



A STUDY OF FIRST LITERARY ARABIC SHORT STORY 'THE TRAIN'

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Literary activities develop in the 19th century on new lines. Among those three new forms of literature were introduced in Arabic literature during the last decade of nineteenth century. The first literary short story "the train" had been written in Arabic in 1917 by Muhammad Tymoora, a well-known Arabic writer and literary person. This fiction has been written to draw the real picture of the Egyptian society and the problems which the peasants face due to the misconduct and misuse of the power by the elite class. The concept and mindset of the people was that only elite class have exclusive right to get good and quality education. They are the only people who can live civilized life and maintain marvelous life style. While observing the socio-political conditions of Egypt, the writer has raised the issue of peasants and the problems which they face in the society but simultaneously, He has started the fiction in a dialogue form to discuss the issue with the civilized and well qualified people in order to reach any conclusion to solve the issue but he only concluded it with the suggestions of both the categories of the society with out any conclusion. Hence it is up to the readers to find out the solution of the problem after going through this fiction. I tried my level best to present the conclusion of the fiction so that the people of the day may get some clues from the same to spend a peaceful life without any discrimination because it is very famous quote and slogan of the day that we should make unity in the diversity. (1¹)

The writer initiated fiction by drawing attention towards the natural scenery of early dawn and the fresh air by which people get rid of from their sufferings and problems. He says that even though we have such a beautiful and fresh air and natural beauty but I am still in tense and fail to understand

how to overcome the problems which I face and how it is possible to get rid from it.

To get rid of from the tiresome conditions so as to get some relief, he tried to read the fiction of French writer Maupassant but couldn't achieved the respite due the sadness and mental disturbance. So he left the book and sat on the chair to think over it to overcome the problems. When he failed to overcome the sadness, he left his home and travelled some where else where he may get some relief. While travelling he reached railway station and started his journey without knowing the destination. He boarded the compartment of the train to reach his village to get some relief. He sat near the window and no one was in his buogie when he took his seat. After some time, Newspaper seller passed by him while he was saying loudly: Newspaper.... AND ... with their Arabic name. He purchased one newspaper and started reading till an aged person having hand kerchief in his one hand. He joined him and soon another person a young boy joined them an old student to him. The student got admission in Cairo and was going to his home to spend his holidays in the village. He opened his bag and started to read a story book. They were about to leave when fourth one joined them. They all were silent and every one of them was busy in their work. The writer was busy in reading newspaper, the student was reading a story book and old man was busy in reciting the holy words and sentences. The train was about to depart from station, fifth person joined them and they started their journey. He was Turkish in complexion and origin. Now train started to run and they were now five persons in one compartment. When they reached shibra station, this Turkish person asked him whether there is any latest and interested news. He replied: No sir there is not any interested news except about a literacy campaign and fight against illiteracy. He without any permission snatched his newspaper and started to search for some excited news at the Shibra railway station. Soon one more person

¹ تاريخ الادب العربي لأحمد حسن الزيات، دار الثقافة، بيروت 1
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boarded and joined with them, having some check fox on his face. The Turkish started to read the newspaper and he wrapped it and then he throw it on the earth and said angrily they want to spread the education and to fight with illiteracy. Their aim is to equal them with elite class and are ignorant about the facts. They committed a great sin by this act will face consequences.

Then they started discussion about the issue which is as under:

He said: what sin is it?

The Turkish replied: you are still young and you don't know the real treatment of peasants or farmers to get the real goal.

He again asked: which type of treatment u mean? Is there any better way than education.

Turkish replied angrily and furiously: whip or lash and government needs no finance for the same as for as education is concerned that needs lot of money and financial support. And farmers only need lashes being habitual of it since their birth and will get till their death. Then the village sarpanch or chowkidar replied to him: you are right brother because I live there and I am well experienced.

Then Turkish gazed at him and said: do you live in that village?

He replied: I am by birth from that village dear brother.

The student was silent and was ashamed to indulge in discussion with the elders. So, asked him: dear sir we are human and it is our duty to respect all the humans and value them equally without any discrimination.

Then village sarpanch again said, I am well experienced and I agree what Turkish person has said because farmer is not ready to accept any language except the language of stick.

Then Turkish said with ridicule: no body can educate better than this person as he is well experienced.

The student who couldn't control his emotions said to him: respected sarpanch: you are absolutely right because you have made them habitual of the same. If you would have made good relations with them then in response you may get the same but you always took harsh steps to civilize them and in return you got the same fruits.

The sarpanch replied: this is the result of education.

At last, sarpanch requested to teacher that you are well educated among us and well experienced, so helps us by your opinion about the issue:

The teacher replied: don't educate the lower cast people of the society.

The student responded: it is sin dear teacher to have such thoughts and feelings. There is another way which is more valuable and respectable and civilized way than to create discriminations and

differences between rich and poor. A good character and civilized behavior is more important than to have a money.

Then teacher replied to him with abhorrence: you are getting the education which is fruitless and you have no guts and don't know how to talk to elders. Neither have you known the values of the elders because of the education which is being taught nowadays nor do have moral value to behave as a human being.

The above conversation helps to understand the value of life and would like to conclude it in ended discussion. The writer has ended this story with out any conclusion so that readers themselves decide the conclusion as issue being raised in the fiction is peasantry rights and their education and to raise the voice against those who try to make confusion in society by different slogans with out having any proper knowledge on the issue so the focus is to fight against those who try to snatch the rights of farmers and to those who make decisions without any proper knowledge. This fiction helps to understand the value of life what so ever, so that people can get their rights in societies without any discrimination, on the basis of class, tribe, casts or religions and races.⁽²⁾

² في القطر لمحمد تيمور مؤسسة هندواي للتعليم والثقافة 2012