



The Sonic Ambience in Taha Hussein's *Doaa Al Karawan*

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Abstract:

Sound is an essential property of the landscape. Soundscape studies the relationship between a landscape and the creatures that constitute its sounds. Murray Schafer considers sounds as ecological properties of landscape and he refers to the soundscape as "the acoustical characteristics of an area that reflect natural processes" (112). Moreover, Krause B. (1987) describes the biological sounds of the living things as "biophony", and the non-biological sounds of rain, storms, wind, as "geophony". Then "anthropony" is added to describe the human-produced sounds.

Among all modern literary texts that teem with sounds, Taha Hussein's *Doaa Al Karawan* occupies a prominent place. Taha Hussein's fascination with sounds is outstanding particularly in choosing a singing bird to be a major character supporting the heroine of the novel. Furthermore, the novel is deliberately written in a poetic, rhetoric style to be suitable to its educational purpose which is giving a moral lesson. The curlew's presence is necessary for the author to enable him to reveal the inner thoughts of Amna. He uses it as a technical device to trace the development of the different stages of the plot. Besides the call of the bird which dominates most of the novel, there are other distinguished sounds. The sounds of different creatures such as the cock, frogs, dogs and owls accompany the main events of the novel to reflect the different states of the heroine. In addition to these sounds, various characters are depicted through their own voices and their reactions to different sounds around them.

Keywords: sound, soundscape, biophony, geophony, anthropony, ecology, Taha Hussein, *Doaa Al Karawan*, the curlew, sonic ambience, rhetoric

Sound is a basic component of nature. It is affected by the human activities that are practiced in a specific environment. Soundscape ecology is essentially related to landscape ecology as almost all human practices, biological or natural changes of a place can be reflected in the patterns of sound of that place. In this context, Marla Morris refers to David Jardine's article in which he states that "life on earth involves a multitude of different interweaving and intersecting voices, of which the human voice is but one of many" (Morris 150). The sonic world of some literary texts deserves to be closely examined. Among the literary texts that have a special focus on sounds, Taha Hussein's novel *Doaa Al Karawan* stands as a prominent example.

Almost all previous studies that discuss *Doaa Al Karawan* tackle Taha Hussein's unique use of a bird to play a major role in the novel. However, none of them explores the intricacies of the sound-focused style of Taha Hussein's writing, or dives deep into the aesthetic *mélange* he creates by blending all the components of the soundscape. Hussein creates a fantastic mesh by interlacing the biological sounds of different creatures, sounds of the elements of nature, and the human sounds. Moreover, they do not highlight how his concentrated use of sounds enables him to depict an expressive romantic image of the sad poetic atmosphere of the novel. In his book *IN the New Scales*, Mohammad Mandour argues that the highly poetic vocabulary of Taha Hussein cannot be the same language style of his simple heroine who narrates most of the novel. He believes that though Hussein managed to cleverly depict the environment of the events, his elevated style cannot be the style of his simple, nearly uneducated characters (46). Likewise, Injy Saladin argues that the end of the novel is not as powerful as the beginning or the rest of it. She thinks that the author quickly shifts

the feelings of anger and revenge to feelings of love between the heroine and the engineer.

Though Samar Sedr praises Taha Hussein's choice of a title that shows an extraordinary relationship between a bird and a human being, she does not concentrate on his use of sound in the novel. Likewise, Manar Khaled focused on holding a comparison between the curlew and the heroine. She argues that both Amna and the bird move from one place to another, both have strong will, intelligence and skill, and both have the ability to live far from their mothers. However, Khaled is not interested in the sonic effect of the presence of such a singing bird.

This paper explores how Taha Hussien uses sound as a narrative device in the novel to perfectly depict the acoustic ambience surrounding his characters, the conflict between them, and also to connect the events of the novel. The call of the bird is used as a technical device that unites all the parts of the novel and traces the inner conflict of the heroine and the development of her relationship with the hero. Moreover, he creates a prolific soundscape that helps him to reflect the various sounds of the Bedouin life.

A soundscape is the composition of the sounds of a landscape. Murray Schafer argues that soundscape can be considered as "the acoustical characteristics of an area that reflect natural processes" (112). In 1987, Bernie Krause "introduced the terms "biophony" to describe the composition of sounds created by organisms and "geophony" to describe non biological ambient sounds of wind, rain, thunder, and so on" (Pijanowiski et al. 204). Then "anthrophony" is added to indicate the human- induced sounds. Therefore, soundscape ecology is the result of the interaction among biophony, geophony and anthrophony sounds. Accordingly,

Pijanowski et al. define soundscape ecology as "all sounds, those of biophony, geophony, and anthropophony, emanating from a given landscape to create unique acoustical patterns across a variety of spatial and temporal scales" (204). Pijanowski et al. refer to Schafer's and Truax's opinion that acoustic ecology "studies the relationships and interactions among humans and sounds in an environment, including musical orchestrations, aural awareness, and acoustic design"(204).

