Italy, These events had such a profound and traumatic effect upon the Arab imagination, even though it was sometimes dormant and slow to reveal itself, that till today the East/West opposition has remained one of the leading themes in Arabic literature. In their search for identity, Arab writers have for many generations often tried to define themselves in relation to the other, the other being in most cases the European.

Likewise, the nationalist struggle for independence became a permanent, indeed at times obsessive preoccupation for writers for many years: the end of the mandate in Iraq came only in 1932, the Anglo-Egyptian treaty which gave Egypt her relative independence was concluded in 1936, the mandate for Syria and Lebanon came to an end in 1941. In 1946 Trans Jordan attained her independence, Libya in 1951, Sudan, Tunisia and Morocco in 1956, Kuwait in 1961, while Algeria achieved hers after a prolonged and bloody struggle as late as 1962. In 1948 the mandate for Palestine came to an end, and the state of Israel was established. Even after the Arab states formally attained their independence, they remained within the spheres of influence of western powers for a long time, in fact until Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir appeared on the scene after the Egyptian Army Revolution of 1952, which in its turn helped to push Arabic literature in other directions.

4.0 Conclusion

The decline of the Arabs began early in the sixteenth century following the rise to power of the Ottoman Turks who imposed their rule over nearly the whole of the Arab world. The French campaign later followed. Even though the French expedition is generally adjudged as a military failure, its significance for Egypt and the entire Arab world cannot be overstated. The French occupation exposed Egypt and other Arab world to western learning and science.

5.0 Summary

In this unit we were able to study the background of renaissance in Arabic literature. We read history backwards to the Ottoman period and the French campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte in Egypt, which is very significant in the renaissance of Arabic literature.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Contrast between the Ottoman rule and the French campaign in of Bonaparte in Egypt.
- Of what significance is French campaign in Egypt to the country?

7.0 References /Further Reading

- M. M. Badawi (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature - Modern Arabic Literature,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

- Noha Mostafa. "The Modernization of Egypt in the Nineteenth Century: A Comparison with the Japanese Case" 2015. available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278783535 accessed December 23, 2020.

- Tignor, R. L. Egypt: A Short History. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010.

- Marsot, A. L. Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

- Aharoni, R. The Pasha's Bedouin: Tribes and state in the Egypt of Mehemet Ali, 1805–1848. New York: Routledge, 2007

Unit Two – The Rise of Muhammad Ali and Modernization of Education

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Rise of Muhammad Ali and Modernization of

Education

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Muhammad Ali was an Albanian commander in the Ottoman army. He joined the forces that were sent to Egypt in 1801 to expel the French forces led by Napoléon Bonaparte that occupied Egypt in 1798. Muhammad Ali exploited the disorder resulting from the power vacuum in Egypt after the French withdrawal. He seized the opportunity of anarchistic situation to strengthen his troops and gain the trust and support of the public. He was later placed as the ruler of Egypt by the Egyptian public chiefs and religious sheikhs. And shortly after he seized the power, Muhammad Ali started his ambitious plan to modernize Egypt in all fields including education.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will explore the rise of Muhammad Ali and modernization of education in Egypt after the French campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte. It will also look at the

beginning of Arabic Printing Press, and the birth of translation movement and journalism.

3.0 Main Contents - The Rise of Muhammad Ali and Modernization of Education

The Rise of Muhammad Ali

The whole course of modern Arabic literature might have been entirely different had it not been for one indirect result of the French campaign. This was the emergence of Muhammad Ali, the Albanian officer who came to Egypt with the Ottoman forces to help drive out the French and who, in the confusion that followed the departure of the French, managed, through absolute genius, machiavellian conspiracies and absolute mercilessness to fill the void and become, in 1805, the ruler of Egypt (1805—1848). He created a dynasty which ruled Egypt until its last descendant, King Farouk, was forced to step down by the revolutionary junta led by Nasir.

Inspired by the example of the Ottoman Sultan Selim III, the ambitious Muhammad Ali launched a more successful and comprehensive programme of military reform along the lines of the superior and well-organized western armies of which he had first-hand experience. To this end he employed all the available resources in Egypt, and in so doing he altered the economic, political and social structure of the country. After he had got rid of the Mamluk adversaries in a notorious massacre, he destroyed the forces that had helped him to attain power, including the class of Azhar ulamā, who were cut off from their economic and political influence. He imposed state ownership of land, abolished the old system of tax farming and had the monopoly of trade. By introducing intensive cotton cultivation in the 1820s and improving irrigation, transport and marketing, he laid

the foundation of modern Egyptian economy: through the export of cotton, Egyptian agriculture became integrated into the international economy. This he achieved with the help of European experts, technicians and officers, who assisted him in establishing an army and a navy that was strong enough to wage successful wars in other Arab countries and even to pose a threat to the authority of the Ottoman Sultan himself. When the Sultan refused his request to grant the governorship of Syria to his son Ibrahim as a reward for his assistance during the Greek rebellion, the armies of Muhammad Ali occupied Syria and threatened Istanbul. The threat was ultimately averted through the interference of the allied European powers whose policy it was to try to protect the weak Ottoman Empire from total collapse.

As a result of the 1841 Treaty of London, signed by England, Austria, Prussia and Russia, Muhammad Ali was forced to return Syria to the Sultan and to limit his army to 18,000 men in return for hereditary right to the rule of Egypt under the suzerainty of the Sultan. Muhammad Ali recompensed his functionaries and members of his own family by giving them land to develop, thus gradually creating a new feudal structure, which was to replace the old landed class of Mamluks and others and which in the course of time and under his successors increased immensely the gap between the rich and the poor.

Modernization of Education

Muhammad Ali imported not only western technicians and military advisors, but also western forms of education, and sent local Arabs on educational missions to the west (mainly to France), to learn the secret of its military supremacy. In 1816 he started a process of superimposing the western type of educational system which had very little in common with the traditional religious Azhar system upon Egypt. He set up a number of modern technological and military schools in which

modern sciences and European languages were taught and in which some of the teachers were Italian, French and later English. Despite his smartness and practical intelligence, Muhammad Ali was not an educated man with any interest in European culture: his aim was strictly limited to what was conducive to the building up of a powerful regime with a strong army. The members of his educational missions in Europe were all technically army officers, with specific ranks; they had to follow an army discipline and were not even allowed to make a tour of the countries in which they were studying.

Nevertheless, it was impossible for these young men to keep interest in western technology in the long run entirely separate from interest in some of the cultural values underlying that technology. Furthermore, the setting up of a new secular system of education, different from the traditional theocentric one, a system which produced men who were to occupy important posts in the government, was bound to result eventually in the weakening of the authority of traditional values. Arab Muslim society therefore ceased to be the 'closed' culture it had been for so long. After the frustration of his military ambitions, Muhammad Ali lost interest in his educational programme, which was also neglected by his successor who was not noted for his sympathy towards the west. The modern technological schools were closed and so was the School of Languages. However, when Muhammad Ali's grandson Ismail came to the throne (1863—1879), he pursued the policy of modernizing education with remarkable zeal, and did so on a much larger scale than his grandfather, reorganizing the entire system of public education. In the course of time western culture and western languages were to play an ever-increasing role in the cultural make-up of the Arab world. Another important development is that because secular education did not grow slowly and gradually out of the indigenous traditional religious system of al-Azhar, but was instead imposed upon it from above, a cultural dichotomy or division ensued with serious

psychological consequences, which had already worried the religious reformer, Muhammad 'Abduh (1849—1905), and which are still visible in the country today.

The Start of Arabic Printing Press, Birth of Translation Movement and Journalism

Muhammad Ali needed books and manuals for his modern schools and the army. He therefore established an Arabic printing press. In fact, the very first educational mission member to be sent to Europe went to Italy to study printing (in 1809). This press (set up in Bulaq in 1822) was not the first to be found in the Arab world: even before Bonaparte brought with him an Arabic press to publish his proclamations in Egypt, as early as 1706 the Maronite priests had their own press in Aleppo for the purpose of printing Christian texts. This was followed by others in Shuwayr (1734) and Beirut (1753). Muhammad Ali's press, later came to be known as the Government Press. It was to play an important cultural role in the Arab Muslim world: it printed translations of European works, at first scientific and technological, but later literary translations as well as Arabic classics such as the work of Ibn Khaldun, which became more freely available than they used to be when they were accessible only in the form of expensive manuscripts copied out by hand. Likewise the press printed the very first periodical, an official gazette, *al-Waqaiu al-Misriyyah* (1828). This marked the birth of journalism, which was to become a compelling factor in the development not only of modern Arab thought, society and politics, but also of modern Arabic literature. Together with translations of scientific works, journalism helped to change gradually the style of Arabic prose, clearing it of excessive rhetorical devices, making it a simpler and fitter vehicle for conveying ideas.

The editing of the official gazette was assigned to the distinguished Rifa'ah Rafi al-Tahtawi (1801—1873), who is generally regarded as the father of modern

Arab thought. An Azharite by training, he was sent in 1826 to France, on the recommendation of his teacher Shaykh Hassan al-'Attar, as an Imam to the large batch of mission students. But he spent his five years in Paris learning French and studying various aspects of French culture, and on his return to Egypt he published in 1834 his observations and impressions of his trip, in a book which became very well-known and was translated into Turkish: *Takhlis al-ibriz ila talkhis bariz.* In it as well as in his numerous other writings, particularly *Manahij al-albab al-misriyyah* (1869), he expressed his respect for the rationality and the good organization of social and political institutions of the west, and the civic virtues such as the love of the fatherland *(al-watan),* qualities which he advocated as necessary for the betterment of Islamic society in Egypt.

Al-Tahtawi was also appointed director of one of the important modern schools founded by Muhammad Ali in 1835, the Cairo School of Languages for the teaching of Italian, French and English, which produced a number of distinguished translators and writers. A Translation Bureau was set up in 1841. This marked the beginning of a significant translation movement, which at first was limited to technological and military books (graduates of the School of Languages were said to have translated some two thousand works from European languages), but in the course of time included literary and historical writings, so that during the last two decades of the nineteenth century literary works alone formed no less than one third of the total output of translations.

Muhammad Ali's various projects resulted in a remarkable rise in the number of Europeans residing in Egypt, and hence in the spread of European schools as well as missionary activity. His liberal attitude towards Europeans made the decade of Egyptian occupation of Syria (1831—1840) one of crucial importance in its cultural history: it resulted in a dramatic increase in French,

British and American missionary and educational activities. These culminated in the Americans founding a college in 1847 which became the American College in 1866. This was later named the American University of Beirut. The Jesuits equally transferred their College (the University of St Joseph) to Beirut in 1874. Missionary schools for girls were also opened. The graduates of these western institutions were naturally more receptive to western ideas, with the result that they played a pioneering role in westernization.

Coming after the earlier generation of Nasif al-Yaziji (1800-1871), who were among the first Christian writers to develop a keen and serious interest in Arabic language and literature, these younger Christians were eager to experiment in new forms hitherto unknown in the Arabic literary heritage. Whole families, such as those of al-Yaziji, al-Bustani and al-Naqqash, became associated with these new forms, together with translations and adaptations, as well as serious journalism of a general cultural and literary type. Marun al-Naqqash, for example, wrote the first play in Arabic (1847) and was followed by his nephew, Salim al-Naqqash. Salim al-Bustani was the author of the first novel (in 1870), Butrus al-Bustani (1819—1883), who probably translated *Robinson Crusoe,* wrote the first Arabic encyclopaedia. Sulayman al-Bustani produced his first translation of Homer's *Iliad* (1904), a *tour de force,* accompanied by a lengthy introduction which includes a comparative study of Greek and Arabic poetry. In 1861 Faris al-Shidyaq launched the important newspaper *al-Jawaib* (in Constantinople), which was read throughout the Arab world and continued to appear until 1884. Ya'qub Sarruf and Faris Nimr founded their epoch-making cultural periodical *al-Muqtataf* in Beirut in 1876, which gave the Arab reader much information about western thought, science and technology. And in 1885 it was transferred to Egypt where it continued to appear until 1952. The prolific Jurji Zaydan, among his various

activities in Cairo, published the monthly cultural periodical *al-Hilāl,* which began in 1892.

4.0 Conclusion

The rise of Muhammed Ali in Egypt and the modernization of education in the country, as well as the birth of printing press, the start of translation movement and journalism, all brought about a radical change in Arabic literature of the time and this lasted for a long time to come.

5.0 Summary

This unit explored the rise of Muhammad Ali and the modernization of education in Egypt after the French campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte. It also looked at the beginning of Arabic Printing Press, and the birth of translation movement and journalism.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Appraise the rise of Muhammad Ali and modernization of education in Egypt.
- Examine the history of Arabic Printing Press, the birth of Translation Movement and Journalism in Egypt.

7.0 References /Further Reading

- M. M. Badawi (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature - Modern Arabic Literature,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

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Unit Three – The Development of Modern Arabic literature

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Development of Modern Arabic literature - Age of
Translations, Adaptations and Neo-classicism

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction - New Conception of Literature, New Reading Public

The developments discussed in the previous units are reflected in the literature of the time. For literature to mirror such developments a fundamental change had to take place in modern Arabic writings. The mediaeval view which had dominated until well into the nineteenth century gradually gave way to the attitude that literature should mirror and indeed change social reality.

