



Role of Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad in Diwan Movement

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Abstract: Arabic literature has been influenced by the Western literature in the modern period particularly French and English literature. This Western influence created a number of Arab critics who became famous as critics in the entire Arab world. The history of the Arabic criticism has been changed after the introduction of the Arab literary figure with the Western literary schools of thought. The change in Arabic literature was big in thought and skill among the new Arab critics who brought about large changes in Arabic criticism who were influence by English school of thought in criticism these were Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad, Ibrahim Abd al-Qadir al-Mazini, Abdur Rahman Shukri and so on. The above mentioned personalities assembled in a literary movement called “Diwan Movement.”

Diwan Movement is a movement in Arabic literature by a group of three Egyptian trio-poets, Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad, Abdur Rahman Shukri and Ibrahim Adl al-Qadir al-Mazini, these poets challenged the masters of neo-classicism during the second decade of the 20th century. The key point their attack were contained in the book which gave them their name as a group *Al-Diwan: kitab fi al-Adab wa al-Naqd*” published in two volumes in Cairo in 1921, joint authorship of al-Aqqad and al-Mazini. The work of diwan poets illustrates the extent to which English literature had become one of the major reformative influences on Arab culture. One of the distinguished features of Diwan Movement was that their foreign culture was English where as even in the Arab countries controlled by Britain. Al-

Aqqad led the attack on Ahmad Shawqi, the figure head of the neo-classical movement by reshuffling the lines of Ahmad Shawqi's "Elegy on Mustafa Kamil." The three Diwan poets they developed Poem, Prose, Novel, Short Story and Drama in Modern Arabic Literature.

The impact of Diwan Movement in Modern Arabic literature by Diwan group, they were critics, poets, novelists, journalists, short story writers and prose writer of Diwan Movement. They criticized poetry through Diwan in modern Arabic literature. Although in their writings about poetry they expressed impatience with the restrictions imposed by the classical structure of poetic form, on the whole their voice were balanced and restrained, leaving the credence of certain significant areas of their poetry to the way to future development.

Keywords: Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad, Diwan Movement, Intellectual domain, literary criticism

Egyptian Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad (1889-1964) was a mostly self-educated writer, historian, philosopher, translator, journalist, intellectualist, poet and a literary critic, who was a modernizer of Arabic poetry and criticism in the twentieth century. He studied about religion, geography, history and many other subjects. He was known for his excellent English and French. He was famous for his actual patriotism toward the country of his birth; he used his writing to spread his democratic beliefs and was known as a leading innovator in twentieth century Arabic criticism and poetry. He wrote more than hundred books about philosophy, religion and poetry. He established a poetry school with Ibrahim Abdul Qadir al-Mazini and Abdur Rahman Shukri. It was known as al-Diwan. His most famous books are al-Abqariyat Allah and Sarah. Some of his books were translated into English, German, French, Russian, Urdu, and Persian. He was best known for his use of ornamental and complicated prose style. Al-Aqqad was honoured by the college of the Arabic language in al-Azhar when they gave his name to one of the halls in the college. Also, in the early 1980s, an Egyptian television series was produced about the life of al-Aqqad, which was titled al-Imlaq (The Giant). Aqqad was one of the most important figures who contributed enormous for shaping Arabic prose literature in a standard style as well as restructured the Arabic poetry in a distinct fashion and criticized the literature in a constructive way. He also wrote for socio-political reform and up gradation which brought one type of new ideas and views as well as profound changes in modern Arab thought, literary concept and intellectual domain as expressed in his different literature.

Aqqad positively holds the ideas of modernism which largely geared to the progress of Arab society. The basic foundation of modern ideal dreamed by him was largely grounded in rationalism, liberalism, nationalism and democratization of politics. His tendencies were more towards secular ideas such as individualism and liberalism, which, from his viewpoint, could bring to men intellectual and cultural liberty. Aqqad believed the rigid structure of religious culture was holding back what was essentially a logical and liquid religion. The practice of religion is essentially rooted in ontological premise of rational and logical truth and its teaching is lucid and clear for common understanding and comprehension. He fashioned essential framework for reform appealing for change and advocating a more modern conception of religion, making significant effort to enlighten classical tradition and ideas.

