Chapter - II

The Evolution of Short Fiction
THE EVOLUTION OF SHORT STORY

Over the last One hundred and fifty years the short story has gained popularity in the literature of several countries. Although short story is the most widely read of all the genres in the modern times, yet little critical attention is given to the short story. The short story gained literary decorum in the year 1933 when the OED supplement of 1933 gave currency to the term short story, defining it as a particular kind of literary product. This provided a formal admittance to the short story into the vocabulary of English readers. Edgar Allan Poe, the American stalwart devoted much energy in the theoretical discussion of this form and brought out some illuminating essay, yet short story needs further development to rise to popularity.

With the rise in magazine publication, there is a noticeable rise in the use of short stories as entertainment yet, the use of short story to encourage mannerisms, mimicry, stereotypes, gimmickry and the like have made critics reluctant to adopt short story seriously as a self sufficient, substantial genre. Howard Nimerov very satirically comments on the existing state of the short story. He says:

Short Stories amount for the most part to parlor tricks, party favors with built-in-Snappers, gadgets for inducing recognitions and reversals: a small pump serves to build up the pressure, a tiny trigger releases
it, there follows a puff and a flash as freedom and necessity combined; finally a celluloid doll drops from the muzzle and descends by parachute to the floor. These things happen, but they happen to no one in particular...

(Ian Reid, The Short Story. 14)

With the efforts of the Russian school in the year 1920, Boris Eiehenbaum and Victor Shklovksy this form has gained a definite structure. In this respect the French structuralists like Tzvetan Todorov and Claude Bremond are experimentalists is no less avail.

The rise of short story did not find much favourable circumstances in written. E.M. Forster did not find the formal properties of short stories as is suitable vehicle for entertainment. Herbert Gold in Kenyon Review says: “The short story teller must have a story to tell, not merely some sweet prose to take out for a walk”.

(Ian Reid, The Short Story. 5)

Gerald Prince and claude Bremond exploring the nature of the short story believed that a short story must have an event as a structural unit with temporal movement as its essential characteristic. The subject matter of the short story is another contemplative area. All stories cannot be the substance of the short sotry. Alfred G. Engstrom observes:

“Legends of demons, saints, gods and the like and tales of outright wizardry seldom have a claim to be
The short story is a smaller affair, but not less artistic than the novel, if the novel is the epic in prose, the short story is the lyric, giving concentrated and emphatic expression to a moment’s experience and producing unity or totality of impression on the mind of the reader. Short story necessarily must convey a “fully human dimension with artistry”. It is important to emphasize that it must have an episodic structure and a credulous tomb. The length of the short story is another matter of debate. Ian Reid in his book *The Short Story* says:

What range of sizes does the term cover? How much contraction or protraction is allowable? Presumably the lower limit comes down in theory to mere sentence, of the sort exemplified earlier, though in practice it is hard to imagine how anything under a page or two can offer more than a skinny outline of happenings... or a diminutive gesture towards some narrative possibilities...

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*, 8)

Henry James believes that its appropriate length is “inside the range of between six and eight thousand words”. Somerset Maugham

considered short stories. They do not focus, as a rule, on human affairs and at any rate are not primarily intended as fictions”...

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*, 8)
in his Preface to *Complete Short Stories* believes that the minimum length should be about one thousand six hundred words and the longest of about twenty thousand words. Frank Sargeson’s *Collected Stories* has a few pieces less than even five hundred words and there is One which runs to about thirty two thousand words Nevertheless, a genre cannot be “arithmetically defined” and it is not “possible to make a word count the Soul criterion”.

The rise of short story is another curiosity. There are a number of examples which justify this belief that the Old Testament stories are the first short stories available in the history of short fiction (Joseph (Genesis xxxvii - xlvi), Samson (Judges xii-xvi) and Absalom (Second Samuel xiii-xviii).

These stories as well as the New Testament narratives are not conceived as literary inventions because it is argued that such stories are strictly governed by moral and expressed a didactic purpose wherefore they are not shaped as contributions to the craft of fiction. If we look back to Hebrew scriptures to ancient Egypt for the earlier stories we are reminded of *The Story of Sinuhe* or *The Ship-wrecked Sailor* which Egyptians wrote down early in the Second B.C. We have records of stories from Greece and Rome like *The Satyricon*, first Century A.D. and *Metamorphosis Or The Golden Ass*, Second Century A.D. some verse writings in Greek and Latin were also associated to short fiction attributed to Phaedrus and Babrius in the first Century A.D.
Milesian Tales of Greece during the first two Centuries B.C. named after its author Aristides of Miletus (100 B.C) exist in fragmentary forms. This story has been retold frequently by a number of story tellers, among them are John of Salisbury in the twelfth Century, Lafontaine in the seventeenth, Voltaire in the eighteenth and also Christopher Fry in the twentieth.

