

The Portrayal of Woman in Ali Ahmad Bakathir's Literary Works

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Abstract- This research deals with an important area in Bakathir's works, woman portrayal in his novels which does not get the sufficient study and attention. It studies and analyzes the image of woman in Bakathir's novels *WaIslamah 'Oh Islam'*, *Al-Thaa'er Al-Ahmar 'the Red Rebel'* and *SiratShoja'a' the Biography of the Brave'*. There are two main objectives of the research, first is to point out how did Bakathir portray woman in his novels and the second is to find out why he portrayed woman in such away. There are three parts of this research; the first is the introduction, which talks about Bakathir's age and life, an outline of his literary career and his view of woman. The second part deals with the portrayal of woman in Bakathir's novels, *Gelnar in WaIslamah*, *Aaliyah in the Red Rebel* and *Sumayyah in the Biography of the Brave*. The third part of the research is the conclusion and findings. It is clear from the research that Bakathir portrayed woman in a positive and bright image. Woman is presented as a wise, brave, hardworking, clever, faithful, honest, heroic, cooperative, influential, skillful and successful Muslim wife and woman with leadership qualities. Bakathir's positive portrayal of woman is influenced by his Islamic ideology as well as his own view and philosophy where he thinks that woman should be admired and appreciated.

Index Terms- woman, portrayal, presentation, wise, image, work.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الملخص

الأعمال الروائية لعللي احمد باكثير عنوان البحث: صورة المرأة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية-كلية مشارك أسناذ اسم الباحث: د. إبراهيم علي احمد الشامي- التربية-جامعة حجة-وكيل محافظة حجة-الجمهورية اليمنية.

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يتناول هذا البحث موضوعا مهما في ادب علي احمد باكثير لم ينل ما يستحق من البحث والدراسة رغم أهميته وهو صورة المرأة في اعمال باكثير الروائية. يهدف هذا البحث الي التعرف على كيفية قدم وعرض باكثير صورة المرأة في رواياته والهدف الاخر هو معرفة السبب الذي جعل باكثير يقدم هذه الصورة للمرأة في اعماله. يتكون البحث من أربعة فصول، الفصل الأول مقدمة تعرض لمحة موجزة عن نشأة وحياة باكثير ورؤيته للمرأة وعرضا موجزا لاهم اعماله الأدبية بينما يتناول الفصل الثاني صورة المرأة في ثلاث من روايات باكثير وهي جنانا في روايته الشهيرة وا اسلاما و عالية في روايته النائر الأحمر وسمية في روايته سيرة شجاع. يقدم الفصل الثالث والأخير الخاتمة والتي تلخص اهم الاستنتاجات والنتائج. يتضح من خلال البحث ان علي احمد باكثير قدم صورة إيجابية مشرقة للمرأة في ادبه حيث تتصف بالشجاعة والوفاء والصدق والتضحية والتعاون والعمل الدؤوب والايثار والقنوة والحكمة والقدرة علنالتأثير والثقة كما يقدمها كنموذج للمرأة المسلمة القاندة والقنوة وذلك بشكل ينال الاعجاب. يتضح من خلال البحث ان اهم أسباب هذا التصوير الإيجابي للمرأة هو فكر وخلفية باكثير الإسلامية وقناعاته الشخصية حول المرأة التي يري انه ينبغي ان يكون لها مكانتها وتقديرها وان تقوم بدورها الريادي في المجتمعات. كما يتضح

من خلال البحث ان هناك تشابها كبيرا بين صورة المرأة في روايات باكثير مع تلك الصورة التي ترسمها مسرحياته مما يعكس رؤية الكاتب الإيجابية للمرأة وادوارها الكبيرة.

The Proposal of the Research:

The Portrayal of Woman in Ali Ahmad Bakathir's Literary Work.

Objectives:

1. To find out how did Bakathir portray woman in his novels .
2. To point out why did Bakathir represent woman in such away.
3. To introduce Bakathir's and his view of woman to the English language readers.