Moreover, soundscape shares a lot of the principles of landscape ecology. The relationship between them is revealed in many aspects such as the interaction between the anthropogenic and the biological ambience, the relationship between sound and the geographic location, and how any disturbance can change the pattern of the soundscape. The great mutual interaction between the soundscape and the nature of the landscape is vivid. Patterns of sound in different times and spaces are affected by human use or transformation of the land. The human activities and their modification of the land result in concrete changes in geophony and biophony pattern sounds. In a similar way, landscape structure influences the distribution of various species and therefore influences the sound patterns of the area. Furthermore, climate influences the geographic sounds as it affects the frequent sounds of wind, rain, moving leaves of plants and the other components of nature. In addition, soundscape can affect the human well-being. Healthy soundscapes offer a positive kind of life to human beings. In contrast, unwanted sounds are so annoying that many policies are adopted to control them. The soundscape of a person indicates the environment in which he lives. Therefore, it becomes a crucial issue that should be valued.

Bioacoustics is a branch of soundscape ecology that studies the sounds of animal communication. Marten et al. indicate that animal acoustic communication depends on three basic elements of sound propagation. The first element of sound transmission is the biophysical characteristics of the sender and the intent of the message itself. The second element is the physical environment that shapes the signal. Finally, the last element is how the recipient perceives and interprets the signal. Therefore, sounds of birds may be affected by wind, rushing water, or human noise. They are also influenced by the physical attributes of the bird such as its body size and the length of its trachea (Pijanowski et al. 2006). Furthermore, the habitat type and its structure also influence the acoustic frequency of the bird's song. The tone of their voice changes with the geophonic sound of wind and rain in their ambience (206). Kacelink and Kerbs (1982) notice that most songbirds sing "intensely early in the morning and late evening (referred to as the dawn and dusk chorus, respectively)" (Pijanowski et al. 2008). The acoustic activity of birds is strongly affected by weather, climate changes, sunrise, sunset and the seasons of breeding and immigration. Also, anthrophony can affect bird communication in different ways. It is concluded that birds sing more loudly in noisier environments than they do in quieter ones.

The famous environmentalist Rachel Carson argues in her book *Silent Spring* that silence indicates the fatal human practices in the natural world. She believes that silence is the result of dusting pesticides so that it becomes a "spring without voices. On the mornings that had once throbbed with the dawn chorus ... there was now no sound; only silence lay over the fields and woods and marsh" (4). Therefore, silence becomes the outcome of the horrible effects of synthetic pesticides on the biosphere. Thus, silence, "as a signal that all is not well in the biosphere, is to be filled with the

sonic abundance – noisiness – that signals a healthy ecosystem"(McKinnon 72). It is obvious that Carson means the "sonic abundance" of birds and nature in rural areas not the noise of machines and sirens in urban areas which is considered unwanted sound.

Leah Toth believes that a "loud stimulus, ... , should evoke an equally loud inner moral voice" (565). Taha Hussein frequently records such responses to auditory ambience in *Doaa Al Karawan*. In the novel, readers interact with the heroine, learn about her past life, thought patterns, and current psychological state by following the ways she responds to various sounds surrounding her, especially that of the curlew. The novel achieves what Ian Marshall thinks of a literary text that it "can be both a virtual soundscape on its own and a source of information about the soundscape of a given time and place" (82).

Taha Hussein's method of depicting sound and responding to it is unique among other writers. He presents the call of the bird as inextricable from the heroine's thoughts and plans. Amna's idiosyncrasies are revealed through her interaction with the audible world around her, particularly the voice of the curlew. Her relationship with the bird reveals her personal background and her peculiarities as opposed to her weak, poor feminine peers. Throughout her speech with the bird, she appears to be contemplative, wiser than others, patient, and a skillful schemer.

The most consistently present aural event in *Doaa Al Karawan* is the cry or the call of the curlew. The bird functions as an aural companion and supporter for the heroine. He is a pacifying friend who witnesses all the stages of her major conflict with the engineer. He is also a narrative device that helps the readers to enter Amna's mind and exposes her inner thoughts through her interaction with

the bird's cry. In addition, it becomes an implicit reminder for Amna to continue seeking retribution for her sister's death. The cry of the curlew shows how biophony unites with anthrophony and consoles it. Furthermore, Taha Hussein's innovation lies in his use of sound as a narrative device to trace the novel's events and to convey an honest portrayal of his characters. Many of the details of these events are conveyed through the characters' reactions to their acoustic environment. Through the distinguished voice of the bird, the reader can follow the different stages of the plot and the development of characters.

Among all other authors who paid great attention to the importance of sounds, Taha Hussein is unique. His concentrated fascination with sound may be ascribed to his visual impairment. His being blind makes him rely solely on the sense of hearing to feel the environment around him through sounds. Blind people are better at auditory tasks and as they are deprived of visual information, they extract more information from sounds. This fact leads Taha Hussein to interact with the world through the "sweet voice" of his wife. He addresses his wife: "I was listening to you, your sweet voice was helping me, as usual, to think" (Al Zaiiat 198). This intensifies his reliance on hearing for communication. He absorbs the sounds around him by intensive listening. Moreover, his highly poetic language reveals the impact of auditory ambience on his choice of words and sonic vocabulary. Furthermore, Taha Hussein's choice of the title of the novel reflects his interest in acoustic ambience and the mutual friendly relationship between biophony and anthrophony. He chooses a bird that is well-known for his sweet voice to be a major friend of the heroine and a crucial witness of the events. The title is onomatopoeic to recall the voice of the bird and his basic role in the life of the heroine.

