

**Taha Hussein's *Duaa Al Karawan* Revisited in the Light of Ecofeminism****Hala Ewaidat****Abeer Elgamal**Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Education  
Mansoura University, Egypt**Abstract**

This research paper, titled "Taha Hussein's *Duaa Al Karawan* Revisited in the Light of Ecofeminism," explores the profound ecological and feminist themes embedded in Taha Hussein's novel, *Duaa Al Karawan*, written in 1934. Despite predating the formal coining of the term "ecofeminism" by Françoise D'Eaubonne in the 1970s, Hussein's work remarkably anticipates and addresses the core tenets of ecofeminism. The paper delves into the interconnectedness between the oppression of women and the degradation of the environment, both attributed to patriarchal systems.

Taha Hussein, a prominent figure in Arabic literature (1889-1973), intricately weaves together the experiences of Arab women and the environmental context in his writings, challenging prevailing patriarchal norms and advocating for women's empowerment. *Duaa Al Karawan* stands out as one of the earliest Arabic novels to explicitly present ecofeminist themes, laying the foundation for discussions on equality and sustainability.

Examining *Duaa Al Karawan* through an eco-feminist lens, this study highlights how Hussein establishes an inseparable link between women, their surroundings, and the prevailing social structures in Egyptian society at the time. The title itself, along with Hussein's dedication to Abbass Mahmoud El-Akkad, underscores the novel's emphasis on the natural world. The nightingale symbolizes this connection, witnessing the protagonist's journey and serving as a voice for the repressed female protagonist. The narrative unfolds in three sections, addressing the identification of the protagonist with the nightingale, the oppression of women in patriarchal societies, and the themes of love and peace as sources of empowerment.

**Keywords:**Ecofeminism; Taha Hussein; *Duaa Al Karawan*; Arab Women; Patriarchal Systems; Environmental Literature

### المستخلص

هذه القراءة لرواية عميد الأدب العربي طه حسين، دعاء الكروان، تهدف لاستكشاف أسس النسوية البيئية المضمنة في سردها، وتقدم منظورًا يوضح أنها أتت كتعبير عن النظرية النسوية البيئية حتى قبل وجودها. من خلال التحليل، تهدف الورقة إلى كشف فهم حسين للعلاقة المتأصلة بين المرأة والبيئة، بما يتماشى مع المبادئ الأساسية للنسوية البيئية. تضع هذه الدراسة حسين كصاحب رؤية، مدرِّكًا للتأثير الضار للأنظمة الأبوية على كل من المرأة والطبيعة، ويسعى إلى تحدي الأعراف المجتمعية وتمكين المرأة قبل فترة طويلة من ظهور الفكر النسوي البيئي الغربي. تعتبر الرواية التي نُشرت عام 1934، بمثابة عمل رائد في الأدب العربي، حيث تقدم النسوية البيئية في مراحلها الناشئة. ينتقل السرد في الحياة المتشابكة لبطل الرواية، آمنة، والعالم الطبيعي، متمثلًا في الوجود المستمر لطائر الكروان الذي يعمل كشاهد على الأماسة التي تحدث لأسرة مكونة من أم وبنيتين وعلي تطور الابنة الصغرى آمنة، وتقدم استعارة مؤثرة للأصوات الصامتة للنساء المضطهدات. بعد دراسة موجزة للنسوية البيئية كإطار نظري، يتكشف التحليل عبر قسمين موضوعيين، مع التركيز على تماهي بطل الرواية مع الكروان في الجزء الأول، ثم التركيز بعد ذلك على اضطهاد النساء والتقليل من قدرهن والمفاهيم التقدمية الداعية للتخلي عن تقليد الانتقام وتبني الحب والسلام.

إن تجارب طه حسين الشخصية، ولا سيما فقدانه لبصره، صقلت لديه قوي الإدراك الحسي السمعي والحدسي، مما ساعده علي فهم أصوات المهمشين، بما في ذلك أصوات النساء والطبيعة. تتعكس حدة السمع هذا السرد المعقد للرواية، بنسج دعاء الكروان ونضالات النساء غير المتعلمات في مجتمع يهيمن عليه الذكور. ويتجلى التزام حسين بالتحول المجتمعي والتنشيط الفكري في دوره كمتقف مصري يدعو إلى التعليم المجاني، وخاصة للنساء. هذا الموقف يضعه كرائد في حركة التنوير العربية، متحدثًا بالأعراف المجتمعية ومعززًا للمساواة بين الجنسين. وباستعراض بعض الأصوات الناقدة في الأدب النسوي البيئي، تضع الدراسة عمل حسين ضمن سياق عالمي أوسع، مع التركيز على الأهداف المشتركة المتمثلة في الاستعادة البيئية والقضاء على عدم المساواة بين الجنسين. ومن خلال القيام بذلك، يؤسس البحث مساهمة حسين الأساسية في الخطاب النسوي البيئي ويضع دعاء الكروان كنموذج مبكر لهذا الإطار النظري في الأدب العربي.

### الكلمات المفتاحية:

طه حسين، دعاء الكروان، النسوية البيئية، النوع الاجتماعي، البيئة، الأعراف المجتمعية.

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It is a horrifying cry that was heard, and a heavy body falls to the ground, it is my sister, my uncle stabbed her. My mother and I are close to Hanady's dying body, restlessly shaking and her blood bursts as if water is coming out of a will. (*Duaa Al Kaarwan*, 65)

Arabic literature is full of treasures that are worth exploring in the light of recent critical theories. It is amazing how some texts that precede the emergence and articulation of some theories come out as perfect representatives of a theory. The purpose of these series of papers (this one is the first) is to shed light on some great Arabic texts that delve into the core of ecofeminism even before the term itself was coined in the 1970s by Françoise d'Eaubonne. Ecofeminism is a relatively new theory that blends ecology with feminism stressing the commonality of the oppression of women and that of nature by men and addressing the dire need for equality and sustainability in our modern world.

Taha Hussein (1889-1973) realized the inseparable connectedness between women and the environment in the same manner that ecofeminism stipulates, stressing that it is the patriarchal system that damaged life for both. The bulk of Hussein's work, not just his writings, echoes the realities of Arab women's world, their suffering, interests, and aspirations. It defies the traditions and prevalent patriarchal culture for the purpose of empowering women four decades before the first eco feminists in the West formulated the same ideas into a theory. *Duaa Al Karawan* (1934) (Translated to *The Nightingale Prayer* or *The Prayer of The Curlew*) is one of the first novels that presented ecofeminism in Arabic literature in the beginning of the twentieth century.