The patron prince or ruler who encouraged poets to flock to and gather at his court to sing his praise and immortalize his name in memorable *qasidas,* formal sonorous odes, was being replaced by a middle-class reading public, educated in

secular and not theocentric schools, who as a result of the introduction of printing press had access to printed books and did not rely on a few copied manuscripts. The new readership were interested in reading newspapers and magazines. Undeniably in a society where the degree of illiteracy was extremely high, the size of the reading public was initially very small, but their number grew rapidly with the spread of popular education.

Gone therefore was the poet craftsman who offered his panegyric verse to the highest bidder; he was replaced with 'inspired' poet, the man of feeling who valued sincerity or the campaigner who had strong views about wider issues, particularly the ills of his society. The traditional prose writer who sought to entertain the privileged learned minority by drawing on diverse aspects of knowledge or who embellished his epistles to fellow writers or his *maqamahs* (narratives of sorts in rhyming prose) with all kinds of figures of speech, in the most artificial manner imaginable, gave way to the concerned playwright or journalist burning with reforming zeal in matters intellectual, religious, social and political, no less than in language and literature.

Whatever might be the attitude to the imitative view of literature these days in the era of Post-structuralism and Deconstruction, it is the emergence of literature as an imitation of life that signaled the arrival of modern Arabic literature on the scene. Instead of the ideal types provided in traditional mediaeval literature, presented in the most elaborate language, concrete observable reality became the subject-matter of writers, particularly in the newly imported forms of drama and fiction.

2.0 Objectives

In this unit, we will investigate the history of modern Arabic literature which is traditionally divided into three main periods: the Age of Translations and

Adaptations as well as Neo-classicism; the second is the Age of Romanticism and Nationalism; and the third is from the end of World War II to the present.

3.0 Main Contents - The Development of Modern Arabic literature and Classification of its Main Periods

The history of modern Arabic literature could be divided into three main periods. The first started from 1834 to 1914, and may be termed the *Age of Translations and Adaptations* as well as *Neo-classicism*. The second is the inter-war period, and may be described as the *Age of Romanticism and Nationalism*. The third started from the end of World War II to the present. The third period embraces a wide variety of schools, approaches and styles.

Age of Translations, Adaptations and Neo-classicism

The year 1834 is an important landmark, because it marked the publication of al-Tahtawi's account of his trip to France, *Takhlis al-ibriz ila talkhis Baris.* The book contains examples of al-Tahtawi's translations of French verse, possibly the first to be undertaken in Arabic. Although they are of an indifferent quality and are much more adaptations than translations, nevertheless they are important insofar as they signaled the very beginning of the process of introduction to, and assimilation of, western literature by Arab writers. In his account, al-Tahtawi also tells us that during his mission in Paris he read works by Racine, Voltaire, Rousseau and Montesquieu, among others. It is true that his major literary translation of Fenelon's *Telemaque* was to appear much later in 1867; nevertheless it was during his stay in Paris that he studied the art of translation, what he called *Fann al-Tarjamah,* and according to him he translated twelve works (apparently they are technological and historical rather than literary). After his return, he occupied the position of head of the newly created Translation Bureau which produced a large

number of distinguished translators of literature. In 1835 the anonymous translation of *Robinson Crusoe* was published in Malta.

Equally 1914 is an appropriate date to end this first period, for around that date significant works appeared in which Arab authors seemed to go beyond the stage of translation or adaptation, revealing their mastery or close-to-mastery of the imported literary forms. It was during this period that Hussayn Haykal's novel *Zaynab* and Ibrahim Ramzi's comedy *Dukhul al-Hammam* (Admission to the Baths) and his historical drama *Abtal al-Mansurah* (The Heroes of Mansurah) were published.

This early period witnessed the emergence of Arabic printing press, which not only made more Arabic classics available and to which authors turned for inspiration in an attempt to assert their identity in the face of external danger. The period also witnessed an increase in the number of governmental and non-govermental periodicals of a general cultural nature in which early translations, adaptations and imitations of western fiction were published. They catered for a new type of reader, the product of missionary institutions in Syria or Ismail's new, more secular type of school, a reader who was not deeply grounded in the Arabic classics but who sought entertainment in a simpler and more direct Arabic style than that provided in the traditional *maqamah*. The newspapers also provided a forum for political activists and religious and social reformers, resulting in the birth and development of the modern essay from the rather unpolished and informative attempts in official and semi-governmental periodicals. <u>These periodicals made by the pioneer generation of al-Tahtawi, to the more powerful and ardent work of politically committed Egyptian and Syrian essayists, mostly the disciples of al-Afghani, who published their articles in the one like *al-Ahram*</u>. (Not clear)

Under the influence of Muhammad Abduh they sought to express their views in a less decorative style, a strong prose, relatively free from the artificialities of *badīu.* These included Adib Ishaq, Salim al-Naqqash, Abdallah Nadim, Muhammad Uthman Jalal, Muhammad Abduh himself, Ibrahim al-Muwaylihi and Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi. Their work was further developed under British occupation by 'Ali Yusuf in the conservative *al-Mu'ayyad,* Mustafa Kamil in *al-Liwa,* the organ of the Nationalist Party, and particularly Ahmad Lutfī al-Sayyid (1872—1963) in *al-Jaridah,* the mouthpiece of the *Ummah* Party which represented the more liberal Arab intellectuals and stood for intelligent westernization, rationality and the scientific attitude in education and social reform.

Lutfi al-Sayyid's thoughtful essays, in which he displayed his secular, liberal and patriotic position, earned him the title of *Ustadh al-Jil* (the Master/Mentor of the generation) and through *al-Jaridah* many of the leading writers and essayists found their way to the public: Abd al-Rahman Shukri, Abd al-Aziz al-Bishri, Ibrahim Ramzi, Muhammad al-Siba'i, 'Abd al-Hamid Hamdi, Muhammad Husayn Haykal, Taha Husayn, al-Mazini, al-Aqqad, Mustafa 'Abd al-Raziq and Salamah Musa, as well as women essayists like Labībah Hashim, Nabawiyyah Musa and Malak Hifni Nasif. In the hands of some of these writers, particularly al-Māzini and Tāhā Husayn, it can be said that the essay had attained its most elegant form.

During this period a close connection between journalism and serious literature was established to the extent that towards the end of it, there were not only *qasīdas* by the major poets and short stories, but whole novels, such as Jurji Zaydan's novel that was serialized in the newspapers. In fact this connection was only strengthened in later periods: leading novelists and even literary critics (such as Tāhā Husayn) first published their works in newspapers.

Najīb Mahfūz's novels equally first appeared in as serials in *al-Ahram* and on the literary page of a newspaper. One of the implications of that trend was that some of the early Egyptian writers also journalists. The reason was that it was extremely difficult for writers during the period to live on the royalties of his books alone, hence the need to have another regular job which often tended to be journalism. This was also favoured by newspaper proprietors because having distinguished authors and writers on their staff usually increases the circulation of their papers. However, this close link between literature and journalism proved to be a mixed blessing, for while on the whole it helped to raise the standard of journalistic writings, often it contributed to the shallowness of some of the literature published.

4.0 Conclusion

The significance of the year 1834 lies in the fact that it marked the publication of al-Tahtawi's account of his trip to France, *Takhlis al-ibriz ila talkhis Baris.* The book contains specimens of al-Tahtawi's translations of French verse, perhaps the first to be undertaken in Arabic. They are of high quality and are much more of adaptations than translations. However, they are important as they point to the very beginning of the process of introduction to, and assimilation of, western literature. The year 1914 is equally important in that it marked the end of this period. Around that date significant works appeared in which Arab authors seemed to go beyond the stage of translation or adaptation, revealing their mastery or near-mastery of the imported literary forms, namely Haykal's novel *Zaynab* and Ibrahim Ramzi's comedy *Dukhul al-Hammam* (Admission to the Baths) and his historical drama *Abtal al-Mansurah* (The Heroes of Mansurah).

5.0 Summary

We were able to investigate in this unit, the history of modern Arabic literature by trying to divide its main periods into three: the Age of Translations and Adaptations as well as Neo-classicism; the second is the Age of Romanticism and Nationalism; and the third is from the end of World War II to the present. However due to the lengthiness of this unit, we shall delay the treatment of the other two periods to the next unit.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Assess the Age of Translations and Adaptations in the development of modern Arabic literature.
- What was the connection between journalism and novel writing in the first period of the development of modern Arabic literature?

7.0 References /Further Reading

- M. M. Badawi (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature - Modern Arabic Literature,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
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Unit Four – The Development of Modern Arabic literature –

The Periods of Romanticism and Nationalism, and Retreat from Romanticism in Arabic Literature

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Periods of Romanticism and Nationalism, and Retreat From Romanticism in Arabic Literature

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, we examined the history of modern Arabic literature. We divided its main periods into three: *the Age of Translations and Adaptations as well as Neo-classicism*; the second is *the Age of Romanticism and Nationalism*; and the third is from the end of World War II to the present. However due to the length of the content of the *Age of Translations and Adaptations as well as Neo-classicism*, we could discuss the other two periods. It to the latter, we now turn our attention.

2.0 Objectives

In this unit, we will investigate the second period, *the Age of Romanticism and Nationalism*; and the third period which started from the end of the World War II to the present.

3.0 Main Contents - the Age of Romanticism and Nationalism; and the period of Retreat from Romanticism

- The Age of Romanticism and Nationalism

The period between the two world wars is known in Arab modern history as that *Romanticism and Nationalism*. The world wars resulted in the destruction of the Ottoman empire and the annexation of Arab provinces by British and French mandate. Egypt, already under British occupation, was declared a Protectorate in 1914. The strength of nationalist feeling erupted in a series of major revolts first in Egypt (1919), then in Iraq (1920) and later in Syria (1925).

The search for an essentially Egyptian literature that would reflect the Egyptian identity was a slogan of many authors in Egypt, especially a group of young men associated with what became known as *al-Madrasah al-Hadithah* (The New School). This included Mahmud Tahir Lashin and the Taymur brothers (Muhammad and Mahmud) who later distinguished themselves both in fiction and in drama. Connected to this was the call for the use of Egyptian colloquial language at least in dialogue in literary production. The emphasis on the Pharaonic past by writers such as Haykal and al-Hakim was similar to the need to relate to the Phoenician civilization expressed by Sa'id 'Aql in Lebanon.

This was the period in which Arab countries tried to reject foreign domination and attain statehood. In Egypt, attempts were made by such individual as Tal'at Harb to establish national industry and banking. The desire to achieve progress and

modernity was strongly felt, and this entailed a critical and at times rejectionist position to traditional values. In the wake of Kamal Ataturk's abolition of the caliphate in Istanbul in 1924, two famous debates took place as a result of the publication of two revolutionary books: 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq's *al-lslam wa usul al-hukm* ('Islam and the principles of government', 1925), in which he argued that the caliphate is not an integral part of Islam, and Taha Husayn's *Alaa Shi'r al-jahil* ('On Pre-Islamic poetry', 1926) which cast doubt on the authenticity of Pre-Islamic poetry and the historical veracity of certain allusions in the Koran. The former caused its author to be expelled from the body of ulamā, while the latter cost Tāhā Husayn his job and brought about calls for his trial and imprisonment.

In literary criticism several radical works appeared such as al-'Aqqad and al-Mazini's *al-Diwan* (1921), Mahjari Mikha'il Nu'aymah's *al-Ghirbal* (1923), and the Tunisian al-Shabbis *al-Khayal al-sh'ri 'ind al-Arab* ('The Arab poetic imagination', 1929). Other considerations apart, it was quite natural for Arab writers, particularly poets, to turn for their inspiration to European Romanticism, which was a literature of revolt. Unlike classicism which, with its stress on polished language and good form, romanticism was a product of a society which was at odds with itself and in which the individual could question the relevance of traditional values.

Traditional Arab conception of literature shared many of the fundamental assumptions of European classicism. Arab writers therefore found in European romanticism the assumptions and ideals which seemed to them to adequately fulfill their own needs. The Arab romantics were not simply imitating western positions. The sharp sense of individuality, the agonizing feeling of social and cultural change, the political malaise, the occasional awareness of loss of direction and of being strangers in an unfamiliar universe, all were facts of Arab existence for some

time. Many were politically committed nationalists, and they were keenly aware of the ills of their society.

The role of journalism grew more during this period as a result of the rise of political parties in Egypt which tried to enlist the help of distinguished writers in their partisan daily or weekly newspapers: such as *al-Siyāsah al-Usbū'iyyah* which published Tāhā Husayn, al-Bishri and Muhammad Husayn Haykal's works, and *al-Balagh al-Usbu'i* in which al-Aqqad's articles appeared. Literary periodicals (long- and short-lived) also appeared, such as Abu Shadi's *Apollo* (1932—1934), Ahmad Hasan al-Zayyat's *al-Risālah* (1933-1952) and Ahmad Amin's *al-Thaqāfah* (1939-1952), all of which appeared in Cairo. In Damascus *al-Rābitah al-Adabiyyah* (1921-1922) was published, while Beirut saw *al-Amaali* (1938-1941), *al-Makshuf* (1936—1947) and *al-Adib* (1942 —), among others.

