CHAPTER- 3

CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORY WRITERS OF NAGUIB MAHFOUZ

In the history of modern Arabic literature, in general as it was turning point in much of the social and political life of Middle East. This was a reflection of their realization of the pressing need for political action, which come a result of their disillusionment with political parties, their horror at the corruption at court and in public life. At the abysmal was poverty of the masses due to the inflation created by the war. Some turned to communism or socialism for a possible solution, while others found the answer in the teachings of the Muslim Brotherhood, both parties using the fictions amongst other genres, as a means of expressing their social and political commitment.

The early twenty century witnessed an important development in the history of the modern Arabic fiction, namely a dramatic rise in the numbers of novels, short stories and dramas written as well as published. Interestingly the three young university graduates, who later proved to be the most significant fictionists of their generation, Adil Kamil, Ali Ahmad Bakathir
and Naguib Mahfouz, who found several outlets in the magazines and newspapers of the day. There were attempts made by some serious writers to surmount the difficulty of taking contemporary life, with the ideology of the present.84

The major attainments and unique among the literary person works Naguib Mahfouz (1911-2006) in the genre of the short story benefit from his awareness of the necessary of endowing the short story with multiple layers of meaning which can assume symbolic value. In the early period of Naguib Mahfouz gave attention between the essay, the short story and the novel. He produced short stories, which are full of romanticism of Taymur, Sentimentality of Kamil and the realistic works of Haqqi. Mahfouz started his literary life with the short story. His first collection of short story entitled ‘Hams al-Junun’ 1938 (Whisper of Madness). Mahfouz, continued his writing, But when spouted in the short story since he stopped writing it. After the devastating shock of the 1967, Arab defeat did he became aware of these changes and assimilate some of these strategies into his traditional narrative edifice. He elaborated a set of imploding symbols, which he

84 M.M. Badawi, A Short History of Modern Arabic literature, P-131.
skillfully interwove with his apparent simple description. In the Arab world, the short stories of Mahfouz are standard among his contemporaries.\(^\text{85}\)

The writer commonly regarded, as contemporaries of Naguib Mahfouz, for the development of the genre of the short story in Arabic are the Egyptian Mahmud Taymur is the outstanding. He was a member of al-Madrasa al-Haditha (The New School) during his long and productive career published nearly thirty collections of short stories, in addition to his numerous plays and novels, which he used to sign in magazines with the pen-name ‘The Egyptian Maupassant.’ These deals with social problems, such as the greed, ignorance, and hypocrisy of the men of religion, the ill-treatment of women by their irresponsible husbands, the conflict between town and country, innocence and experience, the Arab variety of the Noble savage. Both the setting and the characters are emphatically Egyptian. The characters tended to come from the weak and eccentric, the poor and the downtrodden strata of society and were viewed from outside, in a realistic vein with a sentimentality, although occasionally the author succeeded in portraying a character’s thoughts and feelings, bringing out the pathos underlying a human situation. Taymur’s later stories underwent a change.

\(^{85}\) Sabry Hafer, Modern Arabic short story, P-305.
The emphasis shifted from social criticism and didacticism to preoccupation with chaste and idealized love against the background of beautiful natural scenery, as well as with the world of art and artists. The aristocracy, artists, and intellectuals replaced characters from the lower classes and the opposition between the idealized country and the ugly town greatly enhanced.\(^{86}\)

Another two excelled more in the short stories then in the novels, obvious examples are the Egyptians Yahya Haqqi and Yusuf Idris are contemporary of Naguib Mahfouz. Haqqi published near about half a dozen short story collections throughout his career. He is regarded as a pioneer of the short story in Egypt, which he began writing in 1923, but it was not until 1944 that he published his famous work, *Qindil Um Hashim (The Lamp of Um Hashim)*, which reflected his deep Eastern and Western patterns of cultural interaction. M. M. Badawi translated it into English under the title of *The Saint’s Lamp and Other Stories* (1973).\(^{87}\) In 1955, he published his second story *The Postman*. His other fiction includes *Antar and Juliette* (1961), *A Suitcase in the Hand of Traveler* (1969), *The Empty Bed and Other Stories*, *People in the Shadow* (1971) and *Blood and Mud*, three

\(^{86}\) M.M. Badawi, A Short History of Modern Arabic literature, P-234.  
\(^{87}\) Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction an Anthology, P-89.
novels translated into English by Pierre Caehia (1999). Miriam Cooka translated another collection, *Good Morning and Other Stories* (1987). Throughout his writing career, Haqqi reflected a deep interest in developing a sense of identity. The setting of Haqqi’s stories was present in such rich detail that the spirit of Egyptian breathes in them. He has considered as a cornerstone in Egyptian fiction.  