This study examines *Duaa Al Karawan* through the eco-feminist lens showing how Hussein creates an insoluble link between women and their surrounding environment and the prevalent social structures in the Egyptian society. The title itself, stressing the and the dedication that Hussein writes as a tribute to Abbass Mahmoud El-Akkad testify to the importance to the natural world in the novel, symbolized in the presence of the nightingale which witnesses the tragedy and the development of the female protagonist from start to end. In the first section of the novel, Hussein focuses on the identification of the protagonist with the

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nightingale which is given a voice to compensate the heroine's repressed voice as a female. In the second part, the stress is on the oppression of women in patriarchal societies and the prevalent tradition of revenge and finally on the concepts of love and peace through which she is empowered.

Losing his eyesight at an early age due to ignorance and the dominance of superstitions on how to deal with illness intensified Hussein's ability to hear the sounds of nature and listen to the voices of the voiceless, namely women and nature, and to speak for them and eventually to create the link between the prayer of the nightingale and the suffering of naïve, oppressed uneducated women in a male dominated society which is the major interest of this pioneering novel.

In *The Eco criticism Reader*, Glotfelty, Cheryll, and Harold Fromm asked a question that seems to be one of Hussein's preoccupations: "How then can we contribute to environmental restoration, not just in our spare time, but from within our capacity as professors of literature? The answer lies in recognizing that current environmental problems are largely of our own making; they are certainly a by-product of culture." (1996: PXXI) Hussein came to the same conclusion years earlier; he believed in the role of Egyptian intellectuals in changing culture and rebuilding a modern and more enlightened and sustainable Arab society that sees women as full-fledged human beings who can contribute to its development in the same capacity as men. Endless battles he had to fight against the old-fashioned traditions, class distinction, and oppression of women. He called for all Egyptians' right in free education, males and females, and he considered it a right of birth as essential as air and water to all humans. Eid Abdelhalim (2016) asserts that, "Taha Hussein's efforts represented a substantial aspect of the Arab Enlightenment movement in the twentieth century. . . especially the right for education for all humans and women's rights." (8) When he was appointed dean of the faculty of Arts, women joined the university. Hussein became Minister of Education in 1950, and it was then that the right in free education until the secondary stage for Egyptians from all classes was guaranteed. His philosophies were not separated from the realities and the problems of the society that he himself had lived in as a member of the middle class. Hussein was a passionate learner and an avid reader; he acquired wide knowledge of ancient and modern cultures. He was open to new ideas and capable of assimilating new ways of living after his studying at the Sorbonne for his Ph.D. Thus, Hussein was able to affect radical changes in the Egyptian society and its culture and improve conditions for women. His works

were controversial because of his revolutionary ideas and endeavors to generate an intellectual, social, and political revival of Arabic environment and culture.

Susan Buckingham (146) rightly argues that Ecofeminism as a neologism conceived by Françoise d'Eaubonne in her infamous book *Le Feminisme ou la Mort* (Feminism or Death) signifies the conjoining of radical ecological and feminist thinking in a variety of perspectives, for the purpose of eliminating gender inequalities and hierarchies in a way that values the environment and articulates parallels between the exploitation of women and environment. With the publication in the United States of Carolyn Merchant's book *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* in 1980, the movement "spread worldwide to comprehend a great "variety of regional, ethnic, and cultural ecofeminisms," as noted by Heather Eaton (365). In his book *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, Buell uses Davion's phrase "the twin dominations of women and nature" (Davion 234) as "an umbrella term for a range of theoretical and practical positions" of "patriarchal culture instituted in antiquity and (as argued most influentially in Merchant 1980) intensified by the epistemological dualism and rational instrumentalism of the scientific and technological revolutions." (Buell 139) Charis Thompson believes that Merchant's "The Death of Nature is commonly considered to be one of the founding texts—perhaps the founding text—for the articulation of ecofeminism in the U.S. academy." (2006)

In "Eco feminism and Deep Ecology", Cheney notes that, "The term ecological feminism or ecofeminism refers to a sensibility, an intimation, that feminist concerns run parallel to, are bound up with, or, perhaps, are one with concern for a natural world which has been subjected to much the same abuse and ambivalent behavior as have women." (115) In *Ecological Feminist Philosophies*, Karen J. Warren explains that Ecological Feminism "captures a variety of multicultural perspectives on the nature of the connection within social systems of domination between those humans in subdominant or subordinate positions, particularly women, and the domination of nonhuman nature". (1) Sherilyn MacGregor asserts that the connection between the oppression of women and nature is the core of Ecofeminism which "describes movements and philosophies that link feminism with ecology." (286) The empowerment of oppressed women is the essential objective of both ecology and the four fundamental feminist theories: social, radical, liberal and Marxist. Charlene Spretnak clarifies that

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varieties of eco feminisms emerged with the several kinds and waves of feminism. (123)

Fifty years of constant change and development of the term as Margarita Estévez-Saá & María Jesús Lorenzo-Modia note in 2018 “eco-feminist values, principles, practices, and orientations have been explained, described, reformulated, refined, questioned, and indeed criticized.” (123) Glazebrook T. affirms that Ecofeminism is ‘the theory and practice’ of examining and challenging the political, social, historical, epistemological, and conceptual links between the domination of women and the exploitation of nature. (807) Warren points out that this movement does not only seek to eliminate prejudice against women and the environment, but all forms of social injustice.

A close examination of the novel at hand proves that Taha Hussein explores elements of the theory and practices of ecofeminism long before they were formulated in Western Academia as the above brief survey of its history and development shows. Not to mention the title itself, *Duaa Al Karawan* opens with the protagonist’s conversation with a nightingale, or rather, the nightingale because it is treated all through the novel as an independent character that follows the events and character development of the main character. Amnah resorts to it as a trusted friend and confidant, revealing her suffering and that of Hanady and their mother as women in a patriarchal society in a harsh environment that forces them to relocate and get uprooted because of a crime that their father has done. They had to pay for his sins and leave the community they belong to behind simply because it will not accept women without a man.

Amnah's quest for self-fulfillment unfolds in two distinct phases, delineated by the tragic murder of her sister Hanady at the hands of their uncle, emblematic of oppressive male authority. This event compels Zohra, the mother, and her daughters into an involuntary departure from their tribal community following the immoral actions of their deceased father. Forced to eke out a living, they find themselves working as household servants for affluent families in the newfound small town. Despite enduring hardships in separate employments, the family reunites weekly in modest rented lodgings. Amnah, employed as a servant for Khadija, the sheriff's daughter, benefits by having access to education. Meanwhile, Hanady, employed by an unnamed engineer, becomes entangled in a love affair that culminates in pregnancy. Faced with distress, the mother appeals to her brother to take the family back home.