The Significance of the Research

This research is a significant one because it deals with an important issue in Ali A. Bakathir's works, which did not get the sufficient study and attention. The image of woman is one of the controversial themes in modern literature; there are various and contradicted attitudes and ways of woman representation varied according to the ideology and philosophy of the authors. Bakathir, a pioneer of modern Arabic, Islamic literature, has his own and unique way of woman's representation which, to some extent, remains unknown to both Arabic as well as English speakers and readers. This research highlights this important issue in Bakathir's novels.

The Scope of the Research:

This research is limited to study the image of woman as presented by Bakathir in these novels. More specifically, the research is limited to study woman presentation in Bakathir novels, *WaIslamah*, *Al-Tha'aer Al-Ahmar* translated into English as *the Red Rebel* and *SiratShoja'a* translated into English as *the Biography of the Brave* ..

The Methodology

This research is a theoretical library research based on theoretical analysis of the image of woman as presented in Ali A. Bakathir's novels. It adopts the descriptive and analytical method.

The Parts of the Research

1-Introduction. This part is divided into three subtitles as follows:-

- 1.1 Bakathir's life
- 1.2 Bakathir's view of woman
- 1.3 Bakathir's literary career

2- The Portrayal of Woman in Bakathir's Novels. This part is also divided into three subtitles:-

2.1 Gelnar in Bakathir's novel *WaIslamah*

2.2 Aaliah in Bakathir's novel *the Red Rebel*.

2.3 Sumayyiah in Bakathir's novel *the Biography of the Brave*.

3- Conclusion and Findings

I. INTRODUCTION

This part introduces a general background about Ali Ahmad Bakathir and his vision of woman with a general and brief survey of his works. It is divided into three subtitles, the first introduces Bakathir and his life, and the second presents his view of woman and the last summarizes Bakathir's literary production.

1.1 Bakathir's Life.

Ali Ahmad Bakathir was born in Indonesia in December 21st, 1910 for Yemeni parents from Hadramout. He came back to his homeland Hadramout when he was ten years old together with his father. He settled in Seiyoun, a city in Hadramout with his half brothers and sisters and studied Islamic theology and sciences and Arabic language. The society of Seiyoun, especially the family of Bakathir, were fond of poetry and this is one of the reasons that encouraged Bakathir to compose poetry early at the age of thirteen. His father died in February 3rd 1925 while Ali Ahmad Bakathir was at the age of fifteen and he composed an elegy poem for the death of his father of more than seventy lines. He studied and worked in some educational institutions in Seiyoun and participated in some cultural and educational activities. After the death of his beloved wife, Bakathir was full of sorrow and sadness so he left to Aden in 1932. He stayed in Aden for few months where he met the famous poet Mohammad Loqman and he composed some poems which were collected and published later entitled the Magic of Aden and the Pride of Yemen. Then, Bakathir left Aden to Somalia, Ethiopia and after that travelled to Hijazz' Saudi Arabia' where he wrote his first poetic social play *Humam aw fi Al-Ahqafand* composed some poems later collected and published. Bakathir left Saudi Arabia to Egypt and settled there to study English literature at Fuad the First University' now Cairo University'. In 1936, during his study in the university, he translated Shakespeare's play Romeo and Juliet into Arabic in the form of free verses and two years later he wrote his poetic play in the form of free verses *IkhnatonwaNefertiti*. After graduating from the university, Bakathir worked as an English teacher for fourteen years then he was transferred to the ministry of Althaqafahwa Al-Irshad Al-Qawmi 'ministry of culture where he worked till he dies in November 10th, 1969. Bakathir got married to an Egyptian lady in 1943 and got the Egyptian citizenship in August 22nd, 1952. Bakathir wrote six novels, more than sixty plays, four collections of poetry, a short story, literary translation and critical articles and more details about his literary career will be given in the following part.

