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### THE REPRESENTATION OF THE JUDICIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THE LAW AND POWER IN TAWFIQ AL-HAKIM'S THE SULTAN DILEMMA

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#### ABSTRACT

Tawfiq Al-Hakim is one of the most prominent Egyptian luminary and a visionary writer who has left his creative mark in modern Arab literature particularly in the field of theater as he plays the most prominent role as the sole founder of this field in which his influence is continued to this day. In his prolific literary works he deals with many themes that reflect the political and social reality of Egypt and show special interest in developing patriotism supporting the principles of justice, equality, freedom and consolidating democracy. One of Al-Hakim literary innovation (which strengthens his literary standing) is embodied in his inspiration for the themes of his many plays from the heritage of Egypt in its different eras. Thus, his play Al Sultan Al-Hair (*The Sultan's Dilemma*) is inspired by the popular history of the fifteenth century during the Mamluk Sultans era. The protagonist of the play, the Sultan, is put in a very critical situation that requires him to solve the biggest crises that encounters his reign by choosing one of the two suggestions to overcome it. The problem lies in the burden entailed by his choice and that he must bear on his own. He has to choose between applying the law which means being sold in a public auction (the Chief Cadi's suggestion) or relying on power and terrorizing the people (the Vizier's suggestion). The paper sheds light on the conflict between the law and power, the justifications provided by each party, the rational for the Sultan's preference for one of them and the consequences of his performance.

## INTRODUCTION

Tawfiq Ismail Al-Hakim (1898-1987) was born in Alexandria, Egypt to a wealthy Egyptian father who worked as a judge and Turkish mother from the aristocratic class. He completed his high school studies in Cairo, which he left for Paris where he got his law degree preparing for his doctorate at the Sorbonne. His presence in Paris represents a bench mark in his life as his attention shifted to Paris' theatres, so he left his studies back to Egypt full of ideas to revolutionize the Egyptian theatre.

Tawfiq Al-Hakim is regarded as a giant and most influential literary figure in Egypt and the Modern Arabic literature. He is also considered as the father and the founder of contemporary Arabic theatre due to his profound contributions to its rising and development. He is primarily known as a prolific playwright who writes over seventy full-length plays of exceptional variety, besides being "practiced all the other genres of writing" (Davies, 2008, p.3). In addition, the publication and the performance of his significant play *Ahl Al-Kahf* (The Sleepers of the Cave 1933) cements his reputation as he regarded the major pioneer of Intellectual Theater. It represents turning point in his artistic development and a significant event in Arab dramatic genre as whole (Alen, 2010, p.106). In fact the Intellectual Theater is one of his theatrical arts that contain the Biographical Theater and the Object Theater.

Tawfiq Al-Hakim has established his prestigious literary position, and his uniqueness and creativity as he is the first playwright to derive the themes of his plays from the Egyptian and Islamic heritage throughout his various Pharaonic, Roman, Coptic and Islamic era (Allen, 2010, p.100). In addition to that he writes several novels but his autobiographical *Yawmiyat Naib Fi Al-Aryaf* (1937) is the most successful one in which he dares to write the dialogue passages in colloquial Egyptian making it acceptable part of literature (Goldschmid, 2000, p.67). He also publishes a volume consisting of his numerous short stories in English translation. Tawfiq Al-Hakim's distinguished literary works, literary creation and his unique authentic contributions help raise and elevate the advancement of Egyptian Arab Theater. His prolific literary productions have been awarded with many prestigious awards. He is awarded an honorary doctorate in 1975 by The Egyptian Academy of Fine Arts.

## THE DISCUSSION

"This man puts us in a dilemma, he makes us choose between two alternatives both of them painful"

(*The Sultan Dilemma*, 1.34)

Tawfiq Al-Hakim's *The Sultan Dilemma* takes us back to the late Medieval Egypt through its charming oriental atmosphere of Mamluk Sultans Reign. Al-Hakim weighs up the ethical commitment of the just Sultan Mamluk when he is held up in an ordeal that could be settled faster by the use of force than by reference to the law. The play opens at a crucial situation where a convicted man is about to be executed. The interesting dialogue between the two characters shows the convict's anxious and disastrous situation. His increasing anxiety is expressed in a barrage of successive questions waiting the time of his execution. The restless convict is tired of the burden of waiting and he