However, instead of taking full accountability for abandoning his sister and her daughters, Naser, the uncle, callously murders Hanady,



ordering the family to falsely claim her death as a result of the plague. Annah, witnessing the tragedy, escapes the oppressive, male-dominated tribal society. She vows to avenge her sister's death by secretly working for the engineer who had been Hanady's lover, concealing her true identity. Despite the engineer's attempts to seduce her as he did with Hanady, Annah maintains her composure, serving him loyally and patiently awaiting the opportune moment for retribution. The narrative takes an unexpected turn when the engineer confesses his love for Annah and proposes marriage, defying societal norms, traditions, and class distinctions.

Annah, torn between love for the engineer and her commitment to avenge Hanady, reveals her sister's tragic fate. The plot thickens as Annah discovers her own love for the engineer, making it inconceivable for her to inflict harm upon him, let alone seek revenge for her sister's death. The novel's conclusion introduces a surprising twist aligned with ecofeminist principles, emphasizing transformative and healing concepts. Annah and the engineer choose to confront life together, challenging the cycle of revenge. Their union serves as a powerful repudiation of entrenched traditions and class hierarchies, defying societal expectations that deemed a marriage between an educated upper-class man and a humble peasant servant unthinkable. In this way, Hussein underscores the potency of love as a healing force capable of dismantling unjust and dehumanizing traditions.

Hussein's formative years in early twentieth-century Upper Egypt deeply ingrained in him a disdain for the oppressive practices pervasive in male-dominated societies, particularly in their treatment of women and marginalized classes, along with the vengeful traditions that prevailed. His literary depiction of this world in *Duaa Al Karawan* serves as a testament to his progressive ideologies and earnest endeavors to enlighten the nation about the pivotal role women play in fostering societal advancement during the modern Arab world's renaissance. The transformation of the central character, initially known as Annah and later as Soad, facilitated Hussein's role as a social reformer and eco-feminist, providing a platform to advocate for women's empowerment. The narrative delves into the profound influence of the environment on a woman's self-esteem and her societal contributions, exploring these dynamics in two distinct cultural and social settings: the rural/tribal and the urban.

In the tribal rural milieu, Annah epitomizes an uninformed, fragile, submissive, and vulnerable peasant grappling with the pitfalls of unawareness, ignorance, and the oppressive patriarchal system. However,

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following an episode of personal and familial tragedy, including the murder of her sister orchestrated by her uncle, Amnah undergoes a metamorphosis. She adopts the name Soad and escapes to work at the engineer's residence with the intent of seeking revenge. In the urban setting, Soad emerges as the moniker of choice for Amnah, symbolizing an educated, independent rebel capable of autonomous decision-making. Soad vehemently rejects the unjust and degrading traditions governing the treatment of women, which led to her sister's tragic demise, while her perpetrators—the uncle and the engineer—remain unpunished. This dichotomy between the rural and urban communities, embodied in the transformation of Amnah to Soad, serves as a narrative device through which Hussein, as a writer and thinker, explores themes of empowerment, resilience, and the defiance of oppressive norms, particularly as they pertain to the female experience.

Amenah's transformative journey from the subservient, oppressed Amnah to the assertive and educated Soad aligns seamlessly with ecofeminist principles that advocate for the liberation and empowerment of women. Ecofeminism, as a theoretical framework, emphasizes the interconnectedness between the oppression of women and the degradation of the environment, viewing both as intertwined facets of patriarchal systems. Amnah's evolution mirrors this ecofeminist perspective, depicting her emancipation from the constraints of a tribal, male-dominated society and her subsequent resistance against unjust traditions. Through her education and newfound autonomy, Soad challenges societal norms that perpetuate gender inequality, echoing the ecofeminist call for women's agency and societal transformation. Hussein's portrayal of Amnah's metamorphosis reflects his commitment to advancing ecofeminist ideals by illustrating how a woman's empowerment and liberation contribute to broader societal change, promoting a more equitable and sustainable future.

Hussein believes it is the ethical responsibility of intellectuals to enlighten people in order to change the prevalent ideas that lead to the marginalization and unfair treatment of women. In a like manner, Donald Worster declares in *The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination* that what is really needed is to raise people's awareness:

We are facing a global crisis today, not because of how ecosystems function but rather because of how our ethical systems function. . . .  
Historians, along with literary scholars, anthropologists, and



philosophers, cannot do the reforming, of course, but they can help with the understanding (27).

This is the mission Hussein believed in and the message he tried to convey. His novel gave the readers of his time understanding and this is what helped him in convincing families to send their daughters to school and then to the university and in changing the society's perception of the role of women and the need for her empowerment.

When Carolyn Merchant in *The Death of Nature* (1980) established the pillars of the emerging concept of ecofeminism, she compared the state of respect and even worshipping of both woman and nature in prehistoric society to the devaluation in the male dominated society. This created links, communication and even identification between women and nature. Recently, Zhen Yang concluded that, "The identification of women with nature . . . is the primary content of eco-feminism." (287) Hussein, the eco-feminist, presented inner and psychological problems of the protagonist in *Duaa Al Karawan* through her identification with the nightingale. Amnah's conversation with the nightingale started on the second page of the novel:

Here I am dear bird, still awake watching out for your arrival, waiting for your call. I cannot sleep until I feel your presence, hear your voice, and answer your call in that vast space. Haven't I done this for twenty years? The souls are relieved in this darkness, fearless and silent. Your call is like the sounds of those souls, it reminds me of my sister's soul that you and I witnessed her death at that horrifying, momentous night when it was impossible that a voice could be heard, or a help obtained. (9)

Taha Hussein unifies the sad voice of the nightingale with women's cries of oppression and suppression. Amnah, the poor, smart and insightful peasant identifies herself with the nightingale and asks the bird to allow her to tell her story which is still a repeated case in some Arab societies that persecute women and deny them their rights.

Hussein underscores the ethical obligation of intellectuals to bring about enlightenment and challenge prevailing ideas that perpetuate the marginalization and mistreatment of women. In alignment with this perspective, Donald Worster, in "The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination," contends that the global crisis we face stems not from ecosystem functionalities but rather from ethical systems. He asserts that historians, alongside scholars in literature, anthropology, and philosophy, play a role in fostering understanding, though they cannot solely instigate reform (27). This aligns with Hussein's mission, as reflected in his novel, which provided

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contemporaneous readers with understanding and aided in persuading families to educate their daughters, thereby altering societal perceptions regarding women's roles and the imperative of empowerment.