During the medieval times, some stories belonging to eastern cultures flowed into European Literature by a number of routes. Ian Reid gives some substantiate information in his book the Short Story:

"The most indefatigably migratory is the PANCHTANTRA. In its original Sanskrit form it dates back at least to the early sixth Century A.D; in a variety of translations it spread through Europe in the Middle Ages and Thomas North rendered it into English in 1570. From an Italian version of a Latin Version, of a Hebrew Version of an Arabic Version of a lost some Pahlavi (Middle Iranian Version) of some (lost) Sanskrit Version of the Original Panchtantra..."

(Ian Reid, The Short Story, 18)

Boccaccio The Decameron and in England William Painter's Palace of Pleasure Geoffrey Fenton's Certain Tragical Discourses and George Petite A Petite Palace of Petie His pleasure are the earliest
stories in short fiction. Since then Spurious attempts were made in the novella or Short story. In the Eighteenth Century some writers toyed with the oriental tale for example: Addison and Steele used it as an appendage to their essays, The spectator and Voltaire in Zadig. Soon after the renaissance, short fiction gained some popularity in the Romantic Age. Germany, France, Russia and America added to the most energetic initiatives and a new face of Short Story gradually shaped up with innumerable talented creative artists contributing to its form. In Germany the short story became a highly developed literary form by the first Quarter of the nineteenth Century. The works of Stifter, Keller, Storm and others rendered noticeable service in the middle Century. In France the art of the short story occupied a special niche at the second half of the twentieth Century because novels were used to depict urban life whereas the short story was found much suitable for the portrait of regional life. Likewise in Russia, Pushkin gave much significance to short fiction and his attempts were further supported by Gogol and Turgenev. Pushkin’s attempt in Russia did much the same wander as Maupassant did in France. Pushkin unlike Maupassant featured the aristocratic world but Gogol focussed his attention on the ordinary people “apparent non-entities”. H. E. Bates, showering praises on Gogol remarked. “He took the short story some way back to the ‘folk tale’ and in doing so bound it to earth...”

(Ian Reid, The Short Story, 24)
In America the short story first made its legitimate appearance sometimes in the year 1880. Fred Lewis Paltee in his historical survey, *The Development of the American Short Story* points out that the term short story itself used generically to designate an independent literary form rather than just a story that lacks length, dates back to the year 1880’s. Washington Irving, author of *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* called his writing, tales and the same term was also used by Hawthorne, Melville and Poe.

Harte’s remark about the evolution of the short story in America speaks about the formative influences.

Crude at first, it received a literary polish in the press, but its dominant quality remained. It was concise and condensed, yet suggestive. It was delightfully extravagant, or a miracle of understatement ..., it gave a new interest to slang ... It was the parent of the American short story...

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*, 26-27)

To sum up, A Short Story is a short piece of prose fiction. All we need require is that each short piece of prose fiction should have an aim worthy of an artist and should succeed in reaching it.

**Forms Of The Short Story**

In the study of Short Story it is essential to know the
various convention that add to the making of shorter fiction. A historical study points out that the Short Story is in the constant process of growing and there are many traditional currents giving birth to new ones. The blossoming and the further blossoming in terms of richness may also be noticed in the form it has branched and sub-branched itself. Ian Reid names this feature as “tributary forms”. They are six in numbers namely

1. Sketch.
2. Yarn.
3. Marchean.
4. Parable.
5. Fable and
6. Mixed Modes.

1. Sketch

    Sketch is a story that details the condition, surrounding the protagonists and the foils, detailing the interaction between the two. The sketch has a static form for it is primarily descriptive in nature. Here the primary emphasis is put on what something place a person is like. Washington Irving is regarded to be its chief exponent and he describes the Sketch as :

    The play of thought and sentiments and language; the weaving in of characters, yet lightly expressively delineated; the familiar and the faithful exhibition of scenes in
common life and the half-concealed vein of humour that is often playing through the whole ...

(Ian Reid, The Short Story, 31)

Several American writers in the 1820s and early '30s produced sketches, especially regional vignettes of local scenery, custom and the like. At about the same time in England something similar is to be found in the work of essayists. Charles Lamb occasionally introduces a sketch into some of his writings. Eighteenth Century periodical writers, too, had produced sketch like pieces when depicting fictitious personages most memorably, 'Sir Roger de Coverley' in the Spectator essays of Addison and Steele without involving them in any chain of substantial events.

The Sketch is commonly character studies with a noticeable movement towards narrative dimension. Example of stories that are predominantly Sketches are Joyce's 'Clay', Mann's 'The Infant Prodigy' and Mansfield's 'German Pension'.