1.2 Bakathir's View of Woman

Bakathir's view of woman and his treatment to this important issue is influenced by his own philosophy and his Islamic ideology. He has his own and unique way of presenting

woman in a distinguished and bright image. His portrayal of woman is an output of his Islamic views and values, his own vision of woman and his views that are touched by some modern touches, which believe that woman, should be admired and appreciated and she should participate actively in different fields of life. Bakathir (1997:66) pointed out his own about woman and his dissatisfaction with some disadvantageous which affected the expected role of woman; Bakathir stated-

In my opinion, the woman of modern age is no more a female one because she leaves her home and works and does many activities, which make her extend the limits of her feminism. Furthermore, she did not pay the sufficient attention of the works of her home, and she neglected the children because she believed that these tasks are the responsibility of the servants (1).

However, this does not mean that Bakathir stand against the works of woman and her rights. He thinks that woman has a great function and status in life and she should do the jobs and works that suit her nature and psychology. When he was asked, "do you think that woman should not work? He replied, "No, she should work but she should not be transferred into a male because of her extroverted behaviors; it is not suitable for her to undress her body in a disgusting way, even the husband does not like to see his wife naked. She would be annoyed in her way, in transportation and in her job if she behaves openly and impolitely. She should be introvert so that she can avoid the annoyances of others. She should do the works that suit her nature and she also should avoid the behaviors that make her fell in the trap of those who run after their sexual motifs (2). This view of Bakathir about woman and her roles was based on his Islamic view; Bakathir (1997:99) declared " I always think of Islam as a powerful civil and spiritual power and humanity will be in need to be enlightened guided by this power. (3) Bakathir's positive view of woman control his literary vision and treatment of female characters. Al-Zabidi (2008) declared that Bakathir has introduced a bright modal of woman in his works; Alzabiadi states:

Bakathir has introduced bright modals of woman in his literary works and he put woman in her right place, which was never done before by other writers, as I know. He did not only introduce woman in a positive and bright image in his works but more he rewrote some historical and legendary works, which humiliated woman and looked down upon in a way to keep the prestigious status of woman. Bakathir praised the roles and contributions of Muslim and Arabic Woman. The famous Arabic novelist Muhammad Jebril (2013) confirmed this view in an article entitled "Woman Equitable and Fairness in the Genius of Ali Ahmad Bakathir. Gebril (2013) stated-The genius contributions of Ali Ahmad Bakathir the poet, the dramatist and the novelist represent clear representation of the role of the Muslim and Arabic woman. This role of woman includes her contributions in taking care of the husband, children, which expanded to include her contributions to the general life (5). Bakathir revealed the great role of Muslim and Arabic woman in the history both modern and old. Gebril (2013) pointed out that woman has a positive role in the bright history both old and modern (6). He confirmed the effective role of Muslim and Arabic woman in modern and old history, both as individual and in groups, which was depicted by Bakathir in his works. Bakathir also defended woman against false accusations of others and he

believed that woman shared man in the great deeds and changes in the history. This point comes out of Bakathir's own philosophy and vision, which believes in woman's fairness. He also called for woman's education and believed that she should have an effective role in several fields of life. This view of Bakathir influence and govern his presentation of woman in his literary works.