In Carolyn Merchant's foundational work, "The Death of Nature" (1980), she draws parallels between the revered status of women and nature in prehistoric societies and their subsequent devaluation in male-dominated cultures, forming a basis for the emerging concept of ecofeminism. Zhen Yang further underscores this connection, stating, "The identification of women with nature . . . is the primary content of eco-feminism" (287). Hussein, embodying an ecofeminist stance, intricately weaves the inner and psychological struggles of the protagonist in *Duaa Al Karawan* through her identification with the nightingale. Amnah's poignant conversation with the nightingale commences early in the novel, symbolizing a twenty-year-long connection:

Here I am dear bird, still awake watching out for your arrival, waiting for your call. I cannot sleep until I feel your presence, hear your voice, and answer your call in that vast space. Haven't I done this for twenty years? The souls are relieved in this darkness, fearless and silent. Your call is like the sounds of those souls, it reminds me of my sister's soul that you and I witnessed her death at that horrifying, momentous night when it was impossible that a voice could be heard, or a help obtained. (9)

Taha Hussein masterfully unites the melancholic voice of the nightingale with the cries of oppressed women. Amnah, the impoverished yet astute peasant, identifies herself with the nightingale and implores the bird to allow her to share her story—a narrative still echoed in some Arab societies that persecute women and deprive them of their rights.

The nightingale, an unwitting witness to Amnah's profound suffering and the tribulations of other women, stands sentinel to the anguish endured by a mother at the hands of a selfish and immoral husband, whose reckless desires shatter the family, and a callous brother who adds to their distress. The entire family experiences misery and alienation, condemned by a merciless society that punishes them for the misdeeds of the murdered father. The heartless decision of the uncle to exile them from their home forces them to navigate unfamiliar towns on their own. The nightingale observes these harrowing incidents alongside the mother and Amnah, culminating in the murder of Hanady and her burial witnessed by her mother and sister.

In these horrific events, Naser, the uncle, orchestrates the crime, forsaking his bonds of brotherhood and humanity. He callously takes the

life of his niece, prioritizing tradition and societal shame over compassion. The connection between the heroine and the bird is extraordinary. Amnah's identification with the nightingale transcends the individual, evolving into a symbiotic unity expressed through the shared pronoun 'we.' This bond signifies a profound intertwining of their fates, as both the woman and the bird navigate the depths of despair and injustice. The following quote underscores the bond between women and nature that is the core of ecofeminism:

Dear bird, here I am answering your call. Come closer. . . Listen to me and talk to me. Let's recall that tragedy that we witnessed together and were helpless. . . . We were only sending our cries in the space, but no ear or heart could hear us. Our cries mount up while the torn beautiful body fell down in the hole prepared and covered with dust. You were crying but no one to answer. I was crying for help but no one to give a hand. An old woman there shedding tears in deep silence and an old man sat aside levelling the land, pouring water and then cleaning his body and clothes from the dust and the blood. His voice then was louder, giving orders to leave. (10)

The symbiotic connection between the protagonist and the nightingale transcends the boundaries of the human-non-human relationship, facilitated by Hussein's adept use of audio-visual techniques that provide the reader with an effective depiction of Amnah's interactions with the nightingale. This does not only serve as a literary device but also enhances the emotional and sensory dimensions of their relationship. Through vivid descriptions and auditory cues, Hussein enriches the narrative, allowing readers to engage more deeply with the protagonist's emotional journey and her profound connection with the natural world. This technique becomes a powerful vehicle for conveying the intricate layers of ecofeminist themes embedded in the story, fostering a sensory experience that mirrors the broader ecological concerns explored in the novel. Amnah's profound reliance on the bird serves as a catalyst for her self-awareness, prompting a realization of her own vulnerability. In the context of ecofeminism, this form of identification aligns with Matthew's observation in "Deep Ecology," where he notes that ecofeminism envisions a relational understanding of selfhood grounded in active identification with increasingly broader circles of being (221).

Prior to the tragic murder of her sister, Amnah's discourse with the nightingale underscores the shared empathy and restlessness between them:

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Here we are dear bird, spreading your fast call in the silent darkness as if it were a plea for help. What's your news? . . . Send your cry fast I am awake. . . I do not think I can go back to sleep before witnessing something like the look I saw on my sister's face when she was staring as if waiting for news from heaven. I feel I will see her in the same state of yesterday. I am getting up but there is something about you and your nonstop cry. (45)

The profound identification between Annah and the nightingale extends beyond the physical realm, delving into a metaphysical connection. The nightingale's prayer, now transformed into an unceasing cry, carries a message that becomes clearer to Annah after the tragic murder of Hanady. The persistent plea for help, akin to a "news from heaven," remained unheard in the vast expanse of space. Notably, Hussein suggests not only the empathetic resonance of the nightingale with Annah's emotional turmoil but also hints at a broader interconnectedness among all living beings, emphasizing the shared experiences and struggles within the intricate web of existence, human and unhuman:

The dark, silent momentous night is not yours alone as it used to be. What woke the other birds up? I can hear the movement of their wings, I feel they are out of their nests in panic in this dreadful atmosphere. What woke the dogs up? I can hear their strong, continuous barking. Even the people, what woke them up. . . This is your call, as if your mission is not just waking me up alone, but all the people and all the living creatures. (46)

Hussein's eco-feministic view of women's ability to communicate with nature made Annah feel the bird's prayer was an indication of a forthcoming danger. But as a woman in that male dominated society, she is helpless and voiceless. Through this identification and intimacy with the bird, the night and other elements of nature, Annah realizes later that the bird's cries in the night of Hanady's murder were but warnings from nature of the approaching dreadful events related to her own fears and worries and to subverting the eco system itself:

This is your last cry dear bird and your voice comes closer and your singing spreads as if it is light that reveals the horror we felt but could not see. Here you are sending your cries in the air as if arrows of light in this darkness that made everything obvious: the horrible crime, the hateful murderer and the victim lying there in blood. (46)

Physically and spiritually, the nightingale's cries were "arrows of light", light of liberation from fears Amnah has always lived with, the uncle or the embodiment of the male dominated society and the darkness and heaviness of tradition on the hearts of women. She can now see the reality of the oppression of her community, the bird acts as an eye opener to make the dark reality of women clear to her. Just like the bird, Amnah feels the need to escape and free herself of the vicious past. After the murder of her sister, the bird's cry sharpens Amnah's vision of women's status in the surrounding environment:

Your voice did not only wake me up alone but also awakened my mother. She asks her brother unbelievably you did it Naser?! Then she gets drowned in silly, meaningless crying, the crying of a disparate, helpless, and surrendering female who has got nothing but shedding tears. Damned you miserable woman! You can cry for ages but you cannot wash one drop of this pure blood. Damned you criminal mother! You can never restore your innocence and safety. Yes my dear bird, your voice woke me up and that criminal mother that killed her own daughter by the hands of her brother. Your voice even awakened that criminal himself to start erasing the remains of his crime. But your voice could not wake Hanady up, no matter how strong or repeated, it cannot penetrate through the thick curtains of death. (65)