2. Yarn

Yarn is a story about events and its primary concern is the live of action. It may have an anecdotal core, develops into a tale with an account of happenings discussed in a romantic wind. It may also be called the tales of gest (from Latin gesta deeds) The Yarn includes gesta like adventurous exploits, The ballad, the fairy story or anecdotes,
local legends (German sage) or a joke (Witz) or a tale with proverb (Spruch) or riddle (Ratsel). Among the innumerable yarns the Australian is the Quite noticeable one and is closely comparable to Chinese Ping Hua and Russian Skaz. Ping Hua appeared in the early seventeenth Century, characterized by its narrators presence, colloquial idiom, and realistic tone. Comparatively the Skaz is a kind of dramatic monologue which emphasises the speech habits of the narrator and this contributes to the effect of what is recounted as well as imparted.

3. Märchen:

Märchen draws its connection from the wish fulfilment patterns of fairy story which appeals to the sense of the marvellous. J.R.R. Tolkien describes fairy stories as:

Fairy stories are not in normal English usages stories about fairies of elves, but stories about Fairy, that is Faerie, the realm or state in which fairies have their being, Faerie contains many things besides elves and fays and besides dwarfs, witches, troils, giants or dragons: it holds the seas, the sun, the moon, the sky and the earth... and ourselves, mortal men when we are enchanted....

A 'Fairy Story is one which touches on or uses Faerie, Whatever its own main purpose may be: Satire, adventure, morality fantasy. Faerie itself may perhaps most nearly be translated by Magic but it is magic of a peculiar
mood and power, at the farthest pole from the vulgar
devices of the laborious, scientific, magician' ...  

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*, 34)

The term ‘fairy Story having become depreciated and
devalued, the German word Marchen is often used in the English
instead critical Lexicon. French and Irish Literature abounds in Marchen
types and are conscious artistic adaptations of the genuine folk material
as well as anonymous oral tradition. Marchen is at times confused with
the myth. Anthropologists from Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict to Claude
Levi-strauss hold this view that myths and folk tales share much the same
kind of content and there is an interchange of themes and motives hence
no absolute distinction is noticeable between the two categories. Ian Reid
differs from them:

First, their pre-occupation differ markedly on the one
hand religious matters aristocratic heroism, and so forth:
on the other, the familiar day dreams and nightmares of
ordinary folk. Moreover, whereas myth is manifold and
deversiform, the Marchen shapes its material (Whether
derived from mythology or not) according to a particular
kind of limited formal pattern ...  

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*, 35-36)
The pattern was appreciatively demonstrated by Russian formalist Vladimir Propp in 1928. He discovered after studying the structure of a hundred Russian stories, that although particular elements such as character attributes change form story to story, the basic function in the plot are precisely narrowed in confirmative to regular sequence. Propp's emphasis on the underlying interrelationships of a narrative components has encouraged French structuralist like A.J. Greimas, Claude Bremond and Tzvetan Todorov to develop his insight into a general theory of fiction.

4. PARABLE AND FABLE:

These are closely akin in their simple pre-modern forms of the short-story. Fable endows animals, or sometimes attend vegetative world with human capabilities. The Parables are commonly stories with a moral purpose. John Gardner and Lennis Dunlop in their book *The form of Fiction* draws the line of demarcation between the two:

In general Aesop's Fable is tough-minded and 'instructive'; it is in this respect quite, unlike the typical fairy tale ...

The form is epigrammatic, extremely economical and absolutely concrete. It has no room for the elaboration of character or setting and originally had no rooms for a concluding abstraction to meaning...
The typical Parable is realistic in its attitude and moralistic in its purpose, as is the Aesopic Fable; but it need not be cynical or ironic, and its meaning need not be instantly apparent. The character in a parable are generally human beings, not animals or stories or trees, and certain details in setting and character (both of these are often presented more fully than in the Aesopic fable) may be symbolic...

(Ian Reid, The Short Story, 37)

5. MIXED MODES:

Mixed Modes is a form which is representative of a confluence of several modes of the short story. Modern fiction is much of this form. The fiction of Franz Kafka belongs to this category. Finally all these tributary terms of story telling belongs to a tradition to which a story teller may easily resort to.

Essential qualities of the short stories.

The short story is not merely the novel on a smaller scale. It is neither an abridgement nor a fragment of the novel. The Novel can deal with the whole life of a man, a whole society or a whole generation. It can exhibit life in all its complexity and the evolution of character in all its subtlety, as Tolstoy does in War and Peace and Anna Karenina and George in Romola. There are novels which comprehend in their sweep
to two or three generations as does Galsworthy’s Forsyte Saga. The novelist pays and can pay equal attention to plot, characterization, narration, dialogue etc. We can study a novel from several point of view. Our admiration for it can be many sided.