The Egyptian short story writer, novelist and playwright Yusuf Idris is the foremost short story writer in the Arab world. From the beginning of his creative career, he demonstrated the caliber of an international writer of high standard. He began writing his short stories when he was a medical student. His early stories drew immediate acclaim, and he continued to write prolifically. He wrote some interesting plays. His novel ‘The Illicit’ was made into a movie. His work reflects his great empathy with people’s psychological and emotional reactions to life’s experiences and places such as poverty exploitation, particularly of women. He produced more than a dozen collections of short stories. His first collection of short story book *Arkhas Layali* (translated as The Cheapest Nights, published in 1954) with rich variety of themes and mastery of structure. *A Matter of Honor* (1958),

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88 M.M. Badawi, A Short History of Modern Arabic literature, 132.
*The Language of Aye Aye* (1965), *House of Flesh* (1971), *Kill Her* (1982), etc. Idris received well-deserved great acclaim for his novella *Abyss of the City* (1964). His works has been translated widely into several languages. His story is full of social criticism in which his keen power of observation, bondless sympathy for the poor and underprivileged, not surprising in a Marxist. Idris’s stories dealt with many problems of contemporary Egyptian society, such as over population, child-labour, extreme poverty in primitive villages torture of political prisoners- all sensitively treated with an eye on the telling, moving detail and in a manner which shows deep humanity, psychological insight as well as irony.⁸⁹ As the case of Haqqi, human realities viewed in all its complexity and not reduced to simplistic formula. Sex figures prominently in Idris’s vision of the world: it is a means of defining human relationships and generally unmasking hypocrisy, enhancing either the human comedy or tragedy. Idris’s later stories bear some resemblance to the work of more self-conscious modernists such as al-Sharuni and al-Kharrat. While dealing with basic human situations and psychological truth, Idris’s stories, however, tended to have a further political significance.

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⁸⁹ Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction an Anthology, P-390.
Sex is also one of the dominant themes in the stories by the Iraqi Fu’ad al-Takarili, which are among in the genre most artistically accomplished. Full of suspense and strongly organized with a carefully painted setting and a powerfully evocative atmosphere, his stories often example by means of a highly developed narrative technique the darker side of sexuality, particularly unlawful sex, incest and rape, themes which amply illustrate the author’s courage in dealing explicitly with such a taboo in his society. It is inherent psychological interest, it mean to reveal the pathological state of contemporary Iraqi society with its social injustice, political repression and brutality, issues that provide themes for many of his stories.\(^90\)

Zakariyya Tamir has also one of the major short story writers in the Arab world. Tamir has been described by the historian of the Arabic short story, Sabry Hafiz, as the poet of the Arabic short story par excellence.’ His use of lyrical language, dense imagery, metaphor, allegory and irony and every aspect of the narrative, inspire its structure, liberate the action from the shackles of realistic plausibility and suggest a new logic and different order. Tamir use of fantasy is therefore not an escape from reality, but a means of

\(^{90}\) M.M. Badawi, A short History of Modern Arabic literature, P-237.
reaching a deeper love of reality and proving the appalling inhumanity of man in the modern world. His angry, critical and symbolic work is one of the major experiments that inspired other short-story writers in the Arab world.

