CHAPTER II

A. RENAISSANCE OF MODERN ARABIC LITERATURE

B. ARABIC LITERATURE BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WAR
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1. The Beginnings of the Literary Renaissance (النهضة):

a. Egypt:

In 1798 when Napoleon Bonaparte occupied Egypt with a French expeditionary force, he brought to an end of the power of the Mamelukes. He therefore could present himself as a champion of the Arabs and a liberator of Egypt from the tyrannical rule of the Mamelukes. For the first time Egypt came in contact with European culture, its scientific progress and materialism. Bonaparte took with him a team of distinguished scientists, experts and scholars who undertook a thorough and systematic survey of Egypt and its resources. They established modern libraries and laboratories to carry out scientific and literary research. They conducted their scientific experiments in the laboratories and published their findings in a newly established French-language periodical. He also brought with him an Arabic language press from the Vatican. It was the first Arabic printing press in Egypt. The primary purpose of the press was to publish the French proclamation and other official matter in Arabic.

The Egyptians admired the efficiency and organization of the French. They were highly impressed by the experiments in the laboratories, which encouraged them for learning and their desire for knowledge. The learned men
such as al-Jabartī and Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār, the teacher of the pioneer of modern Arab thought al-Ṭahtāwī visited the laboratories and libraries. They were impressed by the library and fascinated by the experiments they were shown.

**Emergence of Muḥammad ‘Ali:**

The French adventure did not last long. In 1803 the French troops left Egypt in a state of chaos. In this situation Muḥammad ‘Ali, an Albanian military commander, seized the opportunity to have proclaimed himself governor of Egypt in 1805. He ruled Egypt from 1805 to 1848. The reign of Muḥammad ‘Ali marks the beginning of the Arab awakening. He organized a strong army and navy and extended his rule over the Arabian Peninsula. Muḥammad ‘Ali established a number of military and technological schools in which modern sciences and European languages were taught. Western military advisors and technicians were employed as instructors. He also gradually began to send Egyptians to France, Italy and Britain to be educated in various disciplines. After their return, one of them soon became the managing director of the Government Printing Office. In 1816 he started a process for introducing a Western type of educational system which had very little in common with the traditional religious Azhar system. Cairo was a suitable centre for the Renaissance (النهضة) due to the presence of the Azhar. This was an institute of Islamic education established by the Fatimids. It was still the leading treasury of knowledge of Arabic language and literature. Muḥammad ‘Ali tried to modernize his property with all his might.
It was Muḥammad ‘Ali who with great determination led Egypt into the modern era. He made an all-out effort at modernization and undoubtedly Egypt as a whole benefited from his innovations. Muḥammad ‘Ali was not an educated man. He probably spoke little Arabic and was in no position to appreciate literary Arabic. His aim was strictly limited to what was conducive to the building up of a powerful administration with a strong army. The Egyptians sent on educational missions in Europe were all technically army officers with specific ranks. They had to follow an army discipline and were not even allowed to make a tour of the countries in which they were studying. These young men lost their interest in western technology. Moreover, the setting up of a new secular system of education was totally different from the traditional one. A system which produced men, who were to occupy important posts in the government, was bound to result finally in the weakening of the authority of traditional values. Arab Muslim society therefore ceased to be the ‘closed’ culture it had been for so long. After the disappointment of his military ambitions Muḥammad ‘Ali lost interest in his educational programme. The modern technological schools as well as the school of languages closed. But the process of modernization of education was continued further by his grandson Ismā‘īl. When he came to the throne (1863-79), he pursued the policy of modernizing education enthusiastically. He did so on a much larger scale than his grandfather and recognized the entire system of public education. During Ismā‘īl’s tenure Egypt made pretty larger progress in establishing contacts with
French culture and institutions. It followed the French judicial and administrative systems. Many schools and colleges were established for imparting modern education for the army and technicians and also for the common people and girls.

The developments made by Ismā‘il contributed much to the Arab Renaissance, which was similar to the European renaissance of 15th century. It is characterized by a return to classical literature whose masterpieces served as models for new writers. The Arab renaissance is further characterized by an interest in European literature.\(^5\)

**Contribution of Printing Press, Translation and Journalism:**

The Arabic printing press played a vital role in the literary Renaissance because without printing press the Renaissance (النهضة) would have been inconceivable. Maronite priests introduced printing press into Arab world in 1702 in Aleppo. The Aleppo press published mainly religious literature, but some linguistic studies were also printed in addition to the work of mission schools.\(^6\)

An American mission had its press in Malta. In 1834, the Lebanese writer and journalist ʿĀḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, was sent to Malta by American missionaries to supervise its Arabic publications. A pioneer of Arab journalism al-Shidyāq later founded his own printing house in Istanbul. It published the weekly newspaper *al-Jawāb* (الجواب) founded by al-Shidyāq and also published many literary works from the numerous manuscripts in Istanbul libraries. Contemporary works were also published from all parts of the Islamic world.\(^7\)
Napoleon brought with him a printing press in Egypt, on which the French Scientific Panel *Le Courrier de l’Egypte* and a scientific and literary magazine, *Le Decade Egyptienne* were printed. But the journals and magazines could not make any impact on local Egypt, as these were published in French. Arabic was used in 1821, when Muḥammad ‘Ali established an Arabic printing press at Bulaq. Later it was known as the Government Press. This press played an important cultural role in the Arab Muslim world. It printed translations of European works, at first scientific and technological, but later on, literary translations as well as Arabic classics. In 1828, the press started printing the Egyptian Government Gazette *al-Waqā‘i‘ al-Miṣriyya* (الوقائع المصرية) the first newspaper in the Arab world. It was printed three times a week and edited by al-Ṭaḥṭawi. It was the first appearance of journalism in the history of the Arab world. It played an important role in the development of modern Arab thought, society and politics and also of modern Arabic literature. Journalism as well as translations of scientific works helped to change gradually the style of Arabic prose, making it free of excessive devices and making it a simpler. Thus it had direct impact on modern Egyptian literature.

The most important effect of the translations was their eagerness to the birth and development of literary forms that were not found in classical Arabic. The growth of short story, novel and drama was the direct result of the translations.
In short, printing press, newspapers, journals and translations played most significant role in the literary Renaissance. Without these assets the Renaissance would not have been possible.

Shaikh Hasan al-'Attar taught French Officers Arabic during the Nepoleonic occupation. By 1830, he kept himself in touch with Muhammad 'Ali and subsequently al-'Attar was appointed rector of the Azhar (شيخ الأزهر). His work is sometimes considered as a preparation for modern Arabic prose during the reign of Muhammad 'Ali. Hasan al-'Attar has been named the first Egyptian man of letters 'who evolved a style of his own'. He achieved greatest fame for his booklet Insha' al-'Attar which had numerous editions. It is a sample book of letters and also love-letters written in externally mannered style and in purer Arabic than that of his contemporaries. His Arabic was far from journalistic. As he traveled widely, in Arab world he was open to new ideas. Tahtawi was one of his pupils. He was sent to France in 1826 as an Imam on the recommendation of his teacher Shaikh Hasan al-'Attar and al-'Attar encouraged him to write the famous description of his journey which forms a milestone in the history of modern Egyptian literature. Some call him one of the pioneers of the literary Renaissance.
Rifa‘ah Rāfi‘ al-Tahtāwī is generally regarded as the father of Arab thought and the greatest forerunner of modern literary prose in Egypt. He was born in Upper Egypt of a poor family of distinguished background. He studied at the Azhar in Cairo and in 1824 he was appointed *mudarris* (مدرس) in this institution, at the time the only school of higher education in Egypt. In the same year he was also appointed *imām* (chaplain) of a newly formed army battalion. In 1826, on the recommendation of his teacher Shaikh Ḥasan al-‘Attār, he was sent to France as an *imām* of a group of mission students. He remained in Paris from 1826 to 1831 and learned enough French as well as studied various aspects of French culture. After his return to Egypt he published in 1834 his observations and impressions of his trip in *Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī Talkhīṣ Bāriz* (تخليص الإبريز في تلخيص باريز) in which he recorded his experiences as a student in Paris. In this book as well as in his numerous other writings, he expressed his respect for the rationality and the good organization of social and political institutions of the West.

In 1835 he was appointed director of the Cairo School of Languages founded by Muḥammad ʿAli, for the teaching of Italian, French and English and also for the preparation of students for the professional schools and the training of officials and translators. It produced a number of distinguished translators and writers.
In 1841 a Translation Bureau was established attached to the Language school. This marks the beginning of a significant translation movement. At the first stage it was limited to technological and military books, but subsequently it included literary and historical writings. In 1841 al-Ṭaḥṭāwī became the editor of Egyptian Government Gazette *al-Waqā‘i‘ al-Miṣrīyya* (الوقائع المصرية) which had been established by Muḥammad ‘Ali in 1828. This was the beginning of his carrier as a journalist. He had numerous contributions to this famous periodical. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī helped to change it from a dry official organ into a modern newspaper, publishing articles, discussions and translations, as well as official news. Due to his valuable contributions al-Ṭaḥṭāwī is considered a pioneer of Renaissance (النهضة) in general and of translation in particular as well as Arabic journalism.

After the death of Muḥammad ‘Ali, in 1848 when ‘Abbās I came into power, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī fell into disgrace. He was exiled to Khartum. In Khartum he translated *Telemaque* of Fenelon, thus became a pioneer of the novel in Arabic.

Under the ‘Abbās’ successor al-Ṭaḥṭawī returned to Egypt and became director of a college. In 1863 he became head of the Translation Department of the Ministry of Education. There in co-operation with some other translators, he translated the French *Code civil* and the *French code du Commerce*. He advocated education for the girls’ and the first Egyptian girls’ school was established a year before his death.
Al-Ṭahṭāwī’s contemporaries were more interested in his book on Egyptian society *Manāhij al-Albāb al-Miṣriyya fi Mabāhij al-Adāb al-ʿĀṣriyya* ( المناهج الألباب المصرية في مباهج الأدب العصري )—"The Paths of Egyptian Hearts in the Joys of contemporary Arts"— which was published in 1869.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī is also sometimes considered as the first nationalist Egyptian and in fact, he advocated love for the fatherland (الوطن). But in his poems the *watanīyat* (الوطنية) he is a patriot rather than a nationalist and the fatherland he refers to is always Egypt not the Arab world.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī, from a literary point of view, was very important mainly for the development of a modern Arabic prose style. His Arabic style, while not merely functional or conversational, is straightforward. His best known work *Takhliṣ al-Ibrīz fī Talkhīṣ Bāriz* (تخليص الإبريز في تلخيص باريز) was written in clear and simple style and easy to read. It is distinguished by its style. Al-Ṭahṭāwī greatly contributed to the development of Egyptian journalism and also through the official gazette *al-Waqaʿī‘ al-Miṣrīyya* (الوقائع المصرية).

It has been observed that in the first half of the nineteenth century—roughly to the end of the reign of Muḥammad ʿAli, the Renaissance (النهضة) had only just begun in Egypt. Muḥammad ʿAli’s revival of culture was largely confined to science and technology.

Though it is difficult to ascertain where the movement of literary revival was stronger or where it contributed more to modern Arabic literature, it is seen that the Syro- Lebanese were the most accessible among the Arabs to a literary
revival. In Syria and Lebanon, the Renaissance (النهضة) was literary from the beginning.

b. Syria and Lebanon:

The Renaissance (النهضة) was a result of the contribution of the scholars of the Levant and Egypt. In Syria and Lebanon the Renaissance (النهضة) was mainly due to the activities of the Christians. In Syria and Lebanon, European influence began to be felt in the 16th century.