Taha Hussein not only personifies the curlew treating him as one of the principal characters, but he also uses his voice as a narrative device. Chapter One is a kind of introductory part that shows Amna as a servant at the engineer's house. Then, through her speech with the bird, the readers learn about the murder of an innocent girl and how neither Amna nor the bird was able to rescue her. The strength of her bond with the bird is revealed when she asks his permission to return twenty years ago in order to narrate the misery of her sister. In doing so, she aims at giving other people a cautionary tale in order not to spill more innocent blood. Here, Dr. Ali El Raie argues that Taha Hussein declares frankly the educational purpose of his novel as the heroine wants to advise the readers and give them a moral lesson. As he considers *Doaa Al Karawan* "a rhetoric, poetic novel" (16), Amna's elevated style is suitable to the educational quality of rhetoric. In contrast to Mandour, Al Raie believes that readers of such kinds of novels celebrate their elegant expressions and the fullness and confirmation of their meanings. Therefore, it is not necessary for such a poetic novel to be realistic, or to convey the real educational standard of the heroine. Furthermore, it is not the anthrophonic sound that alleviates her loneliness, but she is listening to the bird to "achieve the same effect that human companionship might bring" (Marshall 87). She feels safer and more comfortable with the bird which certainly does not know the deceit of the anthrophony.

Amna addresses the curlew: "Oh dear bird! I am still awake, watching for your advent and waiting for your call. I cannot sleep till I feel close to you, hear your voice, and respond to your cry. Haven't I gotten used to do this for more than twenty years!" (10). She explains that the bird's voice is the loveliest sound for her, especially during the night when the universe is calm, life is asleep and the spirits are released in the dark silence. Amna is not afraid

of that dark silence as she is reassured by the call of the bird. Moreover, the curlew reminds her of the spirit of her dead sister because it was a witness to the detestable murder of that desperate sister. In such a text the reader becomes an attentive listener to an attractive soundscape in which anthrophonic sounds are akin to biophony and vice versa. Her addressing the curlew through her speech with the bird's occasional call, shows how Hussien erases the barriers between the two realms.

Again, in a salient example of the fusion of anthrophony and biophony, the heroine urges the bird to approach her and listen to her speech in order to remember the disaster that they helplessly witnessed together. Amna considers the curlew a loyal friend who supplies her with moral courage and support. She reminds it that they were unable to rescue Hanadi's life as they both sent screams but nobody responded. The bird's calls collaborated with Amna's screams in order to rescue the wretched sister from the stab of her tough uncle, but in vain. Amna continues reminding the bird that ever since the disaster of that murder, they have been pledged to remember this horrible event, especially at midnight. At that time the bird calls Amna daily, and she responds that she thinks of avenging her sister on the person who was the primary cause of her murder. It is only through taking vengeance on the engineer who deceived her sister and brought shame on her, that Amna can have rest. She keeps meeting the bird at midnight for years in order to relieve her internal tension and to reveal her future schemes.

Through Amna's speech with the bird, which is a kind of interior monologue, Taha Hussein reveals the bustling sound of Amna's inner thoughts of retribution, painful agony, loneliness, and future plans. It is depicted in contradiction to the peaceful ambience of life in both the Bedouin and the small towns to which she moves. At

the end of this introductory chapter, Amna resorts to flashbacks to relate her now twenty- year- old story.

Again, with the rising action of the plot in chapter four, the bird appears to play the role of a clock for Amna. She dreams of the Sheriff's house and his friendly daughter, Khadija, and his kind-hearted wife. She dreams of her comfortable life at the Sheriff's house when the bird's voice awakens her. Therefore, Amna thinks that the voice of the dear bird takes her from sweet sleeping to a painful awakening. She finds herself lying on a rough, primitive bed in the mayor's house, waiting for their ruthless uncle. Knowing that the engineer has deceived her elder daughter, the mother sent for her brother to accompany them back to their native village. She is certain that Hanadi's conduct brings shame to the whole family. She orders her daughters to leave the engineer's and the sheriff's houses where they work in order to return to their village. The mother thinks that it is better for them to live among their hateful relatives where they will be "miserable but safe" (33).

In the middle of the mysterious sadness in which Amna, Hanadi, and their mother live at the mayor's house, comes the voice of the curlew. When Amna hears its sweet far call at the dark night, she feels that her life is restored to her. It awakens her sweet memories and becomes a source of hope and vitality for Amna. Not only does Amna feel positively exultant as the bird and his call return, but she also feels safe by his company. However, the positive impact of the curlew's voice seems dedicated to Amna alone. There is no response from the absent-minded sister who is so distracted that she seems deaf. As for Amna, the bird's voice is like a "luminous arrow launching into a sea of darkness"(Hussein 26). It is a spark of hope amidst a dull, fearful darkness. Taha Hussein cleverly depicts the bird's calls by translating them to human language while very

effectively capturing the calls' rhythms and pitch changes. He creates a common ground between biophony and anthrophony to reveal how they can harmonize together. He relies on sound devices like assonance, alliteration, and internal rhyme to convey the sound of the bird calls. He also resorts to onomatopoeia to intensify the tonalities of the bird song.