During the last two decades of the twentieth Century essays on the short story began to pour continuously especially in America. A call was raised to recognise Short story as a distinctive genre whose uniqueness rests in three related Quality: it offers a single impression to the mind of the reader. The short story must have ‘Motif’ or informing idea leaving a clear, well defined impression on the mind of the reader. This is called the unity of effects or Impression. It must have in general one single Central character on which the attention of the reader is concentrated. A long string of Dramatic Persons is not permissible in a short story. Poe asserted that the chief property of ‘The short Prose tale’ was ‘unity of impression’ which he regarded as a product of a conscious artistic labour; the author ‘first conceived’ with deliberate care a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out V.S.Pritchett does not wholly agrees with Poe’s dictum he remarks:

“The wrong word, is misplaced paragraph, an inadequate phrase or a convenient explanation, start fatal leaks in this kind of writing, which is formally very close to poetry. It must be totally sustained”.
But Poe's conception of unity, claiming to go further than that, becomes too limited to cover all short stories ...

(Ian Reid, The Short Story. 54-55)

The Short Story is a smaller affair, but not less artistic than the novel. If the Novel is the epic in Prose, the short story is the lyric, giving concentrated and emphatic expression to a moment's experience and producing unity or totality of impression on the mind of the reader. H.G. Wells a great short story writer says:

A Short Story is, or should be, a simple thing it aims at producing One single vivid effect; it has to seize the attention at the outset and never relaxing, gather it together more and more until the climax is reached. The limits of the human capacity to attend closely therefore set a limit to it; it must explode and finish before interruption occurs or fatigue sets in ...

(Ian Reid, The Short Story. 56)

Moment of Crisis

Sylvan Barnet in his book A Dictionary of Limited Terms expresses the idea that:

Most frequently a short story writer of the nineteenth or twentieth Century focuses on a single character in a
single episode and rather than tracing his development,
reveals him at a particular moment ...

(Ian Reid, The Short Story, 56-57)

Theodore Stroud points out in his essay, 'A Critical Approach To the Short Story'; that the moment of crisis is the juncture during which the character undergoes some decisive change in attitude or understanding. He further adds: "Several characters in a story may change as a result on concatenation of stimuli which constitutes the part of a story. Sometimes two characters are related as undergoing reciprocal changes, so that for instance the happiness of one requires misery for the other. Sometimes even more; Gorkis "26 and one" is a rare example of a story in which a large group is treated as a single personality undergoing a change ... for, ordinarily recognising that a change is critical is tantamount to discovering the "Plot". Only then do we rationally comprehend the emotions vaguely produced as we read the story for the first time.

(Shiv K. Kumar and Keith Mckean (ed) Critical Approaches to Fiction, 37)
It is the extent of revelation of peak of awareness experienced by a character that makes some stories linger in the mind of the reader. Such personal crisis points bring in an important shift of perspective which makes the purpose of the story as fully apprehended. Further a change in the character's mind may even be accounted as a moment of crisis. Although there may not be substantial changes in the world around yet, the world does stand change in the consciousness of the character who is pivotal in the story.

**SYMMETRY OF DESIGN**

Brandes Mathews in his book *The Philosophy Of The Short Story* declared that symmetry of design was a sine qua non in the short story and this quality gives the narrative structure to the short story for without conflict, sequential action and resolution there can be no plot. Similarly Somerset Maugham and others believed that Aristotle's dictum about the plot a beginning a middle and an end applies axiomatically to the short story as it does to the drama or novel. Insistence on symmetry was first propounded by Poe who believed in its religious exercise in the writing of shorter fiction and believed it to be as one of the most important features of the genre. The modern writers of shorter fiction have two good reasons for discarding symmetry of design for it impeded recognition of the fact that in many good stories symmetry is not present at all and it gave no opportunity to the critics to talk indiscriminately about the structure of stories in which it actually is present. Robert
Creeley in his book, *The old Diggers* echoes more or less the same idea: "Whereas the novel is a continuum of necessity, chapter to chapter, the story can escape some of that obligation and function exactly in terms of whatever emotion best can serve it."

The story has *no time* finally or it hasn't here. Its shape, of form can be so thought of, is a shape, or an egg of obdurate kind. The only possible reason for its existence is that it has, in itself, the fact of reality and the pressure. There, in short, is its form no matter how random and broken that will seem. The old assumption of beginning and end those very neat assertions—have fallen away completely in a place where the only actuality is life, the only end (never realized) death, and the only value, what love one can manage...