1.3 Bakathir's Literary Career and Production

Bakathir wrote different literary forms including novel, drama, poetry, short story, literary translation and criticism. Most of his works are published but still there are works, which are not published and remain in rough copies and drafts as some poems, stories, plays and critical essays. He wrote six great novels and all of them are published, most famous of his novels are (*WaIslamah*) "*Oh my Islam*" 1945 and *Al- Thaaer Al-Ahmar*, "The Red Rebel" 1948. Though limited in number, he gained great reputation from his novels and he was introduced as a pioneer of Arabic and Islamic historical novel. Islamic history, values and concept influenced Bakathir and his novels; He used to quote some verses from the Holy Quraan to introduce his novels and also he borrowed some historical characters and events to treat some modern problems and issues. He represented the Islamic trend, attitude and school of modern fiction; The Islamic values and ideology of his early and original society in Hadramout, Seiyun participated in forming the Islamic views and conception of Bakathir the novelist and the writer. Dr. Aati (2013:190) stated that " Ali Ahmad Bakathir got his Islamic thought from the Islamic sources ' The Holy Quraan and Sunnah; the Islamic attitude and Bakathir's Islamic thoughts were clear in his novels, plays and poetry (7). Moreover, Dr. Serbaz (2010 :1) confirmed the view that Bakathir represented the Islamic trend and attitude in his fictional, dramatic and poetic works where the Islamic background can be seen clearly. He pointed out that Bakathir called for Islamic thought and he did not think that there is any problem in this aspect because Bakathir believes that each writer has to have an idea or thought to call for in his works(8). Bakathir also wrote another novel '*Sallamat Al-Qis*'1943 and its main idea was taken from the first century of the Islamic history and it treats a modern issue, love; Bakathir presented the theme of pure and innocent love and dealt with human weaknesses which is a part from his humanity from Islamic perspective. Dr. Hamid (2010:15) pointed out that Bakathir presented a realistic treatment of this romantic theme which was one of the reasons behind the great reputation of this novel and it was produced in a film on cinema(9). The theme of Bakathir's novel '*Lailat Al-Nahr* 1946 was a modern one; it deals with a social problem of pure and truthful love between a boy and a lady but the boy failed to marry her because of her uncle who took care of the lady and refused to agree for her marriage. He insisted that she should marry another rich boy though she did not love him and then the boy whom she loved and he loved her died out of sorrow and sadness. Another novel of Bakathir is '*Sirat Shoja'a*' "*the Biography of a Brave* 1955. Bakathir presented in this novel an example of the conflict for the sake of rule and authority in Islamic history. The novel has a political theme, the conflict to get authority and nationalism. At the end of this novel nationalism and good are victorious and the best remains however the worse and treachery are defeated. The last novel of

Bakathir is '*Al-Fares Al-Jamil*' The Handsome Warrior 1965. The author here borrowed a historical event from the Islamic history to deal with modern political issue and problem. It depicts the struggle and conflict for personal affairs and searching for regime and authority even on the expense of nation union and its truthful welfare. It deals with modern political conflict and it calls for Arabic unity and cooperation away from personal materialistic considerations and selfishness. Thus, Bakathir deals with historical, social and political themes and problems in his novels and some of them were taught to students in schools as the novel of (*WaIslamah*) which were taught in Yemen and Egypt. Bakathir was awarded many medals and he won some prizes for his distinguished literary production as the State Prize of Egypt and the medal of Science and Arts from the Egyptian president Jamal Abdu Nasser in 1963. Bakathir was an optimistic writer who believes in humanity and universality. Hamid (1997:69) narrated what Bakathir said about himself and stated that Bakathir said " I am an optimistic writer..I believe in humanity as a part of my belief in The Almighty Allah and I wish that Allah would make Arabs regain their mission of being benefit able and Witnesses on humanity (10). Bakathir's optimistic view and inspired soul influence his works clearly. Away from novel, Bakathir is originally a poet. As mentioned earlier, he started composing poetry in the beginning of his literary career at the age of thirteen. His early poems reflected his mission of reform and renewal which he wished for his homeland Hadramout as Hamid(2008:20) pointed out (11). Furthermore, Hamid(2008:11) declares that " poetry was the companion of Bakathir during his life in different phases; it was the mirror of his emotions, feelings and inner thoughts(12). Though Bakathir is well known as a dramatist and novelist, his poetic talent and interest can be seen clearly even in his plays and novels. He wrote poetic drama, the plays that were written in free verse and he called for using literary standard in writing novel and drama. Hamid (2008:11,12) added while talking about Bakathir "poetry was present in Bakathir's dramatic and fictional works; moreover, poetry had a distinguished and an excellent presentation in his poetic plays which represented the birth and the leading appearance in the history of Arabic poetic drama and poetry . Bakathir became the pioneer of Arabic free verse in modern Arabic literature as most of the critics declared (13). Bakathir's poetic career can be divided into four stages related to the places and countries where he lived. The first stage is Hadramout where he stayed until 1932; at this stage, he started composing poetry to describe his deep sense of love to his beloved wife and his love of his homeland Hadramout. He wrote several poems in this stage which were collected and published later in a form of a book entitled " The Flowers of Refine in the Poems of Youth"1987. The second poetic stage is era in which he composed poems in eth city of Aden. The themes of nationalism and friendship were among the important themes for his poems there which were collected later and published in 2008 in a book entitled "*Aden's Magic and Yemen Pride*". The third stage is that while Bakathir was in 'Hijazz' , now Saudi Arabia where he composed poems later collected in a book entitled *Nagd Youth and the Breaths of Hijazz*. The last one is the Egyptian stage after his arrival to Egypt where he composed poetry equaled in amount to the three previous stages as Hamid (2008:12) pointed out. (14) Bakathir had the dream of being