wants to know the exact time of his executing. The anxious convict continued to wonder, because he has nothing to calm his heart and relieve his tension to face his death at dawn. So he asks the sleepy Executioner whether dawn is near or far. The Executioner is fed up with his questions explains clearly: "It's the Muezzin who knows. When he goes up to the minaret of this mosque and gives the call to the dawn prayer, I'll raise my sword and swipe of your head-those are the orders. Happy now?" (1.6) The convict shocks us when he cries bitterly: "without a trial? I haven't yet been put on trial, I haven't yet appeared before a judge" (1.6). It's such a suspicious situation! A citizen is deprived of his legitimate right and treated unfairly to the extent that he is sentenced to death even before he is put on trial! This makes us suspect that there is something suspicious, dangerous and possibly related to the country's security. Our suspicions are escalated when the convict asks the Executioner about the crime for which he is punished with death. The Executioner forbids him even from uttering a single word threatening him with death, yet he is "one of the very richest of merchants and slave-traders" (1.7). While waiting for the dawn to break the Executioner invites him to drink at the expense of the convict saying to him: "A Wine Merchant a stone's throw away from your tavern is open all night, because he has costumers who visit that whore who lives in the house opposite." (1.7) The Executioner's behavior deepens the convict's sense of loneliness, helplessness and despair. In fact, he ignores completely the convict's tragic situation, the injustice and cruelty he suffers while awaiting for his death.

The loud noise of the drunken Executioner singing and shouting in the middle of the night disturbs the beautiful lady who has headache and wants to sleep quietly. So, her maid opens the window and asks him to stop disturbing. The beautiful lady is shocked by the Executioner's audacity, so she angrily asks her maid to teach him a lesson in manner and respect. After a violent quarrel with the Executioner he retracts his words and apologizes to the beautiful lady. Then the convict salutes the beautiful lady who is one of his old acquaintances, and she begins to wonder sadly about his situation and what is his crime. She is shocked that the convict is forbidden even from uttering a single word about his crime and is threatened to stop talking. Moreover, the convict is originally prohibited even from standing in the court before a just judge and getting a fair trial to defend himself. For the second time the convict is prevented from speaking which confirms our doubts about the significance of his crime and it is likely that it is related to the country's security. Such a catastrophic situation, the dawn is about to break and the executioner refuses to wait for the result of the convict's complaint. He is only waiting for the arrival of the Muezzin according to the strict orders given to him. When the Executioner is asked by the lady and the convict whether his orders are issued by the Sultan he answered: " Roughly. ...The Vizier- the orders of the Vizier are the orders of the Sultan." (1.19)

The Vizier (the Minister) represents the power in the Sultanate and he must be intelligent, courageous and wise person in order to be able to control the state's conditions and organizes its affairs. However this doesn't give him the right to intimidate his citizens and confiscate their right to obtain a fair trial to defend themselves. The lady sympathizes with the convict (being one of her respected acquaintances) and decides to make a clever trick to help him by

delaying his execution as much as possible and getting extra time while waiting for the outcome of his complaint. When the Muezzin arrives the lady does her best to convince him (since he is one of her best friends in the quarter) that he needs a warm drink because his vocal cords are affected by the cold of the night. Ultimately the lady manages to persuade him that a warm cup of coffee restores his voice. The Muezzin justifies his agreement to accept the lady's invitation saying: "There are only two men there [at the mosque]. One of them is a stranger to this city and has taken up his abode in the mosque, whilst the other is a bigger who has sought shelter in it from the night cold" (1.20). The lady takes a great risk in helping the Condemned Man because she feels that her humanitarian duty pushes her to help him. Besides, she feels the injustice he has suffered, the lack of his resourcefulness and his inability to defend himself from injustice.

Meanwhile, a huge crowd of people appear showing the presence of the Vizier's retinue. "The Vizier appears surrounded by his guards." (1.21) He is surprised when he sees the Condemned Man who has not yet been executed. The Condemned Man is astonished to see the Vizier and begs him to help him because he sends a complaint to the Sultan, but the Vizier interrupts him saying:

"Yes, your complaint is known to his Majesty the Sultan and he ordered that you be turned over to the Chief Cadi [Chief Judge]. His Majesty the Sultan will himself attend your trial. This is his noble wish and his irrefutable command." (1.22)

Then he orders the guards to "clear the square of people and let everyone go home. This trial must take place in complete secrecy" (1.23). The Executioner tries to explain the matter to the Vizier but he is dismissed with a gesture by the Vizier.

At the appearance of the Sultan with his retinue in addition to the Chief Cadi, the Condemned Man begs him for justice crying: "I haven't been tried! I haven't been tried" (1.23). It is really a tragedy when a citizen is deprived of his right and demands it as if he is demanding a privilege and not one of his rights. How can a citizen be intimidated to the extent that he is sentenced to death and is deprived of even a fair trial and is deprived in the first place of his defense. Thus, the Vizier has no right to forbid the Condemned Man of his right to have a fair trial to defend himself. The Sultan assures the Condemned Man that: "You shall be given a fair trial in accordance with your wish, and the Chief Cadi shall be in charge of your trial in our presence" (1.23). Then the Sultan orders the Chief Cadi to start the trial, who is a fair and compassionate person, so he treats the Condemned Man with humanity and tries to win his confidence in the law and works to reassure him that justice will take its course. Therefore, he is keen to order the guards to remove the chains from the Condemned Man first and then start asking him about his crime.