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*, 63)

In modern fiction there are stories which could not have existed if it had a developing plot in the old manner Samuel F. Pickering writes:

In its end is the beginning and its beginning is its end, the divisions of the story are inseparable and there is no progression between them. Wright Morris ‘Magic’
confuses the reader by describing a Psychological world in which Past, Present and future are only separated from one another, other stories such as Tillie Olson's *Raqua I* and Jonathan Strong's 'Patients' examine the non Sequential world of the mentally ill...

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*. 64)

'Statis' is not stagnation. It is regarded as a very common feature of the modern stories for such stories do not convey "an activity".

... the character shows himself unable and unwilling to alter his situation: the movement is of a treadmill sort or suggest continuous transits without a foreseeable re-entry into social relationships. This inconclusiveness becomes a meaningful principle of structure...

(Ian Reid, *The Short Story*. 64)

Yet plotless narrative have managed to provide what William James named as:

An impression like that we often get of people in life: their orbits come out of space and lay themselves for a short time along ours, and then off they whirl again into the unknown, leaving us with little more than an impression of their reality and a feeling of baffled
curiosity as to the mystery of the beginning and end of their being ...

(Ian Reid, The Short Story. 65)

THE SHORT STORY HOME AND ABROAD

The Short Story distinct from anecdotes, tales, sketches, reportage and novellas came at the last stage of the evolution of narratives. The ancient Indian Literature was extremely rich in tales, fables and parables and there was hardly any time in any Indian Literature when the stories did not occupy a prominent place. The stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabhartha and the various Puranas were told and retold along with cycle of stories of Panchtantra, Hitopadesa and of Betal and Vikramaditya. The corpus increased in size and variety with the Persio-Arabic contact; stories from the middle-east became a valuable part of Indian Literature. Many of these stories were recreated in verse in the pre-printing era and they were the first to appear in a new form when the printing Press and Prose were introduced in our language.

The Short Story as a literary genre appeared in all Indian Literatures when the mythological adventurous and marvellous stories had exhausted their possibilities, and the novel indicate the readers and writer's perception of the novelty of the form, so do the different terms for the Short Story in different Indian languages reflect the varied
distinctiveness of the form implied in nomenclature like Katha, Akhyan, Upakhyan, Afsana and Dastan. The short story written in the Indian languages acquiring the form of a distinct Literary genre however emerged only in the first quarter of the 19th Century. A large number of collections of short stories published between 1800 and 1885, some of them already referred to, belong to these tradition. These stories continued to appear even after 1885, but the critical terms identifying the “Short Story” had by then emerged as a result of the writer’s desire to distinguish the new stories from the old.

The Kannada work Sri Krisna Samgraha (1886) a collection of stories about Krishna collected from Sanskrit Puranas and folklore or the eight-volume Urdu works Dastann-e- Amir Hamza Daftar Awwal (1887-1900) a collection of stories from Persio-Arabic sources compiled by Hafiz Syed Abdullah of Belgram, or the Tamil work Vivekacakaram (1890) a collection of stories each one of them linked with other by a slender thread of narration as in (Suka Saptati) or the Arabian Nights) by Husain Khan or the Gujarati collection of anecdotes Tucaka Samgraha (1890) by Jahengir Baharnji Marjhaben or the Sindhi work Sabha jo Singar (1894) collection of stories based on Panchatantra and Hitopadesa by Sobhraj Hasaram Daswani, or the Maithili collection of tales from the instruction of women, Stri dharma Siksa (1897) by Laldas are some of examples of the continuation of the indigenous tradition of tales. The growth of the short story was also accelerated by
the emergence of short fiction i.e novellas and long tales which shares the general features of the novel in respects of structural complexity and development of character through a considerably long periods of time. Bankim Chandra’s *Radharani Yuglangariya* and *Indira* are such examples. Fakir Mohan Senapati is probably the first Indian to write a short story in the modern sense. His first short story ‘Lachmania’ was published in 1868. The growth of the short story was partly regulated by the growing demand for stories by the reading public who preferred a complete story to parts of novels serialized in journals and periodicals. The editors of various journals therefore, encouraged the popular novelists of their time to contribute stories to each issue. The situation was very much similar to that in contemporary Europe and America where journals played a dominant role in the development of the short story. One of the earliest stories considered by critics as the first specimen of short story in Bengali, distinct from the novella as well as the tale, was written by Puranchandra Chattopadhyay in 1873 and was published in Bangadarsan, edited by his elder brother Bankim Chandra. This story *Madhumati* its theme being amnesia of the heroine, appeared as a fresh and striking work.