Arab Laureate after Ahmad Shawgi ; Hamid (2010:11) stated:- Ali Ahmad Bakathir arrived Egypt as a poet, dreaming of being the Arabic Laureate after Ahmad Shawgi, but after joining the faculty of Arts , department of English, Cairo University he turned to drama (15). To sum, Bakathir began his life as an inspired and genius poet and ended as a great pioneer of modern drama and novel. Bakathir's study of English language and literature in the faculty of Arts , Cairo University increased his motivation to write drama and led to two main changes in Bakathir's literary tendency. Baharethah(2012:97) pointed out these two changes and stated: The first is that Bakathir invented Arabic free verse poetry with repeated monometer which was clear in his poetic drama in Egypt; the second, is that Bakathir turned to drama and novel instead of poetry(16). It is clear from the above mentioned that Bakathir turned to the art of drama after his arrival to Egypt and joining the department of English Language though he wrote his first poetic play " *Humam Aw fi Al-Ahgaf*" earlier. Bakathir's genius extends poetry to drama. Aati(2013:65) pointed out that if Ali Ahmad Bakathir is the pioneer of modernity in modern Arabic poetry in the twentieth century, he is no less genius and pioneer in the fields of drama and fiction (17). Bakathir is a well known and an outstanding Arabic dramatist. He wrote more than sixty plays with different themes including political, social, and historical and legendary ones. He is a genius playwright with universal themes and ideas. Hamid(1997:67) stated that Bakathir once said" I believed in universality. I wished that peace to be spread over the world..I wish if the world is united in continues peace, cooperation and love(18). Bakathir's well known plays includes *The Secret of Shahrazad*1952 a romance which was translated into English inspired by the Arabian Nights. Another play is *Harut and Marut* 1962, a moral fantasy represents the Islamic view of man's future in the universe. It makes possible that man can reach other planets and stars and discover their secrets there as he does on earth. *Men Fawq Saba'a Samawat, Qasr Al Hawdag , Al-Silsilahwa Al-Ghofran and SerrAlhakim be amr Allah* are another plays of Bakathir that influenced by his Islamic attitude and values. Another significant play of Bakathir is *Dr.Hazim* which dealt with contemporary social issues. Bakathir also wrote *Masrah Al-Siasah 'The Drama of Politics'* which is a collection of his political dramatizations dealt with some political issues and themes. Six of Bakathir plays were written in verse and eleven plays remain unpublished. *Ikhnaton WaNefirtiti* is a famous verse drama and it dealt with historical events from ancient Egyptian history. *Oedipus Tragedy* is another famous legendary and social play of Bakathir.

II. THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMAN IN BAKATHIR'S NOVELS

This part discusses the presentation of woman in Bakathir's novels. It is divided into three subtitles, the first talks about Gelnar who is a dominating woman in Bakathir's famous novel *WaIslamah* whereas the second deals with Aaliah who is an important female character in Bakathir's novel *the Red Rebel* and the third presents Sumayyiah, a central female character in Bakathir's novel *the Biography of a Brave*.