The author uses the identification between Amnah and the nightingale to convict the tyrannical passivity of a patriarchal, suppressive tribal-rural community. Amnah's identification with the nightingale awakens her mind and soul. It undermines the bonds of family and community that show no sympathy or respect to her humanity. She is educated and cannot accept her mother's submission. Hanan Al Amayra argues that Hussein is one of the pioneers to use the nightingale as 'an intellectual symbol' that has cultural and psychological indications. On hearing its voice, Amnah discloses the painful past and present events of her life and unveils the secrets of her inner self as if this voice takes her to the past and back to reality. (24)

In all the stages Amnah has been through, the voice of the nightingale is there as if penetrating into her mind and soul and inspiring her future plans:

This is your voice dear bird, it comes closer little by little to fill me with safety, tranquility and sadness. It fills my ears, heart and soul and I understand what you want: to remember my sister and her death, remember who killed her and who sent her to death. Tomorrow I will be going to work at the engineer's house where my sister used to be but I



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will not encounter her fate in that vast space. . . I heard from you dear bird and I understood and now I regained my mind and my strength and in waiting for the morning to go to the engineer, my heart is in total darkness and my face smiles. (138)

The profound identification with the nightingale serves as a wellspring of empowerment for Amnah, providing solace in a realm where she cannot freely articulate her thoughts to others. The intricate connection between her emotions and the avian voice is pronounced, with her resolve to avenge her sister arising as a direct response to the messages conveyed by the nightingale. The understanding and fortification of her inner strength, as well as the restoration of peace to her troubled mind, are intricately interlinked with the ethereal voice of the nightingale.

In a poignant culmination at the novel's end, the nightingale's song resonates once more. However, this time, it captures the attention and elicits a response from the engineer, elevating the nightingale from a mere observer to an integral component of the engineer's psyche. This transformation underscores the profound impact of nature and its symbols in influencing the emotional landscapes of individuals, forging a connection between the human and the natural world as the following quote elucidates:

The talk between us (Amnah and the engineer) stopped. We were drowned in silence . . . but your voice dear bird grabbed me out of it and I jumped afraid as he did, then, peace and tranquility are restored. Two hot drops of tears roll on my face and he said, "The nightingale prayer! Do you think the nightingale repeated that voice when Hanady was murdered in that vast space!! (160)

Rendered speechless by the unfolding events, humans find solace in the mellifluous cadence of the nightingale's song, providing Amnah with a profound sense of "peace." This resonant connection with the bird mirrors her innermost self, allowing her to confront her fears with love instead of vengeance, thereby restoring tranquility and equilibrium within her immediate environment. The symbiotic harmony between Amnah and the nightingale serves as a poignant manifestation of Taha Hussein's ecofeminist aspirations. In seeking to reconstruct the societal fabric of Upper Egypt, Hussein proposes a resolution to the entrenched tradition of revenge, envisioning a transformative narrative that predates the emergence of the ecofeminist movement in the Western world. Through this narrative, Hussein strives to lay the groundwork for a more equitable



and compassionate world for women, fostering an ethos of harmony with the natural world.

Zohra, the feeble, ignorant, submissive and oppressed mother is the typical image of woman at that time in the male dominated tribal community. She loves and obeys her husband in spite of his irresponsibility, immorality, unfaithfulness and violence. When her husband is murdered, according to tradition and the dominant culture, her brother is supposed to assume full responsibility of the women of his family. But this is not what happens as young Amnah notices:

Nasser, my uncle was cruel to my mother and to us. He did not think of us as orphans or of my mother as a widow. He only thought of the family and the people's gossip and the shame and disgrace. Few days later he came with a dark face to convince mother that leaving the village is inevitable. (51)

Nasser forces the poor, helpless, naïve women to face the world away from their tribal community for the first time all by themselves. Nevertheless, when the mother discovers Hanady's premarital pregnancy, she cannot take the decision of helping and protecting her daughter. She refuses to continue living and working in the villages at rich people's houses whom she and her daughters used to serve. She tells her daughters "our village that banished us, it is still our shelter... We will return to our first life and live among our people, miserable yes but safe." (33). Though she has been failed by a reckless husband and callous brother, Zohra insists that "A woman should be protected" (33) by a male figure whether a father, a husband or a brother and when young Amnah objects, the mother still insists on going back to their village.

The mother is convinced that women need to be protected by men in order to be safe, though neither her husband nor brother give her or her daughters the security they need all through the novel. Unable to provide for her daughters, the mother had to work to earn her living and had to send them to work as house maids in different places. Young as she is, Amnah feels the humiliation of their situation "Our mother would take us to those houses of the rich traders and governmental officials to expose her daughters for service, exactly the same manner when slaves are shown to their masters." (17) Slavery is mentioned more than once to describe the state of a woman who cannot decide for herself or have the freedom of choice. Amnah is in a way the mouthpiece of Hussein uses to lash the urban materialistic community with criticism and to call for changing conditions for women and the poor:

I worked at the sheriff's house. My job was mainly the company of his daughter, almost my age. Like slaves, I was to be with her

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when she goes to play but not permitted to play with her, when she reads, I am with her but not allowed to learn from her. When the tutor teaches her, I am there but cannot take the lesson. I was an observant servant responding to whatever my little mistress needs but should not share any pleasures. (17)

Just like slaves, Amnah had no rights. But Hussein wanted to pass the message that this cannot go on. Amnah, intelligent and eager to learn as she is, actually gets the same home education as Khadija just by observing her. Khadija herself loves Amnah and becomes a friend to her despite all the warnings of her mother. Hussein seems to be telling the society that educating women from all classes of society is the only path to modernity and progress. Without it, society will remain fixated in the traditional gender roles leading to oppression and causing more disasters like the murder of Hanady. When Hanady asked for her mother's support, the mother does not dare violate tradition; all she is capable of doing is resorting back to the male figure by asking for the help of her brother who had abandoned her and her daughters earlier to avoid shame. This is the only thing she could do despite the distress she feels. She acts against the motherly sympathy and love towards her daughter to stick to deeply-rooted traditions. Hussein thus reveals that the power of tradition is sometimes stronger than natural motherly feelings and of humanity itself. The mother cannot prevent the murder of her own daughter at the hands of her brother; she only cries out of grief and oppression:

Harshly and violently my uncle ordered us to step down. Here we are obeying without knowing why in this place. I wanted to say something but couldn't, I became speechless. It is a horrifying cry that was heard and a heavy body falls to the ground, it is my sister, my uncle stabbed her. We are close to the Hanady's dying body, restlessly shaking and her blood burst as if water is coming out of a will. We are astounded could not understand or wait for anything. We were deceived and Hanady was kidnapped. Her body shakes and her tongue moves with some words and then calms down and it this painful quietness: the quietness of death. While we were astounded, my uncle stood looking like the devil. (65)