The Condemned Man answers that "I did nothing at all except utter an innocent word in which there is neither damage nor harm" (1.23). But the Vizier believes that the Condemned Man's word means completely the opposite therefore he tries to terrify the Condemned Man commenting on his word: "It's a terrible and sinful word." (1.23) The Chief Cadi repeats his question about the Condemned Man's crime asking: "what is this word" (1.24) But the Condemned Man hesitates to answer because he is afraid of the Vizier.

Thus the Vizier answers instead of him telling the Chief Cadi: "He [the Condemned Man] said that His Majesty, the great noble Sultan, is a mere slave. ...And he claimed that he was the slave trader who undertook the sale of our Sultan in his youth to the former Sultan." (1.24) The Sultan wants more information so he asks the Condemned Man saying: "When was that?" (1.24) Then the Condemned Man answers him saying:

"Twenty –five years ago, your Majesty. You were a small boy of six lost and abandoned in a Circassian village raided by the Magols. You were extremely intelligent and wise for one of your tender years. I rejoiced in you and carried you off to the Sultan of this country. As the price for you he made me a present of one thousand diners." (1.24)

Accordingly the Sultan replies: "I see no great harm in his saying or bruited abroad the fact that I was a slave." (1.24) Furthermore

"the entire family comes from slaves since times immemorial. The Mamluk Sultans were taken from earliest childhood to the palace, there to be given a strict and hardy upbringing; and later they become rulers, army, leaders, and sultans of countries. I am merely one of those, in no way different from them." (1.24)

The Sultan explains clearly the history and the traditions of his family's Sultans and he confirms that since he is member of this family so, he is not different from any one of them. He recalls his childhood explaining that:

"All I remember is my childhood at the palace under the protection of the late Sultan. He used to treat me as though I were his real son, for he himself had no children. He brought me up and instructed me so that I might take over the rule. I knew for absolute certainty that he was not my father." (1.25)

Once again the Sultan affirms that the Condemned Man doesn't hurt the Sultan neither by a word nor deed and there is no need to incriminate him. So he asks whether there is a real crime for which the Condemned Man is punished. The Vizier tries to justify his unfair and harsh action against the Condemned Man, and why he is sentenced with death without getting a fair trial and to clarify his real crime to the Sultan. He explains to the Sultan saying:

"To say that you had been a slave is truly not something shameful, no reason for guilt- all the Mamluk Sultans have been slaves. It's not there that the crime lies. However, a Mamluk Sultan is generally manumitted before ascending the throne." (1.25)

The Vizier hesitates to clarify the problem to the Sultan because he is embarrassed. So he explains it gradually to avoid the Sultan's anger. The Vizier continues addressing the Sultan saying: "So, Your Majesty, this man claims that you have not yet been manumitted, that you still a slave and that a person bearing such a stigma is not entitled to rule over a free people." (1.25) The Sultan mocks of the Vizier's words because the Sultan is known to his people for his courage, being the conqueror of the Mogols, and he who has devoted himself to serving the country and ensuring the safety of the people until it becomes impregnable and at the height of its greatness should not be rewarded with ingratitude that all his sacrifices and deeds are ignored to the extent that it is said about him that he is not manumitted. Consequently he orders the Chief Cadi

"to let the town-criers announce an official derail in the city and publish to the people the text of the document registering my manumission, which is doubtless kept in your strong rooms, isn't that so?" (1.26)

In order not to increase the Sultan's anger the Chief Cadi suggests that the trial should be postponed until they are alone and they can speak privately. Although the Vizier agrees to the Chief Cadi's suggestion to postpone the trial, the Sultan prefers the trial to be continued. Accordingly, the Vizier dismisses every one with gesture, so that only the Sultan, the Chief Cadi and the Vizier himself remain on the stage. In spite of the fact that he is very embarrassed yet, the Chief Cadi tries to reduce the shock when he informs the Sultan about the disastrous news. So, he kindly addresses the Sultan saying: "Yes, you're Majesty. You have with your perspicacity realized . . . in actual fact there is no document of your manumission in my strong room" (1:27). The Sultan is astonished upon hearing the shocking news and that there is no document proves that he is manumitted. Thus, he turns to the Vizier who is his right arm man and who knows everything that happens in the sultanate. The Vizier sadly confirms the veracity of the Chief Cadi's words explaining that the late Sultan died of a sudden heart attack before manumitting him (the current Sultan). The Vizier apologizes to the Sultan explaining that the sudden death of the late Sultan ended this matter. The Sultan become very angry feeling that the Vizier and the Chief Cadi have let him down and that they are negligents in the performance of their duties. Otherwise they would take appropriate measures to respond to such statements insulting to the sultan's reputation. The angry Sultan feels that such words not only offended him but harm his glorious history which is full of achievements and military victories.