2.1 The Image of Woman in Bakthir's Novel *WaIslamah*(Gelnar)

Bakathir introduced a distinguished and an admirable image of woman in his famous historical novel *WaIslamah*. The character of Gelnar, a dominating woman in his novel *WaIslamah* can be taken to be a clear representative of female character with extraordinary characteristic features. Bakathir presented in this novel the role of woman in peace and war, which was a distinguished role. A brief outline of the novel may help to understand the role of Gelnar, the woman in *WaIslamah* properly. This novel talks about an important historical hero whose name is Mahmood, later renamed as Qutz . Mahmood was sold together with his relative, the daughter of his uncle whose name is Gehad and after being sold, Mahmood was renamed as Qutz and Gehad was renamed as Gelnar; the two lovers Qutz and Gelnar were sold in Damascus then in Egypt as servants. They were separated from each other for a long period. Qutz improved and developed gradually in his works to become at the end the King of Egypt renamed as king Al-Mudaffar and he could meet and marry Gelnar. She was a model of honest, faithful, hardworking and wise woman. As a successful wife, she did all her duties in peace and war and sacrificed herself to save and protect her husband. In a battle and while Qutz was about to be killed in an attack by his enemy, his faithful, sincere and brave wife offered her body to save and protect him and she was badly injured and killed and he was saved. Before her death, in her last breaths when she heard her beloved husband crying and saying ' O my Beloved! O my Wife' she told him not to say that but rather to say '*O my Islam*' *WaIslamah* and then she dies. Her husband was full of sadness and sorrow and then he was killed by his friend Al-DhaherBebars but Qutz forgave him before his death and requested hi to work for the welfare of Islam.Gori (2010) stated that Gelnar is the second main character in the novel and she was originally the daughter of Sultan Jalal, Sultan Khwarizmi country and she was sold as a servant and renamed as Gelnar instead of Gehad and she was presented in a distinguished way(19). The original name of Gelnar, Gehad reflects her main deeds and works,; it is associated with fighting, war, sacrificing and resisting enemies as Gelnar did. Bakathir selected the names of his female characters in his novels carefully to reflect some of their features and deeds as Gehad in *WaIslamah*, Aaliah in *the Red Rebel* and Sumayyiah in *the Biography of a Brave*.

Gehad or Gelnar of *WaIslamah* learnt the skills of fighting and cavalry to defend herself and to support her husband in war and battles. She is presented as a brave, skilful, heroic, honest and faithful woman who supported her husband in his daily affairs, peace and war. She accompanied her husband in all his adventures and great tasks. She sacrificed her life to make him live. She always used to support and encourage him since their childhood. When they were children, Qutz used to imagine that he was fighting their enemies and she encouraged him; she motivated him by giving him flowers as a gift and reward for his imaginative victory on the enemies. It is clear that Bakathir introduced a bright and distinguished image of woman in this novel. She is portrayed as a faithful, honest, courageous, cooperative, hardworking, wise, skillful and modal Muslim woman who sacrificed for the sake of her religion, husband and nation.

2.2 Woman Image in Bakathir's Novel *Al-Tha'aer Al-Ahmar, the Red Rebel* (Aaliah)

Aaliah is the name of an important woman in Bakathir's novel *the Red Rebel*. She is also presented in an admirable way. She is skilfully portrayed with distinguished characteristic features. Al-Babakri (2005:164) stated:-

Bakathir skilfully portrayed the female character in *Altha'aer Al-Ahmar, the Red Rebel*, and he introduced this character in an artistic way based on gradualism in revealing her dimensions (20).