Once again, the bird appears in chapter seven in a scene teeming with various auditory sources. The bond between Amna and the curlew enables her to interpret his "quick, far call" as a cry for help (45). This is a notable example of the fusion of anthrophony and biophony that reveals how Amna can analyze the tone of the bird, or relate it to her own state of mind. She enquires, "What is the matter with you? What do you want to inform me?" (45). She accuses the bird of insisting on awakening her as if it swears an oath not to let her sleep. She interprets her own worry, fear, and sadness through its continuous call which does not stop. She suspects that a dangerous incident is about to happen. Here, Taha Hussein's peculiar use of the sound of the bird becomes vivid. Though songbirds are mostly depicted as a major source of exultation and merriment, Hussein makes it participate with Amna in her hardships and difficulties.

Amna notices that this night is not as dark and calm as usual. She hears the sound of the wings of the other birds which are not accustomed to being awake at that time. Even the dogs are awake and she hears their strong continuous barking as if they were calling for somebody who does not hear them. Then she hears a lot of people moving and calling each other and their movement increases. She thinks that the bird is trying to awaken not only her, but also all people and all living things. Its call is still continuous, fast, and far away. Amna enquires if the bird is trying to talk to the

stars. Here, there is a fusion not only of biophony and anthrophony but also of biophony and geophony. It seems that all creatures share a common knowledge and participate in what is going in the mayor's house and outside it. Asking about the reason of this noise and chaos, she knows that the mayor's chief guard was killed. It is through screaming that the mayor knows about the murder and awakens his guards to search for the killer. It seems that this murder paves the way to the approaching, more effective murder of Hanadi.

The rest of the chapter also teems with sounds. There is a description of the voice of the murdered guard which was as "thunder" when he knocked at the people's doors. The description reflects a strong, commanding voice because the man was well-built and enjoyed a high position in the village. There is also the noise of the chaotic movements of the villagers and the mayor's guards who are searching the houses, hoping to find the killer. However, the chapter ends with the sound of Amna's heartbeats when she tries to suppress a scream of astonishment on seeing the sheriff among the investigators. Though she is eager to return to the sheriff's house, she is careful not to be seen by him as she is obliged to accompany her miserable family.

One of the most important occasions on which the call of the bird plays a prominent role is when it accompanies the main disaster of the events. It takes place in chapter ten during the murder of Hanadi, which marks the climax of the novel. It happens when Amna's hateful uncle comes to accompany them back to their native town. At that moment the uncle comes to kill Hanadi who has become shameful after accepting to co-habit with the engineer without a formal marriage. Before going to take them, he dug a hole in which he plans to bury Hanadi. Amna and Hanadi ride two camels and are accompanied by their succumbing mother and their

harsh uncle. Suddenly, in an ample space on their way back, the rough, fearful voice of their uncle harshly ordered the girls to dismount from the camels. The uncle's voice is evil and ill-intentioned as it reveals the hateful scheme of the man.

As Amna dismounts from the camel stumbling, and secretly wondering why they stopped at that vast deserted space, she hears a horrible, fearful scream and a heavy body falling to the ground. To her shocking astonishment, she finds her sister stabbed to the heart by her ruthless uncle. Here, the sound of the scream is an ill-omen and announcing a disaster to come. It conveys horror, a catastrophe, violence, a treacherous deed and an approaching death. Then the sound of resisting death is heard from Hanadi's body which keeps moving and beating the ground as the blood is bursting out of the body. Amna and her mother are amazed as they watch Hanadi's body shivering, beating and she is trying to say something. Then this irritated body becomes still and the amount of blood reduces while the painful silence of death fills the place.

It is at that horrible moment and at the advent of this catastrophe that the bird appears calling in the air. The biophony here comes to rescue the heroine from this disastrous moment when she confronts the evil deed of her uncle. She has extreme hatred for this uncle so that she likens him to the devil. The whole situation is terrible when Amna, her mother, and even the killing uncle are in total astonishment. Moreover, the painful silence of death covers the whole place. Out of this hateful calmness, fear, sadness, and gloomy atmosphere, comes biophony represented by the call of the curlew. Amna becomes aware of his voice approaching her. His singing spreads like shining light in a total contrast to the anthrophony's feelings of astonishment and absent-mindedness. The cries of the bird "come following each other as if they were

rapid spears of light in the middle of darkness" (Hussein 65). They awaken Amna from this horrible nightmare to see clearly this fearful, disdainful crime, the hateful guilty criminal, and the desperate victim lying dead amid her spilled blood.

The call of the bird is not only a witness to the treacherous crime, but biophony here also plays the role of an alarm that awakens Amna and her mother from this terrible experience. The mother is awake from her absent-mindedness asking her detestable brother, "Oh have you done it Nasser?!" (65). At this moment Amna is extremely discontented with her mother's attitude and thinks of her mother's weeping as "silly weeping, the weeping of the surrendering female who does not possess anything except her tears" (65). Amna thinks that the call of the bird awakened her and "awakened that criminal mother who spilled her daughter's blood at the hands of her own brother and it also awakened that criminal, reminding him that his crime should be hidden and the traces of his guilt should be erased"(Hussein 66). Here biophony's role is so concentrated that it nearly becomes a participant in the events and one of the major characters. His voice awakens Amna, her mother, and the tough uncle, but it is unable to awaken Hanadi because "whatever strong and persistent is your voice, it cannot penetrate the veils of death" (66).