The Egyptian writer Aqqad enriched the Arab library with numerous books on different topics including history, philosophy, poetry, literature, political, biographies and autobiographies besides translated books from English language. The early 20th century was characterized by incessant attempts to integrate the different aspects of the Egyptian renaissance by shaping the national consciousness and thought a process which led to several literary and intellectual contentions with Aqqad playing therein greater role, giving his individuality and his rejection of all constraints.

Aqqad wrote in different aspects of literature, he composed some Diwans (collections of poems), the first entitled 'Yaqazat al-Sabah' (*Morning awakening*), 'Bits and Pieces' and 'Shazarat', he is considered as a pioneer innovator in Arabic poetry. In the twentieth century, new styles in poetry were introduced by two new schools: in the 1920s the Diwan school, led by Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad and in the 1930s, the Apollo school, the most prominent representative of which was Ahmad Zaki Abu Shadi. Between these two schools poetry survived the twentieth century in the Arab world as a vibrant and relevant cultural mode. The poetic style of Aqqad has a rational feeling which widely interprets feelings, he believed that the poet who cannot be identified through his poetry is not worthy of being known, he always emphasized the value of the poets uniqueness and independence. He had interest in stories but not as much as poetry, he wrote but one story called 'Sarah' (1938). It relates a personal experience in his life with the only woman he loved. His views of women were those of respect and appreciation, and were included in some books in which he demanded the full participation of women in building the society. Here another thing is notable that al-'Aqqad is one of the leading members of modern and new

literary form of Arabic novel. "The first Arabic novel of literary merit '*Zaynab*' was written in Paris between 1910 and 1911 by a young Egyptian lawyer, Mohammad Hussayn Haykal (1888-1956), and was published in Cairo in 1914. In 1926 Haykal's example was followed by other writers; Taha Husayn started his autobiographical novel as a series of articles which he published in 1927 as the first volume of *al-Ayam*, the second volume followed in 1939 and the third in 1972. Soon other writers like al Mazni '*Ibrahim el-Katib*' 1931, Tawfik al-Hakim '*Awdat al Rooh*' 1933, and 'Abbas al Äqqad '*Sarah*' 1938. They tried their hands at this "new" literary form. . It is proven to the critics that the style of 'Äqqad is a top-level and scientific one, and some consider the issues raised thereby as symbolizing the Egyptian conscience - his emotions, morals and literary bravery. He touched all things with his poetry. According to al-Äqqad, poetic experience is not limited to feeling or imagination about the past, but also extends to the present and not only to a few topics like nature and love but to all scenes and perspectives. Äqqad was especially concerned about literary studies, and if we only mention his book on '*Ibnur-Roumy*' the Arab poet in which he exposed the innermost of the poet, his life and his proficiency, one can only perceive in these studies genuine opinion, compact evaluation and skillful analysis. Äqqad believed in the liberty of criticism and subsequently the liberty of mind as towards the assessment of literature, hence the uniqueness of 'Äqqad's literary criticism through which he influenced fine arts; he even had impact on the literary trends which were to crystallize and appear later on. The spirited, frank and knowledgeable critiques of Äqqad invited for the breaking out of literary disputes of great interest to his readers. Let us proceed now with the 'Äqqadian School of writing. "The movement which later came to be called the diwan movement was conceived about this time with the close collaboration of Shukri and al- Mazini. This style reflects a most projecting eye of this literature and provides the best demonstration of interconnection between ideas and the thoughts of the writer. Al-'Äqqad does not beat to present only the results of his reflections. For him, style is basic to the idea. The mastermind and brain of the art of writing is exhibited only if one is in entire control of the manner of writing. One cannot deal with thoughts without taking into interpretation the style nor deal with style to the harm of the desired expression of thoughts. They must go organized as a pair and only in this style can the writer's personality and scholarly capacity be acknowledged and highlighted. After an in-depth study of Äqqad's works of rhyme and prose, it can be said; he hardly shies away from the states of the soul. "In prosody al-'Äqqad's experiments are restricted to the length of the metre which he varies according to the subject

matter. For instance he uses short metres for commonplace themes. He never put his feelings in the forefront of his concerns nor highlights the emotions he felt in his writings. His works bore fruit of thoughts full of substance. He perceived life's images in the depths of a ripe reflection. The fertility of his creative expertise won over many who had thought literature was limited to the emotional side.