Despite the fact that *Al-Tha'aer Al-Ahmar* narrates the conflict between socialism and communism and talks about the revolution of the common people against injustice, woman also plays an important role in the novel. Aaliah, the main female character and her Rajiah play important role in this novel. The focus in this part is on the character of Aaliah who is a main and dominating one in this novel. She shared man in his works in farms as farmers. Early in the novel, she seemed to be extremely busy in the farm and she is a hardworking woman. She started mocking at the person who tried to talk with her to attract her attention. Her name 'Aaliah' reveals some of her characteristic features; Aaliah means high, and she seems to be highly distinguished in her deeds, behaviors and features including her determination, faithfulness, courage, religious faith, wisdom and strong character. She is presented a modal and symbol of Muslim woman who did her best to serve her religion and nation. She was portrayed at the beginning while she was working hardly in the farm together with her sister Rajiah then she had to leave her village to another place for some personal reasons and she was absent for a long period away from her brother and sister. She came back after a long time and she met her brother and sister. She rejected their false and wrong faiths and practices. She did not follow them in their bad behaviors and practices. They could not convince her to follow them though she was imprisoned. She is depicted as a totally a Muslim woman of strong faith, she did all her prayers in the right way, recites verses of Holy Qura'an and supported the needy persons. As a leader woman, she was able to collect, guide, educate and convince other woman to follow her and to come back again to the right instructions and faith of religion. Moreover, she was able to convince her brother who was a leader one to repent and follow the right way of religion. She is presented as an admirable and influential woman who could influence her society and change the wrong beliefs and practices. She is also portrayed as a brave woman with strong character who refused the wrong practices and faiths and attacked those wrong views and its holders. They could not force or convince her to stop her religious and educational effort or to stop her invitations to the pure fundamentals of Islam and its right values. She has a heroic and leader character who could control herself, guide her family and influence her society in a distinguished and an admirable way. Babakri (2005:178) declared that Aaliah is the best female character of Bakathir novels in comparison with other female characters because she defends her religion, virtue and values and she called for that among woman (21). Thus, Aaliah, the heroine of Bakathir's novel *the Red Rebel* is presented in a bright and an admirable way; She is presented as a faithful, determined, strong, influential, wise, learned, leader, brave, confident, cooperative, unselfish, kind, hardworking Muslim woman of strong faith in Islam. She is a dominating

woman who guides and influences her gender in the society and works for the sake of Islam.

2.3 The Image of Woman in Bakathir's Novel *Sirat Shja'a, the Biography of a Brave* (Sumayyiah)

Another bright and an admirable image of woman and her role is presented by Bakathir in his novel *Sirat Shja'a*, in English *the Biography of a Brave*. The name of this heroine is Sumayyah who has a great role and contribution in the events and plot of the novel. She is trained and got practices on arms to defend herself and society whenever necessary; her father refused to allow her get this train as he thought that woman should not be trained to such things. However, Sumayyah insisted to be trained and to learn the different skills and techniques of fighting. Finally, her father was convinced to allow her learn the arts and skills of fighting and he praised her. She is presented as a faithful, honest, strong, brave and skilful wife who possess heroic character. She revenged the enemy who killed her husband and she was able to kill him at the end of the novel. Moreover, she used to follow the news and information of the enemy to convey it to the Muslim leaders Asaduddin and Salahuddin. She contributed actively in the political conflict and carried the pains and the hopes of her religion and society. Babakri (2005:179) pointed out that "Sumayyah participated in the field of political conflict and she carried the issues of her religion and country" (22).

She possessed good and distinguished heroic characteristic features; she sacrificed for the sake of her husband, religion and nation. As an honest and sincere wife, she shared her husband his happiness even when she is sad and shared him his sadness and difficult circumstances; she proved herself as truthful wife with national and religious zeal and feelings. She is almost silent, polite, wise and an introvert woman. She is obedient to her mother, father and husband and she is so close to her father so that gradually she becomes one of the wise and trusted consultants of her father. Though she is young, she appears wise enough to suggest some important solutions to the problems that both her father and husband face. Her father trusted her and revealed some special and dangerous issues and secrets and she kept all his secrets and supported him by suggesting some valuable suggestions. Her fascination and attraction was in political and religious of her nation rather than in jewelries and clothes as ordinary women did. Babakri (2005:181) rightly pointed out that "Sumayyah is not an ordinary woman. She is an extraordinary woman who paid attention to political and reformative issues and affairs. She loves the one who can achieve her father's hopes in reformation" (23). Bakathir's representation of woman in this novel and others is influenced by his Islamic ideology and philosophy. Al-Kailani (1985:72) rightly confessed that "Bakathir got prestigious place and reputation in the world of drama, fiction and poetry; he felt proud of Islam and its events, values, historical leaders (including woman) and he expressed his pride of Islam in a way that deserves to be admired" (24).