It was followed by a sentimental story by Rabindranath in 1877. The short story is a viable form did not emerge in Bengali till the year 1891, when Rabindranath wrote Six short stories for the six consecutive issues of the newly established journal Hitabadi. The first
short story in Malayalam is *Vasana Vikrti* (The mischief habit) by Kunji Raman Nayanar was published in the monthly *VidyaVinodini* in 1891. The short story in Hindi appeared around 1900. Our first story ‘Writes Jindal’ confined to a single incident or moment appeared in the first volume of *Saraswati*. That was ‘Indumati’ by Kishorilal Goswami, Ramchandra Shukla’s *Gyarha Varsa Ka Samay* (eleven years Time) was published in 1903. If ‘Indumati’ is an imitation of a Bengali story as suspected by some than Ramchandra Shukla must get the credit of writing the first original story in Hindi. In Tamil the short story developed with V.V.S.Iyer (1831-1925) around (1915-1917) when he published his *MankayarKaraSiym Katal*. The short story made real progress in Telugu only after 1920. The Urdu short story was born in the writings of Premchand (1880-1936) and his contemporaries such as Sajjid Haidar. collections of Premchand’s short story came out in 1908.

The short story germinated towards the close of the nineteenth century after having remained dormant for a considerable length of time. The period of infertility affected only the readable stuff; oral form of the short story continued to exist in almost every household where culture and social ties throbbed with life. The close of the nineteenth Century initiated some sporadic writings by writers like Kamala Satthianandan *stories from Indian Christian Life* (1898); K.S. Venkataramani’s *Paper boats* (1921) and *Jatadharan and other stories* (1937); K. Nagarjani single volume called *Cold Rice* (1945) During this
period Rabindranath Tagore wrote some short stories in Bengali which he himself translated in English. Of which the most popular are: “The Kabuliwallah”, “Subha”, “The Post master” “The Castaway”. Among the lesser writers, the memorable names are A. Madhaviah (Kushika’s Short Stories, 1924), A.S.P. Ayer Sense In Sex And Other Stories and Shankar Ram (children of The Kaveri, 1926 and Creatures All, 1932).

The mid thirties of the twentieth century proved extremely fertile for Indian English short story. The well known contributors to this genre now came through the writings of Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, occupies a prominent place; his collections like An Astrologers Day, Lawley Road and A Horse and two Goal’s represents various facts of human life. The sustaining power of Narayan’s story is its pure delight in the simple country or urban living.

Raja Roa is well known for his collections. The cow of the Barricades And Other Stories and The Policeman and the Rose which reflect social and political living in India. His choicest subjects are popular myths, national throb, rural characters and Philosophical probing. Manjeri S. Isvaran has ten volumes of short stories to his name. The well accepted One are Naked Shingles, A Madras Admiral and many more. His stories are rooted in the life of the low and middle classes. He is excellent in depicting female psyche and gives credible records of their delicate psychology.
Khushwant Singh, who had published four volumes of short stories between 1950 and 1971, has now brought all of them together in *The collected short stories of Khushwant Singh* (1989). *The Mark of Vishnu* And other stories, *The Voice of God And Other Stories*, *A Bride For The Saheb And Other Stories* and *Black Jasmine* makes an attack on the repulsive ways of living; hypocritical way are also condemned by Khushwant Singh. Of some interest is his Foreword “On the Short Story”. Which spells out his idea of the short story: it must have unity, a distinct beginning, middle and end, a “ring of truth”, “a message to convey,” and a “Sting in its tail”. It is hardly surprising therefore, that Singh should find Somerset Maugham “the greatest spinner of short stories of all time”.

Another older short story writer for whom also Mugham was a model is Manohar Malgonkar. To his three collections which had appeared between 1974 and 1977, he has now added *Four Graves and Other stories* (1990), seven of the fifteen stories here have already in *Bombay Beware* (1975). The eight new stories have mostly a colonial colouring.

Equally significant to the name of Ruth Prawar Jhabvala, a German by birth, Polish by parentage and an Indian by marriage. She has four volumes of short stories to her credit namely like *Birds Like Fishes And Other Short Stories*, *How I Became Holy Mother And Other Stories*. *A Stronger climate and experience of India*. K.A. Abbas, a well
known film script writer has created a special niche in the body of Indian English short story by the production of five collections. His stories portray poverty, ignorance, insufficiency hypocrisy, selfishness and unemployment. His two volumes Blood And Stories And Other Stories (1947) and Cages of Freedom And Other Stories (1952), treat political issues where as social evils are portrayed in his collection entitled Rice And Other Stories (1947) and One Thousand Nights On A Bed of Stories And Other Stories (1947). In his stories Abbas appears as a Zealous socialist who lashes harshly on the social ills.

Equally famous as a short story teller in English is G.D. Khosala, whose four volumes. The Price of a life (1958). The Horoscope cannot Lie And Other Stories (1961), Grim Fairy Tales And Other Facts And Fancies. (1966) and A Way Of Loving And Other Stories (1973), hits hard at the Social evils like untouchability and ill matched marriage.