The Sultan blames the Vizier for his negligence accusing the Vizier that he wants to cover up his mistake by handing over the Condemned Man to the Executioner. He addresses the Vizier saying you want to "bury your fault by burying the [Condemned] man himself?" (1.28) The Vizier believes that power is everything and it represents the perfect solution to any problem, so he insists on using power to achieve his goals whatever the sacrifices. He tends to use power and he is ready to do anything even if it is immoral to accomplish his goal. Accordingly to solve the problem of the Sultan the Vizier suggests that "If this man's head [The Condemned Man] were cut off and hung up in the square before the people, no tongue would thenceforth dare to utter." (1.28) Bragging that "If the sword is not able to cut off tongue, then what can?" (1.28) But the Chief Cadi has a completely opposite opinion and he only believes in the law because it is the only way to solve the complicated problems and preserve the right of individuals. The power terrifies people but the law solves their problems and preserves their rights. Thus, he states, "the sword certainly does away with heads and tongues; it does not, however, do away with difficulties and problems." (1.28) He continues explaining: "I mean that the problem will still nevertheless remain, namely that the Sultan is ruling without having been manumitted, and that a salve is at the head of free people" (1.28). But The Vizier adheres to his principle of power assuring that he will use the power against everyone who opposes him justifying that because power achieves anything one wants. He gives a clear example of obtaining the throne by power referring to what the Sultan Al Muizz li-Din Allah Al -Fatimi did saying:

"It is not necessary for the person ruling to be carrying around documents and proofs. We have the strongest and most striking example of this in the Fatimid dynasty. Every one of us remembers what AlMu'izz li-Din Allah –AlFatimi did. One day he come along claiming he was descended from the Prophet (the prayers of God be upon him), and when people did not believe him, he went at them with drawn sword and opened up his coffers with gold saying 'These are my forebears, these my ancestors.' The people kept silent and he reigned and his children reigned after him quietly and peaceably for centuries long." (1.29)

The Sultan approves the Vizier's words which encourage him to present a solution for this problem by announcing to the public that his:

"Majesty the Sultan has been legally manumitted, that he was manumitted by the late Sultan before his death, and that the documents and proofs are recorded and kept with the chief Cadi - and death to anyone who dare deny it!" (1.29)

In spite of the Chief Cadi's embarrassment because of the presence of the Sultan, the Chief Cadi gathers his strength objecting to the Vizier's plan refusing to have a role in his plan. The Chief Cadi believes that he is the representative of the law and that his conscience, principles and moral integrity prevent him from participating in any conspiracy against the law which he represents. The cunning Vizier tries to calm the Chief Cadi down by being kind to him in order to gain his support so that he will not oppose his (the Vizier's) plan saying:

"Take it easy, Chief Cadi! We are not now discussing the view of the law but are looking for a way by which to be free of this law, and the way to be free of it is to assume that manumission has in fact taken place. So long as the matter is a secret between us three, with no one but ourselves knowing the truth, it will be easy to induce the people to believe ...[the lie]" (1.30)

Once again the Chief Cadi insists on his opinion opposing the Vizier's opinion who wants to manipulate people's mind and push them to believe the lie that the Sultan is manumitted. Refusing to join hands with them, the Chief Cadi explains:

"A solution through lying ... In relation to me it's different, for I cannot fool myself and I cannot free myself from the law, being as I am the person who represent it; I cannot break an oath by which I took upon myself to be the trusted servant of the civil and religious law." (1.30)

The conflict between the Chief Cadi on the one hand and the Vizier and the Sultan on the other hand begins to deepen. In fact, in every step the Vizier proves his loyalty, support and keenness for the interest of the Sultan, so that finding a way out for the Sultan's problem with the least losses has become the Vizier's first priority. While the Chief Cadi insistence on his opinion of adhering to the law increases the Sultan's doubt about the Chief Cadi's loyalty to him. Accordingly, the Sultan orders the Chief Cadi not to interfere in what the Sultan and the Vizier are doing and let them do what they can to overcome this complicated problem. The Sultan justify his order that he wants to avoid him (Chief Cadi) the violation of his oath and to satisfy his conscious. But the Chief Cadi abides by the law again and fails once again to confirm his loyalty to the Sultan. He addresses the Sultan: "In the eyes of the law you are lacking the authority to make a contract, I find myself obliged to order that all your