The political situation in Lebanon helped to make it a centre of al-Nahda (النهضة). Lebanon became part of the Ottoman Empire in 1516. The administrative divisions assumed a new wilāyah. Under the provincial administration (wilāyah), the northern part came under the Governor of Syrian Tripoli: the central and southern parts were under the Governor of Damascus. In the northern part, Kisrawan, the Maronite Christians were predominant while in the southern districts of Shuf, the Druze constituted the majority. The Ottoman conquest did not affect deeply the political structure, the language and the way of life of the people of Lebanon.

The enlightened and liberal administration of a Lebanese prince, Fakhr al-Dīn II (1590-1635) opened the door wide to Western cultural influences. Fakhr al-Dīn’s ambition was to become an effective administrator of the whole country. By persuasion, politic marriages and perhaps implicit threats, he could bring most of the lords of the Mountain to his side. Fakhr al-Din II was the most energetic
and the greatest figure at that time who ruled Lebanon throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During his reign he extended the geographical boundaries far beyond Lebanon. He was open-minded toward foreign religious creeds and encouraged European missionaries to build Christian churches. Fakhr al-Din II cared for the prosperity and the welfare of his country. He sent Lebanese students to take education in Italy. He also established schools in Lebanon so that the graduates could gather knowledge and spread learning in their native land. His ambition was to create a greater Lebanon and set it on the race of progress and he came near realizing his dream.

In 1584, a seminary was established by Pope Gregory XIII in Rome for the Maronite students for clerical careers. The students were taught particularly theological education in the Maronite school. There was also provision of learning secular science and European languages, literature as well as philosophy. After the completion of graduation from the Maronite school, they went back to the Levant and began to spread the knowledge what they had learnt in Rome. Some of the prominent missionaries who had brilliant works can be mentioned here. Ibrāhīm al-Haqalani got the little of Court Translator for rendering important Arabic works into French, Bishop Gabriel al-Sīḥūyni al-Adhani (1577-1648) translated Sharīf al-Idrīsī’s work *Nuzhat al-Mushtaq fi Dhikr al-Amsār wal-Âfāq* (نزهة المشتاق في ذكر الأمسار والافاق) into Latin. Germanūs Farhat (1670-1732) was perfect in many languages. He is generally considered as the forerunner of the literary revival in Syria and Lebanon. He wrote on
philosophy, logic and Arab Sciences. Yusuf Samani (1687-1768) translated many Arabic and Syriac texts into Latin. He also spread educational activities on European influence. His work at the Vatican Library resulted in the addition of a large number of Oriental manuscripts to the collection now considered one of the richest in the world.

The Maronites began to establish schools in the towns and villages of the Levant. Roman Catholic Church also had its hierarchy in the Levant. They used education as the medium of missionary work. In 1755, the Lazarites founded a boys' school in Damascus, and the Capuchines established their centers in Antioch, Beirut and Aleppo.

Pioneers of the Renaissance:

After the downfall of Fakhr al-Din II, Lebanon was stripped of her newly acquired territories beyond the boundaries of the Mountain and a drastic change took place in both local and international scene. Following the convention which became established after the downfall of Fakhr al-Din II, the Shihabi Bashir II (1798-1840) became the Amir of Lebanon. He built a fine palace near his mountain capital. He encouraged education and outside contacts. He patronized the scholars giving them administrative posts and accepting their practical eulogies. His court was the meeting place of famous poets such as Nikūlā Yusuf al-Turk, Buṭrus Ibrāhim Karāma, Amin al-Jundi and Nāsif al-Yaziji. They enjoyed the patronage of Bashir Shihab II.
An important Lebanese author of eighteenth century was Aḥmad al-Barbir (1747-1811). He was a Muslim and expert on Islamic Jurisprudence (fiqh). He thoroughly studied the religious sciences as well as Arabic language. He wrote *maqāma* (مقامة) and poetry both secular and religious. He wrote his religious poetry in simple language. The love for the *maqāma* was an important factor in the Renaissance in Syria and Lebanon no less than in Egypt.²³

Among the pioneers of the Renaissance of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, two Lebanese writers deserve to be mentioned. They are Nikūlā Yūsuf al-Turk (1763-1828) and Buṭrus Ibrāhīm Karāma (1774-1861).

Nikūlā Yūsuf al-Turk was a court poet and secretary to the prince Bashir II. Addressing to this prince he composed many eulogistic poems. His poems were published in a *dīwān* in 1949. These poems, classical in character, hardly contributed to the revival of Arabic poetry. He wrote *maqāmāt* (مقامات), essays (مقالات) and a long account of the Napoleonic occupation of Egypt. He also wrote a History of Napoleon.

Buṭrus Ibrāhīm Karāma was a bosom friend of Bashir II and became his adviser on foreign affairs because of his intelligence. Subsequently he became the chief minister and accompanied the amir on his travels. His merits were recognized by appointing him chief interpreter at the Sultan’s Palace. During his youth he had written panegyrical poetry to local distinguished persons in Aleppo and also continued it while working for Bashir II in Lebanon. His literary contributions were almost in poetry. Most of his poems were published in a
diwān in 1898. Louis Cheikho considers him to have played an important role in the development of Arabic literature in the first half of nineteenth century, while Dagher refers to his great innovation in poetical spirit, style and shape.24

There are three important Lebanese writers belong to the first half of nineteenth century. They are Nāṣif al-Yāziḍī (1800-1871), Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq (1805-1887) and Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819-1883); they produced their best works during the century. They were all Christians. One of them al-Shidyāq accepted Islam later.

Nāṣif al-Yāziḍī was one of the pioneers of the Arabic literary revival in the nineteenth century, who enjoyed the patronage of Bashir Shihāb II. Al-Yāziḍī was educated in language, literature and also medicine. Besides a court poet, he was also a prose writer who played a vital role in reviving classical Arabic. He also assisted American missionaries as proof reader with their publications especially with the Arabic translation of the Bible. His principal works are on such subjects as medicine, logic and historical works as linguistic text books, poetry and art prose.

Al-Yāziḍī was famous for his important works on grammar and rhetoric. His grammar Fasl al-Khitāb (فصل الخطاب) was first published in Malta in 1836. It may be considered as a substitute for medieval masterpieces.

In respect of his poetry, he imitated classical poetry in general and Mntanabbi in particular. He did not show any interest to direct his poetry to new themes of current interest of the Arab world. When he was a court poet of Bashir
II, he had composed eulogy and elegy in conventional style found in the old *qasida* (قصيدة). His last poem, an elegy on his son Habib was also written in traditional style.

In respect of his Art prose, *Majma' al-Bahra'in* (مجمع البحرين) "The Conjunction of the Two Seas" is an important book of al-Yāzījī, which he had written in the traditional *maqāma* style imitating al-Hariri and al-Hamadhāni. This book shows his complete mastery over the Arabic language.

Al-Yāzījī was more successful in his imitation of al-Hariri. Empty formal beauty of word-patterns, artificial rhetorical figures, persistent use of rhymed prose and a display of meaningless erudition are found in his works. Sometimes we find true emotion expressed in a simple and spontaneous way. But in spite of these faults, the value of his literary and linguistic works is considered as part of the classical revival. He had set out to model himself on the ideal of the traditional Arabs. Besides his literary and linguistic interests, al-Yāzījī was deeply concerned in the nationalist movement which provided inspiration for both his prose and poetry.

Al-Yāzījī is considered to some extent as the first genius or near genius of *al-Nahda* (النهضة). He saw Arabic literature as a means of achieving national unity, as it is the common inheritance of both Muslim and Christian and therefore advocated its revival as a way of salvation. He was among the first Christian writers to develop a keen and serious interest in Arabic language and literature.
Another precursor of the Renaissance (النهضة) was أحمد فارس شيدياق. Like al-Yazıği, he was also very interested in language, rhymed prose and rhetoric. He wrote linguistic books. He was also a pioneer of journalism.

He visited foreign countries including Malta, Britain, France and Tunis and he knew foreign languages. He got his secondary education in the Maronite school of ‘Ain Waraqa and learnt Syriac, Franch and English. He went to Egypt and worked as a translator for the Americans. There he met distinguished scholars and improved his grasp of Arabic language and literature. He also entered journalism writing for the periodical al-Waqa’i’ al-Miṣriyya (الوقاعى المصري).

In 1834, he was sent by the American missionaries to Malta. He worked in their press and supervised the Arabic publications there. In 1848, he was invited to England by the British and Foreign Bible Society, to assist Samuel Lee in translating the Bible into Arabic.26

He also wrote a eulogistic ode in honor of the visiting Bey of Tunis in Paris. His ode is known as lāmiyya (لامية), because the rhyme was the letter لام (لام). The Bey, being pleased, invited him to Tunis and appointed him editor of his official newspaper al-Ra’id al-Tūnisī (الرائد التونسي), the first newspaper of Tunis. In 1857, he went to Istanbul and worked as translator and proof reader in the state press of Istanbul. He also founded a weekly newspaper al-Jawā’ib (الجوانب) in Istanbul in 1862. It was the first Arabic newspaper which had a wide circulation and popularity throughout the Arab world. It was first published in the
Turkish State Press. He later founded his own publishing house *Matba' al-Jawā'ib* (مطبعة الجوانيب) in Istanbul. In addition to his newspaper *al-Jawā'ib* (الجوانيب), it published literary works from the numerous manuscripts of the Istanbul libraries. Contemporary works were also published from all parts of the Islamic world including the compilations of Siddīq Ḥasan Khan of Bhopal in India.²⁷

Al-Shidyāq was also a pioneer of modern Arabic lexicography. He was famous for his studies in lexicography. He called for arrangement in Arabic dictionaries in the modern alphabetical order, instead of conventional rhyme order based on the final root letter. In his dictionary *Sirr al-Layāl* (سر الليل) “Secrets of the Nights”, al-Shidyāq introduced a novel alphabetical order of his own, beginning with the gutturals to support the theory of the onomatopoetic origin of language. He also treated two letter anagrammatically, e.g., b-d with d-b, r-d with d-r. This idea came from the theory of bilateral origin of Arabic roots which was originated by Khalil ibn Aljmad in the eighth century.²⁸ He also wrote about his travels abroad. His *al-Saq 'ala al-Saq fimā huwa al-Fariyāq* (الساق على الساق فيما هو الفرياق) “Leg over leg concerning what Fariyāq is” is one of the earliest travel books in the modern period.

Al-Shidyāq tried to exploit all the resources of the language from the archaic to the popular and vulgar. His style, which made use of many levels of diction, was in fact a number of different styles, each applied to a proper subject,
Mārūn al-Naqqāsh (1817-1855) is a pioneer of Arabic drama. He introduced the dramatic form to Arabic literature. He wrote al-Bakhīl (البخيل) “The Miser”, the first play in Arabic, in 1847. His second play Abū 'l-Hasan al-Mughaffal (ابوالحسن المغفل) “Abul Hasan the Fool” was produced in 1850 which based on an amusing story in the “Thousand and One Nights”. He finally wrote his third play al-Salit al-Hasūd (السليط الهاسود) “The Sharp Tongued Envious Man” and for its production he built a special theatre which was the first in the Arab world. But after his death it was turned into a Church.