It is not difficult to point out the gains of the 'Aqqadian manner in all the works of the author. His writings are clear and explicit, not with respect to vocabulary and stylistic processes, but in the statement of his ideas and the interconnection with their conception. We have no worry to journey from the start of his books to their very end. We find sensation in the overall unity which pleasures us as we spend time reading. We observe just below the apparent all that this great writer has marked on quiet pages that arise to speak to us with expression more animated than that of enlightened thinkers.

Al-Aqqad's literary works are included in essay, poem, novel, and critiques of classical and modern Arabic. Specialty his essays show the influence of 19th-century English essayists, mainly Thomas Carlyle. He gave a boundless devotion for literature, Al-Aqqad remained a bachelor and devoted his life to literature. His best works appeared during the thirties and forties. He also devoted much thought to religion and politics, and his works include studies of the philosophy of the Qu'ran, of political and social philosophy, and biographies of various Muslim leaders. Aqqad wrote more than hundred books about philosophy, religion and poetry. He founded a poetry school with Ibrahim al-Mazny and Abdur Rahman Shukri called ad-Diwan. Some of his books were translated into English, German, French, Russian, Urdu, and Persian. He was best known for his use of ornamental and dense prose style. Al-Aqqad wrote several poetical collections starting from 1916, and indulged into numerous scholarly confrontations against various well known Egyptian intellectuals protecting his principles about poetry and literature. His works are frequent, among them: Allah (1947), Al-'Abqariyyat, The Genius of Muhammad , The genius of Abu-Bakr, The genius of Omar , The Genius of Othman ,The genius of Ali ,The genius of Khaled, The genius of Christ, The genius of righteous, Hours among Books, The Noon Glow (poetry volume),Ghosts of the Afternoon (poetry volume), Sorrows of the Night (poetry volume), The Strong Hand in Egypt, The Absolute Rule, Sarah (1938), AAsiru Maghrib (Cyclones of a Sunset), The caller of the heaven Belal, The daughter of the righteous, Al-Hussein the father of the martyrs, Amr Ibn al-'Ass, Mu'awiya Ibn Abi Sufian, Fatima al-Zahra, al-Fatimiyyun, The truths of

Islam and the falsity of its contenders, The Qu'ranic philosophy, Thought is an Islamic duty, The emanation of the light, Democracy in Islam. Diwan an-Naqdus-'Shir in 1921 Aqqad wrote it with al-Mazini in two parts. It is considered fundamental in the poets' approach to poetry and criticism. Human being in the holy Qu'ran, Islam in the twentieth century, What is said about Islam, Me Ana in Arabic, The opium of the peoples, This tree, The funny Guha, The great soul of al Mahatma Gandhi, The life of a pen, The beginnings of the Mohammedan mission, No for communism and colonialism, Ibn Rumi: his life and poetry, Zionism and the issue of Palestine, A compound of the living (1916), The morning awakening (1916), The Diary Resume (1921), Sa'ad Zaghloul (1936), The Arab Impact on European Civilization (1942), Al-Faraby (1944), Francis Beckon (1945), Poetic Language (1958), Eblees or the Devil (1958), Introduction to Shakespeare (1958), Benjamin Franklin (1959), The Diaries (1963) etc. Additional legendary writings are Wahy al-Arba'in (1933), Hadiyyat al-karawan (1933) and 'Abir Sabil (1937).

Conclusion:

From the above discussion about Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad and his contribution, I can reach at a conclusion that al-aqqad was outstanding Egyptian poet, translator, historian, journalist, philosopher and an innovative critic of the twentieth century in Arabic literature. His criticism achieved a good result and his objectivity in literary criticism rightly deplores that the theory of badness in poetry has never received the study which it deserves, partly on account of its difficulty. His early critical articles were little known were included in the volume of essays "*al-Fusul*" (1992). He was valued as a critic of the generation, but his ornate style was too much for even those of his contemporaries who themselves strove to receive the new Arabic literary criticism. Al-Aqqad tried to win the co-operation of all Egyptian poets and to start a movement of objective criticism based upon western methods, especially on English criteria of literary criticism. However in his criticism he declared himself to be the founder of a new poetic school.

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