Fat-hi Ghanim was a major Egyptian writer of fiction, though, like many of his generation, he has tended to live in the shadow of Naguib Mahfouz and other more prominent figures. His first fictional works: *A Gilden Irona*, a collection of short stories, and *Al-Jabal* (The Mountain-1965), a novel that deals with the intrigues surrounding the smuggling of ancient Egyptian antiquities in Upper Egypt and the Plans to move people to a “modernized” village. From the outset, Ghanim has experimented with fictional techniques, something reflected in his two short stories, in such collections as the *Experience of Love* (1958), and *The Spiked Iron Fence* (1964). He continued in this experimental vein, with varying degrees of success, in a stream of novels, including *Those Days, The Idiot* (1966) and *Hot and Cold* (1970). His latest contributions included *A Little Love and a Lot of Violence* (1985), *A Girl from Shubra* (1986) *Ahmad and Daud* (1989) and *Women of Beauty* (1991). Wider recognition of Ghanim’s contributions
to Arabic fiction has Saddam Husain Prize for Literature in (1989) and the Egyptian State Prize for Literature in (1995).\textsuperscript{91}

Jamal al-Ghitani Egyptian short story writer and Novelist, A writer of great statues and originality hardly paralleled in modern Arabic Literature, his style is rooted in the Arabic Literary tradition. His writing is very concerned with the day and particularly with Egyptian history in the 1970s. He has successfully attempted to reintroduce the old Arabic “Tale” from in contradiction to other writers who model their fiction on Western styles. His collections of short stories are: Remembering What Has Happened, The Diary of a Young Man Who Died a Thousand Years Ago in (1969), Surface to Surface in (1972), Siege from Three Directions in (1975), Al-Zuwail in (1975, Fruits of Time in (1990), Singer of Sunset in (1997) and Approaching Eternity in(2000) etc. He has also written a number of novels. His collection A Distress Call, translated into English. His novel O, Danial and al- Zaini Barakat also translated into English by Farouk Abdel Wahhab and published by Penguin. His more recent novel, The Book of Revelation, is a superb attempt at merging the past with the national and universal and together with

\textsuperscript{91} Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction an Anthology, P-305.
Al-Zaini Barakat, has been discussed at greater length in the introduction to his book.\textsuperscript{92}

Yahya Tahir Abdallah an Egyptian short story writer and novelist, his work is characterized by great originality of theme and approach, a vivid style and a sharp perception. He had published one novel and several collections of short stories, \textit{The Drum and the Chest} (1974), \textit{The Prince’s Tale} (1978), and \textit{Images from Earth, Water and Sun} (1981). Ibrahim ‘Abd al-Majeed an Egyptian novelist and short story writer one of the avant-grad younger Egyptian writer of fiction, he has published several novels and short story collections. His first book of fiction collection was \textit{Little Scenes around a Big Wall} (1982), \textit{Closing the Windows} (1993), \textit{Spaces} (1995) and \textit{Old Ships} (2001). Abu al-Ma’ati Abu al-Naja Egyptian short story writer and novelist, he was a writer with abroad vision of the universal human condition whose work has contributed an added flavor to the Experimental works written by the next generation of short stories, \textit{Illusion and Reality} (1974), \textit{Everyone Wins the Prize} (1984) etc.\textsuperscript{93}

\textsuperscript{92} Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction, P-317.
\textsuperscript{93} Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction. P-131.
Another distinguished Egyptian short story writer Shukry Ayyad has published several collections of short stories include, The Locksmith (1958), My Gentle, Beautiful Wife (1976) and in 1997 he published his short stories six collections in one volume. Salwa Bakr was another most gifted and original Egyptian woman short story writer. The universal aspects of her fiction are based mainly on Egyptian experience that transcends through her skillful and insightful handling and her deep understanding of human nature anywhere the realm of the national to the wide space of universal human experience. She has several collections of short stories Zinat in the Presidents (1992), Rabbits (1994) and Opposing Rhythms (1996) etc. Zayd Mutee ‘Dammaj is another Egyptian fine creative writer with a special sensibility for various important aspects of human experience; love, beauty the way the humorous intertwines with the tragic and challenge intrigue and moral frailty. He has at least three collections of short stories Tahish al-Hauban (1986), The Scorpion (1982) and The Bridge (1986).94

Another Egyptian socialist believer in realistic and sensitive short story writer is Sulaiman Fayyad. He has a great contribution to the genre of modern Arabic short story like Naguib Mahfouz. He has several collections