Afterwards, poetical drama became an important literary genre. The Lebanese Ibrāhim al-Aḥdab (1826-1891) played an important role in poetical drama in the Renaissance. Though once he was considered a major figure in the Renaissance (النهضة), now he is forgotten. He wrote about twenty plays, some original and some adopted from European plays. His original plays were mainly on Islamic historical themes. One of them is al-Tuhfa al-Rāshidiyya fi 'Ulūm al-'Arabiyya (التحفة الراشدية في علوم العربية).

Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819-1883) was the patriarch of the Renaissance (النهضة). He was born in the Lebanese village of al-Dabbiyya in 1819. He was educated in the Maronite school 'Ain Waraga. He learned Syriac, Latin, Italian and Arabic. He went to Beirut in 1840 and worked in the British and American
offices. He taught for two years in the American Mission School at Abey. He also assisted the Americans in translating the Bible into Arabic.

He established the first National School in Beirut and also a school for girls. In 1870, he started in Beirut a political, scientific and literary fortnightly *al-Jinān* (الجنان “Gardens”), one of many periodicals founded by him. The motto he chose for his new publication, “Patriotism is an article of faith”, gave the formula a new meaning in the Arabic language. In 1870, al-Bustānī compiled a large two-volume dictionary arranged in the modern type. He also began publication of his Arabic encyclopedia, *Dā’irat al-Ma‘ārif* (دائرة المعارف) in 1876 and he himself completed its first six volumes. The remaining volumes were completed by other members of Bustānī family. It was his outstanding contribution. Among his writings *The Life of Napoleon* and *Commentary on the Dīwān of al-Mutanabbi* are well-known.

Al-Bustānī wrote on women education to encourage the girls to be educated. In championing girls’ education, he was ahead of his time. Many Arabic writers have benefited, either directly or indirectly, from this Arab Protestant “Patriarch of Learning”.

Rizqallāh Ḥassūn (1825-1880), a Syrian Christian writer, became prominent in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. He belonged to an American family of Persian origin. He was born in Aleppo, but he was educated in Lebanon. Besides Arabic and Armenian, he learned Turkish, French, Russian and English. He went to Istanbul and there he founded *Mīrā‘a al-Aḥwāl* (مرأة

His important works on translation were *Ash'ar al-Shi'r* (اشعار الشعر), published by the Americans in Beirut and *Kitāb al-Nafāthāt* (كتاب النفثات) published in London in 1861.

Sulaiman al-Bustānī (1856-1925) produced his verse translation of Homer’s *Iliad* (1904), a tour de force, accompanied by a lengthy introduction which includes a comparative study of Greek and Arabic poetry.33 It was the first translation of epic verse into Arabic. He was also the first to apply methods of modern literary criticism in Arabic.

c. Iraq:

Like Egypt, Syria and Lebanon, the signs of the Renaissance (النهضة) are found in Iraq though the circumstances were not favorable. There are one or two writers who achieved lasting fame, but cannot be compared with that of figures like Ṭaḥtāwī and Yāzījī.

The Ottoman Turks began their rule in Iraq in 1534. Though the Persians regained it in 1638, Sultan Murad II conquered it again and it remained part of the Ottoman Empire till 1918.
The first reforming governor was Sulaiman Pasha. He patronized learning, establishing mosques and schools. Later Da'ud Pasha took bolder steps for independence and reform. He built schools in Baghdad. In 1869 one of its most progressive and liberal statesmen, Midhat Pasha became the governor. He tried to check lawlessness, settle the Bedouins as peasants, improve irrigation and introduce a system of land registration. He wrote the first liberal constitution for the whole Turkish Empire in 1876. He was considered a brilliant governor as well as a great reformer. He encouraged economic and industrial development. He founded the first Iraqi newspaper, the official Turkish Arabic *al-Zaura*. Later the new governor put an end to his reforms.

During the period of depression, Iraqi literature was more concerned with form and conventional language except religious literature and ascetic poetry. Some typical writers of this era were Shaikh ‘Abdullāh al-Suwaidi (1692-1761), his sons Abū al-Mahāmid ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Suwaidi (1740-1795), Muḥammad Sa’id al-Fath Ibrāhīm and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān.

‘Abdullāh was famous for his works - commentaries on classical poetries and grammars, a book on metaphor, *maqāmāt* (مقامات) and poems. This poems are chiefly eulogy or on historical events. Abū al-Mahāmid also wrote *maqāma* and similar types of books of that his father.

Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Alūsi (1802-1854) was an art prose writer and the polygraph pioneer. On the other hand the poets are Sālih al-Tamūmī (d.

Alūsi played a major part in the Renaissance (النهضة) in Iraq. He wrote three books on travels. His important religious book was Koranic commentary, and his linguistic commentaries were on classical grammars and poetry. His famous collection of five maqāmāt was Maqāmāt al-Alūsi (مقامات الألوسي), published in Karbalā’ in 1856.

Al-Tamūmī was a court poet and a secretary of Da’ud Pasha. He was also favored by Riza Pasha. Al-Tamūmī wrote eulogies to both these governors.

Al-‘Umari was an official of the Turkish government in Iraq. He was appointed lieutenant governor of Baghdad. He wrote religious poetry in praise of the Prophet and the members of his house. He also wrote eulogy on the Sultan. Basically he was a conventional poet, but he had great powers of description.

Al-Akhras wrote of ‘wine, women and boys’. He also joined the court of Da’ud. Besides love and wine poem, he wrote eulogy on sultans, governors, friends and contemporaries.

Al-Ṭabṭabā’i was born in the second quarter of nineteenth century but died in the twentieth century. He was very prolific and fluent. He could compose and recite in a hundred-verse ode extemporaneously. He also wrote ghazal, eulogy and elegy.

Another famous poet was Haidar al-Ḥilli. He was called by some contemporaries, the ‘poet of Iraq’. He also wrote saj’. His diwān, first published
in Bombay in 1894, includes ghazal (غزل), eulogy and fakhr (فخر) all beautifully embellished in antique style.37

From the above discussion, it can be assumed that the Arab Renaissance (النهضة) was an outcome of the contribution of the scholars of the Levant and Egypt. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, many writers, thinkers, scientists, journalists, poets, translators and printers had emerged. Printing press, newspaper, journals, periodicals and translations played a significant role in the development of Arab thought, society and politics as well as of modern Arabic literature.

These assets helped to change gradually the style of Arabic prose making it free from its traditional forms and encouraged the young writers to write in simple style which in due course helped in the creation of modern prose and new literary forms in Arabic. Thus this had direct impact on the whole Arab world. The growth of short story, novel and drama (which will be discussed in the following pages) was the direct effect of the translations.

Moreover, the establishment of different schools, colleges and missionaries brought about radical changes in developing the educational activities in Egypt and the Levant. Under European influence many writers knew foreign languages and traveled both within the Ottoman Empire and to European countries.
How far the scholars of the nineteenth century were successful in freeing the Arab mind from the traditional shackles of centuries and developing the new literary forms and styles, can best be estimated by the following literary effort.
2. Renaissance in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries till the End of First World War:

I. Poetry

a. Egypt:

Historical Background

The civil disturbances of 1860 in Syria and Lebanon were not favorable to literary progress until after the First World War. At the end of the century, the Lebanese and Syrians began to emigrate to Egypt as well as North and South America. The Syro-Lebanese immigrants in Egypt played a very significant role.

Unfortunately Muhammad 'Ali's immediate successors did not carry his work. His grandson 'Abbas (1848-54) dismissed all foreign advisers and abolished all foreign schools as well as most other institutions of European character; his successor Sa'id (1854-63) was equally opposed to Western ways. They abridged cultural missions to Europe and slowed educational expansion. 'Abbas was against Western especially French influence.

But during Isma'il's tenure (1863-79), great changes took place and literature developed. He had been educated in France and he widely traveled in Europe. He equipped completely to modernize Egypt. He carried out great public works -- railways, irrigation and education. Over 4,000 primary schools were opened during his reign, and this was itself, a fillip to literacy and therefore, to literature. He encouraged a large number of Christian missions to establish schools, where many Egyptian children, girls and boys took their education in a
European language mainly in French. He established *Dār al-‘Ulūm* (دار العلوم) "The Teachers’ Training College" in 1872 aiming to combine traditional Islamic Arabic culture with western learning. He established learned societies, a museum and an observatory, and patronized exploration. He established *Dār al-Kutub* (دار الكتب) “The National Library” in 1870 which achieved permanency. He also founded the Opera House in Cairo, which was opened in 1869.

During his reign an American college was founded at Asyūt (1865) and is still in operation. The American college for girls at Cairo began as a primary school in 1861. He officially opened the Suez Canal in 1869, which re-routed the shipping pattern of the Old World and increased the strategic importance of these lands and accelerated their re-entry upon the scene of world trade and world affairs. But his over-ambition led to state bankruptcy as well as weakened Egypt’s hold over the Suez Canal and led to European interference in affairs of the region. Subsequently under the Western pressure Ismā‘il was deposed by the Turkish Sultan in 1879. Two years before his deposition he was bestowed upon the title of Khedive in consideration of his generosity.

During the reign of the next ruler Khedive Tawfīq, the reaction against the deteriorating condition manifested itself in the first armed revolt of modern Egyptian history. Egyptian nationalism was reflected in literature, and also in conspiracies and rebellion. The revolt started as a result of discontent among soldiers. ‘Āḥmad ‘Arābi as a central figure in a new Nationalist Party (*al-Hizb al-Watani*), which won the sympathy and support of the unlikely alliance of
Egyptian *fellaheen* and Turkish notables. In 1881, Maḥmūd Sāmi al-Bārūḍī was appointed Prime Minister and ‘Arābi became under-Secretary for war. But al-Bārūḍī resigned before the rebellion developed into a military conflict with the British troops. The rebellion was brought to a sudden end by the British victory at *al-Tall al-Kabir* (Tell el-Kebir) on September 13, 1882. The British occupied the land and ‘Arābi was exiled to Ceylon.

The British undoubtedly developed the country both financially and economically, but did little for education. They developed self-government and took steps to train Egyptians for posts of the highest responsibility. British advisers were placed in the major government offices.

The Egyptian gesture to British influence is reflected in the literature, especially in poetry. It was a love-hate or admiration-hate relationship.

In 1907, three political parties were directly involved. They advocated an end to British rule in Egypt and represented two divergent schools of thought. The Constitutional Reform Party (*Ḥizb al-Islah al-Dastūrī*) of ‘Āli Yūsuf, and the National Party (*al-Ḥizb al-Watani*) of Muṣṭafā Kāmil, endeavored for pan-Islamism and wanted Egypt to remain under the Ottoman Empire. The People’s Party (*Ḥizb al-Umma*) of ‘Āḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid was secular and believed in the total independence of Egypt and the demand of Egypt for the Egyptians. Afterwards the second school, The National Party became widely popular.

After the outbreak of the First World War (1914-18), ‘Abbās II was deported by the British. Egypt was declared a protectorate, and ‘Abbās’ uncle,
Husayn Kāmil succeeded him with the title of Sultan. Fu‘ād, who in 1917 followed his brother Ḥusayn, was proclaimed mālik (ملك) in February 1922, at which time the protectorate was terminated, Egypt was declared independent and a constitution was promulgated. ⁴⁴

When the war ended in 1918, the nationalist leader Sa‘d Zaghlul led to a delegation (waf'd) to plead its cause before the Peace Conference in Paris and in London, but understanding the strength of the nationalists, he was rebuffed and exiled to Malta. The result was the eruption of Egyptian revolution of 1919. This was the first in the series of revolutions that affected the Arab politics for over half a century. The search for specifically Egyptian literature and for an Egyptian identity was a slogan of many authors in Egypt, especially a group of young men associated with what became known as al-Madrassa al-Haditha (مدرسة الحديثة) "The New School", such as Maḥmūd Tāhir Lāshin and the Taymūr brothers (Muḥammad and Maḥmūd), who later distinguished themselves in fiction and in drama. ⁴⁵ Sa‘d Zaghlul was allowed to return and Egypt became a constitutional monarchy with Britain in 1922 retaining certain rights, including the presence of her troops on Egyptian soil with the control of the Sudan.