It seems that the bird is as horrified as Amna so that it sends frequent, consecutive cries in addition to her screams. She addresses the bird saying, "our screaming voices fill the ample space", but in vain as neither "that woman stops her silly crying nor the hateful uncle stops burying the dead body in the previously prepared hole" (66). Again, she addresses the bird "your voice emerges in the ample space calling for help but none answers it and my voice emerges in the wide space calling for Hanadi but she does

not respond" (66). The repetitive poetic language of Taha Hussein concentrates on the sense of hearing to depict the fear, shock, grief and perplexity of the heroine. In this situation, biophony is friendly as the bird accompanies Amna, and tries to help and console her. However, anthropony is deceiving and aggressive as the mother is described as "this criminal mother" and the hateful uncle as "the criminal" (66).

After finishing with the burial of his victim, the harsh uncle is described mainly through his voice which is an "interrupted voice that is full of terror, fear and warning" (66). He orders Amna and her mother in a more "horrifying and threatening voice" (66) to say that Hanadi has died because of the spreading pandemic that attacked the city weeks ago. Chapter ten ends with Amna declaring that, as she faints, she no longer hears the bird's voice or her uncle's voice. Even when she is delirious because of fever in her Bedouin house, she remembers the voice of the dear bird which is weakening like a train gradually going far away. She also faintly remembers in disgust the damned, criminal voice of the sinful uncle.

The beginning of the falling action, or the anticlimax of the novel, occurs when Amna is preparing to work at the engineer's house in order to avenge the death of her sister on him. This work comes after a lot of scheming and planning. Amna spent most of the night talking to the ghosts of her late sister and reminding herself of the painful fate of Hanadi. She is completely convinced that though their ruthless uncle kills her sister, it is the engineer who is the primary cause of what happens to her. He deceived Hanadi and brought shame to the whole family. Amna never forgets the horrible murder of Hanadi as she never forgets planning to take revenge for her.

At that night, the voice of the bird comes to Amna as a solace and a source of hope. This time geophony also plays a role, represented by the air. Amna addresses the bird saying, "Oh dear bird, this is your voice carried to me by the air till it faintly reaches me, it spreads in the silence of the night as light spreads in the atmosphere" (138). She feels the voice of the bird approaching her and filling her with calmness and tranquility but with sadness at the same time. This is because it fully awakens Amna and reminds her of the agony of the past. Moreover, the curlew's call helps Amna prepare herself for the various possibilities of the future and to think slowly, with careful insight of what may happen to her in the coming days.

Amna ascertains the impact of the voice of the bird addressing it, "Yes, your voice fills my ears , fills my heart, covers me, I understand what it means, I remember my sister and her death, and I know who caused her death as I know who made her taste this death" (138). She releases her sorrow, anger, and suppressed secret thoughts to the curlew. She unites herself with the bird which helps her express her inner thoughts in a manner that resembles an interior monologue. Furthermore, Amna frankly tells the bird that she is going to the engineer's house the coming day to replace her late sister but she will not face her horrible destiny. She is not as naïve and inexperienced as her sister who was easily deceived by the engineer. She restores her mind and her strength to be able to tempt him and calmly avenge the death of her sister on him. To achieve her purpose, she will deal with the engineer with a smiling face but a completely dark heart. This reflects her ill intention and the purpose of her retributive scheme.

The last occasion on which the bird appears comes at the very end of the novel, marking its conclusion. It happens at the moment

of complete revelation between the heroine and the engineer. The voice of the bird reappears when the engineer proposes marriage to Amna, but she apologizes telling him the whole story of her late sister. At that moment, he realizes how he participated in torturing the girl and indirectly killing her. He becomes a loving, appreciative man who offers to help Amna carrying the burden of her sad story and horrible secret. The heroine and the engineer become absent-minded after the revelation of the whole truth. They are semiconscious in the awesome, complete silence of the room. It is at that time that the voice of the bird "snatches" (160) Amna from deep silence so that both she and the engineer fearfully jump. When they restore their calmness, the engineer says: "the call of the curlew! Was he echoing back his call when Hanadi was killed in that ample space!!"(160). Thus, Taha Hussein ends his novel with the call of the bird with its unique bond with the heroine, so that it becomes a connecting technical device throughout the novel. The cry of the bird accompanies the heroine from the beginning of the novel till the last lines. The bird is nearly one of the main characters of the novel through which the inner thoughts, agonies, feelings of revenge, schemes and planning of the heroine are plainly expressed to the readers. In every prominent stage of the plot, the bird is mentioned and his distinguished voice is present.

Thus, there is a dialogue between the anthropony and the biophony all the time. Amna resorts to the curlew most of the time, waits for his company and asks him for help. He is the truly honest friend that she can confide her secrets to him. However, what is unique about the dialogue is the "metaphoric equal footing upon which it takes place. Both the anthropony and biophony have their say in the discussion and their chance to be heard" (Marshall 97). On all important occasions, Taha Hussein affirms the strong bond between Amna and the bird. He has become a remarkable symbol

of the true friend from whom the heroine elicits her psychological repose. In addition to the role of a friend and main supporter to the heroine, the call of the bird constitutes a kind of rhythmic unity throughout the novel. The rhythm of the bird's call adds unity to the structure of the novel and beauty to the poetic language of Taha Hussein.