The "devil" that Amnah describes here is not just a man who killed her sister, it is the ideology and dogma behind the man, the tradition that gave him the right to decide for women and granted him the power to do what he sees fit even if it meant the cold-blooded killing of a niece. The victim of the father, the engineer, and the uncle was mercilessly killed for a crime she did not commit alone; each of these male figures contributed to the disaster and Hanady is the only one who

had to pay the price because she is a woman. She remains voiceless, submissive and weak in the same manner that the patriarchal society has taught her to be to the moment of her death. Even her mother cannot question the situation and the only one who wants to ask the uncle why they stopped in such a deserted area where the killing happens is young Amnah; but she does not have the time since the uncle stops her sister in the blink of an eye. The power of questioning and voicing what goes on in the mind is innate in Amnah; and indeed in each woman. Yet, it is denied by society and what Hussein does it that he gives it back to his heroine through her perseverance and thrust for learning and her ability to develop into a full human being. Hussein allows his protagonist to go through the natural process of restoring and healing what nature has originally given women after it was taken away from them by patriarchal societies and the weight of traditions.

The circle of oppression of women is endless until women themselves put an end to by refusing the submission and fulfilling their potential as human beings regardless of gender. Hussein punished the mother for her submissiveness and deprived her the presence of both daughters: Hanady is dead and Amnah escapes. Al Amayra argues that the circle of tyranny and oppression becomes complete when the brother added to his sister's suffering by killing her beloved daughter. Amnah is the one who breaks the circle by revolting against the society that punishes the victim and supports the victimizer. Hussein's message is that surrendering to patriarchal authority is a crime against human instincts. Amnah hated the pathetic, destitute, and helpless mother who could not resist that male authority in spite of her unquestionable love for her daughters. ( 25)

The eco-feminist Taha Hussein in this impressive tragic scene of the murder, and with economy of words masterfully establishes the interconnectedness of women and nature. Mark Stoddart noted that, "Several feminists make the distinction that it is not because women are 'women' or 'feminine' that they relate to nature, but because of their similar states of oppression by the same male-dominant force" (352). The murder scene starts with 'the uncle's order' that Amnah, sister and mother obey even without understanding why they stop then and there in the middle of nowhere. Amnah wants to ask him but she cannot do so out of fear; she knows instinctively that as a female she had no right to voice out what is in her mind. After all, she is the youngest of the three women and if the mother is unable to speak out that means she too has no right to do so. The order to stop there and then comes from a man and as

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women, they are not allowed to question it or to object. In her world, women are repressed and treated like property; they have no rights.

This scene sums up the weight of tradition and condemns the ideology that considers women a part of the property of men. The order to stop is given first to the camels and is automatically extended to the three women. The camels obey the uncle's order instantly and so do the women; they are treated just like cattle. The power over the two animals and the three women falls in the hands of the one male in the scene, the uncle. Eloquently and precisely, Hussien establishes the link between women and nature and the unquestionable power that the man has power over both:

Both camels move actively, no signs of tiredness or lack of interest appear in their strides. Then our uncle's voice, callous and frightening, rises; it is full of evil and wow: "Here we stop and get down". In no time, the camels stopped; none of us could utter or think of anything. Rather, it is a strange thick amazement that had befallen us and filled our souls, just like the darkness of the night had enveloped and penetrated inside us. Standing like the devil, our uncle commands us aggressively to dismount and the two camels would not move an inch. (64)

The horrifying image of Hanady's body collapsing then lying on the ground to be part of the earth and the way her blood springs out of the wound as if "water out of a will," is an image of total unity with mother earth. It stresses the inseparable connection between women and nature whether in life or death. Hussein introduces a unique full eco feminist perspective of oppressed women as part of the environment, and stresses that the oppressor of both women and the environment is the same. Even in the time of her death, a woman is part of nature, and her blood is the water, the source of life that makes it possible for the environment to live and thrive.

The novel is based on the triangle of sin, revenge, and love. According to Margarita Estévez-Saá, María Jesús, and Lorenzo-Modia, "Love seems to be a key concept in eco-feminist writing. Yet it is not evoked as an abstraction, but rather as a practice arising from the ethical and aesthetical envisioning of eco-caring." (123) The patriarchal society denies women the right to love and relates it sin. In *Duaa Al Karwan* the innocent, ignorant, submissive Hanady knows that she might pay her life for her love, but still "yearns to the east where she left her heart in that beautiful house surrounded by its wide garden. . . a place where the young luxurious engineer lives. There she left her heart". (56)

Amnah/Suaad, on the other hand, handles love in a different way. When she becomes an educated and assertive woman, she is able to gain the engineer's love and respect without falling to sin; she does this out of self-respect and a sense of responsibility towards herself, not because of fear or submission to the norms patriarchal society and the weight of tradition:

I thought my sister was sad because of her sin. I do not doubt she felt sad and the feelings of remorse tortured her. Yet, after spending the night with her and knowing how she really felt I had pity on that girl that looks back and sees a lost love and looks forward and sees horrible fear. . .but she is pushed forward, cannot resist or show any sign of resistance. What a force that dominates souls and erases their identities. This force is called bashfulness and following tradition with its taboos. (57)

Education and experience broaden Amnah's mind and prepares her to expect the unexpected: to receive love without guilt or sin. Amnah at the beginning of the novel is a smart peasant who yearns for education and learning as tools for liberation and empowerment, but she does not have a plan, due to her status as a servant. She is aware of her position and seeks to change it since it is the outcome of an unjust social class system; she hates the oppression and marginalization of herself, her mother, and sister that ends with her sister's tragedy. The more she learns, the more she wants to get out of the rut. Earlier in the novel when she meets with her mother and sister in their room for a one day vacation, she misses being with Khadija and hates the humble place while the mother and Hanady have no objection to it. Hussein is here showing the readers that change has to start from within.