In the late nineteenth century, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1838-1898), among the great reformers, played a significant role. He was the first who brought modernism in Islam. He advocated political revolution. By birth he was an Afghan, but made Egypt his home. He identified himself with the ‘Arabi movement.
Muḥammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905), the great reformist of Egypt who rose to the religious position of Grand Mufti. He created an intellectual climate suitable for the reception and growth of the new concepts through his writings and speeches. He maintained that basically there was no conflict between Islam and science. He interpreted certain Qur’ānic verses rationally and recognized the insufficiency of Islamic scholasticism. He advocated religious awakening to bring about reform.46

Both Afghāni and ‘Abduh were exiled by the Egyptian government for their liberal views. But their message was carried forward by their disciples who included the great Egyptian nationalist, Sa‘d Zaghlul (1857-1927), the champion of women’s rights Qāsim Amin (1865-1908) and the editor of ‘Abduh’s books, Rashid Riḍa (1865-1935).47

Neoclassicism:

Political events most significantly had created a favorable environment to the revival of modern Arabic Poetry that led to neo-classicism and pre-romanticism. The revival of Modern Poetry was a slow process.

Neo-classical poets followed the traditional form of the qaṣida (قصيدة). They reproduced the imagery themes, and the form of pre-Islamic or early Islamic qaṣida (قصيدة), opening with the traditional theme called nasīb (نسيب).

Neo-classical poems were composed in traditional meters of classical Arabic poetry with minor derivative meters. Neoclassicists continued composing
poetry using the traditional *aghārd* (اعرادة) "thematic type". They use their language depending on that of mediaeval Arab poetry, especially that of the ‘Abbasid period.

The main characteristic feature of neo-classicism is the transformation of the content in Arabic poetry. Poetry, composed in the past predominantly in the service of rulers and patrons, was now increasingly addressed to the nation. The neo-classicists dealt with the contemporary issues like: the conflict of the Arabs with the imperialist powers, their struggle to ameliorate the lot of the poor and a plea for social uplift and education. The echo of nationalism and patriotism found place in their poems. They depended mainly on the diction and techniques of the distinguished ‘Abbasid poets.

The neo-classicists are considered conservative (*muhāfīzān*) by the later critics, because their main trend was to go back to an old, venerable model, and to relive the glorious experience of classical poets. They specially inclined to preserve the Arabic models of the ‘Abbasid period. The neo-classicists brought vitality to Arabic poetry and in their poems they successfully portrayed the socio-economic and political life of the people. In their works, we rarely find the expression of individual feelings, but they expressed to a large extent, the feelings and ideas of the community in which they lived.

The richness of the unbroken tradition was the most serious obstacle in the way of those Arabs who were responding to the emergencies of modern life as well as to the Western influences.
The earliest exponents of neo-classicism of Egypt are Maḥmūd Sāmi al-Bārūdī (1838-1901), ʿĀʾisha al-Taymūria (1840-1902) and Ismāʿīl Ṣābīrī (1853-1923). Their life and literary contributions are briefly discussed below.

Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (1839-1904):

The most outstanding Egyptian pioneer of neo-classicism was Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī. He was the first major figure in modern Egyptian poetry that set the example for many of the poets who followed him, particularly poets of the neo-classical school. Al-Bārūdī was born in a prominent Circassian family in Cairo and was educated in the Military Academy. He was sent to Istanbul to work in the service of the Sublime Porte, where he learnt Turkish and Persian language and literature. On his return he obtained an army commission, despite the fact that the love of poetry was already strong in him. He served in the Egyptian army participating in the wars of the Crimea and Crete on the Turkish side.

In 1878, he became the governor of the Shariqiah province. Then, he became the Minister of Education as well as Minister of War in 1881. During the ‘Arabi movement he became Prime Minister for a short while. The ‘Arabi revolt brought al-Bārūdī’s excellent carrier to a sudden end. After ‘Arabi’s defeat, he was exiled to the island of Ceylon for seventeen years. He returned to Egypt in 1900 and died in Cairo four years after his return from banishment.
The poetry of al-Bārūdī is traditional in language and highly conventional in structure and themes, but his models were the ‘Abbasid rather than the late medieval poets. He followed the form of the classical qasida (قصيدة) but filled it with his own personality and ideas. He wrote poetry which is free from artificiality and which is a direct and forceful expression of an impressive personality. He wrote poetry only from an inner impulse and he wrote what he felt. Though he praised the Khedive Tawfiq, he was not a poet of patronage, but of patriotism. He expressed this patriotism in the classical qasida (قصيدة) form.

Al-Bārūdī’s poetry went against the existing style. He wanted to revive the classical form of poetry. The change was revolutionary in his time, for it meant a rejection of the present and a return to a style his contemporaries were not familiar with. He was inspired directly by the classical poets, especially of the ‘Abbasid and pre-‘Abbasid periods.

Though a political poet, al-Bārūdī also exceeds in description of nature, antiquities as well as modern inventions. He wrote a long poet of over four hundred lines, entitled Kashfu al-Ghumma fi Madhi Sayyidi al-Umma (كشف الغمة في مدح سيدى الأمة “Relief of Affliction in Praise of the Master of the Nation”). In this poem he imitated the famous ‘Burdah’ by al-Buṣīrī. He sketches roughly the main events in the life of the Prophet. He depicted the picture of the Prophet in traditional way. He is fascinated by the heroic character of the Prophet and by the military victories which he achieved over his adversities. Al-Bārūdī narrated all the supernatural happenings in the Prophets life in a declamatory style.
He collected a large anthology of classical poets in his voluminous *diwān* which was printed after his death. His verse originated in his reading and in his memories of the classical examples. His *diwān* contains some of the first manifestations of the grand style that was to become the hallmark of the neoclassical school in its heyday.

He also wrote love poems as well as wine-poems. Clichés abound in these poems. Even he describes his experiences during the Turco-Russian War in such a manner that it reminds one more of Mutanabbi's terminology on related themes. Moreover he wrote *mu‘aradat* (معرضة) poems with the same meter and rhyme of classical literature.

Though, the classicist traits are found in his poetry but it is not colorless or a lifeless imitation. Al-Bārūḍī's work is full of life and his imitation is creative. The fact that he found his means of expression solely in the classics he admired so much. During the reign of Ismā‘īl, al-Bārūḍī wrote topical poems containing admonition to the people of Egypt. It is remarkable that in spite of his active involvement in the 'Arabi movement, he wrote little about it.

Al-Bārūḍī was the only contemporary poet to be included in the poetic collective work of the philologist al-Maṣrafi, *al-Wasiyah al-Adabiyyah* (الوسيلة الأدبية). He has been considered by many critics as the precursor of Renaissance (النهضة).

Al-Bārūḍī was the true precursor of the modern poetic revival. He brought Arabic poetry to bear upon the serious business of life. He was the unique figure
for whom the Arab countries had been waiting since al-Mutanabbi. He represents the first stage of the literary Renaissance in Arabic poetry. The stage, in which subject matter is modern, but forms and language are traditional. Al-Bārūdī was neither influenced by Western literature nor there is any sign of influence of Western literature in his works. In this regard, he is a clear example of the first characteristic of the Egyptian literary Renaissance (النهضة), the renewed interest in the classical Arabic writings. Indeed it is impossible to think of Egyptian literary Renaissance (النهضة) without al-Bārūdī.

'Ā'ishah al-Taymūriyyah (عائشة التيمورية)(1840-1902):

'Ā'ishah al-Taymūriyyah was one of the first women writers in Egypt to achieve distinction. She was a contemporary of al-Bārūdī. She was born in Cairo into an aristocratic Kurdish family with a long literary tradition. Despite her mother's opposition, her father engaged a Farsi and an Arabic tutor for her. She studied eagerly and began to write when she was only thirteen. On the other hand, early widowhood increased her devotion to writing.

Though she wrote both prose and poetry, her main output was in poetry. She composed lyrical poetry which focuses on love and death. She wrote elegies on relatives, particularly on her brother and daughter. She also composed occasional poetry including eulogies to Khedive in Arabic, Persian and Turkish. Much of this poetry was anthologized in her Hilyat al-Tirāz (Embroidered Ornaments), which was first published in Cairo, in 1885.55 She also wrote ghazal
(غزل) of a sufistic character. Her political style was traditional and her prose works bear the marks of the *maqāma* (مقدمة) tradition.

**Ismāʿīl Ṣabrī (1854-1927):**

Another more important figure of neo-classicism is Ismāʿīl Ṣabrī. He was born in Cairo and studied law in the University of Aix in France. He held a number of government posts in the legal department. He served as governor of Alexandria and finally, Solicitor General in 1899. In 1907 he retired but he devoted himself to poetry and made his house a meeting place for poets, writers and musicians.

Although Ṣabrī had studied in France and mixed a lot with Europeans, there is hardly a trace of European influence in his poetry. He started off in a highly traditional style with occasional poems in the magazine *Rewdat al-Madāris* in 1871, at the age of sixteen. Love, death and nationalism were his main themes. He was not outspoken nationalistic poet, perhaps on account of his high position in government service which restricted his freedom of expression on this delicate matter. But after his retirement he dared to speak his mind more freely. He was also noted for his description and philosophizing. He achieved an easy and elegant style.

Ṣabrī’s poems were usually short pieces of one or two verses, (*qit‘a*) that described the feelings that came to him spontaneously about love, religion, friendship and loyalty. One of these, a short poem entitled ‘*Maqarr al-Ghazal*”
(مقر الغزل), became quite well-known. He was a real neo-classicist who wrote mu'āradah's of great classical poets. He was a perfectionist in his own writing and also a self critic. He would write, rewrite and polish a poem before reciting in public. He also loved music and knew the leading Egyptian singers and instrumentalists of his time. He wrote a number of daurs, stanzaic poems in the vernacular, often set to music.

His own dīwān was published in 1938 after his death which consists largely of valedictions (tahni'ahs), elegies and verses on political enabled him to achieve fame and reach the climax of idealistic poetry.

b. Iraq:

Iraq was also a very important centre of Arabic poetry which produced its own variety of neo-classicism. However, in nineteenth century, very few innovative poets were active in the major seats of traditional learning in Baghdad, Najaf and Mosul. Some of the poets wrote sufficiently on didactic, religious and casual topics. The Shi‘ite city of Najaf in Iraq was famous for the poetic talent of its learned men, young and old. But in the nineteenth century there was little to contribute to the revival of literature.

Ḥaydar al-Hilli (1831-1887) wrote elegy and he excelled in it. Another poet was Muḥammad Sa‘īd al-Ḥabbūbī (1849-1916). He was born in the Shi‘ite city of Najaf. Some considers him greater than Ḥilli. He was famous for ghazal. He wrote many muwashshahat also. The editor of his dīwān compares him with
Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arri. As a poet he was conservative.