- **Retreat from Romanticism**

After the Second World War, Arabic literature, indeed the whole of the Arab world, entered a new phase. While Romanticism was condemned, political commitment increased and competition grew violent between clashing loyalties and ideologies, against a background of internal and external changes.

In the aftermath of the war, Britain and France ceased to be the dominant foreign powers in the area; their roles were gradually assumed, notwithstanding in a different form, by America and the Soviet Union which, unlike Britain and France, were not simply two rival superpowers with imperialist ambitions, but stood for opposite ideologies. This no doubt contributed to the division of the Arab states and of intellectuals within the same state. But what proved to be the most important single external development for the Arab world was obviously the creation of Israel in 1948 and the series of Arab—Israeli wars which ensued and

which generally ended in frustration and bitter disappointment and helped to determine Arab attitudes to the outside world. The impact of this upon Arabic literature, both prose and poetry has been overwhelming.

The Second World War accelerated the process of independence of Arab states. The League of Arab States was formed in 1945. Resistance movement against external enemies were therefore directed at the enemy within: war was waged on the privileged communities and the rich who had collaborated with the foreign occupiers, or the ruling elites who, in the opinion of the people, were guilty of corruption and mismanagement. This corruption and mismanagement was glaringly evident in the disastrous defeat of the Arab armies in the first Arab—Israeli war of 1948, in which some Arab troops were fighting with inferior weaponry and arms supplied to them by their own government.

In Egypt the disillusionment with the short-lived democratic experiment and with the performance of political parties coincided with the rapid growth of an educated urban middle class that was suffering from inflation caused by the war and the inevitable exploitation of the masses that ensued. The gap between the rich and the poor, particularly the ordinary masses who migrated from the countryside in search of better life in overcrowded cities, became wider than ever. This eventually gave rise to popular movements and mass demonstrations in which students (and workers) figured prominently. With the failure of the liberal democratic experiment, the populace looked for salvation either from the extreme Right (Muslim Brotherhood) or the extreme Left (Marxism).

The need for literature to promote socialist values was reiterated by the radical Egyptian thinker Salāmah Musa (1887-1958), who fell under the influence of the Fabian Society and who continued the tradition of the early Lebanese secularists

such as Shibli Shumayyil. In 1929 he published his progressive review *al-Majallah al-Jadidah* which advocated the adoption of the scientific attitude to life and society and demanded that literature should be written for the people about the problems of the people and in a language that the people could understand. Salāmah Musa's ideas also found acceptance among many circles and from writers such as Luwis 'Awad and Najīb Mahfūz. Other leftist magazines appeared in the Arab world, for example *al-Taliah* (1935) in Damascus and *al-Tariq* (1941) in Beirut. Marxist ideas were propagated by Umar Fakhūrī in Damascus and Raaif Khuuri (1912—1967) in Lebanon. During the war young intellectuals from Egypt and other Arab countries became increasingly interested in Marxist philosophy as favorable information about the Soviet regime became more available in the cultural centers of the Middle East. Influenced by Marxist English literary criticism, Luwis Awad (1914-90) published his Marxist interpretation of leading English writers in his articles in Tāhā Husayn's distinguished review *al-Kātib al-Misrī* (1945).

In 1945 the more influential critic Muhammad Mandur (1907—1965) gave up his academic career to engage in active leftist politics, and after the 1952 revolution became editor of the Arabic Soviet cultural periodical *al-Sharq,* supporting the cause of socialist realism, at least in a moderate form. A chain of novels of angry social protest began to be published in 1944: heavily documented works which described in great detail the misery and deprivation of Egyptian urban life, adding social injustice and class struggle to national independence as political themes. The pursuit of social realism in fiction was not confined to the younger generation of Adil Kamil and Najīb Mahfūz, but can be found in the work of the older generation of Yahya Haqqi and Taha Husayn in Egypt.

The early 1950s witnessed the eruption of noisy debates about commitment in literature, in which leading critics and writers, young and old alike, took part. The Arabic word for commitment, became an essential part of the vocabulary of literary criticism soon after its first appearance on the literary scene around 1950. Its meaning was diffuse to be sure: sometimes it meant the adoption of a Marxist stand, at other times it meant an existentialist position, but at all times it denoted at least a certain measure of nationalism, Arab or otherwise.

In other words, *iltizām* emphasized the need for a writer to have a message. This need was explicitly expressed in the manifesto-like editorial note to the first volume of Suhayl Idris' Beirut monthly periodical *al-Adab* (January 1953), which, helped to determine the course of modern Arabic literature. The publication of creative and critical works enhanced this trend.

In August 1954 one contributor to the *Adab* wrote that 'the idea of committed literature dominates the Arab world now'. In the same year a controversy arose in Cairo newspapers about the relation of form and content in literature, in which the older generation of Tāhā Husayn and al-Aqqād were strongly opposed by the younger Mahmud Amin al-'Alim and 'Abd al-'Azim Anis who later published their Marxist contribution in Beirut (1955) in an influential book *Fil-Thaqafah al-Misriyyah* ('On Egyptian culture') with an introduction by the distinguished Lebanese Marxist critic Husayn Muruwwah, the author of *Qadaya Adabiyyah* ('Literary issues', 1956). In 1955 a celebrated formal debate was held in Beirut between Taha Husayn and Raaif Khuri on the subject 'Does the writer write for the elite or for the general public?' The debate was really about the issue of commitment and the text was published in full in *al-Adab* (May 1955).

Against this background the departure from romanticism in modern Arabic literature became consummated. The reaction was prompted by a growing painful awareness of the harsh political and social realities of the Arab world, an awareness that was later reinforced by subsequent developments ranging from the horrors of Arab-Israeli wars, the plight of the Palestinians, oppressive Arab regimes, the Iran-Iraq war, to inter-Arab conflict and the civil war in the Lebanon. The early success of the 1952 army revolution and the rise of Nasserism gave a boost to Arab nationalism and created a mood of euphoria and optimism. One expression of this nationalistic pride and self-confidence was the frantic search for autonomous or indigenous Arab art forms, such as the specifically Arab or Egyptian or Moroccan theatre, which swept all over the Arab countries. Optimism, however, turned into bitterness when the dream of Arab unity was shattered, civil liberties were crushed by totalitarian regimes, and the Arabs suffered the disastrous defeat of 1967 in the hands of Israel.

Despite the disappointment and set-backs, the search continued in some quarters for cultural autonomy, for independent narrative and dramatic art forms, for authentic Arab or more specifically Islamic values. This was undertaken even by those who, like Hasan Hanafi, themselves received western intellectual or philosophical training and therefore employed western categories in their search and in their rejection of the west, a rejection which may in some measures be explained by the generally insensitive attitude adopted towards the Arabs in their various conflicts with western powers, particularly the United States.

Indeed the limited Arab victory of 1973, which manifested in the destruction of the Bar Lev line and the crossing of the Suez Canal, may have restored some of the Arab dignity, but it coincided with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, which may not be unrelated to this search for total cultural independence by more moderate

Arab or Muslim intellectuals. Yet it is a mark of the complexity of the current Arab cultural scene that several Arab intellectuals have at the same time not been able to weane themselves from their attraction to western intellectual fashions such as Structuralism, Post-structuralism and Deconstruction. It must be mentioned that the three periods of development of modern Arabic literature did not constitute sharp lines of demarcation. There was considerable intersections among the periods.

4.0 Conclusion

In the age of Romanticism and Nationalism in the Arab world, there appeared a group of young men associated with what became known as *al-Madrasah al-Hadithah* (The New School). And after the Second World War, Arabic literature entered a new phase.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, we were able to explore the second and third periods of the development of Modern Arabic literature, namely, *the Age of Romanticism and Nationalism*; and the end of World War II to the present. We also discussed their significance in the development of modern Arabic literature.
The conclusion and summary look very much the same.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Appraise the role of Salāmah Musa in the need for literature to promote socialist values.
- Evaluate the significance of the period of Romanticism and Nationalism for the development of modern Arabic literature.

7.0 References /Further Reading

- M. M. Badawi (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature - Modern Arabic Literature,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

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MODULE TWO: THE BEGINNING OF THE ARABIC NOVEL

Unit One - Fiction (Novels, Novellas, الرواية،)

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - Fiction (Novels and Novellas)

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Arabic literature is divided mainly into two complementary parts – poetry and prose. Our focus here is on prose, and particularly on fiction, with its various forms like novel, novella and short story. Prose, in contrast to poetry is a normal text that runs without meters, rhymes or rhythm. Prose writings have remained popular among Arab writers right up to the end of the nineteenth century when genres that were new to Arabic literature, like the novel, the short story, and drama emerged.

2.0 Objectives

This unit sets out to examine:

- The definition and examples of fiction.

- The origin of the Novel in Arabic literature, and to
- Pinpoint the characteristics and functions of novel and novella.
- To examine early attempts at writing fiction and identify its precursors in Arabic literature.

3.0 Main contents

The word 'fiction' derives from the Latin word, *fictiō*, which means "the act of making, fashioning, or molding. Literally, it refers to texts that are produced from imagination; works that are written or presented not as fact, though it may be based on a true story or situation. There are different types of Arabic prose works. These include the novel, the short story, and novella.

Etymologically, the term **novel** is an abbreviation of the Italian word novella (from the plural of Latin novellus, a late variant of novus, meaning "new"). It is often employed in reference to an invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience, usually through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting. Within its broad framework, the genre of the novel has encompassed an extensive range of types and styles such as picaresque, epistolary, Gothic etc.

In other words, the **novel** is a genre of fiction, and fiction may be defined as the art or craft of plotting and arranging, through the written word, representations of human life, that instruct or divert or do both. The various forms that fiction may take are best seen less as a number of separate categories than as a continuum or, more accurately, a cline, with some such brief form as the anecdote at one end of the scale and the longest conceivable novel at the other. When any piece of fiction is long enough to constitute a whole book, as opposed to a mere part of a book, then it may be said to have achieved novel-hood. But this state admits of its own

quantitative categories, so that a relatively brief novel may be termed a novella (or, if the flimsiness of the content matches its brevity, a novelette), and a very long novel may overflow the 'banks' of a single volume and become a 'river' novel. Length is very much one of the dimensions of the genre.

The Arabic word for **novel** is ***ar-Riwāyah.*** It is a derivative of the trilateral root verb *rawa* (he narrates, he relates), which means to relate, recite, transmit or rehearse a story, a poem or a tradition. The word has been used to refer to different categories of fiction in Arabic: stories of historical romance were called *riwayaat* (novels), such as those of *Antar* (عنتر), *Majnun Layla* (مجنون ليلى) and *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* (حيّ بن يقظان). Literary scholars and historians have used the term interchangeably to refer to different categories of story, be it short or long, especially in the first half of the 19th century when European fictional stories were first translated into Arabic. However, the term *riwāyah* has commonly been recognized and used to mean a novel or sometimes an acted story. *Shadhili* and others using form, theme and technique as parameters, define *riwāyah* as follows:

> "The Novel " الرواية " is the most renowned variety of stories from the perspective of its length…it represents a particular era and a milieu, its events are intricately interwoven and multifarious, it affords its writer the opportunity to analyze his characters from behind its various scenes and opinions."

Focusing on stylistic approach to the genre and its features, Umar, Ali Mustapha says thus:

"The Novel is an expression of a collection of incidents which is narrated in sequence of time devoid of confusion, the writer therefore mentions Wednesday before Thursday; one of its important features is that it awakens the desire of the reader to know what the future portends, or that which lies in the days ahead".

The origin of the Novel in Arabic literature is traceable to the emergence of historical romances as a form of narrative. Popular historical romances such as *Sirat Antar* (The life history of Antar), *Saif ibn dhi-Yazan* and *Qissah bani Hilal* (the story of the Hilal people) existed in the Arab world, but all have been observed to be fictional stories of individuals. A number of other stories which have been regarded as "philosophical" and "quasi-scientific" in nature also existed between the 5th and 6th centuries. They include the *Risalatul al-Ghufran* of *Al-Ma'arri* (d.449A.H.), *Al-Insan wal Hayawan* and *Hayy bin Yaqzan* of *bin Tufail* (d.581. A. H.). But all these styles of prose works have been proved to be of no literary contribution to the art of story writing: "they are rather philosophical expositions in a story form".

The eventual contact between the Arabs and the West was the real facilitator of the appearance of a truly new genre of story writing in Arabic and novel to be specific. The coming of Napoleon Bonaparte to Egypt in 1798 – as we mentioned in the previous unit – was the foundation for literary renaissance in Egypt and indeed in the Arab world as a whole. Muhammad 'Ali who took over from Bonaparte successfully continued the good work of the latter. He, in 1826, sent some Arab students to France to learn about the European heritage. He also established a number of schools including *Madrasatul Al-Sun* (مدرسة الألسن). These efforts

resulted in the academic and literary regeneration in Egypt starting from the 19th century to the 20th century. Literary scholars have thus recognized the evolution of this new genre, *ar-Riwāyah*, the Novel, in Arabic literature as one of the earliest impacts of the renaissance efforts.