Besides focusing on the bird's calls, the author is as attentive to the sounds of the geophony and biophony as he is to the anthrophony. He is extraordinarily appreciative of various sounds. The soundscape created in the novel makes Amna interpret aural events or auditory sounds through her own thoughts and psychological state. Almost at every part of the novel the external events that take place around the heroine are filtered by her internal reflections on their sounds. This happens in many incidents that highlight her interaction with the various creatures according to her emotional and psychological state.

Amna interacts with the voices of many creatures during her stay with her mother and her sister at the mayor's house a few days before the murder of Hanadi. Both Amna and her sister are waiting for the unknown schemes and the harsh treatment of their tough uncle. The night becomes very long and hateful and they are in a devastating fear of the future. In the middle of that heavy, dull, miserable night, they hear the voice of a cock penetrating darkness and announcing the advent of the morning. The call of the cock penetrates the silence of the night and frightens the two sisters as it awakens them from deep slumber. Though the voice of the cock is generally a well-omen, it is here an ill-omen as it accelerates their departure to confront an unknown destiny. On a symbolic level, the biophony sends a desperate wake-up call to alert the helpless girls to the imminent misfortune. Here the sound of the biophony is an

alarming, fearful sound. Not only biophony, but also anthrophony appears strongly through the high sound of the caller of the mosque. He sends a high call to awaken people to pray. This call vibrates with the air to reflect the interaction of geophony and anthrophony. This mixture of biophony, geophony and anthrophony accompanies "this pale morning" and the "pale souls and scared hearts" of Amna and her sister (Hussein 59). They cannot ignore the call to pray at dawn because it is the same time of their departure from the mayor's house. They are accompanied by their passive mother and hateful uncle and they leave with perplexed eyes and agonized souls.

They resume their journey back to their native village. However, they temporarily stop in some villages on the way to have some rest or to spend the night at the mayor's house of each village. Suddenly at the middle of the night, their uncle orders them to ride the camels with their mother in order to resume their departure. At that time of the night anthrophony stops because there is lifeless silence except for biophony which comes from far way places. They hear the barks of dogs in far villages and other weak sounds surrounding them and mixing with the silence of the night producing "wonderful but fearful music in the meantime" (63). They are the sounds of insects and frogs at fields. In addition to these creatures, there is the hateful voice of the owls which is ill-omen and is thought to herald a coming disaster. All these sounds are heard by the heroine and her sister who whisper fearfully as they feel an approaching catastrophe. This scene occurs just before Hanadi's murder. The sonic ambience produced by these different creatures results in a fearful atmosphere that is very convenient to the approaching climax.

Some other hateful voices appear during Amna's hallucination when she is in fever after her great shock at Hanadi's murder.

During that time she imagines that she sees the shadows or the ghosts of her late sister. She wants her sister to respond to her calls and enquires "why she does not answer me? ...Does not she hear me calling her name in frequent, strong, violent screams?" (69). Of course her sister does not answer her but her mother and relatives come to calm her down. The disappearance of her sister's voice proves to her the impossibility of having a speech with the dead.

In the middle of this tranquil, primitive environment machines are rarely mentioned. The only time in which the train is mentioned, it is described negatively. The screech and roar of the train represents the negative auditory impact of the machines. Taha Hussein describes the advent of Amna to the city accompanied by seeing "that strange, horribly fearful sound, thin disturbing whistle which is called the train" (16). It seems that she is expounding the definition of the train as an oppressive, violent sound of industrial noise and an ugly representation of technological loudness. It shows that the sonic ambience of cities had changed by the turn of the century.

These scenes are portrayed through a deliberate blending of anthrophonic sound with the biophony and geophony. This amalgamation of all types of sound gives a precise sonic image of the time and place of these incidents. Therefore, the reader powerfully interacts with what he reads about so that he becomes indulged in the scenes and their descriptive details. One feels that "there is a kind of dialogue taking place, in which human, animal, and natural forces all have their say" (Marshall 93).

The sonic ambience around Amna does not only contain biophony and geophony but it also teems with anthrophonic sounds. Every human voice in the novel is associated with the personal attributes of its character. The "individual sounds" have their

"associative meanings as signals, symbols, keynotes, or sound marks" (Schafer 131). Amna almost all the time describes the characters through their voices in the different situations. This happens when she describes the sonic attributes of her weak mother, miserable sister, cruel uncle, and the deceiving engineer. The readers know the characters of the novel through the heroine's description of their voices and her own interpretation of them. Moreover, the aural events of Amna's life can be considered as the major components of her experience.

Among the anthrophonic sounds of the novel comes the voice of Amna's mother to convey her misery and sadness. Almost all the time she appears in a "suspicious deep silence" (20). It is the silence that accompanies sadness and anger. Her silence is an indication of an approaching catastrophe that absorbs all her vitality and vigor. When her voice is heard, it is a calm, sad voice. However, it is a firm and commanding voice. She orders her girls that the coming day they are going to leave "this ill-omen city" (20) meaning the city in which her older daughter brought shame on the family. Her voice is so "sad, remote and devastated" (21) to reflect her frustration and disappointment. Here, the author pauses to give the reader a kind of background information about this miserable woman. She was deceived by a selfish, immoral husband who died in a shameful way. Then she was expelled from her native village by her ruthless relatives who refused to shelter her and the two daughters because of their immoral father. Therefore, the recent plight of her older daughter is intolerable for her. She decides to return to their native town in spite of the ill-treatment of their relatives where they will be "miserable but safe" (33).