At the turn of the century, the Iraqi poets came forward and joined the ranks of *al-Nahda* (النهضة). They soon could be able to claim a leading position in modern Arabic poetry. Many new poets were making their debuts in the Shī‘ī centers of Najaf. Many of these were inspired by the great Shī‘ī poets of the Abbasid period, like al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (970-1016).

Among the debuts of this period we find such as ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-Kaẓīmī (1865-1935), who settled in Egypt; Muḥammad Rīza al-Shābībī (1888-1965) and ‘Alī al-Sharqī (1892-1962). Their poetry changed gradually from religious causes to adopt national and social causes. This tendency continued and culminated in the poetry of Muḥammad Mahdī al-Jawāhirī (b. 1900), a leading poet of a distinct classical aptitude who was born in Najaf. He was in later years to become the great poet of political and social revolution in Iraq.

The Iraqi neo-classical school developed its distinctive features in Baghdad. Jamīl Shīdqu al-Zahāwī (1863-1936), a prolific poet, contemporary of al-Ruṣāfī, was born in Baghdad. He was very ambitious and concerned of the modern world. His poetry was full of scientific and social ideas. Many of these poems clearly convey the contradictions. He composed several poems on unusual topics such as the theories of relativity and gravity. He also wrote on education and current problems. Al-Zahāwī was a nationalist and political poet.
Maʿrūf al-Ruṣāfī (1875-1945) was a poet having innovative literary taste. Though his classical learning is reflected somewhere in his poetry, he was not confined by classical conventions. He was well equipped with a variety of poetic arts. He willingly avoided classical grandiloquence and wrote in a simple and near-modern language. His diwan was first published in 1910 which includes very few panegyrics and conventional elegies. He also translated Turkish works. Al-Ruṣāfī deals with the current problems of his country. His compositions deal with social problems. He discusses national freedom, politics and social justice; the liberation of Muslim women, progress and education through his poetry. In compare to Shawqī he was more modern and more open to new poetic trends. His most productive period was the first thirty years of twentieth century. He introduced new themes to poetry and his poetry presents a unique bundle of neo-classicism to incorporate new ideas and techniques.

The works of al-Zahāwī and al-Ruṣāfī will be dealt with in details in the next part of this chapter.

c. Syria and Lebanon:

In Syria and Lebanon neo-classicism produced many poets in the late nineteenth century. Khalīl Muṭrān was the greatest Lebanese poet of the period. Iskandar al-ʿĀzār (1885-1916) and Ilyās Fayyad (1872-1930) were dramatists as well as poets. Ilyās Sālih (1870-1895) might have achieved greatness, but died early. Shakīb Arsalān (1870-1946) was prolific in many fields. He was a
journalist in Arabic and French. He founded a French monthly *La Nation Arabe* and he is said to have written several hundred articles every year. He wrote a polemical work entitled "*Why are the Muslims backward while others have advanced?*" which was published in 1939. He was a nationalist and devoted himself to the cause of Arab freedom. He fought against the Italians in the war of 1911. Most of his poetry belongs to his early manhood. His *diwan* includes his former works which appeared in Cairo in 1935.

The Syrian Salîm Rûfâ'il 'Anhûrî (1856-1933) was a great writer as well as a poet. He was innovative in themes and he excelled in the description of modern inventions in verse.

In Syria and Lebanon, many interesting late comers appeared, including the Lebanese Bishârah al-Khûrî (1890-1968) and the Syrians Muḥammad al-Bizm (1887-1955) and Shafîq Jabrî (1898-1980). A belated outbreak of neoclassicism took place.
II. Prose

The development of modern prose in the nineteenth century can be compared with that of modern poetry. But more than poetry, the development of prose literature was due to the establishment of printing press.

In the early nineteenth century two forms of prose were predominant in Arabic. The first one is *maqāma* (مقامة), a series of episodes connected only by the main character and narrator in rhymed prose. The second one is *risāla* (رسالة). *Risāla* was employed in private and official correspondence and for occasions like births, deaths and festivals.

Through the work of al-Ṭahṭāwī, the foundation was laid for the development of modern prose. He studied various aspects of French culture. In his book, about his observations and impression of France, *Talkhis al-Ibriz fi Talkhis Bāriz* (تخلیص الابریز في تخلیص باریز), he avoided the traditional *maqāma* or *risāla* type of prose by making efforts to drop the heavy *saj* and other ornaments. This book is best known for its simple and easy style. The evolution of Arabic prose can be seen in his works.

Developments of modern Arabic prose were parallelly taking place in Lebanon. Nāṣif al-Yāziji was still adhered with the writing of *maqāmāt*, and completed his great *maqāma*, *Majmaʿ al-Bahrain* (مجمع البحرين). While his contemporaries Buṭrus al-Bustānī and Fāris al-Shidayāq attempted a prose style free from rhetorical devices. Though al-Shidayāq wrote his travelogue *al-Sāq ʿalā al-Sāq* in rhymed prose, later he simplified his writing in *Kashf al-Mukhābaʿ an
It was, however, Salim Al-Bustāni who made a break from the style of al-Ŷazījī and al-Shidyāq. His first story Ramya Min Ghair Rāmi (The Shot that Nobody Fired) is written in a straightforward prose suitable to the style of the short story.

The establishment of different governmental and non-governmental periodicals played a vital role in the development of modern Arabic prose. The main forms that appeared in modern Arabic prose were highly influenced by newspaper writing. Through the writings of the Egyptian Government Gazette al-Waqā'i  al-Miṣriyya (الواقعي المصري), the foundation was laid for the development of modern Arabic prose. While the early translations were rendered in rhymed prose, a group of translators produced by al-Ṭaḥtāwī, could be able to express and convey western thought in a simpler and more directly style free from rhyme and rhetoric.

Muḥammad ‘Abduh’s achievements were also of great importance for the development of the modern prose in Egypt. He actively contributed to the revival of interest in the work as a journalist with al-Waqā'i  al-Miṣriyya (الواقعي المصري). He wrote clearly and objectively.

The different forms of prose which appeared may be categorized as: al-Qiṣṣa al-Qasīra (القصة القصيرة) “The Short Story”, al-Riwayya (الرواية) “The Novel”, al-Masrahiya (المسرحية) “The Drama” and al-Maqāla (المقالة) “The Essay”. These forms have been discussed here briefly.
a. The Short Story (القصة القصيرة):

Salim Butrus al-Bustāni may be considered as the pioneer of the Arabic short story. Several magazines and newspapers of the late nineteenth century published short stories. Many early short stories from French, English and Russian were either translated or adopted by Arab writers. Salim was a regular contributor of articles and short stories through the magazine *al-Jinan* (الجنان), founded by Buṭrus al-Bustāni in 1870. Salim al-Bustāni’s first short story *Ramya min Ghair Rāmi* appeared in 1870, and from this year the short story began to be widely produced. The Cairo magazine *al-Diyā’* (الضياء), for instance, from its reception in 1897, published one story in every number. It generally dealt with contemporary social problems.

Among the early influential short story writers who made a mark in literature were al-Manfalūti in Egypt, Jibrān Khalil Jibrān and Mīkhā’īl Nu’aīma in *Mahjar* (مهاجر). Al Manfalūti’s stories are distinguished by its stylistic and emotive power. In 1915 al-Manfalūti published a collection of short stories under the title of *al-‘Abarāt* (العبرات) “Tears”. Among these short stories *The Abyss* and *The Victims* are the most famous. His stories deal with social evils and the reaction against Western practices in Arab society. The stories are not to the taste of modern readers, with their melancholy and pessimism. Al-Manfalūti also included several stories in his collection *al-Nazarāt* of 1910, some of which were translations and adaptations.
Muḥammad Taymūr is generally considered the pioneer of the Arabic short stories in Egypt. His short stories were collected in Mā Tarāh al-ʿUyun (What the Eyes Can See). His stories attempt to depict truly Egyptian characters and also played a significant role in providing the newly emerging genre with a clear sense of purpose.

Some other eminent short story writers are Maḥmūd Taymūr, ʿIsā ʿAbid and Tahir Lāshin of Egypt, Maḥmūd Aḥmad and Anwar Sha’ul of Iraq and ʿAbdul Masīḥ Ḥaddād of America. Maḥmūd Taymūr is the greatest of them (He will be discussed in the next part of this chapter). These are the most prominent names among many short story writers who were trying to develop their works simultaneously without much awareness of each other’s work. They responded to the change in literary sensibility and the demands of the new reading public more than to each other’s work.

b. The Novel (الرواية):

The novel began by the middle of nineteenth century with translations from European languages such as French and English in Egypt and Lebanon. Afterwards, original novels were written in Syria and Egypt.

The first attempt at writing Arabic novels, in fact, was an extension of the maqāma (مقامة). It was Muḥammad al-Muwailihī (1858-1930), who by making it more relevant to modern times, managed to bring the traditional maqāma (مقامة) a step nearer to novel. Al-Muwailihī’s Ḥadīth ʿIsa Ibn Hisḥām (حديث عيسى ابن
The Observation of ‘Isa ibn Hishām’, published in 1907, is by no means a novel, but it is a major contribution to modern Arabic fiction. Although the link with the traditional maqāma is marked in the use of the title, dialogue, saj', choice of words and small sentences, al-Muwailihi tried to adopt the maqāma to the times by taking his images from the society he lived in. The main theme of his maqāma is the change from the traditional to the modern modes of life and thought. Hadīth ‘Isa Ibn Hishām (حديث عيسى ابن هشام) occupied a crucial position in the subsequent development of Arabic literature, especially in the field of the novel.

The early novel writers were not ready to imitate Western models in their perfectness. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī made a contribution to the development of modern Arabic fiction in Egypt. He published his version of Fénélon’s didactic novel Téléméaque in Beirut in 1867 under a rhyming title, in accordance with traditional canons of taste: Mawāqi’ al-Aftāk fī Waqā’ī’ Tilimāk.

Thirteen or more novelists were active between 1865 and 1914 in the Levant. The first original novelist Antūn al-Ṣaqqāl wrote two novels of which al-Ashum al-Nāriyya (Arrows of Fire) is more famous.

Francis Fathullah Marrāsh (1836-1873) wrote a didactic novel Ghābat al-Haqq (غابة الحق) “Forest of Truth”, which came out in 1865 and also another novel Durr al-Ṣadaf fī Gharā’ib al-Ṣadaf (دور الصدف في غرائب الصدف) was published in 1870. It was written somewhat in the manner of the ‘Thousand and One Nights’. Another novelist Nuʿmān ibn ‘Abduh al-Qusāṭali (1854-1920)

The Lebanese Salim al-Bustāni published nine novels, both historical and non-historical, serially in the periodical *al-Jinān*. His famous novels are *Salmā* and *Sāmiya*. Salim al-Bustāni may be regarded as the first to write historical novels in Lebanon who published *Zenobia* (1871) and *Budūr* (1872) in *al-Jinān* (الجنان).

Among the émigrés, the historical novel was taken up with great vigor by Jurji Zaydān (1861-1914) and Faraḥ Anṭūn (1874-1922). They attempted more serious novels than those published serially in the journals. Faraḥ Anṭūn wrote didactic and philosophical novels and Zaydān wrote novels of historical romances. In all, Zaydān wrote twenty-two novels which cover the historical span from pre-Islamic to modern times. He published twenty-one novels, nearly all serially, in his periodical, *al-Hilāl* (الهلال). Among his novels, *Shārīl (Charles) wa ‘ Abd al-Rahmān* (Sharīl wa ‘Abd al-Rahmān) (1914), about the defeat of Muslims at the hands of Charles Martel, King of France, at the Battle of Tours; and *al-‘Abbāsa* (العباسة), about the story of the daughter of Hārūn al-Rashīd and her
secret marriage to his vizier Ja'far al-Barmiki, are famous. Zaydan's novels became very much popular and he inspired others to follow in his footsteps.