actions are null and avoid." (1.30) The Sultan's anger becomes so intense that he accuses the Chief Cadi of insanity because he tells him that he is obliged to revoke the Sultan's orders since he has lost the authority to carry out his work as a Sultan. The Chief Cadi adherence to the law, duty and to his oath to uphold the law does not mean that he isn't loyal to the Sultan, but it means that he wants to help the Sultan as much as he can, yet within the obligation that the Sultan himself has entrusted to him which is to preserve the law and to act upon it. The fact that the Chief Cadi is the trusted adviser of the Sultan places an additional responsibility on him not only from the point of view of the law, but also to maintain the position of the Sultan on the right path that does not cause any legal obstacle to the rule of the Sultan. The Chief Cadi tries to regain the Sultan's confidence in him explaining to the Sultan that he must do his work in the best way in order to serve the Sultan better and that his job's responsibilities determine his actions toward the Sultan. Accordingly, the Chief Cadi offers a solution to get out of this impasse clarifying to the Sultan that he only wants to implement the law and that he will not relinquish his work's responsibilities unless he is deposited outside the country or his head is cut off by the order of the Sultan. The Sultan once again suspects that the Chief Cadi is loyal to him and that he tries to guide the Sultan to what is good from him and for his Sultanate's stability, because the Sultan wants a quick solution without any losses yet there is nothing in the world without price.

The Vizier tries to ease the tense atmosphere explaining to the Sultan that the Chief Cadi "knows that we are in his grasp in that he will divulge everything to the people if the least amount of coercion is used on him" (1.31). So they cannot do anything unless it is legal otherwise the Chief Cadi will not approve it. The Sultan is convinced that there is no point in arguing with the Chief Cadi and that he must reach an understanding with him and hasten to solve his difficult problem asking the Chief Cadi for his legal advice to solve the problem. Thus the Chief Cadi has no escape from informing the Sultan of the only legal and shocking solution to the problem. He addresses the Sultan saying:

"Owing to the fact that in the eyes of the law you are a chattel owned by the late Sultan, you have to become part of his inheritance, and as he died without leaving a heir, his estate reverts to the Exchequer. You are thus one of the chattels owned by the Exchequer an unproductive chattel yielding no profit or return. I, in my additional capacity as Treasurer of the Exchequer, say: it is custom in such cases to get rid of unprofitable chattel by putting them up for sale at auction, so that the good interest of the Exchequer be not harmed and so that it may utilized the proceeds of the sale in bringing benefit to the people generally and in particular the poor." (1.31)

The conflict between the law-sticking Chief Cadi on the one hand and the Sultan and the Vizier who tend to use power on the other hand reaches its climax with the Chief Cadi telling them about the only legal solution that is approved by him. The Sultan is furious at the amount of insults that is contained in the alleged dissolution of the Chief Cadi, and also the fact that his alleged solution is mere bizarre contains a lot of undue exaggeration. Consequently the Sultan is engaged in a violent argument with the Chief Cadi rebuking him that the law that he represents and protects do not give the Sultan a solution in the biggest crises he witnesses during his rule and



threatens him with imprisonment and death. The cunning Vizier sees the Sultan's willingness to make the sacrifice required in order to preserve his throne and to protect the Sultanate. Therefore he intervenes asking the Chief Cadi to give a legal detailed solution to the problem that satisfies the two conflicting sides.

The Chief Cadi gathers his strength, despite the Sultan's threat to kill him, insisting that the justice to be fulfilled and that he has nothing but the legal solution to give it to the Sultan. The Chief Cadi insists on his refusal to give them something other than his legal solution saying that:

"We should put up His Majesty the Sultan for sale by public auction and the person to whom he is knocked down there after to manumits him. In this manner the Exchequer is not harmed or defrauded in respect of its property and the Sultan gains his manumission and releases throw law." (1.34)