Further, the art of translation played a crucial role in the emergence of Arabic Novel. It was obvious that some Western stories were translated into Arabic. With the exception of a few translations, it was only from 1950's upward that Western fiction was translated and published in Arabic. Factors responsible for delay in publishing of Western fictions in Arabic include but are not limited to the fact that:

- Printing in Arabic was at its developmental stage, with insufficient number of printing machines and experts to master the new art of fiction.
- Non-official magazine or newspaper (agent for publicizing fiction in the West) did not appear in Arabic until the 1960s.
- Non-availability of competent translators among the Arabs by then.

Despite all these inhibiting factors, three new popular genres were eventually introduced into Arabic from Western literature via translation. They are the short story, the drama and the novel. It is pertinent to mention that the first to appear after drama was historical novels, novels written by Jurji Zaydan fall within this category.

Emergence of the First Original Novel in Arabic

It is true that Syrian and Lebanese literary scholars had written "novels" in Arabic but their works have been regarded by critics of fiction as being of little standard. The works were consequently not considered true Arabic Novel. Haywood, in his appraisal of those "novels" remarked thus: "the shackles of high flown classical

language were being thrown off, and these novels were readable, but not of the first rank".

If the above statement is anything to go by, it points to the fact that novels written by Arabs between 1865 and 1913 did not fulfill the standards of a genuine Arabic novel.

However, vast-majority of scholars have favored Muhammad Hussein Haykal of Egypt with the view that his novel, titled Zaynab, which was written in 1914 (some literary historians and critics mentioned 1913), is the first original novel in Arabic. Albert Hourani, Gibb, Khemiri and Kampffneyer, Schoonover are among those who uphold this view. The standard of the novel has been the major characteristic that qualifies it as the first true Arabic novel. Gibb, while commenting on its standard observes that "*Zaynab* broke away decisively in language, style, subject and treatment from anything that had gone before it".

Generally the words *'qissa'* (pl. *qisas* = stories), *'riwāyah'* (pl. *riwāyāt* = narratives) and less commonly *'hikāya'* (pl. *hikāyāt* = tales) are used in Arabic fictional writings. The first of these is now the commonest. Early attempts at fiction writing tended to be in rhymed prose with rhetoric devices.

The classical Arabic fiction is full of delightful anecdotes, which were techniques used by writers in bringing home a point or sketching characters in their works. But the anecdotes usually lack psychological insight, detailed and developing characterization which are expected to be found in modern fiction.

4.0 Conclusion

Fiction (al-Fannul Qasasy) is as natural and old as history of mankind. People always like to tell a story or listen to one. There lies the need to understand human condition and to explore the significance of life, to make sense of one's experience and to fulfil the desire to learn about varieties of human experiences in life. These

have led to an increase in the importance and popularity of fictional writings including the novel.

5.0 Summary

This unit examined novel as a form of prose works and an example of fictional writing. It traced the origin of prose fiction in Arabic, and gave examples of prose fiction, such as novel, novella. It also discussed the characteristics and functions of each of the genres. It examined early attempts at writing fiction and identified its precursors in Arabic literature.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Examine the word *al-Riwāyah* as used in Arabic literature.
- Trace the origin of Arabic novel.
- Write a short note on the emergence of novel in Arabic literature.

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Unit 2: The Development of Modern Arabic Fiction in Syria and Lebanon

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Development of Modern Arabic Fiction in Syria and

Lebanon

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

The beginnings of fictional traditions are usually in response to multiplicities of events and trends. The birth of Arabic fiction was not an exception. It was part of wider socio-political and cultural processes of revival and cultural assimilation known in modern Arab history as *al-Nahdah.* It involved a creative combination of two separate forces. One was the rediscovery of the treasures of the Arabic literary heritage and the emergence therefrom of a 'neo-classical' movement. The other was the translation of works of European fiction into Arabic, their adaptation and imitation, and the eventual appearance of an indigenous tradition of modern Arabic fiction. Not surprisingly, these two trends were in opposition during the initial phases of development of Arabic. The oppositional postures were framed as 'traditional' and 'modern'.

In the case of fiction, such a 'revival' involved the investigation of the earlier tradition of Arabic prose in the quest for precedents and models. To a western audience which has come to regard *The one thousand and one nights* as a great repository of tales, it may seem surprising that in the process of re-examining the

genres of prose writing, there was little recourse to this great collection; it was regarded as a repository of 'popular' culture and therefore, not part of the collection under consideration. However, a prose genre which had flourished within the tradition of criticism during the preceding centuries was the *maqāmah,* the start of which is attributed to Badiu al-Zamān al-Hamadhāni (969 —1008). Within the tradition of the *maqāmat,* there is a combination of aspects of the rascally clearly evident in the relationship between the narrator and the 'hero' (in al-Hamadhāni's case, Isa ibn Hisham and Abu '1-Fath al-Iskandari, respectively) and their surroundings, and also in the skillful use of language within the framework of the ancient stylistic tradition of *saj'u,* usually translated as 'rhyming prose'.

While the origins and common purpose of the *maqāmah* tradition are still the subject of debate, it is not surprising that, when at the earliest stages of the *Nahdah* Arab literati began to investigate the treasures of the past, the *maqāmah* among other prose writings was a particular focus of their attention. With its potentials for both illustrating a renewed concern with language and providing a commentary on societal change, the genre became an ideal vehicle for many litterateurs in various parts of the Arab world.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will look at the attempts of early Arab writers in the development of modern Arabic fiction in the Syro-Lebanese region. It will specifically survey how the foundation for the emergence of fiction was laid in a series of works, and how a reading public was developed for the novel genre.

3.0 Main Contents - The Development of modern Arabic Fiction in Syria and Lebanon

In Lebanon, the Christian community had had long-established contacts with the Vatican (where there was a Maronite College). The name of Bishop Germanus Farhat (1670—1732), who wrote a wide variety of works including books of poetry and grammar, is often cited as a precursor in Arabic literary writing. Among his successors, Butrus al-Bustani (1819—83) became involved in a project undertaken by the Protestant churches to translate the Bible into Arabic. This stimulated interest in the language itself.

However, it was Nasif al-YazijI (1800-71) who was credited with being the pioneer in the re-investigation of the great works of Arabic literature from the past. He became familiar with the tradition of the *maqāmat* through a French edition of the collection of al-Harīrī (1054-1122) and was inspired to produce a set of *maqāmat* of his own, *Majmau al-bahrayn* (1856).

Another Lebanese author, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq (1804—87), was also much influenced by the classical tradition and the renewed interest in the history of Arabic language when he came to write his famous work, *al-Saq 'ala 'l-saq-Fiima huwa'l-Fariyaq.* The puns and rhymes within the title and the extraordinary complexities of certain chapters of this book provide clear evidence of Shidyaq's interest in, and debt to, earlier examples of elaborate prose; as he indeed states in the introduction of the work that his purpose is 'to reveal peculiarities and rarities of language'. The 'hero', named al-Haris ibn Hitham, in a clear echo of the earlier *Maqāmah* tradition, takes the narrator on a trip which demonstrates the author's acquaintance with both the Mediterranean area and northern Europe, specifically England.

The autobiographical element, already evident in the title of the work - 'Fariyaq', a combination of the 'Fari-' of Faris and '-yaq' of Shidyaq - can also be clearly seen in the book's vigorous anti-clerical tone, a reflection of the fact that Ahmad's own

brother, As'ad, was killed on the orders of the Maronite Patriarch after converting to Protestantism. This same tone is also encountered in the works of Jibran Khalil Jibran and Farah Antun.

Among pioneer figures in the development of modern Arabic fiction in the Syro-Lebanese region, mention must be made of Faransis Marrash (d.1873) and Salim al-Bustani (d. 1884). Born in Aleppo in 1836, Marrash also travelled to Paris, but ill-health forced him to return to Syria where he died at an early age. In 1865 he published in Aleppo a work entitled *Ghabat al-Haqq* ('The Forest of the Truth'), a highly idealized, philosophical work, which is essentially a parable about freedom. In the work, the 'characters' are personifications of static qualities rather than dynamic agents of change. A second work by Marrash, *Durr al-Sadaf fi ghara'ib al-Sudaf* (Beirut, 1872), has a title in rhyming prose which not only tells about the collection of coincidences which are incorporated within the work but also illustrates the author's debt to the earlier traditions of narrative through the use of framing techniques, the formalized rhyming prose style, and an abundance of moralistic sentiment.

Salim al-Bustani, eldest son of Butrus al-Bustani mentioned above, laid the groundwork for the emergence of the historical novel in a series of works published in the periodical *al-Jinan*. These novels began the crucial process of developing a reading public for the genre by combining elements of entertainment and instruction within a single work. In this case, episodes from Islamic history were combined with travel, love stories and adventure to form a thrilling montage which was to capture an ever-widening public for the genre. *Al-Huyam Fi-Jinaan al-Sham* ('Passion in Syrian gardens', 1870), for example, is set in the period of the Arab conquest of Syria soon after the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632.

Beginning from the 1850s, the Syro-Lebanese region was torn apart by civil conflict between different religious factions. Following a massacre of Christians in Damascus in 1860, large numbers of Syrian Christian families left the area. The effect of this large-scale emigration on both the region that they left behind and the countries to which they emigrated was considerable. For many of these families the destination was Egypt, but others were to travel much further afield, to the United States, to South America and to England.

4.0. Conclusion

Among pioneer figures in the development of modern Arabic fiction in the Syro-Lebanese region were Nasif al-Yaziji (1800-71), Faransis Marrash (d.1873), Salim al-Bustani (d. 1884) and Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq (1804—87). Chapters from Islamic history were combined with travel, love stories and adventure to form a stimulating mixture which was to capture an ever-increasing public for the novel genre.

5.0 Summary

This unit considered early attempts by Arab writers in the development of modern Arabic fiction in the Syro-Lebanese region. It specifically investigated how the foundation for the emergence of fiction was laid and how a reading public was developed for the novel genre.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Examine the contributions of Nasif al-Yaziji, Faransis Marrash, Salim al-Bustani and Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq in the development of modern Arabic fiction in the Syro-Lebanese region.

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Unit 3: The Development of Modern Arabic Fiction in Egypt

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Development of Modern Arabic Fiction in Egypt

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

The translation of works of European fiction into Arabic, their adaptation and imitation, and the eventual appearance of an indigenous tradition of modern Arabic fiction in Egypt is quite similar to the pattern that the emergence of an indigenous tradition of modern Arabic fiction took in Syria and Lebanon.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will explore how newspapers and journals which were established in Egypt later featured poems and works of fiction, and then replicated in Egypt the beginnings of the fictional tradition in Europe. It will also discuss how a critical intermediate process in the development of an indigenous tradition of modern fiction was initiated by 'egyptianizing' their contexts, consequently paving the way for imitation and later, the development of an indigenous tradition of Arabic fiction.

3.0 Main Contents – The Development of Modern Arabic Fiction in Egypt

The Christian families who settled in Egypt became part of a process of educational and cultural revival which had begun with the coming to power of Muhammad Ali. Much impressed by the equipment and military techniques of the French army, he decided to train the Egyptian army along similar lines. Beginning from the year 1820, he sent missions of young Egyptians to Europe, initially to Italy but later to France. Rifa'ah Rafi' al-Tahtawi (1801-73), a young Egyptian studying at al-Azhar in Cairo, was chosen as *Imam* to accompany one of these early missions to Paris. He stayed in France for a period of five years and shortly after his return, wrote *Takhlis al-Ibris ila Talkhis Baris* a description of life in France, including accounts of dress, food, government, laws and many other topics. However, while this work played a crucial role in increasing its readers' awareness of the changes in European society shaped by the industrial revolution and the resultant growth in urbanization, al-Tahtawi's most significant contributions to the development of modern Arabic fiction lie in other areas.

In the first instance, he was editor of the Egyptian newspaper *al-Waqāiu al-Misriyyah*. While the function of this newspaper (which had been founded by Muhammad Ali in 1823) was to serve as the official gazette, it eventually laid the foundations for the later emergence of a strong tradition of Egyptian journalism. In particular, the arrival of many Syro-Lebanese families in the 1870s and 1880s led to a rapid increase in the number and variety of newspapers. As newspapers and journals were founded to support particular political viewpoints and with specific audiences and purposes in mind, poems and works of fiction would be a regular feature of their columns (thus replicating the beginnings of the fictional tradition in

Europe). Entire novels were published thereafter in chronological order and were immensely popular. Among the earliest examples of these was the work of another member of the Bustani family, Sa'id (d. 1901). His *Dhat-alkhidr* ('Lady of the boudoir') was published in *al-Ahram* in 1884 and showed all the complexities of plot and excess of coincidence encountered in the works of Marrash and Salim al-Bustani.

It needs to be emphasized also that the press has continued to fulfill this 'previewing' role up to the present day. While publishing opportunities and circumstances vary in nature and scope from country to country, the Arab world's most illustrious novelist, Najīb Mahfūz, continued to use the columns of the newspapers and journals in Cairo to introduce his new works to the public.

The second way, in which al Tahtāwi was to make a lasting contribution to the development of modern Arabic fiction in Egypt and beyond, was through his role as a pioneer translator of European works. In 1835 Muhammad Ali established a School of Languages in Cairo, and al-Tahtawi was appointed as its director. The initial translation tasks were concerned with science and military strategy, but works of geography, history and philosophy were also included. Soon works of literature joined the list. After the death of Muhammad Ali, al-Tahtawi spent some time in virtual exile in the Sudan and occupied himself in part by translating Fenelon's *Les aventures de Telemaque*.