Muḥammad ʿUsayn Haykal (1888-1956) is the first original Egyptian novelist. His most important novel Zaynab: Manāzūr wa Akhlāq Rīfīyya (زينب: مناظر و أخلاق ريفية) "Zaynab: Rural Scenes and Morals" was written while Haykal was in France and published in Egypt in 1913. It is the story of the daughter of a poor peasant, who loves an equally poor peasant, but is married off by her father to a rich farmer's son. In this novel Haykal depicts rural social life in Lower Egypt. It is free from the flourishes of the maqāma (مقامة) which still dominated in Egyptian literature. Haykal was one of the first to adopt the vernacular for dialogues, despite the strong opposition which many attempts at using anything but standard Arabic in writing always aroused. The story is narrated in a language that is natural and easy. Zaynab has been called the Egyptian novel.

Ibrāhīm ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Māzinī (1890-1949) is one of the best known authors who took up the novel in Egypt. His three best-known novels are: Ibrāhīm al-Kātib (إبراهيم الكاتب) (1931), Ibrāhīm al-Thānī (إبراهيم الثاني) (1943) and Thalātha Rijāl wa Imraʿā (ثلاثة رجال و امرأة) (1944).

c. The Drama (المسرحية):

The Lebanese Märūn al-Naqqāsh (1817-1855) was the first writer who introduced Arabic drama. He may be regarded as the father of modern Arabic drama. His very first attempt at writing drama in Arabic was al-Bakhīl (البخيل).
“The Miser” in 1848. It was written mostly in verse in simplified classical Arabic and it contained many songs based on Arabic tunes. Mārūn’s second play *Abu’l-Hasan al-Mughaffal* (أبوالحسن المغفل) “Abul Hasan the Fool, 1849-50” is the best of the three, written in a mixture of classical Arabic verse and rhyming prose, based upon a tale from the *Arabian Nights*. His third and last play *al-Salīṭ al-Hasūd* (السليط الحسود) “The Sharp-Tongued Envious Man”, he performed in 1853 in a theatre in which he had built close to his house. It was also written in a mixture of verse and rhyming prose.

To al-Naqqāsh goes the credit of not only being the father of modern Arabic drama but also of determining the course it was to take for a long time to come, and that in two respects: firstly in introducing the element of signing and secondly in drawing upon the *Arabian Nights* as a source for drama.

After his early death, Marūn’s theatre was turned into a church in accordance with the terms of his will. But his family maintained this interest in drama. His brother Nikūla al-Naqqāsh published his works in 1869 and his nephew Salīm al-Naqqāsh (d.1884) continued his activities in Beirut where he had formed a troupe and performed his uncle’s plays as well as his own. In 1876, he took his troupe to Egypt, thereby setting an example which many Lebanese and Syrian troupes were to follow.

The Egyptian Yaʿqūb Ṣannūʿ (1839-1912) was the first to produce and perform an Arabic play in Ismāʿīl’s palace. The performance was attended by the Court, several diplomats and local dignitaries whose favorable reception
encouraged him to write more plays, which earned him from Khedive Ismā‘īl the title ‘Moliere of Egypt’. Šannū‘ did not use the Arabian Nights as a source for his works. He sought his material in contemporary Egypt and used colloquial Egyptian as the language of his dialogue.

The most popular Syrian dramatist was Aḥmad Abū Khalīl al-Qabbānī (1833-1902) who started in the late 1870s to produce his own plays in Damascus. In addition to his own work, he performed plays written by other Arab writers, ranging from Mārūn and Salīm al-Naqṭāsh to Najīb al-Ḥaddād. His performance contained much singing, music and dancing at which he was very skilful. His own plays are both adaptations and free translations of European works, or original efforts based upon popular folktales, the Arabian Nights.

The early Arab theatre pioneered by Mārūn al-Naqṭāsh and Šannū‘ was based on songs and lyrics to draw audiences. The Lebanese and Syrian dramatists, actors, managers and their successors and Egyptian imitators with their various splinter troupes played a major role in the development of Arabic theatre in Egypt, making possible the subsequent appearance of great acting talents such as al-Shaykh Salāmah Ḥijāzī, Jūrī Abyād and Najīb al-Riḥānī, who contributed greatly to the popularity of the Arabic theatre.

Faraḥ Anṭūn (1874-1922), one of the most highly educated and men of letters of his generation, advocated plays which dealt with the present-day social problems and issues. Later, he himself was driven by financial considerations to produce musical comedies and historical drama as well as translations of western
plays, ancient and modern. His main contribution is *Misr al-Jadidah wa Misr al-Qadimah* (مصر الجديدة و مصر القديمة) "Egypt New and Old" which deals with several problems of Egyptian society.

Ibrâhîm Ramzî (1884-1949) was a prolific writer and translator. He wrote historical plays, social comedies and serious dramas. Through the long one-act comedy *Dukhul al-Hammâm mish zayy Khurujuh* (Admssion to the Baths is a Lot Less Difficult than coming Out of Them, 1915) and the historical play *Abtâl al-Mansûra* (بطل المنصورة) "The Heroes of Mansura, 1915", Ramzî made a contribution to the development of Arabic drama. He seems to be the first to produce historical drama of literary merit in modern Arabic literature.

Muḥammad Taymûr (1891-1921) wrote three full-length plays. His first play *al-ʻUsfûr fi’l-Qâfs* (عصفور في القفص) "The Bird in the Cage, 1918" is a domestic drama treating life in the upper classes of Egyptian society. It was written originally in classical Arabic; it was later expanded and recast in the Egyptian colloquial. The use of the Egyptian colloquial reaches truly poetic and tragic heights in an even more impressive play, *al-Dhabâ’ih* (الذبائح) "The Sacrifices", written by Anṭûn Yazbak and produced in the stage in 1925. The idea of writing plays in the colloquial was continued and this medium was preferred by a whole line of writers.
d. The Essay (المقالة):

Pioneers of modern Arabic essay are found in the classical *risāla* (رسالة) and *maqāma* (مقامة). The essay may be defined as a short piece of prose confined to a single subject.

Muṣṭafā Lutfi al-Manfalūtī (1876-1924) was the great master of the essay of the period. His best known work is *al-Nazarat* (النظرات), a collection of articles originally published in the newspaper *al-Muʿayyid* (المعيد), which first came out under the title of *al-Usbūʿiyāt* (الأسبوعيات), and later of *al-นาذرة*. He was influenced by the reforming ideas of Muḥammad ʿAbduh. It was *al-Nazarat* which placed him in the first rank among the Arab authors. He wrote on ethical and social themes. His content seldom rises above what would be considered trite in the West - the evils of drinking, poverty and riches, charity, the happy and unhappy marriage, tomorrow, and the like. He often deals with the social evils and repeatedly warned against the dangers of Western civilization. He wrote for the common people, not the intellectual. He wrote on current ethical and social problems.

Al-Manfalūtī wrote in simple and clear language and avoided artificiality. He chose his words carefully. He retained a little *sajʿ* in his essays. His essays are an excellent display of classical Arabic prose writing which will be found in the modern Arabic literature. Though the style is rather antique, the themes and attitudes are modern.
As journalism progressed, the essay (مقالة) attracted the leading political figures of Egypt. Al-Afghānī, Muḥammad ʿAbduh and ʿAbdullah al-Nadim (1845-1896) of Egypt and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawakibi of Syria were among the earliest Arab essayists.78

The distinguished essayists of the period were Fathi Zaghlul, Jurji Zaydān, Yaʿqub Saruf and Farāḥ Antūn. They all contributed a lot to the development of the maqāla (مقالة).

Thus under Western influence, the new genres of the novel, the drama and the short story were well established in Arabic literature in the early decades of the twentieth century. Arabic literature had progressed beyond the classical imitation of the mid-nineteenth century and was adopting more modern character.
B. ARABIC LITERATURE BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WAR:

I. Poetry

Among the outstanding neo-classical poets of inter-war periods ʿĀḥmad Shawqi and Ḥāfīz Ibrāhīm enjoyed the greatest popularity in the Arab world. They were considered the spokesmen of Egypt, and to a lesser extent of the whole Arab world. Shawqi and Ḥāfīz were poets who were deeply involved in the political and social events of their time. They do express to a large extent, the feelings and ideas of the community in which they lived. The Iraqi neo-classical poets who achieved fame were al-Ruṣāfī and al-Zahāwī. The contributions made by these poets in the development of Arabic poetry are briefly discussed.

a. The Neo-Classicists:

ʿĀḥmad Shawqi (1868-1932):

The most outstanding neo-classicist ʿĀḥmad Shawqi was born in a distinguished family of Cairo and grew up in the palace of the Khedive Tawfiq. He was educated in one of Cairo’s newly established schools, and graduated in 1887 from the Law School in the translation department. He worked for sometime in the translating section of the palace administration and later he was sent to France by the Khedive to study law and literature.

Soon after return to Egypt he became the Khedive’s court poet ʿShāʿir al-Amīr (شاعر الأمير). He used to produce a number of panegyrics dedicated to the
ruler every year. Meanwhile, ‘Abbās II had become the Khedive of Egypt. Shawqi became the chief spokesman of the Khedive ‘Abbās II. At the beginning of the First World War, when the Khedive ‘Abbās II was deposed, Shawqi, because of being a Khedive’s man, was exiled from Egypt by the British. He lived in Barcelona throughout the war.

After the war Shawqi was allowed to return to Egypt. When he returned, the country was suffering from the pain of the 1919 revolution. He dedicated himself to the cause of the nation and from the court poet he had turned into the bard of the common people. The period from 1919 to 1932 was most fruitful for Shawqi. Famous poets, intellectuals and great singers from all over the world visited him. During this period Shawqi achieved the summit of his fame attaining unanimous acclaim as the Amir al-Shu’arā ( أمير الشعراء ) “Prince of Poets” in 1927.

Shawqi’s collection of poems al-Shawqiyyāt (الشوشيات) was published in two volumes in 1898. The third and fourth volumes were published after his death. The four volumes of his diwān, al-Shawqiyyāt (الشوشيات), contain eulogies, elegies, descriptive poetry, political poetry, social and occasional poetry. He also wrote verse plays in the last three years of his life. Of his seven plays, three are on Egyptian historical subjects - Cleopatra, Cambyses and ‘Ali Bey al-Kabīr. Three more are on ancient Arab themes - ‘Antara, Majnūn Laila ( عئتر مجنون ليلة)، and Amīra al-Andalus ( أميرة الأندلس) “The Princes of Andalusia”. The seventh was a verse comedy, al-Sitt Hūdā (Madame Huda), which was not published in full till 1960.
Shawqi was a follower of al-Bārūdī. Shawqi was also greatly influenced by classical Arabic literature. He was fascinated by the ‘Abbāsid poets such as al-Mutanabbi, Abū Nawās, Abū Fīrās and al-Buḥṭūrī. The impact of al-Buḥṭūrī was greater. Shawqi says he made conscious efforts to copy the rhyme and meter of al-Buḥṭūrī so much so that it became second nature to him.81

Shawqi wrote his great qāṣīdah on Egyptian history called Kibār al-Ḥawādīth fī Wādī al-Nīl (كبار الحوادث في وادي النيل) “Great Historical Events of the Nile Valley”. He wrote several long poems on the history of Islam and its Prophet, such as al-Hamziyyah al-Nabawiyyah (الهمزية النبوية) and Nahj al-Burda (نهج البردة). These poems show a kind of rhetorical pathos in style which has become very popular.