III. THE CONCLUSION

This part sums up the important findings and results of the research that studied woman's portrayal in three novels and one play of Bakathir. Generally speaking, Bakathir presented a bright

and an admirable portrayal of woman in his novels and plays. He had a positive view of woman, which was reflected, in his works. Bakathir presented Gehad, later renamed as Gelnar, the woman in his well known novel *WaIslamah* in a distinguished and an admirable image. Gelnar is portrayed as a heroic, skilful, brave, strong, faithful, honest, unselfish, hardworking and helpful Muslim wife with leadership qualities who did all her duties as a wife and as a Muslim leader woman both in peace and war who sacrificed her life to save the life of her husband and died to make him alive. She has strong faith and admiration of Islam and she seems to be highly fascinated with Islam so that at her last breaths before death she requested her husband to say *WaIslamah* instead of repeating *O my Beloved Wife*. She is a great an influential heroine who had many good characteristic features in her life and a heroic end at her death. She is one of the immortal female characters in Bakathir's literary works. She is a symbol of the sincere wife and the faithful Muslim woman.

Aaliah, a woman in Bakathir's novel *Al-Tha'aer Al-Ahmar, the Red Rebel* who is also a main character is also portrayed positively. She is presented as a kind, hardworking, cooperative, strong, brave, faithful and modal Muslim woman. Furthermore, she is portrayed as an influential, affective, religious and determined woman with leadership and heroic qualities. She has a sense of determination with strong and learned modal Muslim character. She could affect and influence her brother, society and other woman. She is convinced with her Islamic views and ideology and she had a deep love and obedience of Islam so that she is ready to sacrifice for the sake of her religion. While inviting her brother and other women to the right faith and practices of Islam, she was imprisoned and faced many difficulties and challenges to stop but she insisted to continue her work and call for the right way of Islam. She rejected and attacked the wrong and false views and practices about Islam in a courageous and determined way. She reminds us with Hemingway famous statement "a man can be destroyed but cannot be defeated. Aaliah faced many problems and difficulties to destroy her but she could not be defeated but rather she won. Sumayyiah is a dominating woman in Bakathir's novel *Sirat Shoja'a, the Biography of a Brave*. She is portrayed in an admirable and positive way and image. Bakathir presented Sumayyiah as a great woman possessing distinguished features who sacrificed for the sake of her husband, religion and nation. She is portrayed as a faithful, honest, strong, brave, heroic, skilful, confident and nationalist wife and woman. She is also depicted as obedient wife with high sense of religious and national feelings and patriotism. She is a woman of extraordinary features and qualifications who paid attention to political, religious and reformative issues. She is a successful wife and a skilful political and reformative leader. She could arrange and organize her duties and could achieve all her domestic, family, public, political, reformative and social duties and responsibilities in a skilful and successful way. Bakathir's positive presentation and portrayal of woman in his novels is influenced by his Islamic ideology and his own view and philosophy. He appreciated woman and her roles in life and he defended her against false accusations. He has his unique and distinguished way and style in portraying woman. He talked about the great mental and psychological characteristic features that woman possess. He thought that woman should get all her right

according to his Islamic vision. He confirmed her important roles and great contributions in different fields of life according to her abilities. His own positive vision of woman and his Islamic views and perceptions influence and form his literary presentation of woman.

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