Al-Tahtawi's famous pupil and collaborator, Muhammad Uthman Jalal (1829 — 94), devoted the greater part of his energies to works of literature. Not only did he translate a large number of contributions to French literature, for example the plays of Moliere and the fables of La Fontaine, but he also initiated a crucial intermediate process in the development of an indigenous tradition of modern

fiction by 'egyptianizing' their contexts, thus paving the way for attempts at imitation and later, the development of an indigenous generic tradition.

With these translation activities underway, it is almost not surprising that by the 1870s and 1880s the adventure novels of Alexandre Dumas *pere* and Jules Verne, early favourites for translation, were being rendered in Arabic. It is worth noting that these priorities in selection mirror very closely the parallel translation movement in Turkish where *Telemaque* was translated in 1859, Hugo's *Les miserable* in 1862 and Dumas's *The Count of Monte Cristo* in 1871.

Another important figure in the development of an emerging fictional tradition in Egypt was Ali Mubarak (1824—93). He was selected to study in France in 1844, and later he returned to assume a number of military and technical posts before being appointed as Director of the National Library *(Dar al-Kutub)* in 1870. Besides a multi-volume study of Egypt's topography, *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyyah al-Jadidah* modeled on the earlier work of al-Maqrizi (1346—1442), Mubarak also wrote *'Alam al-din,* a voluminous work on literature of travel in Europe, running to over 1,400 pages. This book was probably inspired by the *maqāmah* tradition. An Englishman and an Egyptian first travelled round Egypt and then proceeded to Europe. Each chapter is called a *musāmarah* (evening chat), and there are elaborate descriptions of a wide variety of phenomena - marriage, railways, women, post, volcanoes and so on — with little attempt to link them into a coherent narrative structure.

Along with the increase in translation activity and in the availability of publication outlets through the press, there came the need to refine and simplify prevalent prose styles in order to produce a medium that would satisfy the desire of the ever-growing public for popular fiction. In this regard, Mustafa Lutfi al-Manfaluti

(1876—1924) played a central role. Indeed, his work may be seen as typical of the many contrasting forces at work in Egyptian intellectual life at this time. The obvious inconsistencies in many of his political and cultural views has not endeared him to criticsms of later generations but it is perhaps the simplicity and idealism of his writings, and most especially his collection of essays entitled *al-Nazarāt* (1910—21), which made him so popular at this time; in the new and powerful medium of the press, his straightforward style and simple moral vision found a ready audience. Perhaps nothing can provide a more graphic illustration of the power and range of the translation movement mentioned above than the fact that al-Manfaluti, who apparently knew no European language himself, was able to take a whole series of works by Chateaubriand, Edmond Rostand *(Cyrano de Bergerac),* Dumas *fils* and others, and adapt them for publication as romantic tales in Arabic.

The Analysis and Criticism of Society: Hadith Isa Ibn Hisham

During the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the pace of revival in Egypt accelerated. The vigorous and expanding press tradition allowed for plentiful discussion of the various political positions which emerged, following the British occupation. Opposition to the occupation was almost universal, but was multi-faceted. One of the most famous of these opponents was Jamal al-din 'al-Afghani' (1839—97). It is difficult to overestimate the effect that the teachings of Jamal al-din and his famous Egyptian pupil, Muhammad 'Abduh (1849— 1905) had on an entire generation of writers in Egypt; a short list of intellectual 'disciples' would include Qasim Amin (1865-1908), who wrote in support of the cause of women, Hafiz Ibrahim, (1871-1932) the 'poet of the Nile', Mustafa Kamil (1874—1908), a famous figure in the growth of Egyptian nationalism, and Muhammad al-Muwaylihi (1858—1930).

Al-Muwaylihi's work, *Hadith Isa ibn Hisham,* has long been recognized as a significant contribution to the development of modern Arabic prose fiction. It was first published as a series of articles in *Misbah al-sharq,* the newspaper of al-Muwaylihi's father, Ibrahim. The original articles were entitled *'Fatrah minal-Zaman* ('A period of time') and contained a great deal of political commentary and bitter societal criticism which are not part of the work as currently available. In 1906 al-Muwaylihi put most of his series of articles into book form. Episodes were edited, material was omitted (including most references to the British occupation), and new material was added. The book appeared in 1907, now called *Hadith Isa ibn Hisham.*

Hadith Isa ibn Hisham was a major step forward in that, unlike its predecessors, it focuses attention on Egyptian society during the author's own lifetime and subjects it to sarcastic criticism. A Minister of War from the time of Muhammad Ali, Ahmad Pasha al-Manikli, is resurrected from his grave and meets up with Isa ibn Hisham, a contemporary Egyptian whose name is identical with that of the narrator of the *maqamāt* of al-Hamadhāni. The two men travels around Cairo, which is in the process of being rapidly transformed into a cosmopolitan metropolis. Close to the beginning of the work the Pasha is arrested for an assault on a donkeyman, and the reader is thus exposed to the chaotic legal system where a system of religious (Shari'ah) and secular courts (based on the French system) are operating under a British governmental administration. Closer to the end of the work, the figure of the *'umdah* (village headman) and his two colleagues, the *khali'* (Playboy) and Merchant, provide some memorable moments of contrast between life in the countryside and the city, between the traditional tastes and values of the *'umdah* and the westernized fashions espoused by the Playboy. However, while the level of

criticism implicit in the treatment of each societal group is constant, the chapters are nevertheless separate entities with little to link them to other chapters apart from the presence of the narrator and his companion. Indeed, from the perspective of narrative structure, the work is very evocative of al-Hamadhani's *maqamāt,* the narrator of which provides al-Muwaylihi's work with its title. It seems clear then that, while al-Muwaylihi was an intelligent and bitter critic of his own society at the turn of the century, he had no intention of writing literature which would entertain in the same way that the adventure novels mentioned above were doing. Al-Muwaylihi was not one to make concessions to any emerging audience for popular fiction. Bearing in mind his spiteful reaction to attempts by the famous poet Ahmad Shawqi to introduce new ideas about poetry into his collected works, one might be able to gauge his reaction to the kind of fiction which was becoming so popular.

Hadlth Isa ibn Hisham thus fulfills a Janus-like function. By taking contemporary Egypt and its people as its subject-matter and scrutinizing both in an intense and often humorous manner, it represents a significant development over previous works which were set apart from the environment of their author in either place or time, or in both. On the other hand, al-Hamadhani's narrator and the style of the *maqāmah* genre are revived to provide a superb and enduring example of neo-classical prose. Indeed the fate of al-Muwaylihi's work may have been sealed in 1927 when it was chosen to be a set text in Egyptian schools. That rite of passage affirmed the transformation of a lively and critical account of Egyptian society during 'a period of time' into a part of the standard of *maqāmat,* an exercise in neo-classicism which, for all its relevance at one period, was soon to be overwhelmed by the emergence of the novel as a genre in Arabic literature.

It needs to be mentioned that works with strong similarities to that of the *maqāmah* as revived in this creative manner by al-Muwaylihi were to appear within both Egypt and other national traditions of Arabic fiction. In Egypt itself, al-Muwaylihi's own father, Ibrahim (d. 1906), wrote a short essay in the genre entitled *'Mir'aat al-aalam aw Hadith Musa ibn Isham* which has never been published in book form. In 1906 the famous Egyptian poet, Hafiz Ibrahim, a close friend of the al-Muwaylihi family, published a work of his own, *Layali Satih* ('Nights of Satih'). Hafiz makes use of encounters between his narrator and a variety of inhabitants of Egypt to comment on a number of pressing issues of the time, including British rule of the Sudan, the presence of Syrian emigres in Egypt, and the need for reform in women's rights. Muhammad Lutfi Jum'ah's (1884—1953) book, *Layali Ruh al-Haahir* ('Nights of the Perplexed Spirit', 1912) contains considerably less socio-political comment; while it makes use of similar scenarios and narrative devices, it is essentially a reflective and philosophical piece.

Among authors from elsewhere in the Arab world whose works show signs of the influence of the classical or neo-classical *maqāmah* tradition, mention should be made of Sulayman Faydi al-Mawsili in Iraq with his *Al-Riwāyah al-Iqaziyyah* ('The story of *Al-Iqaz* — the name of Faydi's newspaper, 1919), Ali al-Duaaji in Tunis with his *Jawlah hawla hanat al-bahr al-abyad almutawassit* ('Trip around the bars of the Mediterranean', 1935), and in Morocco Muhammad ibn Abdallah al-Mu'aqqit with his *Al-Rihlah al-Marakushiyyah aw mir'at al-masail al-waqtiyyah* ('Marrakesh journey or mirror of problems of the time', 1920s). While the dates of publication serve to illustrate the different time-frames for the development of modern fiction in the separate national literatures of the Arab world, all of these works can be regarded from the perspective of the 1980s as

bridges between the narrative genres of Arabic classical prose and the emergence of a new entity which was to become the modern Arabic novel.

4.0 Conclusion

The Egyptian newspaper *al-Waqaiu al-Misriyyah* served as the official gazette, and also laid the foundations for the later emergence of a strong tradition of Egyptian journalism. And the arrival of many more Syro-Lebanese families in Egypt led to a rapid increase in the number and variety of newspapers. As newspapers and journals were founded, works of fiction featured regularly, and novels were published serially. Among the earliest newspaper was *al-Ahram*.

5.0 Summary

This unit explored how newspapers and journals were established in Egypt and how they later featured poems and works of fiction, and then imitated in Egypt the beginnings of the fictional tradition as it happened in Europe. It also discussed how a critical intermediate process in the development of an indigenous tradition of modern fiction was initiated by 'egyptianizing' their contexts, consequently paving the way for imitation and later, the development of an indigenous tradition of Arabic fiction in Egypt.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Assess the role of newspapers and journals in the emergence of Arabic fiction in Egypt.

- In what way did Al-Muwaylihi's work, *Hadith Isa ibn Hisham,* contribute significantly to the development of modern Arabic prose fiction?

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Unit 4: The Historical Novel: Jurji Zaydan

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Historical Novel: Jurji Zaydan

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Jurjī Zaydān was a Lebanese novelist, journalist, and scholar of the *Nahḍa* ('awakening'), an intellectual current of the long nineteenth century for the renewal of Arab culture. With his cultural journal, Zaydān developed a very successful medium to popularize knowledge about Arab history and Arabic literature in order to establish a national consciousness. He became especially famous for his novels on the history of Islam, ranging from the seventh to the beginning of the twentieth century. This became impactful both on the history of Arab nationalism and Arabic literature and remain well-read masterpieces till today.

2.0 Objectives

This unit focuses on how Jurji Zaydan, used the press to contribute to the development of a reading audience for the novel in the Arab world. It discussed how Zaydan employed historical novels to entertain and educate the citizens of Egypt.

3.0 Main Contents - The Historical Novel: Jurji Zaydan

Jurji Zaydan (1861-1914), a Lebanese immigrant to Egypt, provides us with what is probably the best example of the way in which the press was to contribute to the development of an audience for the novel in the Arab world. After founding the magazine *al-Hilal* (The Crescent) in 1892 in Cairo, he proceeded to use it as a channel for the publication of a series of historical novels which brought this genre to new levels of sophistication and popularity; indeed they have remained in print ever since. In his study of the development of the novel in Egypt Taha Badr describes these works as being part entertainment and part educational, a judgment which suitably accounts for both their value in the development of the novel and their success. Zaydan made frantic efforts to acquaint his generation with the history and literature of the Arabs, and used the historical novel to achieve his goals in a manner which is often compared with that of both Alexander Dumas *pere* and Sir Walter Scott.

Avoiding some of the more impracticable heroics of the adventure novels of earlier years, he chose a number of periods in Islamic history as time-frames for his novels. *Armanusah al-Misriyyah* (1889) is concerned with the conquest of Egypt in 640; *Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf* (1909) is about the famous governor of Iraq during the period of the Umayyad Caliphs; *Shajarat al-Durr* (1914) explores the

reign of the famous queen of Egypt. *Istibdad al-Mamalik* ('Mamluk tyranny', 1893) may serve as an illustration. The period is the eighteenth century, and the historical circumstances are the struggle for power between Ali Bey, the ruler of Egypt, and his son-in-law, Muhammad Abu Dhahab. The action fluctuates back and forth between Egypt and Syria. An Egyptian family, that of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman, finds itself caught up in the larger drama, as the father fights in the army in place of his son Hassan. Eventually Muhammad Abu Dhahab emerges as victor, and all also turns out well for the family.

There is no doubt that a principal cause of the continuing popularity of these novels has been the style in which they are written. By contrast with the high style of al-Muwaylihi, for example, Zaydan sets out to write his fiction in a style which would make his works accessible to a wide audience. The vocabulary is familiar, the sentence structure is simple and free from complex imagery, and the narrative flows with an easy spontaneity, all of which earns the applauses of a demanding critic such as Taha Husayn.