The Arabic language had become impoverished in Shawqi’s day and his conscious efforts to enrich the language by re-introducing obsolete words had its merits. Shawqi introduced hardly any innovations. The qāṣīda (قصيدة) with its monorhyme and monometer prevailed in his diwān, although it contained some stanzaic poems. His Duwal al-‘Arab wa ‘Uzamā‘ al-Islām, a long poem in the rajaz meter, is one of his most impressive achievements.82

Shawqi was the first Egyptian writer to take pride in Egypt’s Pharaohnic past. His Pharaohnic poems include - The Sphinx, Tutankhamen, Qasr Anas al-Wujud and On the Foot of the Pyramids.83
He also wrote on national and world leaders. He composed a poem on Mahatma Gandhi. His poem Knowledge and Teacher’s Duty, on social and educational reforms, is full of wise maxims.

Shawqi’s output was enormous, and although a considerable portion was devoted to panegyrics and elegies, he was a versatile poet who contributed to the development of many old and new poetic types. In his poetic styles and techniques he followed mainly the ‘Abbāsid masters, but he was also able to come out from classical conventions and explore new poetic forms and styles.

Though Shawqi was recognized as the greatest poet of his day, he could not get rid of the critics. At the beginning of his literary career, he was attacked by Muḥammad al-Muwayliḥi for violating the classical poetic norms. He was also harshly criticized by several modern-minded critics. The sharpest criticism he received came from ‘Abbās Maḥmūd al-‘Aqqād and to a lesser degree from Tāhā Ḥusayn. But these attacks led him to find ways out and means to improve and diversify his poetic techniques. His flawless composition with the changing modes of literary expression made him the first great poet of modern times.

Muḥammad Ḥāfīz Ibrāhīm (محمد حافظ ابراهيم) (1870-1932):

The second pillar of neo-classical poetry, Ḥāfīz Ibrāhīm was born on a house-boat on the Nile in Upper Egypt. He is called ‘The Poet of the Nile’. When he was four years old his father died and his mother took him to Cairo to live with her brother. Later he lived with his family in Tanta where Ḥāfīz attended a
mosque school. He decided on a law carrier. But the legal profession seems not to have appealed to him and soon he registered as a student at the Military Academy in Cairo.

After successful coming out of the Military Academy in 1806, he was sent to Sudan as an army officer. The tranquility of the Sudan was carried out under the British command with the aid of Egyptian soldiers. It was a success for the British but nothing for Egypt. It awakened his national spirit. He became involved in a rebellion with the Egyptian soldiers against British, for which he was put on trial and pensioned off in 1903. He suffered from financial crisis through most of his life. He tried to get a job but failed. He spent eight years without any employment. At last after eight years, he was appointed Head of the Literary Department at the National Library of Egypt in 1911.

He performed his work at the library, but he could not be satisfied with it, as it was not his temperament. He spent his days mostly visiting friends and nearby coffee-houses. The spirited nationalist poet became an indolent civil servant. As a result his poems began to lose their revolutionary enthusiasm.

Hāfīz Ibrāhīm was greatly influenced by the teaching of Muḥammad ‘Abduh. Under ‘Abduh’s influence, his loyalties became more Egyptian. He advocated for education and social reform. After ‘Abduh’s death, more nationalist verses came out from his pen. He was a poet of natural talent. He married once, but his marriage lasted only a few months.
His *diwān* (ديوان الحافظ) containing political and social poetry, eulogy and elegy, was first published in three volumes between 1911 and 1932. He also wrote a series of prose articles in the *maqāma* style called *Lyāli Satīḥ* (1907) and adopted *Les Miserables* of Victor Hugo: *al-Bu’sa*.84

Ḥāfiẓ was greatly influenced by the classical poets. He imitated classical examples especially in his youth. He knew many classical poems by heart and he could recite them well.

He was also inspired by the neo-classical style of al-Barūdī. In his verse the pattern of the *qasīda* (قصيدة) is apparent that were found in Barūdī’s verse. It does not mean that he was not accessible to new ideas. On the contrary he complained that poetry was too much committed to the old themes and, in a poem entitled ‘Poetry’ (الشعر) exhorted it, with a great amount of rhetoric, to break the ties with tradition.85

Ḥāfiẓ was greatly shocked by the miserable condition of the women. So he advocated for women education for the upliftment of the women folk.

His patriotic verses awakened the nationalistic feelings of the people of Egypt. His poem entitled *Shakwā Miṣr min al-Iḥtīlāl* (شكواة مصر من الاحتلال) “Egypt’s Complaint against the British Occupation”, composed in 1907, directly aimed at the British Prime Minister, it attacks inflation and expresses preference for Ismāʿīl’s days.

It is an elegy that Ḥāfiẓ reached the climax of his success. His feelings rise to the tragedy of the deaths of those he mourns. His elegies on Muḥammad
'Abduh and Muṣṭafa Kāmil are masterpieces in their genre perhaps the last great classical elegies. Muṣṭafa Kāmil was a bosom friend of Ḥāfīz. He regarded 'Abduh's death as a calamity and a great loss for Egypt, as well as the Islamic world and Kamil's as a misfortune for Egypt and nationalism.

In a solitary poem on Pharaonic Egypt, Miṣr Tataḥadath 'an Naḏiḥa (مصر تتحدث عن نفسها) "Egypt Talks About Herself" Ḥāfīz scans heroic splendor of his ancient land.

The main feature of his poetry is clarity. His verse is free from any uncertainty. His language is pure and expressions are very graceful and vigorous. He preferred words having musical appeal, sonority and resounding.

Ḥāfīz occupied a unique position in depicting his feelings and correct sentiments of the common people of his country and this quality earned him such title as 'The Poet of the People.'

Ma'rūf al-Ruṣāfī (Ma'rouf Al-Rusafi) (1876-1945):

Ma'rūf al-Ruṣāfī, the first philanthropist poet of Iraq, was born in Baghdad. He was mixed Kurdish-Arab parents. He was the only non-Egyptian poet to achieve fame outside his own country. His fame is still undimmed.

His mother wanted him to be educated. Al-Ruṣāfī was sent to mosque schools and he learned the whole Qur'ān at school. He could not get beyond the primary stage. He then fortunately got the guidance of famous Arabian scholar al-Shaykh Shukri al-Alūsi. Under his influence al-Ruṣāfī became a sincere
Muslim and a Sufi. Then he devoted himself to literature as he had a fascination for poetry since his childhood. He was so successful that after teaching in a primary school, he was appointed to teach Arabic in a secondary school. During this period he composed many poems that were published in Egypt and Syria.

Al-Ruṣāfī was invited to Istanbul to publish *al-Aqdam* (الإقدام), but this came to nothing and being disappointed he returned home. But again he was called back to Istanbul and this time he edited an Arabic magazine, *Sabil al-Rashād* (سبيل الرشاد). He also lectured on Arabic literature. From 1912 he represented southern Iraqi district in the Turkish Chamber of Deputies and till the end of the First World War he stayed in Istanbul. From Istanbul he went to Jerusalem to lecture on Arabic literature and in 1921 he went back to Baghdad. Then he got a government job in the Ministry of Education and rendered his service from 1923 to 1928. He was also elected Member of Parliament in 1930. During this period he wrote a book on *The Personality of Muhammad* or *The Sacred Enigma*.

Unlike other Iraqi poets, al-Ruṣāfī never compromised on his principles. He could be able to express his political views openly and fearlessly. It was al-Ruṣāfī who first fully represented Iraq’s national feelings and political aspirations in verse.\(^8^8\)

His *diwān* was first published in 1910 in Beirut. Then his *diwān* was enlarged to include his later poems and was published posthumously in 1949. His
diwān contains social poems, political verse and love poems. He also wrote on literary criticism and translations from Turkish.

Al-Ruṣāfī was influenced by al-Mutanabbi and Ibn Malik. But the influence of Abū al-‘Alā al-Maʿarri was more important. Al-Raṣāfī was inspired by al-Maʿarri’s humanitarian verse and from him al-Ruṣāfī learnt to handle problems boldly. Religious skepticism of al-Maʿarri is reflected in his poem The Negative Truth About Me: Haqīqatī al-Salbīyya (حقيقة السلبية).89

A traditionalist, al-Ruṣāfī mastered and reproduced the technique of the classical qaṣīda (قصيدة) with its monorhyme and long meters. He avoided artificiality and rhetorical devices and kept his verse unaffected and clear.90 Although his classical training is well reflected in most of his poetry, he was not shackled by classical conventions. He experimented with a variety of poetic techniques, at times willingly giving up classical grandiloquence in favor of a simple, near-modern language.91 His themes are varied, and relevant to contemporary social problems. He successfully expresses the ideas of national independence, social justice, and the liberation of Muslim women, democracy, progress and education through his compositions. Al-Ruṣāfī had an excellent descriptive power which can be seen in his innovative compositions e.g. in An Autobus Ride and The Clock.

Al-Ruṣāfī was very interested in the welfare of his country and its people. He wrote a number of poems describing the sufferings of the masses, miserable conditions of widows and orphans. Some of these types of poems are The
Nursing Widow, Poor Armenians, The Prison in Baghdad and Orphan at Id. In this series his most famous poem is Poverty and Disease (فقر والسكام). In this poem al-Ruşāfi describes a miserable condition of a helpless orphan and his widow mother.

Al-Ruşāfi devoted a part of his diwān to the problems of women. He advocated for women education and encouraged those giving references of famous poetesses and warriors from the Arab history. He also described that women were given high social position in the days of the Prophet.

Al-Ruşāfi criticizes dictatorship and monarchy and oppressor rulers in his political poems. He never advocated political corruptions. One of his remarkable political poems is Freedom under Imperialist Policy al-Hurriyya fi Siyāsat al-Musta‘mirin (الحرية في سياسة المستعمرين) "Freedom under Imperialist Policy".

Al-Ruşāfi, in compare to Shawqi, was more modern and more open to new poetic trends. He introduced new themes to poetry. His poetry as a whole paved the way for the poets of his time as well as later poets to incorporate new ideas and techniques. His name is almost a household word in Iraq even today.

Jamīl Şidqī al-Zahāwī (جميل صدقي الزهاوي) (1863-1936):

Jamīl Şidqī al-Zahāwī was also a prolific poet of the Iraqi new classical school who was very much concerned with the modern world. He was born in Baghdad in Kurdish family. He learnt Kurdish, Persian, Turkish as well as Arabic and he was very fluent in these languages.
Al-Zahāwī rendered his service holding a number of government jobs. He was on the staff of \textit{al-Zawrā’} (الزور), the official Turkish organ founded by Midhat Pasha. He visited Istanbul in 1896, from where he was sent to Yamen by the Sultan. But after a short spell he was sent back to Baghdad where he represented Baghdad from 1908 in the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies at Istanbul. When this chamber was abolished he returned to Baghdad and later he was appointed chairman of the committee formed to Arabicize Ottoman Laws.