The voice of the mother changes according to the different situations she undergoes. In front of her daughters, her voice is sad

but commanding and firm. However, with strangers her voice is formal and her speech is concise. She addresses the mayor saying, "we are female strangers who reached the village at this late hour of the day, so please mayor, shelter us till the morning" (23). Her voice is "calm and balanced" (23) to be formal and realistic. Yet, on a rare occasion, Amna describes her mother's voice as "whispering, full of warm heartedness and sadness" (29) when she is contemplating the beautiful face of her elder daughter in sleep. She asks Amna to look at her sleeping sister's face "look for a long time! Don't you see her so beautiful?" (29). She is in great grief as she knows that Hanadi's sin destroys her life forever.

Similar to the weak, sad voice of the mother, is Hanadi's voice. During their temporary sojourn at the mayor's house, Amna notices that Hanadi is distracted and inattentive to all that surrounds her. She feels that her sister is distant, sad, and absent-minded. When Amna asks her why she looks at the sky, Hanadi answers in a "hesitating, interrupted" voice that she "wants nothing and wants nothing" (26). Hanadi is scared, desperate, frustrated and expects horrible events in the future. She trembles, her voice is suppressed and she breathes violently while shedding copious tears. When embraced and consoled by Amna, Hanadi says in a whispering, remote voice "I wished to be embraced by mother not you dear young sister, you are not created to spoil your sister or bestow on her such sympathy and compassion" (26). Hanadi is broken-hearted and she is in poor need for the sympathy and support of her mother who cannot forgive her sin.

The calm, desperate voice of Hanadi takes another shape at the climax of the novel. It turns into a frightening, horrible scream when her detestable uncle stabs her to the heart, causing her immediate death. This scream marks the end of Hanadi's life and

the obsession of Amna to avenge her death on the engineer who deceives her and destroys her life. However, Hanadi's voice appears in two contrasting states when Amna compares Hanadi's cheerful song before her sin and the groaning of her shadows after her death. Amna remembers Hanadi singing innocently like the other girls in the village. She imagines hearing "my sister's voice spreading in the ample space and filling it with happiness, mirth, rapture and pleasure" (93). She sings her frequent song with her "sweet, melodious voice which is carried by air and reaches to the others' souls as if it were dew drops" (93). Here, anthrophony is blended with geophony "air" and "dew drops" to convey the sweetness of Hanadi's song. The song says, "Oh my mother, how I love him! And if I love him, nobody can blame me" (93). This reveals how Hanadi was an innocent girl leading a simple hopeful life. However, after Hanadi's death, Amna imagines seeing the pale shadow of her sister producing a weak sound like that of an echo. This sound spreads in the air filling hearts with sorrow and grief. Its song is similar to sparks of fire that burn every heart and soul. This echo sends a groan and the song at the present is like a moaning call asking for help. The recent song reminds Amna of Hanadi as a victim of both the entrapping engineer and the detestable uncle. Therefore, it spreads "a desperate, sad singing" (94).

As for the voice of the uncle, it conveys his tough, harsh, and cruel character. When he comes to accompany the girls and their mother back to their hometown, he uses a tough accent and a firm dictatorial voice. He is a tough man who did not protect the girls from their ruthless relatives after the death of their father. He thinks of them as a burden to be disposed of. His Bedouin upbringing increases his toughness. His voice is always harsh, firm, commanding, and void of any merciful emotions.

Concerning the voice of the engineer, it is described according to his relationship with Amna. During her first days at his house, he tries to entrap her as he did with many previous girls. As she knows his seductive intention, she does not like either his voice, his "obnoxious jest", or his "silly laughter" (9). As she is careful not to be deceived by his cunning style, she is able to secretly criticize him. However, later on their relationship develops and he truly loves her. She is astonished to hear him imploring and begging for her love. He kneels in front of her then he silently weeps and finally bursts into tears. When she resists his love, he restores his calm, stable voice in an attempt to keep his dignified manner again. It is only near the end of the novel, after a period of innocent friendship between them, that the engineer proposes marriage to Amna. The detailed description of his voice as a direct, moderate and clear voice reveals that it is a moment of frank, well-intentioned speech. His voice becomes "calm and sad" when she tells him that she cannot accept his proposal. Insisting to know the reasons of rejecting his offer, his voice becomes nervous and "violent" (159) to know the whole truth. Then the final page of the novel reflects a thoughtful, factual voice suggesting that both he and Amna stay together to be able to bear the burden of their strange relationship. He advises her to be together particularly after being covered by "light" (160). Certainly by light he means the positive feelings of love and hope instead of the darkness of hatred and revenge.

Though most of the anthroponic sounds in the novel reflect sadness, perplexity, and conflict among characters, Taha Hussein perceives the anthropony in a cheerful, positive light on rare occasions. On their way back to their hometown, Amna and her sister passed by many fields. The author depicts a pleasurable image of singing girls and boys at these fields. They work in fields covered by the bright day light and they are full of hope and vitality.