94 Sabry Hafez, A short History of Modern Arabic literature, P-234.

Another Egyptian short story writer Mahmud al-Badawi was one of the early man of letters to seek submition and knowledge of technique from his readings and translations from wester fiction, particularly in this case from Russian literature, especially from Chekove. Although not as known in the Arab world as was his contemporary Mahmud Taymur, Badawi’s work on the short story widened the horizons of the genre and paved the way for a more candid delination of experience. Among his collections are, The First Sin (1959), A Room on the Roof (1960), The Guardian of the Occhard (1960), The Last Carrige (1961), A Night on the Road (1962), Sad Beauty (1962), The Falcon of the Night (1970), The Golden Ship (1971) and The Other Door (1977). His ocuvre demonstrates the struggle of early Arabic fiction tofind its methods and approach, as his abundant creativity combated the weaker roots of modern Arabic fiction to produce satisfactory results.\(^96\)

Here it has been discussed about some contemporaries of Naguib Mahfouz of outside of Egypt. Among them Muhammad Abd al-Malik,

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\(^95\) Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction. P-290.
\(^96\) Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction. P-80-81.

Tawfiq Yusuf ‘Awwad a Lebanese novelist, short story writer and editor of Magazine. He was considered as a contemporary of Naguib Mahfouz. His most famous work is *Windmills of Beirut* (1972), in this novel won immediate fame as a sensitive reflection of Arab society in general and Lebanese society in particular during the post (1967) Arab Israeli war. He

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The modernist writer of the 1940s are in a sense, less than a preface to the works of Yusuf al-Sharuni, Ihsan Abd al-Quddos, Edward al-Kharrat in Egypt, Zakariyya Tamir in Syria. Apart from al-Kharrat’s translations from English and French literature, he published several collections of short stories, *High Walls* (1958), *House of Pride* (1972) and *Conflicting Passions* etc. His novels including *The Other Time, City of Saffron* and *Girls of Alexandria*, translated into English by Francis Lairdet (1989 and 1993). Al-Kharrat’s work constitutes an interesting and welcome change from the claustrophobic political atmosphere of that of many of his contemporaries; he concentrates on individual personal relations, on the inner life of his characters, on man’s awareness of time and place, on emotional, sexual, spiritual and metaphysical issues, though not to the total exclusion of political considerations. He combines extreme modernistic formal devices with during and original use of language, the result of his passionate interest in worlds. His novels are marked by a total absence of unilinear narration, a constant movement background and forward in time, a structure that closely

resembles that of a musical composition. External events, reduced to a bare minimum, and presented in a series of flashbacks and filtered through the main character’s consciousness, memories triggered of by discrete sensations, sounds, smells, taste, touch, and vision.\textsuperscript{100}

They constitute the core of modernist writing in the 1950\textsuperscript{s} and 1960\textsuperscript{s}. Shaping of the modern sensibility through their work took place side by side with the victory of the older sensibility. They were breaking new ground and developing a radically different type of short story that was largely ahead of its time. Sharuni and Quddos started publishing their short stories in a Lebanese monthly review while living in Egypt. They benefited from the upsurge of cultural activities at the beginning of the 1950\textsuperscript{s} in Cairo and their first collection \textit{al-Ushsaq al-Khamsah} (Five Lover’s) in 1954\textsuperscript{s} and Quddos’s ‘\textit{Sana’a al-Hubb}’ in 1949\textsuperscript{s}, their study of philosophy has left a clear mark on their thematic scheme and on the type of modern sensibility discernible in their work.\textsuperscript{101}

Sharuni’s main themes are contradictory and complementary, and deeper conflicts between society and individual, the objective and the

\textsuperscript{100} M.M. Badawi, A short History of Modern Arabic literature, P-237.
\textsuperscript{101} Sabry Hafez, Modern Arabic Short story’ in Cambridge History of Arabic literature, section- 2.
subjective, the other and inner realities. Sharuni created the first most coherent world of modern sensibility with distinct views, visions, techniques, characteristic, archetypes and modes of discourse. He succeeded in articulating many of the ambiguous fears and anxieties’ that had characterized the atmosphere of Arab society since the late 1940s and became almost palpable towards the 1960s.