Once again the courageous Chief Cadi proves that he is a man of principles and he holds his ground despite the aggravation of the situation and despite the difficulty of the scene. He stands in the presence of the angry Sultan to offer again and again, the only solution he has that satisfies his conscience and principles, opposing the Sultan's wish who is waiting for his cooperation to present a solution commensurate with the Sultan's position regardless of justice. The situation of the law-abiding Chief Cadi exacerbate the conflict with the Vizier who wants to use the power to solve the problem immediately because it (the power) achieves his goal quickly, gets rid of his opponents and guarantees the satisfaction of the Sultan. In fact, the toughness of the Chief Cadi's attitude towards the Sultan and his insistence on relying on law to solve the Sultan's problem urges the Vizier to rebuke him considering the Chief Cadi's solution by selling the Sultan by the public auction as a mere madness. Moreover, the Sultan himself is shocked by the Chief Cadi's insistence that selling the Sultan by auction is the only legitimate solution to resolve the problem. The Sultan considers the -Chief Cadi's insistence on his legal solution as a deliberate abuse of him which urges him to draw his sword to chop off the Chief Cadi's head. The Vizier intervenes asking the Sultan to calm down, to be patient and reflects on his action turning a blind eye to killing the just Chief Cadi because if he kills him then the Chief Cadi will become a martyr of principles and he will turn into an icon of justice. Thus, the Sultan will be the only loser, being the unjust Sultan who breaks the civil and the religious laws. The Sultan is very displeased with the Chief Cadi's stern attitude towards him, and that the Chief Cadi puts him in a bewildering position in which he cannot determine his choice, because any one of the two choices will cost him a lot, saying:

"Then what's to be done? This man puts us in dilemma; he makes us choose between two alternatives, both of them painful: the law which shows me up as weak and makes a laughing stock of me, or the sword which brands me with brutality and makes me loathed." (1.34)

The Sultan meditates his bewildered and despaired situation to solve the most difficult problem he faces during his reign. He is obliged to choose between two very difficult matters and has to suffer the heavy burden of his choice. On the one hand, the Chief Cadi considers restoring to the law as the only best and safest solution to resolve the problem because it preserves the Sultan's right to the throne, strengthens the security of his sultanate and eliminates any claim or

disputes that interferes with the Sultan's right to the throne. But the Sultan has to pay the highest price that required getting all these things because he (the courageous and majestic Sultan) must endure the humiliation of selling him in a public auction. Yet the Sultan is "a leader of armies and conquered the Mongols ..., the right-hand man of the late Sultan, whom he arranged to rule after him." (1.26) In addition to that restoring to the law solves the problem of the Sultan permanently and forever that no one will dare to object to any of the rights of the Sultan or to override them because the right of the Sultan will be preserved by law.

On the other hand, the Vizier urges the Sultan to use the power to end the problem by executing the Condemned Man and hanging his head in the square to be an example to the people and to anyone who is tempted by himself to object the Sultan's right to the throne and intimidate the people and prevent them from speaking about the subject of the Sultan being an uncommitted. But, the Sultan must pay a high price that is required to obtain these matters by bearing to be described that he is a brutal, oppressive and loathed Sultan. Furthermore the adherence to the force doesn't solve the problems permanently because the people will be silent and terrorized for a while then gossip and problems will begin to appear and cannot be suppressed at that time.

The Vizier tries to smooth out the atmosphere with the hard Chief Cadi asking him to be understanding of the Sultan's critical situation and taking into account how much embarrassment the Sultan suffers. The Vizier intervenes asking the Chief Cadi to soften his strict attitude and accept compromise so that they can reach a reasonable solution acceptable to both of them the Chief Cadi and the Sultan. Accordingly, he (the Vizier) suggests a compromise solution that satisfies both parties that he and the Chief Cadi ransom the Sultan with their own money secretly so that they preserve the Sultan's dignity and honor. But the rigid Chief Cadi refuses the Vizier's solution justifying that saying: "It cannot be secret- the law is specific in that it lays down that every sale of the properties of the Exchequer must be carried out publicly and by general auction." (1.36) The Vizier is fed up with the Chief Cadi but he intercedes again for the sake of the Sultan to reach a solution to the problem. Thus, he reminds the Chief Cadi that the ruling politicians usually given special treatment and asks him to offer the Sultan this privilege. The Chief Cadi refuses completely to present anything except the legitimate solution that he previously provided. He refuses to participate in any conspiracy concerning the "legitimacy of authority and the ways in which it can be abused." (Alhakim, 2015, p.xi) The Sultan has repeatedly been shocked by the hardship of the Chief Cadi's attitude and his insistence on implementing the only legal solution that has previously provided by the Chief Cadi. Accordingly, the Sultan is completely desperate to persuade the Chief Cadi to change his mind to cooperate with him or to initiate any flexibility towards the Sultan. Therefore, the Sultan uses the only remaining solution for him which is to kill the Chief Cadi who is threatened clearly by the Sultan who addresses him indicating

"(His sword) It's not made of wood, it's not a toy. It's a real sword and must be useful for something, must have some reason for its existence. Do you

understand what I'm saying? Answer! Why was it ordained that I shall carry it? Is it for a decoration or for action?" (1.36)

The Chief Cadi understands the Sultan's threat and tries to palliate the Sultan's tension reassuring him that he is keen to the interest of the Sultan in everything he does, and that his abide out to the law is completely in the interest of the Sultan, confirming his rights to the throne and the Sultanate and achieving lasting security and peace for the Sultan and the Sultanate,