4.0 Conclusion

Jurji Zaydan was born in Beirut, Lebanon. Many of his works focused on the Arab Awakening. He founded the journal, *al-Hilal*. Zaydan transformed his society by helping to build the Arab media, but he was also an important literary figure, a pioneer of the Arabic novel, and a historian of Islamic civilization. Zaydan was an intellectual who proposed new world view, a new social order, and new political power. He was author of twenty-two historical novels covering the entirety of Arab/Islamic history. He used the novels to popularize Islamic history.

5.0 Summary

This unit focused on how Jurji Zaydan, used the press to contribute to the development of a reading audience for the novel genre in the Arab world. It discussed how he employed historical novels to entertain and educate the citizens of Egypt. Some of his novels include: *Armanusah al-Misriyyah, Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, Shajarat al-Durr* and *Istibdad al-Mamalik.*

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Appraise the contribution of Jurji Zaydan to the development of a reading audience for the novel genre in the Arab world.
- Write a short note on Jurji Zaydan's novel, *Istibdad al-Mamalik*

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Unit 5: Between Education and Entertainment in Modern Arabic

       Fiction

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - Between Education and Entertainment in Modern Arabic

                Fiction

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

In the previous unit, we examined how Jurji Zaydan, used the press to contribute to the development of a reading audience for the novel in the Arab world. Zaydan employed historical novels to entertain and educate the citizens of Egypt. Subsequently, with the emergence of press tradition in Egypt, other literary writers from within and outside Egypt contributed in significant ways to the development of modern Arabic fiction using it as a valuable bridge to link between entertainment and education about the reality of their society.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will survey how modern Arabic fiction was used to entertain and educate the Egyptian public about the reality of the situations they were living at that time. It investigates how journal and monthly novels were used to portray the past to the present, with an overlap of romance.

3.0 Main Contents - Between Education and Entertainment in Modern Arabic Fiction

Writers from Lebanon made use of the emerging press tradition in Egypt to contribute in significant ways to the development of an audience for modern Arabic fiction. Availing themselves of such publications as *al-Riwayat al-shahriyyah* ('Monthly Novels'), Niqula Haddad (c. 1872-1954) was to produce a whole series of works with titles such as *Hawwa al-Jadidah* ('Modern Eve', 1906), *Asirat al-Hubb* ('Prisoner of love') and *Fatinat al-lmperator* ('Enchantress of the Emperor', 1922) which in their variety served as a valuable bridge between the prevailing taste for entertainment fiction and the gradual emergence of a tradition more closely focused on present reality. Ya'qub Sarruf (1852—1927), the founder of the journal *al-Muqtataf,* and Farah Antun (1874-1922), the founder of the journal *al-Jami'ah* and a renowned secularist, both wrote historical novels.

Sarruf's own written novel was entitled *Amir Lubnan* ('Prince of Lebanon', 1907) and takes as its topic the history of his native land during the religious struggles of the 1850s and 1860s; Antun delves further back into history in his novel, *Urishalim al-Jadidah aw fath al-'Arab bayt al-Maqdis* ('New Jerusalem or the

Arab Conquest of the Holy City', 1904) which is set during the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem in the seventh century A.D.

In other works, both Sarruf and Antun turned from the portrayal of the past to the present, even though with a large overlap of romance. In Sarruf's novels *Fatat Misr* (1905) and *Fatat al-Fayyum* (1908), the scene is set in his adopted country and among its Christian (Coptic) community.

Antun's other novels are a mirror of the various trends of his age: from the somewhat philosophical *al-'Ilm wal-din wa'l-mal* ('Science, religion and money', 1905) which discusses the conflict of science and religion, to *al-Hubb hatta 'l-Mawt* ('Love till death', 1898) and *al-Wahsh, al-wahsh, al-wahsh* (1903), both of which treat the problems of Lebanese society confronted with returnees from the emigrant community in America.

A member of that very community, Jibran Khalil Jibran (1883—1931), known for his publications in English and Arabic, was another contributor to the development of romantic fiction in Arabic. While the abundance of descriptions to be found in much of his fiction may not suit the tastes of today, there is no doubt that he had interest in developing an articulate and beautiful style in both his poetic and his prose writings. His works of fiction belong to the earlier part of his career and show a lively concern with some of the pressing societal issues of his time. *Al-Ajnihah almutakassirah* ('Broken Wings', 1908) and *al-Arwah al-mutamarridah* ('Spirits rebellious', 1908) take up the cause of women's rights, of forced marriage and the question of the tyranny of the clergy, in a forthright manner which predates modern advocates of these causes by many decades. Jibran is primarily remembered in the western world for the unique series of

heavily allegorical and philosophical tales and aphorisms which are now most popular in their English versions, the principal amongst them being *The Prophet.*

While Jibran's own works of this type have maintained their appeal, they also may be seen as providing precedents for the writings of a number of other authors. In the late 1940s Mikhail Nu'aymah (1889-1988), a close colleague of Jibran, published a group of heavily philosophical tales in both English and Arabic although, in the case of at least one, *Mudhakkirat al-arqash* (translated as *Memories of a vagrant soul,* 1952). These works have been characterized as 'real sermons based on the doctrine of metempsychosis and of the ultimate union of the human soul with its divine origin', and the resort to the supernatural which is to be found in them.

The work of the Tunisian writer Mahmud al-Mas'adi (b. 1911), *al-Sudd* ('The dam', written between 1939 and 1940 and published in 1955) appeared at a later date than the works of Jibran and Nu'aymah. The structure and prevailing philosophical tone of al-Mas'adi's work have, from the outset, made it the object of considerable discussion regarding its broad purpose; it has been described as a play and as not falling 'into any of the recognized categories of literary forms'. Given a warm reception by Tāhā Husayn, the work tells the story of Ghaylan and his female companion *Maymunah*, who come to a valley where the people worship a goddess named *Sahabba*. Ghaylan determines to change the way of life of this community by building a dam, but no sooner is the structure completed than it is destroyed by mysterious forces. Whatever the other qualities of the work, there is almost unanimous critical opinion about its regard for the extreme elegance of its language, a factor which have ensured it a lasting place in the history of modern Maghrib fiction.

4.0 Conclusion

Niqula Haddad;s works *Hawwa al-Jadidah* ('Modern Eve', 1906), *Asirat al-Hubb* ('Prisoner of love') and *Fatinat al-lmperator* ('Enchantress of the Emperor', 1922) served as a valuable bridge between the prevailing taste for entertainment fiction and the gradual emergence of a tradition focused on reality. Ya'qub Sarruf, and Farah Antun, both wrote historical novels. These writers portrayed the past to the present, but with great overlay of romance. They used their fictional works to educate as well as entertain their society.

5.0 Summary

What we have done in this unit is the survey of how modern Arabic fiction was used to entertain and educate the Egyptian public. It discussed how journal and monthly novels were used to portray the past to the present, with an overlay of romance. In other words, we investigated how Arabic novel was employed to educate and entertain the Egyptian society about the reality of their circumstances.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Discuss how Niqula Haddad contributed to the development of romantic fiction in Arabic.

- Write a short note on *Al-Ajnihah Al-mutakassirah* of Khalil Jibran.

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Unit 6: The Status of *Zaynab* by Muhammad Husayn Haykal

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Status of *Zaynab* by Muhammad Husayn Haykal

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Muhammad Husayn Haykal was one of the most outstanding literary figures of modern Egypt. He touched almost every branch of Arabic fiction. He wrote short stories, novels, biographies, and auto-biographies. He even composed poems. For the development of Arabic language and literature, Muhammad Husayn Haykal chose as themes the real facts that prevailed in the Egyptian society.

2.0 Objectives

In this unit, we are going to present a short biography of Muhammad Husayn Haykal and then examine the status of the novel *Zaynab*, written by him. We will investigate the various arguments of literary scholars about whether the novel is truly the first real novel in Arabic or not. We will also present a content analysis

on the novel as done by literary scholars and historians, so that students can understand why the novel *Zaynab* is regarded as the first true novel in Arabic.

3.0.   Main Contents - Muhammad Husayn Haykal and His Novel, Zaynab

3.0.1 Biography of Muhammad Husayn Haykal

Muhammad Husayn Haykal was born in the village Kafr Ghanam in Dakahliah district of Egypt in the year 1888 to an Egyptian couple. His family belonged to a rural area of Egypt. His family members were very popular for their hardwork and leadership quality. His father Husayn Afandi Salim Haykal was a well-known person in the locality. He was the leader of the tribe. Although his family belonged to a rural area they were very sound in respect of dignity and property. They were aware of modern education.

Muhammad Husayn Haykal was born and brought up in Egyptian village where he found fresh environment and mixed up eco-friendly atmosphere. He used to work in the field with his parent and elderly people and by the evening he used to play with his friends and companions. He enjoyed the natural beauties of nature in the rural areas of Egypt. Moreover, he used to spend his leisure time in reading newspapers and children magazines. So, reading newspapers, journals and magazines became a habit for him since early days.

He bagged B.A. in Law 1909. After that his father sent him to Paris in 1911 with government scholarship and studied Law in Sorbonne University where he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in 1912. Then he came back to Egypt in August, 1912 and started his professional career as a lawyer in Mansura City. From 1917 onward he delivered some lectures in Egyptian

National University. In 1922 he became the editor in-chief for *al-Siasah* Journal which opened a new epoch in his life and he started working as a journalist but in 1937, he left journalism as he was appointed as a Minister of State for the Interior Ministry in the second government of Muhammad Mahmud in 31st December, 1937. Then he was appointed as Minister of Education.

In his literary and intellectual career, Muhammad Husayn Haykal was impacted by Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, who influenced him by the call for comprehensive reform and developing ideas of modern education. During his stay in Europe he started writing his first literary work *Qissatu Zaynab* which was published first in 1914. Returning from Europe, he was associated with Ahmed Lutfi Sayeed who was the patron of the intellectual Modern School. He influenced Muhammad Husayn Haykal's political and intellectual as well as cultural behavior. Muhammad Husayn Haykal died in 1956.

3.0.2. The Status of *Zaynab* by Muhammad Husayn Haykal

Many opinions have been expressed regarding which work represents the first 'real' novel in Arabic, ever since H. A. R. Gibb. Some critics have identified *Zaynab* by Muhammad Husayn Haykal (1888—1956) as occupying that position. While some critics would consider *Zaynab* as a step on the road to the appearance of the 'genuine' novel, others have drawn attention to Mahmud Tahir Haqqi's (1884-1964) work *Adhraa Dinshaway,* 1906 (translated as *The Maiden of Dinshway,* 1986) as at least a further intermediate step.

This work by an Egyptian writer certainly places Egyptian characters into a contemporary Egyptian setting in both place and time. The events ensued when, in retaliation for the death of a British soldier while shooting birds near an

Egyptian village, the authorities passed sentences of execution on a number of the villagers to what or who this refers to is not clear at all. Here we have a contribution to fiction which manages to combine some of the elements mentioned earlier: the concern found in al-Muwaylihi's work with the description and analysis of present-day Egypt and the tradition of the historical novel, and the introduction of a local love-story.

In view of recent research on the earlier periods in the development of modern Arabic fiction, and more specifically, those written in Egypt, it is perhaps more useful to see *Zaynab* not so much as the first example of any particular category or quality of novel, but rather as an extremely important step in a continuing process. Without lessening the importance of Haykal's novel in the history of modern Arabic prose literature, in any way, it may be suggested that a clearer historical perspective can be obtained by placing it in a broader universal context.

Zaynab was written while Haykal was in France and was published in Egypt in 1913 under the stage name '*Misri fallah* ('a peasant-Egyptian'). Some argument has surrounded the fact that Haykal did not use his own name. His identity was certainly known to critics at the time, and it has been suggested that the purpose behind the use of a fictitious name was more concerned with the marketability of the book, than with fear of whatever condemnation or censure may have been attached to the writing of fiction.

Whatever the case may be, Haykal proceeds to place his readers firmly in the midst of the Egyptian countryside. Subtitling his book, *'Manazir wa-akhlaq rifiyyah'* ('Rustic scenes and manners'), he depicts the Egyptian countryside in considerable detail and with not a little sentimentality which carries over into the portrayal of his characters. The plot has love as its primary focus. Hamid is a

student studying in Cairo who returns during his vacations to his parents' country estate. He maintains an epistolary relationship with his cousin, 'Azizah, but she is married off to someone else.

For a while, Hamid turns his attention to Zaynab, a beautiful peasant girl who works on his father's lands, but eventually he returns in frustration to Cairo. Zaynab herself is in love with Ibrahim, another peasant worker, but she too is married off, to Hassan who, unlike Ibrahim, is able to afford the bride-price. Such is Ibrahim's poverty that he cannot afford the bribe necessary to avoid being drafted into the army. He is sent to the Sudan and is killed. Longing for her true love and clutching his handkerchief, Zaynab dies of tuberculosis.

In this work there is a heavy focus on local background. When we bear in mind the fact that Haykal was himself the son of a wealthy landowner and was writing about his homeland from a distance, this emphasis and the accompanying sentimentality become less surprising. Haykal also seems to follow or, in the case of the Arabic novel, even to establish, the trend whereby first novels tend to be heavily autobiographical; later works by Ibrahim al-Mazini, Tawfiq al-Hakim, 'Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra and many others provide further evidence of this. When Hamid writes a lengthy letter to his parents from Cairo expressing views on liberty and justice borrowed from John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, he becomes the barely disguised voice of Haykal himself, a young man who had already been exposed to the ideas of such figures as Qasim Amin, the writer on women's rights mentioned earlier, and who was later to become one of the major intellectual figures in modern Egypt. With *Zaynab* we encounter a novel which places its characters into a fictional but authentic temporal and spatial context and then proceeds to explore some of the pressing

social issues of the day. The resulting characters show obvious psychological flaws, but they are real Egyptian characters.