Fuad al-Takarili is are of the most prolific write in Iraq of Modern Arabic short story, who started writing in the 1950 and his first collection appeared in 1960, became a landmark in the development of the Arabic short story. He was one of the rare masters of narrative structure in the modern Arabic short story, preceded only by Haqqi and succeeded by Tahir and Aslam. His sensitivity to the dialectical interaction between texture and structure can be seen in his awareness of the motivations of very textual device that he uses. This gives his narrative a coherence of vision that penetrates every detail and remains undisturbed by the turbulent changes in the Socio-political milieu that he tries to express. His main theme, the investigation of the dark side of sexuality, world have provided another writer with an easy path to fame and excitement. But his dexterous treatment of the theme, and his concern for the exploration of its social undercurrent,
turns it into a serious and complex issue. His bold and insightful exploration of the many facets of this theme takes the Arabic short story to new grounds, and initiates new methods of dealing with such complex and forbidden issues. The repressive values that control the nature of sexuality in Arab society are called into question, for they are seen as a senseless imposition that impoverishes the quality of life of the individual. Then the various relationships are presented and incestuous relationships are presented only as symptoms more deformities that are radical.  

Another distinguish and most prolific writer in modern Arabic literature of Syria, Zakariya Tamir. Tamir has great on eat contribution to the Arabic literature through Tamir’s writing the stream of consciousness assumes a new life in literary investigation of the area of expression. Tamir is the poet of the Arabic par short story par excellence, both because of his use if lyrical language, dense and sustained imagery, allegory irony and metaphor, his ability to except his narrative from the common file of prose as simple transaction by intuitive perpetually withholding some indefinable remainder of the meaning.

102Salma Khadra Juyyushi, Modern Arabic Fiction. P-721.
With his, unique, background as a self-taught worker rising from poverty. Tamir saw the shifting Arab realities of the 1950s and 1960s with fresh ayes, free of hypocrisy and more importantly, free of the state narrative conventions. Tamirs narrative a unique place in the development of modern sensibility far greater than that of the self-professed pioneers of modernism, for it was executed with innocence and simplicity were multi leveled in their seductive power to create new sensations, move dream and reality into another place of existence, and breathe new life in to old forms and themes. Tamir has five collections of short stories, which he published, between 1960 and 1978, constitute five different aspects of this metamorphosis, for each collection presents a homogeneous experiment. Through these stories, he expressed all the conditions dreams, passion, imagination, rebellion action reality Justice and injustice, and every conditions of society.¹⁰³

The 1960 is an important decade in the history of the modern Arabic Short story for it is decade, which dealt a substantial blow to the nomination, Sentiments, and photographic approach to reality rooted the modern sensibility in the literary séance. The sever contradictions of this decade and the apparent leach of political freedom, men of letters enjoyed a relatively

¹⁰³ M.M. Badawi, Modern Arabic literature, 1992
substantial freedom expression even if their works contained a constant
flow of social and political criticism, as did those Mahfouz did in these field.
It was indeed a decade of paradox for despite its heavy paternalistic
atmosphere many opponents of the prevalent establishment became the
pillars its, it literary movement and enjoyed substantial influence and
freedom, Mahfouz is a strong case in this point. Mahfouz is the young writer
who started his careers in 1938 and the 1960 is known as the sixties
generation encountered a difficult situation for social and political
phenomena other young writer also started their career in the 1960s and who
are known as the sixties generation, done the same like Naguib Mahfouz.
The development of new codes and new techniques was a course and
blessing, the work of the new writers from the wider reading public not
usual to such code and techniques; at the same time, it alimented did a
criticism and sentimentality.\textsuperscript{104}

After the decade, 1960 until the end of the century many o young
prolific writers turned their hand to developed the Arabic short story.
Specially, Naguib Mahfouz, Ihsan Abd al-Quddos, Muhammad Hafiz Rajab,

\textsuperscript{104} M.M. Badawi, A Short History of Modern Arabic literature, 1993.
Yahya al-Tahir, Ibrahim Aslam, Muhammad Ibrahim Mubarak, and many others work with the same phenomenon and the same theme.

The short story has now become the most popular mode of Arabic literary expression. Large numbers of collections published annually throughout the Arab world. For many decades, Egypt and Lebanon generally regarded as the primary centre of publication. However, more recently the output in the Gulf state, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Maghrib has been an addition in both quantity and variety. Virtually every newspaper and journal are published a work of fiction - a short story and a segment of a novel-weekly or monthly; there are magazines devoted entirely to the genre. This represents a change in the relative popularity of literary genres earlier this century seems clear, but the current political and economic status of those in the Arab world who feel the inspiration to create works of fiction is such that the short story presents itself as the ideal mode. Through which to apply that creative urge to a fictional reflection of individual concerns and the complexities of modern life.