"For one or the other. ...I mean that you have a choice, Your majesty. You can employ it for action, or you can employ it for decoration. I recognize the undoubted strength possessed by the sword, its swift action and decisive affect. But the sword gives right to the strongest, and who knows who will be the strongest tomorrow? There may appear some strong person who will tilt the balance of the power against you. As far the law, it protects your rights from every aggression because it does not recognize the strongest- it recognizes right. And now there's nothing for you today, Your Majesty, but chooses: between the sword which imposes and yet exposes you, and between the law which threatens and yet protect you." (1.37)

The Chief Cadi gives the Sultan a wonderful lesson that he will not forget all his life. He explains that the sword represents strength and speed of decisiveness but it is usually given to the strongest because it depends on the balance of the power that varies according to different circumstances, so what is your right can be given a while to another one only because he is the strongest. The sword follows strength and it is a relative thing that changes according to the circumstances which means instability of the Sultan's life, and that his life will be at the mercy of circumstances and not right and justice.

The law is what we must maintain and act according to because no matter how the circumstances change and the balance of powers differ, the law is fixed and never subject to any change and remains the protector of the person's rights and defends him when necessary. Even if a person faces any problem, the law is the only thing that guarantees the full rights of this person and it does not allow anyone to transgress his rights. We must obey the law in order to protect ourselves from any violation of our rights and thus maintain the safety of others in the society. Also we obey the law in order to preserve our rights and thus we will preserve the rights of others in the society. Accordingly the law is what organizes our lives and the lives of others and preserves the rights of every individual in society under all the circumstances, and then the law is what makes our lives safe and comfortable.

In fact the Sultan considers the Chief Cadi's words and repeats them over and over again having learned the lesson, so he expresses his great pleasure and admiration for the opinion of the wise Chief Cadi who provides the Sultan with his wise and rational advices. The Chief Cadi rationally justifies his resort to the legal solution explaining that the legitimate solution requires that the Sultan to endure the indignity of selling by a public auction for a short period, but the Sultan will be rewarded with the legitimacy of being the Sultan with the authority of the law. The Chief Cadi explains to the Sultan that it is not possible to rely on power because it is a relative thing and it is subject to those who have the dominance, but the law is what must be relied and acted upon because it is the thing that protects people and their rights and that there is nothing better than law and justice to work under them to protect the right of

the Sultan and his throne and to obtain the people's consent. The Sultan addresses the Vizier saying: "What an accursed old man he is! He's got a unique genius for always landing us in a spot" (1.38). Consequently the Sultan is fully convinced of the words of the Chief Cadi which he carefully thinks about declaring and: "(Shouting decisively)! The law! I have chosen the law" (1, 39). The Sultan decides to choose the law and voluntarily submit to the legitimate solution of the Chief Cadi, through his consent to be sold in a public auction because he realizes that the law is the protective shield and the defender of the individual from offences and usurpation of rights. In fact the Sultan who renounces the sword and chooses with conviction to implement the law that guarantees his rights and throes of his people is a just, responsible and respectable Sultan (Alaeela, 2005, no. p). Therefore the law is the main factor in installing reassurance and safety in the life of people and society. The law is the main pillar for achieving justice, peace, security and resolving disputes. Furthermore, The Sultan wants to give a clear signal to everyone that no one is above the law and that no one will receive any special treatment including the Sultan himself who "chooses the path of law even though it was a harder way to take." (Al-Hakim, 2009)

After a frenzied bidding, the Sultan is sold at a public auction, and is bought by the highest bidder who is the ill-reputed lady who pays her whole life's savings that she inherits from her late husband (the rich merchant), for the Sultan at the auction asking him one thing in return saying:

"That you give this night to me, Your Majesty-a single night. Honor me by accepting my invitation and be my guest until day break. And when the Muezzin gives the call to down prayers from this minaret here, I shall sign the deed of manumission and Your Majesty will be free." (2.69)

So, the lady hosts the Sultan with great happiness and hospitality. The Sultan enjoys the singing and dancing of the beautiful slave girls and has dinner accompanied with the music playing. **The conversation that takes place between the Sultan and his hostess reveals the truth about the lady's personality. The Sultan is surprised when he discovers that the prostitute is a respectable person, and she is nothing but a woman who loves literature and art, as she explains saying: "I am a lover of art"(3.69).** The Sultan sympathizes with the lady and the burden of the bad rumors that are going to burden her that describes her with harsh words that don't represent her or her behaviors and that she is a good person which is opposite to what is said about her. It is clear that it is not until the Sultan has gone to her house and his conversation with her that makes him realize what is really going on in her house and recognizes who she really is. "In fact her real image that was unmasked by the Sultan during their brief encounter" (El-minia, 2005, p.234) surprises him, so he comments: "It is extraordinary that your exterior should proclaim so loudly what is not to be found within; your shop window advertises goods that are not to be found inside" (3.78). The fair Sultan gives a great example to his people in his commitment to the law and its implementation. In addition to that the Sultan's own justice and humanity with the people, especially with the notorious lady, helps the Sultan to reveal to the people the truth of this virtuous prostitute. (Shukri, 1983, p.269)