In this context, mention must also be made of the language or rather languages used in this work. Haykal followed the lead of earlier figures such as 'Uthman Jalal, 'Abdallah Nadim (1854—96) and the dramatist Ya'qub Sannu (1839—1912) by adopting the colloquial dialect as a literary medium and using it in the dialogue of his novel. The question of the literary value which is to be attached to the various registers of the Arabic language represents a matter of continuing debate among Arab litterateurs and critics, fired not only by the emotive issues of heritage and religion but also by the more practical aspects of localism and the ramifications of publics and publication. While *Zaynab* is too full of description to contain a great deal of dialogue, its attitude to this question of language usage is another factor contributing to the status of *Zaynab* as an important point of reference within the history of the modern Arabic novel.

4.0 Conclusion

Muhammad Husayn Haykal is considered as the most successful novelist of Egypt. During his stay in Paris he started writing novel. He chose novel as it reflects the true human life. His first novel *Zaynab* was written in between 1910-1911 but he published this novel in 1914. The novel *Zaynab* is acknowledged as the first original Arabic novel, in the proper artistic sense of the word.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, we presented a short biography of Muhammad Hussayn Haykal and then examined the status of the novel *Zaynab*, written by him. We investigated the various arguments of literary scholars about whether the novel is truly the first real novel in Arabic or not. We presented a content analysis on the novel as

done by literary scholars and historians so that students can understand why the novel *Zaynab* is regarded as the first true novel in Arabic.

7.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- Examine the status of the novel, Zaynab of Muhammad Husayn Haykal in modern Arabic literature.

- Write a short biography on Muhammad Hussayn Haykal.

7.0 References /Further Reading

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Module Three: The Mature Arabic Novel Outside Egypt
Unit 1 - The Emergence of the Novel: Political and Social Concerns
Unit 2 - Prominent Themes of the Arabic Novel in Recent Decades
Unit 3 – Muhammad Husayn Haykal' *Zaynab:* A Content Analysis

Unit 1 - The Emergence of the Novel: Political and Social Concerns

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - The Emergence of the Novel: Political and Social Concerns

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

In the second half of the 19th century, the literati began to speak of an 'Arabic novel' in the sense in which the term is understood today. The rise of the novel form is associated with the movement of literary and cultural renewal known as the *nahda*, Initially the movement was concentrated mainly in Egypt and Syria/Lebanon and focused on rediscovering classical Arabic cultural and intellectual heritage particularly in view of the impacts of Western literary forms

into that was then being imported into the region. Much argument has taken place about what was the 'first Arabic novel'. However, despite a number of other early attempts at novel writing, it is probably only with the series of Jurji Zaydan between 1891 and 1914 that the novel can be said to have moved into the mainstream of Arab cultural life. Zaydan's novel published in 1914 has thus been regarded as the first true novel in Arabic.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will identify and discuss factors that motivated the emergence of the Arabic novel. It will also identify literary figures who led the way in fiction writing in their own regions before the genre now became a popular one in Arabic literature.

3.0 Main Contents

- **The Emergence of the Novel: Political and Social Concerns**

While the novel *Zaynab* was much concerned with romance, its author Muhammad Husayn Haykal placed a mumber of characters firmly at the centre of the plot of the novel as a technique to mirror the problems confronting the Egyptian society including the role of women in the society. In the decades that followed the publication of *Zaynab,* the novel has continued to function both as a source of **entertainment** and **education**. Novels of romance continue to appear and have more recently provided ready materials for both television and film.

The tradition of the historical novel has also continued, particularly under the impetus of a growing sense of national pride nurtured by Arab Nationalism but, in more recent times, the attention of novelists has tended to be more devoted to the

events of the recent past and the lessons to be derived from them. However, as historical events bring about a process of change whereby the Arab world begins to challenge the hegemony of European colonialism and to play a much larger part in the course of its own destiny, so the novel, as reflector and even catalyst of change, assumes a more significant role. It is thus more than fitting that such an indication of change as *Zaynab* should be published in 1913, at the very moment when the colonial and other powers were making preparations for the most wasteful war ever fought in human terms, an event which led to vast changes throughout the Arab world.

In the realm of fiction, the need to develop and foster a sense of **national identity** and **local pride** based on a revival of the glorious past explained the prevalence of historical novels in many countries of the region during the inter-war years. The Syrian novelist Ma'ruf al-Arna'ut (d. 1947) published a series of four novels tracing early Islamic history, including one each on Umar, the second Caliph, and Tariq ibn Ziyad, the hero of the conquest of Spain in the eighth century. Al-Bashir Khurayyif, the Tunisian writer (b. 1917) uses his novel, *Barq al-layl* ('Night lightning', 1961), to portray life in his native country under Hafsid rule in the sixteenth century, although the inclusion of reference to the Spanish invasion in 1535 no doubt served to remind his readers of the realities of occupation in the twentieth century.

Meanwhile, while a number of Arab novelists continued to write historical works of fiction which would make their readers aware of glorious episodes from the past, the rapidly developing awareness among Arab intellectuals of the need for political and societal change led to a decrease in the role of the historical novel. Faced with the realities of colonial occupation, Arab novelists could find lessons in the more

immediate past. In Iraq, for example, Mahmud Ahmad al-Sayyid (1903—37) used his novel *Jalal Khalid* (1928) to portray some of the events during the Iraqi revolt of 1920. One decade later, Tawfiq Yusuf 'Awwad (b. 1911) published his novel, *a/-Raghif (The* loaf, 1939), in which the author gives graphic portrayals of Arab resistance to the Turks during the First World War. In still more recent times when history has been able to provide a rich collection of conflicts in the Arab world, novelists have still occasionally turned to the earlier decades of the 20th century for inspiration, as, for example, with the Syrian writer Faris Zarzur in his novels, *Lan tasqut al-madinah* ('The city will not fall', 1969) set during the First World War, and *Hasan Jabal*(1969) which is a rather excessively documentary account of resistance to the French occupiers during the 1920s and 1930s. The popularity of romantic fiction is replicated within each of the local traditions and often provides a historical point of reference.

In 1947 the Algerian novelist Ahmad Rida Huhii (1911-56) published *Ghadat Umm al-Qura* ('The maid of the city', 1947), in which the topic is love and marriage and, in particular, the death of Zakiyyah, a young girl who is being forced into a marriage with a rich man when she is really in love with her cousin Jamil. A larger number of Sudanese novelists have dealt with this same theme, among whom is Badawi Abd al-Qadir Khalil with *Ha'im 'ala 'l-ard aw rasa'il al-hirman* ('Roaming the earth or letters of deprivation', 1954) which, makes heavy use of the epistolary mode, and Shakir Mustafa with *Hatta ta'ud ('Till* she returns', 1959) in which the love affair of Mahmud and Awatif is shattered when he marries a foreign woman and only returns to his real beloved as she lies dying.

Contacts with Europe and Europeans were among the principal sources of inspiration for Arab writers of fiction at the very earliest stages of the *Nahdah.* As

Arab nations continued to explore the nature of their own national identity and endeavored in various ways to convince the western powers of their desire for independence, pioneers in the writing of the novel in three separate regions of the Arab world made encounters with the west, the subject of their works. In Syria, Shakib al-Jabiri (b. 1912) published *Naham* ('Greed', 1937), a novel set entirely in Germany with many German characters and scenes, which is widely acknowledged as a pioneer work within the Syrian novelistic tradition. In two later works, *Qadar yalhu* ('Fate at play', 1939) and *Qaws quzah* ('Rainbow', 1946), al-Jabiri explores the relationship between an Arab student of medicine in Germany and Elsa, a poor German girl with whom he falls in love. In 1939, Dhu '1-Nun Ayyub, the Iraqi novelist and short story writer, published *al-Duktur Ibrahim* ('Dr Ibrahim'), a work which portrays the ruthless climb to power and influence of a young man who travels to Europe, and then returns to his homeland, only to consort with the foreigners who are occupying it until eventually he decides to leave in order to live in the west. As with so many of these early attempts at novel writing, the autobiographical element seems close to the surface here, in that the author wrote this novel following a decision by the Iraqi government to 'banish' him to Mawsil after the publication of his collection of short stories entitled *Burj Babil* ('The Tower of Babel', 1939)

During the inter-war period, the relationship between the Arab nations and the western powers (most especially Britain and France as the two 'protecting' powers) was one of suspicion and distrust. In Palestine the British became more and more involved in the political entanglement of their own making, and the few attempts at reconciling the irreconcilable merely antagonized both Arabs and Zionists.

On the political front, both Egypt and Syria gained a degree of independence; the Saudi family's consolidation of its control in the Arabian peninsula was acknowledged by the western powers; and in Lebanon an agreement between Sunnis and Maronites in 1943 allowed for the emergence of a Lebanese state, though one based on a flimsy balance.

However, for the majority of nations in the Arab world, the limited nature of the political gains during this period was abruptly underlined by the Second World War. At a later stage, when Arab nations had gained their independence and overthrown the various *anciens regimes,* several novelists in search of national heroes from the recent past were to make use of the restrictions placed on civil liberties as a result of these occupations and the popular resistance they aroused, as central themes in their works.

The Syrian novelist Hanna Minah (b. 1924) sets his first two novels in this period: *A.l-masabih al-zurq* ('Blue lamps', 1954) is set in Ladhiqiyya and, with all the hyperbole of emerging social realism, it recounts the tale of popular revolt against the French forces led by Muhammad Halabi, a local butcher. *Al-Shira' wal-'asifah* ('The sail and the storm', 1966) contains less use of slogan than the previous novel and is again set on the coast of Syria where Abu Zuhdi al-Turiisi, the hero of the novel, rescues a fisherman colleague during a storm but loses his own boat. Confined to the land for a while, he organizes popular opposition to the French before returning to his preferred environment in a new boat.

The Iraqi novelist, Ghaaib Tu'mah Farman (b. 1927) sets his novel *al-Nakhlah wa'l-Jiran* ('The palm-tree and the neighbours', 1966) during this same period, but his principal subject is the effect of wartime economy and the morals of the black market on all segments of the society.

4.0 Conclusion

The emergence of Arabic novel owed a great deal to political and social concerns. These reflected in the birth of a public opinion and nationalistic thought, the democratization of literature and the freedom to write. Others were public literary opinion and the freedom of political expression, the need for reformation and the flowering of nationalism and the creation of fertile literary activity.

5.0 Summary

This unit recognized and discussed factors that motivated the emergence of the Arabic novel. It also identified literary figures who led the way in fictional writing in their own regions before the now became a popular genre in Arabic literature.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- Discuss how political and social concerns were responsible for the emergence of the Arabic Novel.

- Examine how contacts with Europe and Europeans served as source of inspiration for Arab writers of fiction.

7.0 References /Further Reading
- Allen, Roger. *The Arabic Novel, an Historical and Critical Introduction*, 2nd edition, Syracuse University Press, New York 1995.

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  the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arabic in the Faculty of
  Arts, 2016)

Unit 2 - Prominent Themes of the Arabic Novel in Recent Decades

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents - Prominent Themes of the Arabic Novel in Recent Decades

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

The evolutionary process of modern Arabic novel manifested itself in the works of writers who treated social issues such as marriage and family relations and especially love between man and woman. In matters of love, they were careful to choose their plots and characters which could approve love only within the boundaries of legal marriage. To solve this problem, some writers used native characters, but transferred the action to foreign countries where extramarital relations were tolerated. Several novel writers tackled Western concepts and ideologies e.g. socialism. Still other writers attended to producing native fiction patterned after Western models, but with domestic themes and settings. Unable to free themselves from conservative attitudes, however they attacked the harmful influence of Western civilization upon their own cultural tradition. There are however, so many novel writers who remained faithful to the traditional forms of Arabic fiction to modifying them with new elements.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will mention and discuss prominent themes of the Arabic novel in recent decades. The themes include:

- Conflict and Confrontation
- Civil war in Lebanon
- The Arab world and Europe: Cultures in Contact
- After Independence
- Analysis of the Course of Revolution and Change
- Land and Peasants: City and Countryside
- The Family in Society: Education
- The Individual and His Identity: Oppression and Alienation.

3.0 Main Contents - Prominent Themes of the Arabic Novel in Recent Decades

- Conflict and Confrontation

One of the fountains for creative writings for most Arab writers in the contemporary period has been the seemingly unending conflicts between the Arab-Palestinians and the Israeli occupiers. Arab writers have therefore been unrelenting in mirroring the national, international, political and social ramifications of the conflict in all forms of genres including fiction. They have mirrored the many dimensions of the conflicts and the series of military engagements between the Arabs and the Israeli forces which have taken place in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973 and 1982; the activities of the 'freedom-fighters' or 'terrorists' on each side; the effects of the conflict on the peoples in neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Syria and Jordan; and the life of the Palestinian communities, in Israel itself, in the occupied territories such as the West Bank and in various refugee camps. All these aspects

have been explored in modern Arabic fiction and, while some works will, no doubt, prove to be of only temporary and occasional appeal, there are many others which are clearly destined to endure.