They sing during working so that their voices raise "not with complaints or groans but raise with such a sweet, innocent singing that sends sweet, innocent melodic tones in the atmosphere" (60). In this scene, there is a wonderful blending of the geophony represented by the bright sun and the sweet air, and the singing of the anthrophony. This singing reflects hope, satisfaction, reassurance and work love. It seems that Taha Hussien portrays such a mirthful image to highlight the great contrast between the state of those people and the gloomy state of Amna, her sister, and their mother. Again, Amna stresses the beauty of nature around them saying, "these fertile fields are full of productive activity and this sweet singing rises in the atmosphere and mixes with light and air, and we pass a village after another one" (62). She urges her sister to interact with this wonderful state of rapture around them and to sing like the other girls but in vain.

The only reassuring anthroponic voice in the novel is the voice of Khadija, the Sheriff's daughter. During her work at their house, Amna admires the nice character of Khadija. She describes her speech as "a delicate, sweet language" (19) which is the language of urban cities not the tough language of villages. Khadija is so friendly with Amna that she confides her thoughts and secrets to her. Through imitating Khadija, Amna becomes more civilized. She not only becomes literate but she also discusses Khadija in her French books. Khadija's voice plays the role of a great solace to Amna that helps her to forget the horrors of her suffering life. It is the voice of culture, tolerance, kindness and friendship in Amna's life.

Thus Taha Hussein's sound- focused style in *Doaa Al Karawan* enables him to skillfully depict a varied influential sonic ambience. With the help of his peculiar use of sound, he reveals the thoughts

and plights of his characters particularly those of his heroine. Throughout the interactions of the characters with their sonic environment, readers can explore not only their external conflicts but also their internal ones. On hearing the call of the bird, Amna indulges in a private listening experience, recalling particular past memories with all their suffering and revealing her future plans of revenge. Moreover, he perfectly manages to create a wonderful amalgamation of biophony, geophony, and anthrophony. Therefore, he successfully conveys the aural environment of the place of the events. Furthermore, he uses the bird's voice as a narrative link that unites the different stages of the plot.

Doaa Al Karawan proves to be, as Angela Frattarola says about the modern novel, "saturated with sound – both in content and form" (Toth 566). Besides the idea of making a singing bird, like the curlew, one of the main characters of the novel, Taha Hussein's poetical writing style plays another principal role. He gives some of its paragraphs a musical form and uses the bird "for tonality as if it were a melody in a piece of music that appears repeatedly" (Al Raie 20). Samar Sedr thinks that the novel "is dominated by a musical style that is flowing with a sad, romantic tone" (Sedr Hkaer jalees). Moreover, Muhammed Mandour ascertains that Taha Hussein's highly poetic vocabulary gives the novel the "musical sense" (47) that is felt throughout reading it.

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الملخص :

يعتبر الصوت خاصية أساسية من خصائص الطبيعة. وتدرس البيئة الصوتية العلاقة بين البيئة الطبيعية والمخلوقات التي تشكل أصواتها. ويعتبر موراى سكيفر أن الأصوات هي احدى السمات البيئية للبيئة الطبيعية ويشير إلى البيئة الصوتية على أنها ' السمات السمعية لمنطقة معينة والتي تعكس العمليات الطبيعية لهذه المنطقة' (112). ويصف بيرناى كروز الأصوات الحيوية للكائنات الحية ب(الأصوات البيولوجية) والأصوات غير الحيوية مثل صوت المطر والعواصف والرياح ب (الأصوات ذات الطبيعة الجغرافية) ثم تم اضافة (الأصوات البشرية) لتصف الأصوات التي ينتجها البشر.

هذا وتحتل رواية دعاء الكروان للأديب طه حسين مكانا بارزا بين كل النصوص الأدبية الحديثة التي تعج بالأصوات. ويظهر شغف طه حسين بالأصوات جليًا على الأخص في اختياره طائرًا مغردًا ليكون شخصية رئيسية تساند بطله الرواية. كما أنه تعمد كتابة الرواية بأسلوب شعري بلاغى لكى تكون ملائمة لهدفه التعليمى منها وهو تقديم عبرة وعظة. وأصبح وجود الكروان ضروريًا للكاتب ليمكنه من كشف الأفكار والمشاعر الداخلية لبطلته. كما أنه يستخدمه كوسيلة تقنية ليتتبع المراحل المختلفة لحبكة الرواية. وبالإضافة لنداء الطائر الذى يسيطر على معظم مراحل الرواية، فإنه يوجد العديد من الأصوات الأخرى المميزة مثل صياح الديك، وصوت الضفادع والكلاب واليوم الذى يصاحب أحداث الرواية ويعكس الحالات المختلفة للبطله. وبالإضافة الى ذلك يرسم الكاتب الشخصيات المختلفة للرواية من خلال وصفه الدقيق لأصواتهم وتفاعلهم مع الأصوات المختلفة المحيطة بهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصوت، البيئة الصوتية، السمة البيئية، أصوات بيولوجية، أصوات

ذات طبيعة جغرافية، أصوات بشرية، طه حسين، دعاء الكروان