Meanwhile the Chief Cadi is concerned that the lady may not fulfill her promise to manumit the Sultan, so he does a trick to make sure that the Sultan

will be manumitted before the dawn call to prayer. Therefore he orders the Muezzin to "climb up in to your minaret and give the call to the dawn prayer" (3.88). At midnight, the lady and her guest are shocked by the early dawn call to prayer. But she understands the Chief Cadi's trick that he is driven by his love, loyalty and devotion to the Sultan. The Chief Cadi wants to be assured that his master, the Sultan, will be manumitted upon the call to the dawn prayers. The Sultan begins to blame the Chief Cadi for such trick, yet the lady clarifies to the Sultan that the Chief Cadi's loyalty and devotion to the Sultan is not less than her loyalty and devotion to the him proving that by manumitting the Sultan signing the document of his manumission. The Sultan is impressed with the lady's loyalty and humanity showing his gratitude to her by describing her that she "is one of the most outstanding of women! The people of the city must respect her. That is an order, O Vizier!" (3, 95)

In addition to that, the Sultan rewards her by giving her the enormous ruby that has no peer in the world and which adorns his turban as a memory for what she does for him saying: "I shall never forget that I was your slave for a night" (3.95). The lady bows farewells the Sultan saying: "For the sake of principles and the law, Your Majesty!" (3.95). Thus the just Sultan proves the wisdom and validity of his choices of law by upholding law and principles confronting a personal humiliation (Al-Hakim, 1985, p.81). By applying the law alone everything is fine. The just, wise and courageous Sultan is manumitted. Also the lady who is known wrongly with her bad reputation regains her good reputation and the Condemn Man (the slave trade) is exempt from execution. This demonstrates the importance of law in establishing human life in a just manner and that the law is what preserves, perpetuates security and peace and preserves the rights of the citizens.

### CONCLUSION

To conclude Tawfiq al-Hakim's **The Sultan Dilemma** bears a great moral lesson that must be depend on to establish a life full of peace and safety. Which is relying on respecting the law and its implementation as a basis for living in the society and the country because the law is what preserves, organizes, and defends the right of the citizens. Thus law organizes the lives of the citizens in the society because with the rule of the law, peace, security and the tranquility are prevailed in the society. Accordingly Al-Hakim suggests that the Sultan is the one whose rule is established depending on the law and who bears its resulting, responsibilities and burdens, because the law is the one that organizes and preserves the rights and duties of the citizens and causes peace and security in the country which guarantees the respect and love of the people for the Sultan. While the Sultan's reliance on power, violence and bloodshed will have disastrous consequences for the Sultan and the Sultanate because the suppression of the opponents will not stop and the Sultan will be forced to use power and violence constantly and this what earns the Sultan the people's contempt and hatred.

In the play the Mamluk Sultan is facing a critical problem that can only be solved by adopting one of the two bitter options. The first option is to respect the law (by adopting the Chief Cadi's suggestion) and the second opinion is restoring to power to solve the problem (by adopting the Vizier's suggestion). Thus the Sultan is bewildered between the two options. The wise Chief Cadi

supports his legitimate solution by presenting a logical justification that the Sultan should endure the humiliation of auction for a short period in order to guarantee the legitimacy of the Sultan's rule. Moreover the Sultan himself will give a clear example and a deep lesson to his people to consolidate and prove the principle of justice and that there is no one is above the law. The Chief Cadi also confirms that restoring to the sword dedicates the continuation of the Sultan's rule for a period after which the Sultan can be removed by someone who is stronger than the Sultan himself, and that the use of power and bloodshed leads to its continuous usage that causes anger and opposition of the people to the Sultan and their hatred to the Sultan. Thus the wise choice of the Sultan by depending on the law provides a happy ending for all sides of the problems.

Apparently, the play emphasizes the importance of the law, its application and its imposition by the Sultan in the country to achieve justice and peace for the people. It also emphasizes the role of the just and honest Chief Cadi whose existence is considered a safety valve to preserve the safety, peace and the rule of the law in the Sultanate. Otherwise, the society will become a jungle in which the fittest survive

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