Three Palestinian writers have addressed themselves to the many phases and aspects of the recent history of their people, each in his own unique way: Ghassan Kanafani (1936-72), Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (b. 1919) and Emil Habibi (b. 1921). All three have contributed in significant ways to the development of the Arabic novel.

- **Civil war in Lebanon**

The modern histories of Lebanon and the Palestinians have, of course, been linked since 1948 and even before, but the uneasy *modus vivendi* between the many separate religious and ethnic communities which resulted from the creation of Lebanon as a nation-state, already injured by the influx of refugees from 1948, came under extreme stress during the post-1967 period. Raids across the border into Israel and resulting reprisals, as well as complex political alignments of a local and international nature all contributed to heightening tensions.

A number of novelists have managed to explore the many aspects of the conflicts and its effects on society with a remarkable degree of creativity. Against this background the work of Tawfiq Yusuf 'Awwad, *Tawahin Bay rut* ('The mills of Bay rut', 1972, English trans., *Death in Beirut* 1976) in which he uses the arrival in Beirut from southern Lebanon of a Shi'ite girl, Tamimah, to expose factionalism and corruption in the wake of the 1967 War, becomes charmingly prophetic. Ghadah al-Samman's (b. 1942) work *Kawabis Bayrut* ('Beirut nightmares', 1976), mixes reality and nightmarish fantasies in a recounting of the fighting in November 1975 around the hotels of Beirut, during which her protagonist is trapped with her cousin and uncle. With Hanan al-Shaykh's *Hikayat Zahrah* (1980, English trans.

*The story of Zahra,*1986), we see one of the most notable recent additions to modern Arabic fiction, both for the effective way in which a number of issues are presented to the reader and for the brilliant use of technique and style.

- **The Arab world and Europe: Cultures in Contact**

Throughout the lengthy process that led to the independence of Arab nations from the colonial powers, a theme which was to provide a vehicle for the analysis of the often antagonistic and confrontational relationship between the cultures of the Arab world and the west was that of visits by Arabs, mostly as students, to different countries in Europe; a theme which inspired some of the earliest prose writings of the *Nahdah* and which was later adopted by a number of pioneers of the novel. The example set by writers such as Tawfiq al-Hakim in Egypt, Shakib al-Jabiri in Syria and Dhu '1-Nun (in Ayyub in Iraq, is replicated at a later date by novelists from other national traditions.

- **After Independence**

Once the nations of the Arab world had achieved their independence, the need to establish a sense of self-identity as a nation and, in some cases, to cement new alignments developed within the revolutionary process. This was a primary stimulus in the emergence of a tradition of social-realist fiction which would trace the development of the independence movement and identify the social foundations upon which the new era would be built.

Within this context highest prominence has long been given to the Egyptian novelist Najib Mahfuz (b. 1911), who wrote a series of works about his native land, and his native city, Cairo, during the 1940s and who, with *al-Thulathiyyah* ('The trilogy', 1956—7), painted a vast landscape of a society undergoing the individual

and collective turmoil of change during the period from 1917 to the 1940s. Mahfuz's work stands virtually alone in the breadth of its scope, the detail of its attention to place and time, and the sophisticated way in which the portrayal of character reflects the generational clashes of the period. However, on a smaller scale a number of novelists throughout the Arab world addressed themselves to these themes within the context of their own society.

- **Analysis of the Course of Revolution and Change**

In those countries (like the Sudan, Algeria and Morocco) in which the granting of independence was in itself a major stimulus to the emergence of a novelistic tradition, it is not surprising to note that early novels concentrate on opposition to the occupying forces and the events leading up to the day itself; as, for example, in the Sudan, in *Min ajl Layla* ('For Layla's sake', 1960) by al-Sirr Hasan Fadl and in *Liqa inda 'l-ghurub* ('Meeting at sunset', 1963) by Amin Muhammad Zayn. In Morocco, Abd al-Karim Ghallab (b. 1919) traces the resistance to the French, the class divisions within society, the separate educational systems and many other issues which were far from solved by the granting of independence.

Land and Peasants: City and Countryside

From a prolonged process of confrontation and even conflict with outside forces, the newly independent nations of the Arab world, several of which were faced with the challenge of implementing goals long advocated as part of the process of revolution, turned their attention to the enormous agenda of social reform which remained as a legacy from the earlier times. Bearing in mind that the exploitation of peasants and the land had been a common rallying-cry even before the advent of independence, it is hardly surprising that agricultural reform was one of the top priorities of the new generation of Arab governments and that the genre of the

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novel provided a fertile arena for a portrayal of the need for and implementation of such measures. Thus Dhu '1-Nun Ayyub's novel, *al-Yad wal-ard wal-ma* ('Hand, earth and water', 1948), which had dealt with corruption and exploitation in the countryside of Iraq during the monarchy, anticipates the reforms initiated in several Arab countries.

The Family in Society: Education

When we bear in mind the history of the novel as a genre in other cultures, it is not surprising that the period following independence and revolution in the Arab world should have seen the appearance of a large number of works concerning the most vital of societal institutions, the family, the unit which serves as 'a vehicle of the natural continuity of life'. As each society set out to establish its own political and social agenda, several novelists (especially during the 1950s) wrote works depicting the traditional points of tension within family life.

The Individual and His Identity: Oppression and Alienation

A number of critics who discuss writing by women use the image of the cage or prison to describe the lack of freedom which many women felt within the environment of traditional customs. Thus for women the family hierarchy came to represent in small-scale version the very same restriction of liberty which was to be applied with regrettable regularity to members of the male population. In many Arab countries, the aftermath of independence brought an initial period of euphoria and expansion on the broader domestic and international front, followed on the individual level by a decade or more of repression and loss of civil liberties, a situation which was described by Arab novelists, often at considerable risk to themselves, in a number of works.

In novels which deal with dissenters and rebels against the prevailing social and political order, prison is, more often than not, the resort. The Moroccan novelist Abd al-Karim Ghallab does at least set the hero of his early novel *Sab'at abwab* ('Seven gates', 1965) within the nationalist struggle for independence and permits his cell-mates to recount tales of nationalist heroism.

4.0 Conclusion

Arabic novel started with the translations but it was able to create a demand towards the novel and it encouraged the Arab authors to try this new form of fiction in their own writing. Arabic novel flourished in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon and other parts of Arab land. Later more novelists emerged who tried their best to write and publish Arabic novels. The themes of Arabic novel are diverse ranging from romance and portrayal of socio-political situations of the Arab lands as well as expression of individual's identity and education of the masses.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, we were able to mention and discuss prominent themes of the Arabic novel. These include the following:

- Conflict and Confrontation

 - Civil war in Lebanon

- The Arab world and Europe: Cultures in Contact

- After Independence

- Analysis of the Course of Revolution and Change

- Land and Peasants: City and Countryside

- The Family in Society: Education

- The Individual and His Identity: Oppression and Alienation.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- Explain the concept of 'theme' as used in Arabic novel.

- Mention and discuss four themes among the prominent themes of Arabic novel in modern times.

7.0 References /Further Reading

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Unit 3 – *Zaynab* of Muhammad Husayn Haykal: A Content Analysis

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents – *Zaynab* of Muhammad Husayn Haykal: A Content Analysis

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 References /Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Originally published anonymously in 1913 under the false name of Misri Fallah (an "Egyptian peasant"), *Zaynab* is considered by many critics to be the first modern Egyptian novel and one of the first modern novels in Arabic. *al-Jarida* was the newspaper in which *Zaynab* was first published in serialized form. And those associated with the newspaper knew from the start that Muhammad Husayn Haykal was the author. However, it was not until 1922 that his name first appeared on some copies of the text, and in 1929 he finally republished it under his own name.

2.0 Objectives

This unit will present a brief content analysis of the novel, Zaynab, in order to give students idea about how content of literary work of this nature is done. Students are expected to apply the style of analysis here to other literary works of prosaic content.

3.0 Main Contents – Zaynab of Muhammad Husayn Haykal: A Content Analysis

The novel, *Zaynab* written by Muhammad Husayn Haykal is a landmark in Egyptian literature; its themes and the literary and intellectual qualities which its author reveals endow it with the necessary complexity and richness to make it the first artistic novel in Arabic. *Zaynab* has two plots. The one with which the novel begins and ends, centers on the peasant girl Zaynab who, after a slight flirtation with the landowner's son Hamid, falls in love with Ibrahim, an overseer on the estate. Ibrahim feels unable to ask for her hand, however, because there is talk of her being married off to Hasan, a friend of his and the son of a richer peasant. After Zaynab's marriage to Hasan she is torn between her love and her loyalty to her husband. When Ibrahim is called up as a recruit to serve in the Sudan she goes into a decline and dies of tuberculosis.

The second plot centers on Hamid, who is sixteen when the novel opens; he is studying in Cairo and only returns to his family on the estate for summer holidays and festivals. He has developed an idealized image of his cousin 'Azizah, with whom he played as a child but whom he has not seen since she put on the veil. During his summer visit to his family he watches the peasant girls working and his eye is caught by Zaynab, but despite several secret meetings he is not seriously involved with her. During his next summer visit 'Azizah comes to stay, but he cannot see her alone, surrounded as she is by relatives; Zaynab meanwhile is taken up with Ibrahim. The following year Hamid and 'Azizah succeed in exchanging letters and even meet, only to find they are tongue-tied in each other's presence. Shortly after 'Azizah's return to her home she writes to tell Hamid her marriage has been arranged. Hamid seeks to renew his acquaintance with Zaynab, but she,

reminding him that she is married now, politely rebuffs him. Embittered and disappointed, he leaves for Cairo, having in vain sought counsel from a Sufi shaykh, but the knowledge that all his efforts to meet a girl whom he could love and marry will be frustrated in the present state of Egyptian society bring him to abandon his studies and disappear, leaving a letter to his parents in which he explains all.

These two plots unfold against the background of the Lower Egyptian countryside, loving and careful descriptions of which occur regularly throughout the book. But the author's attention to the book's setting is dictated less by his genuine interest in agricultural life than by his nostalgia for his native land (*Zaynab* was written during the years in which he was studying in Paris) and above all by the romantic tone which dominates the novel and which requires that the protagonists spend long hours communing with nature and reflecting on their emotional states and, in Hamid's case, on general metaphysical issues.

This romanticism is placed in the service of a central reforming trend in Egyptian society of the time, the campaign for women's emancipation and against arranged marriages, which was led by Qasim Amin, one of Haykal's masters. A subsidiary theme, the disapproval of popular religious practice, also reflects the reformers' concerns. A third theme, only intermittently pursued, is that of the harsh conditions of the poor peasants and the injustice they suffer; this borrowing from Rousseau is at variance with Haykal's own appreciation, as the son of a landowner, of the peasants's conditions, and it leads to inconsistency in the presentation of the character of Hamid.

On the whole, though, Hamid, the only extended character study, is coherently drawn: a boy looking for a first love, a philosophical dreamer, happy in the openness of the countryside but otherwise rather bored on the estate and missing his friends and books in Cairo. In the course of the novel he develops somewhat, becoming disillusioned with Egyptian society as a result of his disappointment in love, and reaching physical maturity, as is discreetly suggested through the change in the intensity of his attraction to Zaynab. But although he is the main character, and closer than the others to the author in his concerns and attitude to life, Haykal does not identify with him; thus, for instance, the technique of dramatizing a character's thoughts is used for Ibrahim and Zaynab as well as for Hamid.

It is easy to identify awkwardness in technique, such as the inconsistent portrayal of characters like 'Azizah or Hasan, the heavy-handed introduction of characters whom the author needs only for a few pages, the use of coincidences to help the plot along, and the author's intervention with generalizations. On the credit side, however, the plots are skillfully interwoven and there is a considerable degree of balance in the book, not only in respect of characters and incidents, but also, for instance, in the fact that while Hamid's plot is open-ended and his fate unknown, Zaynab's is rounded off with her death. And the borrowing of western themes and plots is to some extent balanced by a recourse to elements of the Arabic literary heritage.

There is considerable artistry in the way in which *Zaynab's* traditional Arabic plot with its closed ending is made to frame the western derived plot of Hamid, himself the character who has undergone the greatest degree of westernization, with its open ending. An Egyptian setting, characters who are recognizably Egyptian, competent narrative organization, issues of great contemporary relevance, some

dialogues in dialect: *Zaynab* pointed the way to what the Egyptian novel could become and set a standard which was not attained again for a long time.

4.0 Conclusion

Zaynab, a novel written by Mohammad Husayn Haykal presents the reader with a thoroughly romantic picture of the Egyptian countryside, which serves as the backdrop for the fervent advocacy of the need for women's education.

5.0 Summary

This unit presented a brief content analysis of the novel, *Zaynab*, in order to give students idea about how content of literary work of this nature is done. The whole idea behind this presentation of analysis is to show students how to apply the style of analysis here to other literary works of prosaic content.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

Do a short content analysis of the novel, *Zaynab* written by Muhammad Husayn Haykal.

7.0 References /Further Reading

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