Among other short story collections of the period may be noted; M.Bandopadhyay’s Behind the Eyelids (1984); J.P. Dass Forbidden Street (1984). Anand Mukherji’s Believe It or not (1984) Stories by a blind author, dealing with the interaction between the blind and those who are not visually handicapped, Mukul Sharma’s Dream sequence (1984); Amal Ghose’s The winged Gods (1985) A.K. Bagchi’s Tales from a small Town (1993); Akhileswar Jha’s Escapades (1993); Dollars Rain No More and other stories by R.K. Raju (1999) Basavoraj

Novelists like Bhabani Bhattacharya, Chaman Nahal, Anita Desai, Shobha De, Arun Joshi and Shashi Deshpande and Lahiri have produced a single volume each. Shobha De’s *Small Betrayals* is less popular than its elder sister. Bhabani Bhattacharya’s *Steel Hawk and other Stories* is concerned with social problems and the approach is satirical. Anita Desai’s *Games at Twilight And Diamond Dust* (2000) is concerned with individual perception of ‘being’ and the life. Margaret Chatterjee, K.N. Daruwalla and Shiv K. Kumar are significant contributors.

Shashi Deshpande is one of the few writers who is equally adept in both forms, the novel and the Short Story. She started her writing career in 1970, with short stories published in magazines like Eve’s weekly, *Femina, The Illustrated Weekly of India* and *Mirror*. These were later collected in the *Legacy and Other Stories* (1971), *The Miracle and other stories* (1986), *It was dark* (1986) and *It was the Nightingale* (1986). Another collection, *The Intrusion and other stories* (1993) contains old as well as newer stories. The authentic recreation of India is outstanding feature of her work. She writes about another kind of deprivation—emotional. The woman bereft of Love, understanding and companionship is the centre of her work.
A number of women short story writers have made their debut in the 'nineties' with the exception of Nisha da cunha (who started publishing stories late in life), all these writers were born after Indian Independence. Manju Kak, Bulbul Sharma, Neelum Sharan Gour, Subhadra Sengupta, Deepa Shah, Kalpand Swaminathan, and Anita Nair, all made their debut with short stories.

The Indian short story has shown remarkable changes during the last four decades. The traditional Indian tale with its didactic and descriptive nature is now supplanted by the modern, which tends to be analytical and narrative the traditional mode of story telling with the omniscient author technique is now replaced by modern modes like the stream of consciousness, the flash back and flash forth, the first person narration, the point of view method and the epistolary style.

The short story was a late development in England for until 1890 it had spurious appearances as the occasional by-product of a novelist. The Short Story was first attempted by Fielding and was followed nearly as long as century to be imitated by Dickens. During this period, Scott also used short story as a part of the novel entitled Red Gauntlet. By 1860 the Short story became 'A Noble Literary Form' in America, France and Russia. Edgar Allan Poe, an American made significant contribution, Balzac made in France, Gogol and Turgenev in Russia. Their efforts were soon supplemented by Bret Harte and Ambrose
Bierce in America, Maupassant in France and Tchekhov in Russia. Maupassant and Tchekhov became model story tellers for the English writers in the twentieth century.

Abroad the short story made noticeable development in the early years of the twentieth century. E. M. Forster, H. M. Munro and G. K. chesterton made the short story as influential as the novel is. Rudyard Kipling, H.G.Wells, W.W. Jacobs (Many Cargoo), Conan Doyle (The Green flag and other stories) poured out a flood of stories which greatly as they differed in quality and flavour had so much in common that they determined the form of the short story for close on twenty years. Kipling's glowing imagination, Well's eager curiosity, Jacob's comedies of riverside and country pub, Conan Doyle's costume pieces and detective stories were all expressed in terms of plot and action W.W. Jacobs introduced humorous stories in the first half of the twentieth century and his three sailors Sam small, Peter Russet and Ginger Dick became home names. G.K. Chesterton and R.L. Stevenson also produced short stories depicting a world of imagination, which fascinated reading for each and all. Kipling contributed to the bulk of short stories through Plain Tales From The Hills (1887).

(A.S.Collins. English Literature of the twentieth Century. 263)

Opening up Indian life more fully and deeply, both human and animal, writing of machines and sea.
Serpents and many moving and adventurous matters
on land and sea...