In the second half of the novel, Hussein prepares the reader for the great shift that happens in the relationship between Amnah and the Engineer and the promising end of the novel. He reveals the convincing development that happens in Amnah's personality that comes naturally by accumulating learning and experience, and her growing awareness of her self-worth as a human being regardless of gender or social class. The Amnah we see in this part is more experienced, she is able to evade the blood conflict and the revenge motivation and transform them into an intellectual and psychological game in which she always wins the engineer:

My master does not come to me looking for love, pleasure, or sin; he wants me to surrender, to submit, he wants a victory . . . who knows maybe he postpones sending me away till he achieves victory and wins. So, he would fire me humiliated after I yield to



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his domination. This made me forget revenge and think of him as a foe who wants to subvert me, and I want to surmount him. I saw him as a master who wants to overpower me, and I have to dominate him. (145)

Throughout the rest of the novel, Hussein follows the process of self-developing, maturing and learning that Amenah consciously goes through until she manages to be an equal to her master intellectually. When at the end of the novel the engineer proposes to her, the reader is not shocked; it came as a natural development of her personality that affected the way he perceives and feels about her. She comes to the engineer's house as a submissive servant preoccupied with hate, revenge and rebellion. These are the emotions that govern her state as Amnah the servant and ends up as a match to the engineer on all levels. She falls in love with him but remains strong enough to control that love. It is no wonder that the engineer changes accordingly, the resistance and power she shows in this relationship make him realize that the only way to be with her is to marry her, even if it means he has to go against all traditions and social class system.

Hussein provides a deep analysis of the internal struggle that Amenah goes through. The initial core is her struggle with the unfair society and the patriarchal system that cause the death of her sister at the hands of her uncle. The struggle gets more complicated when she falls in love with the engineer who initiated her sister's dilemma and the one who unfeelingly and even unknowingly led to the separation of the family members. By the end of the novel, the struggle is between her love for the engineer and her promise to herself and the nightingale to avenge the death of her sister. The shift of struggle is Hussein's way of encouraging a shift in the whole society; love has entered the equation and altered everything in Amenah/Suaad's case and it can do the same on the level of society as a whole. It is no longer just about hatred and revenge. She is torn between two opposite forces: love and revenge and it seems that Hussein wants us to realize that the power of love can overwrite any other emotion and affect deep changes on the personal and societal levels.

Hussein's mastery in analyzing the psyche of the heroine adds a layer of depth to the novel and is in complete alliance with ecofeminism which celebrates the great power of love to transform and heal both women and nature. When Amnah/Suaad realizes that she truly loves the engineer and he realizes that he cannot live without her, the shift in the engineer's perception of her as a fellow human being starts to appear gradually. She moves with the engineer to his parent's house in Cairo



and there she is no longer treated like a servant, but rather as a personal assistant to him. She reads the books he owns and discusses all matters with him, the shift in Amnah is so powerful that it alternates the way the engineer sees and treats her; it is no longer physical attraction to a beautiful woman that governs him; he sees her as a human being whom he loves and appreciate, an equal match and a lover. All the traditions and class system that used to govern their relationship fade away, giving way to a new kind of perception.

Amnah/Suaad detects and skillfully articulates the changes in herself and the engineer. The ongoing debate between her old self as Amenah and her upgrade as Suaad allows her to realize the deep shift in the relationship she is involved in as she notices that the image of her sister “is becoming a vague sad memory that touches the heart sometimes then fades away as a blue cloud. . . I am content with my new life and my heart feels safe and I am happy with it. . . Isn’t it a queer friendship between this young man and myself after all the differences?” (154-155)

Suaad, the new version of educated and more experienced Amenah, is happy and content with the new status she earned as a friend; yet she is intelligent enough to describe this friendship as “queen” according to the norms of society which still govern the situation between them. Hussein has moved her from the category of submissive, unworthy women to that of a capable equal and an effective member of society, and therefore, worthy of being a friend. Later on, the final shift is plausible as they are ready to be husband and wife.

The novel investigates a wide range of emotions; it opens with passion (Hanady’s towards the engineer) which leads to her tragic death. Then comes rebellion on Amenah’s part due to what happened to her sister, then it is followed by hate and the decision to revenge from the man who caused the tragedy. Amenah keeps reminding herself of the mission she embarked on when she introduces herself as the Engineer’s new servant Suaad; “You (the nightingale) and I promised to recall this tragedy every day at midnight until we take revenge for that girl who was treacherously killed in that space. After that we remember it at the same time to prove our loyalty to her soul and blood. (11)

When love gets in the way and threatens to alter everything, resistance comes as a natural by product. While staying at the engineer’s house Amnah/ Suaad resists her feelings of love for him and seeks help from her dead sister’s soul :

This is my master trying to be kind and nice to me, begging then setting before me as if offering me prayers, then silently crying, and finally bursting into tears. Here I am almost weak, and I feel I

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pity him but gathering myself and all my powers praying for my sister and her blooded shadows and asking her for help and more strength. (146)

Things radically shift for Amenah/ Suaad as she realizes that she too loves the engineer but she attempts to escape the situation that she cannot handle: "... let me go. . . I'll take the first train. . .send me to any place where I will live honorably protecting my virtue which is not lost." (147) The engineer's response to her decision to leave marks the shift in her status; to him, she is not a servant anymore: "You still mention servants and masters! You know that this is not the relationship between us. (147)

Hussein alternates using the names Amenah and Suaad in a way that suggests the deep changes his heroine undergoes. The love that grew in Annah's heart keeps torturing her as she is trapped between the memory of her sister and her own pride until it became an unescapable destiny and a conscious choice for the rest of her life:

... this life with the young engineer filled her mind and heart . . . Yes, she became unable to be herself or think only of herself. She is with him in his presence and his absence . . . but pride still controls her, whenever Suaad is about to surrender, honorable Annah is before her eyes. (151)

On a deeper level, Suaad is Hussein's representative of the struggle of the poor class to overcome its misery and find love and happiness and a respectable way of life. The author employs the characters coming from the countryside to the small town to shed light on the way they think of urban places and life there and what they actually find. There is a moral and social goal that is decided and directly mentioned by the author in this novel. Traditions and costumes and poor conditions of life all plan the course of the tragedy. The locale in the beginning of the novel is Upper Egypt with its heritage of preserving virtue and honor believing in blood as the only means for purification in the case of sin.

A man who suffered from blindness and had to struggle in a society that gives no rights to the blind, the poor nor to women, Hussein's novel implies, as Hannah Fakhory remarks, a revolutionary cultural strategy that aims at enlightening women's minds as a pre-revolution in the social reality in an attempt to reveal women's relationship to environment and society. The author was able to achieve this goal through the intellectual and psychological conversion in the character of Amenah to Soad. (229) The names that Hussein gives the protagonist in different stages of her development correspond to her goals in life and her overall development.

Banished from her home and sent to work as a servant, the little girl Amenah (the one who feels safe) seeks only to be “safe” after parting with her mother and sister. She learns to read and write and befriends Khadiga and her lot in life is about to change but the tragic experience of her sister causes her to take a decision to leave everything behind. She escapes to take revenge and takes on the name Suaad as a camouflage; she continues to learn and re-discover herself. She finds out that despite all odds, she is capable of love and enjoys the delicacies of life that her work for the engineer offers. She loves the house, her room with all its details and the abundance of everything in the engineer’s house. Things get even better when she moves to Cairo and is treated with compassion and respect from the whole family. She finds more about her worth as a human being, her strength and resilience become unmistakable to her. Suaad (carrying the connotations of happiness and fulfilment) is a name that suits her as she gradually matures and realizes she deserves a happy and fulfilled life.

While tracing the development of Amehah/Suaad, Hussein articulates the predicament of the whole society with all its classes whether upper or lower as she moves from one locale to the other. The novel comes as a defense of the case of women and their rights in a male dominated society and of poor classes and their right to live a decent life. He advocates women’s right to education and a secure life as free human beings who participate side by side with men in building a better society regardless of class or locale. The struggle in the novel is, in fact, between tradition and new ambitious notions of enlightenment that seek to advocate women’s rights and improve the quality of life for everyone.

With education that eliminates inequality among classes and genders and love that guarantees peace and equality of men and women that nature provides, an enlightened society can progress. When Suaad is sure about her emotions and the motives of the engineer, the whole dilemma is solved: “ I have no doubt now that it is not my master’s desire in me or that he wants to achieve victory over me, it is love.” (150) After a long journey of pain and misery trying to realize self-esteem and liberation from the bonds of a patriarchal society, it is time for happiness as the engineer concludes: “It is time you and I find rest. . . I’m taking a position in Cairo . . . you will accompany me to Cairo. (152) Now after moving to Cairo Suaad’s prespective of life changes:

The image of my sister is becoming a vague sad memory that touches the heart sometimes then fades away as a blue cloud. I get back to my quite bright life. . . “I am content with my new life and my heart feels safe and I am happy with it. . . Isn’t it a queer

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friendship between this young man and myself after all the differences? (154-155)

The identification with the nightingale emancipated the protagonist when she had no one else to talk to and the power of love created her peaceful new world. The following dialogue between the engineer and Suaad reveals that positive changes exceed the characters themselves and overflow to include some deeply-rooted traditions like revenge and even some norms of society that used to govern relationships. The engineer, who is a selfish and irresponsible young man in the beginning of the novel sums up how he feels towards Suaad, confessing that it was love all through that made the difference. This is Hussein's way of saying that even the toughest traditions and beliefs can change through the power of love:

“This love. We had fights and for a long time we kept silent. . . Shouldn't this vague life end in frankness?

I did not answer. . .

He said, “I want to marry you.”. . . Are you thinking of the class differences between us when a master marries his servant? Do not think that way, I am not that type of masters and you are not like other servants” (157)

Taha Wady believes that “Instead of deeply examining the negative aspects of the society in Upper Egypt that were introduced at the beginning of the novel, *Duaa Al Karawan* concentrated in the second part on an emotional crisis between Amenah the servant and her master which Hussein intended to be a sort of compensation between the poor and the bourgeois classes”. (259) The final words by the engineer seem to come from the psyche of Hussein himself, the man who has always been on a journey to find light; it is clear that he, the engineer, and Suaad identify this light with love, knowledge and renouncing the darkness of ignorance and the unfair traditions of sin, revenge and inequality:

Do you still want to revenge? I answered with my tears.... He said after a pause, “We could have separated before this light overflows us. Now this is impossible. Isn't it strange that this light is better than the darkness we came out of? Neither of us can be guided in that light without the other one. The burden is heavier than your ability or mine to carry. Let's try to stand our misery together till it is God's will. (160)

Exclusively through the transformative power of love can the deeply ingrained seeds of hatred be eradicated, dismantling the formidable barriers of pride and supplanting vengeance with the seeds of

peaceful coexistence. Taha Hussein's unwavering commitment to an eco-feminist ethos is palpable throughout the narrative, evident in his relentless condemnation of patriarchal ideologies that foment aggression towards women, stripping them of their fundamental rights and, in some cases, leading to the shedding of innocent blood. From the outset to the denouement, Hussein adeptly secures the reader's empathy for female victims, who often bear the brunt of the crimes perpetrated by their male oppressors.

Hussein's literary craftsmanship encompasses a realistic analysis of the protagonist's life and surroundings, a deliberate endeavor aimed at reshaping the portrayal of women in the East. His narrative crusades for women's entitlement to education and dignified lives, challenging prevailing notions that have historically rendered them voiceless, controlled, passive, and submissive. In lieu of these stereotypes, Hussein introduces a nuanced depiction that charts the evolution and development of his heroine. By the narrative's culmination, she emerges as an enlightened, intellectual, and independent woman, unshackled by the fetters of tradition.

Duaa Al Karawan serves as a compelling testament to Hussein's eco-feminist vision. Through the power of exemplary storytelling, the novel substantiates Hussein's profound aspiration to alleviate the plight of the poor and marginalized, ultimately seeking to empower women for the collective purpose of birthing a more equitable and compassionate world.

In conclusion, Taha Hussein's *Duaa Al Karawan* stands as a poignant exemplar of eco-feminist literature that transcends its temporal and cultural context. Through the narrative tapestry, Hussein weaves a compelling tale that meticulously dissects the struggles faced by women in the face of patriarchal dominance and societal injustice. His eco-feminist lens sharply focuses on the interconnectedness of environmental degradation and the subjugation of women, crafting a narrative that advocates for both social and ecological healing.

The protagonists, Amnah and the nightingale, symbolize the shared plight of women and the natural world, echoing the tenets of eco-feminism by portraying the intrinsic bond between the oppressed. Hussein's strategic use of the nightingale as a conduit for Amnah's voice underscores the transformative potential of love and resilience in the face of adversity. Through Amnah's evolution from a marginalized victim to an empowered, independent woman, Hussein dismantles conventional stereotypes and challenges oppressive norms, offering a nuanced perspective on the role of women in society.

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Moreover, the author's literary prowess employs symbolism, metaphors, and audio-visual techniques to construct a narrative that resonates with eco-feminist principles. The nightingale becomes a transcendent entity, embodying the interconnectedness of all living things and serving as a witness to the injustices inflicted upon women. Hussein's eco-feminist agenda extends beyond the personal transformation of the characters to a broader societal and environmental reformation.

Hussein's eco-feminist vision, articulated through "Duaa Al Karawan," anticipates the Western eco-feminist movement, offering a prescient exploration of the inherent linkages between gender, nature, and societal norms. By challenging prevailing ideologies and advocating for the empowerment of women, Hussein's narrative serves as a timeless call to action, urging societies to break free from the shackles of unfair traditions and embrace a more equitable and compassionate future. In essence, Duaa Al Karawan remains a literary testament to the transformative potential of eco-feminism in fostering a harmonious coexistence between humanity and the natural world.



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