(A.S. Collins. English Literature of the twentieth Century. 266)

Arnold Bennett contributed the two volumes of Short Stories Tales of The Five Towns (1905) and The Grim Smile of The Five Towns (1907) emphasized the Social scenario of the mechanized England. 1911 marks the first contribution of Katherine Mansfield, In A German Pension when she was only twenty-three. The second decade of the twentieth century made influential achievements. P.G. Wodehouse gave an individual colour to 'Short story' with his comic vision and his impressive characterisation. E. M. Forster made the most dynamic contribution through his collection of six short stories, The Celestial Omnibus (1911). This collection contains exhaustive sketches in fantasy. This decade witness the short story having grown fully into its own. It found a large reader and was now recognized "Pleasurable existence as a form of creative writing". Popular magazines and periodicals became outlets to writers of the short story. 'The strand' and 'The London Mercury' introduced a good many writers along with their works and also contributed largely in making the short story a Vogue.

Some noticeable novelists like Somerset Maugham along with novel writing expressed himself in the Short Story. His first volume of short stories The Trembling Of A Leaf (1921), motivated Other writers
like Walter De La Mare, Osbert Sitwell and Aldous Huxley revealed their skills in short stories along with Poetry and Prose. D.H. Lawrence and C.E. Montague made distinguished contribution, the latter by his Short Stories of the war - Fiery Particles.

Nineteen thirties witnessed a host of appearances like A.E. cowperd, H.E. Bates, Rhys Davies, L.A.G. Strong and Dylan Thomas. E.G.O. Brien by his collection of short stories Modern English Short Stories (1930) and English Short Stories Of Today (1934) and by his annual collection of best stories presented the spectacle of short story as a literary form. It also made the people conscious of this new genre; its preciousness in terms of evoking a situation and in providing excitement in a length of few pages. The popularity paved way for a number of volumes likes Welsh Short Stories, Irish Short Stories and Scotish Short Stories. Of this period T.F. Powys was the most distinguish writer. His rare skill may be enjoyed by reading his collections like, The House with An Echo (1928) and Bottle’s Path (1946).

Short Story saw a temporary set back in the forties owing to interruption made by the war and the literary energies was scattered into different fields. Nevertheless a few short stories were inspired by war of which the excellent were by H.E. Bates : which appeared under the Pseudonym of “Flying officer X”. Bates first collection The Greatest
People In The World sold like hot cakes and a little above three hundred thousand copies were sold. Another factor responsible for scanty output in the body of the Short Story was due to paper shortage. The problem was overcome a little soon before the rise of the next decade.

The short story regained its popularity in the fifth decade with the contribution of Rhys Davies, T.F. Powys, James Hanley, Glyn, Jones and Kate Roberts. Denton Welch was the most talented short story teller during the decade but unfortunately died in 1948 at the age of thirty-One. He is immortal and his fame rests on only one volume of short stories *Brave and Cruel* (1949). Commenting on the nature of Denton’s Short Stories Collin reported:

The nervous tension inside the individual, so characteristic of much modern writing and reflecting so truly much modern experience, is intensely present, together with sharp sensuous impressionism of unusual acuteness and rare precision of expression. Like Dylan Thomas in his autobiographical short stories, Delton Welch wrote from inside a self fed by the absorbed memories of childhood and thinking in images, but he wrote with a clarity alien to the symbol loving soul of Thomas and in that difference his work was characteristic of the turn which writing had taken, in
some ten years, from obscurity clarity both in poetry

and in personal imaginative prose...

(A. S. Collins *English Literature of the Twentieth Century*, 266-67)

The next twenty-five years as Sean O’Faolain remarks is “A Loss of Nerve”. This Period had contributors like O’Henry, D.H. Lawrence Leonard Merick, C.E. Montague, O’Flaherty H.E.Bates and Malachi with Hake were masters of the craft and skilled in telling engaging stories. Of modern English short story writers Somerset Maugham enjoyed greatest vogue and still continues to do so. Commenting on his skill Iyengar adds:

The short story writer makes a trinity with the novelist and the dramatist, and it is difficult to say who will endure longest or which of the three faces (or masks) will most fascinate the future... The short story writer of today shares with the rest of us these horrors and humiliations. But some of our writers at least have somehow managed to retain the ‘vision and faculty divine’, they are inveterately human and they have a gift for humour...

(S. Iyengar. *The Adventure of Criticism*, 160-161)

The short story today is the most popular of literary forms and the short story writer continues to project life with its beauty and
ugliness, with its philosophy and realism and with a stress on individual experience and individual vision. It continues to discover “the unity of the individual” behind the multiplicity of its living. The short story continues to embody truth in art; there is a kind of “knowing” “understanding” and “manifesting” of the essence of living.

Srinivasa in his book *The Adventure of Criticism* foresees the future of the short story as:

So long as there are writers like Maugham and Pritchett, Hemmingway and Faulkner, Masti and Raja Roa and there are quite a few of them whose art can expose the darkness at noon or the glory hidden in the seeming dross, we need not despair of the future of the Short Story...

(S. Iyengar. *The Adventure of Criticism*, 162)
Works Cited