His poetic output consists of his \textit{diwān} in six volumes published between 1908 and 1939 in Beirut, Cairo and Baghdad. They are: \textit{al-Kalim al-Manṣūm} (Poetic Utterances, 1908), \textit{Ruba‘yyāt al-Zahāwī} (Zahāwī’s Quatrains, 1924), \textit{al-Lubāb} (The Essence, 1928), \textit{al-Aushāl} (Trickles, 1934) and \textit{al-Thumāla} (Last Drops, 1939).

His collection of poems includes descriptive poems, political poetry, love poems, elegies and philosophical poems. Besides, he translated the quatrains of ʿUmar Khayyām into Arabic.

Al-Zahāwī devoted several number of his poetry to championing the rights of women. He was afflicted with paralysis easily in life and had to depend on his wife in everyday life and his wife looked after him all through his illness. Perhaps, therefore, he was very sympathetic towards women.

Al-Zahāwī carried out his experiments in the form of Arabic poetry. He was interested in prosody and in introducing variety in the rhyme pattern of
He also attempted to reject rhyme altogether and write in blank verse (شطر مرسل).

While the Persian and Indian quatrain (Ruba’īyyāt) has a triple rhyme - of the first, second and fourth lines, but Zahāwī rhymes only the second and fourth.93

Al-Zahāwī also wrote prose articles in the magazines al-Muqtatāf (المقتطف) and Mujalat al-‘Arab (الفجر الصادق) and a few books including al-Fajr al-Ṣādiq (الفجر الصادق) "The True Dawn".94

Al-Zahāwī’s poetry is full of scientific and social ideas. Simplicity and clarity are reflected in his verse.

One of his poems on science, Siyāha al-‘Aql (سياحة العقل) “The Flight of the Intellect”, is an interesting account of a journey in space. His poem Thawrā fi’l-Jahim (ثورة في الجهم) “Revolt in Hell”, inspired by Risālat al-Ghufrān (رسائل الغفران) of Abū ‘Alā al-Ma‘arri, was published in 1929.

Though al-Zahāwī’s poetic gift was inferior to that of al-Ruṣāfī, but he became popular for his innovative and forward looking ideas.
b. The Pre-Romantics:

Romanticism was above all a revolt against the rigid rules of classicism. At the turn of the century the early experiments of romanticism beginning with the major figure Khalil Mutran introduced the concept of the unity of the poem. The neo-classicists were conservative in their relation to the Arabic literary tradition. On the other hand, the romantics called for change, reform and renewal. In this respect, it is justifiable to call Mutran Pre-Romantic.

Khalil Mutran (خليل مطران) (1872-1949):

Khalil Mutran though a Lebanese descendant belongs to the literary history of Egypt. He was born in Baalbek in a Christian family of the Azd tribe. He was educated in missionary school in Beirut. He acquired a thorough knowledge of both Arabic and French literature under the guidance of the famous man of letters, Ibrâhîm al-Yâzijî. Mutran emigrated to Egypt at the age of twenty and lived there until his death in 1949.

In Egypt, he first worked as a journalist for al-Ahrâm (الإحرام) till 1900. Then he founded his own bi-monthly periodical, al-Majallah al-Misriyyah (المجلة المصرية) and in 1902 a daily newspaper, al-Jawâ'ib al-Misriyyah (الجواب المصرية). Every issue of the periodical was divided into different sections such as literature, politics, economics, agriculture, questions of public health and so forth. The literary section occupied an important place, and his own poem
appeared alongside those of his colleagues and friends Ahmad Shawqi and Ḥāfiẓ
Ibrāhīm.⁹⁵

But his newspaper business did not long very last. He next started a
business, but completely lost his money. In these circumstances he got a job as
secretary to an agricultural organization, *al-Niqābah al-Zar‘iyah* (النقابة الزراعية), a
position he was to hold until his death.⁹⁶

Khalīl Muṭrān became very popular as a poet and his wide popularity
earned him the title of *Shā‘ir al-Qutraīn* (شاعر القطرین) "The Poet of the two
Regions-Syria and Egypt". He became the director of the National Theatre in
1935 and he excessively translated for the theatre and staged plays.

Muṭrān translated several plays from English and French. These are
Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*;
Corneille's *Cinna*, *Le cid* and *Polycute*; and *Hernani* of Hugo.

Muṭrān's collection of poems, *Ḍīwān al-Khalīl* (ديوان الخليل) was published
in four volumes. The first volume of his *ḍīwān* was published in 1908 and the
three subsequent volumes of his *ḍīwān* were published forty years later in
between 1948 and 1949. The significant point at which Muṭrān reveals himself to
be interested in breaking the moulds of old poetic theory comes in the preface
that he wrote to his first published volume of his *ḍīwān*, *Ḍīwān al-Khalīl* (Cairo,
1908).⁹⁷

Muṭrān introduced into Arabic poetry a number of attitudes and
assumptions which were fully incorporated into the poetic thinking of later
generations, to the extent that he, more than anybody else, can be regarded as the father of the new or modern school of poetry. The most important assumptions are firstly, that of the unity of the poem, secondly, there is the belief in the privacy of meaning and thirdly, Mutrān regarded what he called the 'uncommonness of the imagination and the strangeness of the subject' as essential qualities that he tried to realize in his poetry.98

Mutrān is one of the first Arab writers to write ballads and epic poems. One of his remarkable epic works is the poem *Nero*. His poems such as *Nero*, *The Chinese Wall* and *The Death of Buzurjumhr* are virtual allegories written on the contemporary tyrannies in the Arab world.

Mutrān recollects his emotional experience in the poem *Baalbek Castle*. In his love poem *Hikāyat 'Ashiqayn* (حكاية عاشقين) “A Tale of Two Lovers”, Mutrān registers his love for the girl he first met in the park, to their separation and her death; and in the memory of his beloved he composed the poem *Warda Matat* (وردة ماتة) “A Rose that Died” on her death anniversary.

*Finjān Qahwa* (الفنان قهوة) “A Cup of Coffee” is a democratic poem of unfulfilled love and *al-Jahīn al-Shahīd* (الجهين الشهيد) “The Martyred Fetus” is a sharp accusation of the combined effects of poverty and urban exploitation on an innocent poor young girl. These poems explore new themes and imaginative possibilities which are not found in conventional poems.

In his subjective poems, such as *al-Masā’* (المساء) “Evening” and *al-Asad al-Bāki* (أسد البکى) “The Lion in Tears”, Mutrān expresses a deep and intense
emotion, and the sensibility expressed in these poems is something quite new in Arabic poetry.

Unlike the classical poets who were generally onlookers, observing only the outward aspect of nature, Muṭrān blends so harmoniously with nature that his portrayals suggest that his feelings have emerged with the atmosphere. His poetry is not entirely free classical clichés. His poem *Wafāt 'Azīzayn* (وفاة عزيزتين) “Death of the Two Loved Ones” at first sight appears to be a traditional elegy (رثاء) written on the deaths of his relative Yūsuf Muṭrān and his wife, but there is an important difference that distinguishes the poem from the traditional style of the elegy (رثاء). He was greatly inspired by the French literature. His contribution to drama show some French influence.

Arab literary historians have no doubts whatsoever on Khalīl Muṭrān’s importance in the Renaissance (النهضة). They class him with Shawqi and Ḥāfīz, not only as a great poet, but as a pioneer. Muṭrān’s contributions to poetry made him a key figure in the development process of modern techniques as well as style to free the Arabic poetry from the traditional shackles.
c. The **Diwan** (الديوان) Poets:

The main exponents of pre-romanticism were the **Diwan** (الديوان) group of poets, the Egyptian ‘Abd al-Rahmān Shukrī (1886-1958), ‘Abbās Maḥmūd al-‘Aqqād (1889-1964) and Ibrāhīm ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Māzini (1890-1949). Greatly influenced by English literature of nineteenth century, these poets, as early as the first decade of the twentieth century, began a reaction against the neo-classical poets. They advocated the romantic imagination in Arabic verse and attacked openly and bitterly the type of work written by the neo-classical poets.

The book after which they are named as **The Diwan Poets** is **al-Diwan**, **Kitāb fi’l-Naqd wa’l-Adab** (الديوان: كتاب في النقد والادب), “The **Diwan**: A Book on Criticism and Literature”, which was jointly published in two volumes in Cairo in 1921.

Like Muṭrān, the **Diwan** (الديوان) group believed in the unity of the poem. They had a common attitude to the Arabic language. They followed the way showed by Muṭrān to make further development in Arabic poetry. They played the important role in the development of Arabic poetry. Though they were less gifted poets than Muṭrān, they contributed much to the modern Arabic poetry.

‘Abd al-Rahmān Shukrī (عبد الرحمن شكري) (1886-1958):

The most gifted and innovative poet Shukrī is one of the greatest of the **Diwan** (الديوان) poets. After completing his secondary education in Alexandria, he got admitted at the Law School in Cairo. Here he came under the influence of the
nationalist leader Muṣṭafa Kāmil who encouraged him to complete his studies. But in 1906, due to his involvement in the national cause through his poem, he was rusticated from the Law School. In the same year Shukrī registered at the Teachers’ College where he studies until 1909. For further studies, he was awarded a scholarship to study in England. He studied three years in Sheffield, where he got a degree in English literature. He was acquainted with the English Romanticists, such as Swinburne, Rosette and Osocare and was greatly impressed by the English scenery.

At his early age Shukrī read the then popular poets of the post-classical period. He started to publish his poetry when he was at school. He had written an elegy on al-Bārūdī in 1904. In 1908 his first article was published in the newspaper al-Jarīdah (الجريدة), Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid’s liberal nationalist paper. Some of his essays and poems were also published in it.

The first volume of his diwān was published in 1909. A number of his poems deal with topics of public interest. His diwān contains elegies on the nationalist leaders Muṣṭafa Kāmil, Qāsim Amin and Muḥammad ‘Abduh. Shukrī’s second volume was published in 1913, after his return to Egypt, with an extensive preface by al-‘Aqqād. The third, fourth, fifth and sixth volumes of his diwān came out between the years 1915 and 1918.

The first two sections of his diwān are traditional in style and theme, in which frequent signs of the language and imagery of classical ‘Abbāsid poetry
loom largely. With the 1913 volume a distinctive development becomes apparent.101

Feeling is indeed a basic element in Shukri’s poetry. The poet’s emotions, thoughts, attitudes and nature provide the main themes of the vast majority of the poems. In his poem A stranger’s Nostalgia at Sunset, the sight of the sunset arouses feelings of sorrow and nostalgia in the poet. His poems, A Poet in a Strange Land and Nostalgia of a Stranger show that he felt very much like an exile in Sheffield where he spent three years.

The main themes of Shukri’s poetry are philosophical and moral meditations, interesting on unusual states of mind, beauty in general and nature in particular, love, death and the creative imagination.102 His remarkable philosophical poems are: Man and Time, Mixed Needs, The Eternal Seeker and The Voice of God.

Nature occupies a large space in his dīwān. His most important experience in England was his discovery of nature which he beautifully depicted in his poems, such as The Magic of Spring, The Worship of Beauty, Truth and Beauty, A Description of the Sea, and his poems on birds, like, Elegy on a Sparrow and The Caged Song-Bird. Most of his nature poems deal with traditional themes.

Shurkī wrote a number of poems on love and beauty, such as Smile, To the Beloved, The sought Beauty, Love and Eternity, Love and Affection, Love in Paradise and Hell and The End of Love. Nearly his every poem on love and beauty ends with thoughts on death.
Shurkī also wrote some prose works. He published two short prose works in 1916. One in his autobiographical prose work *Kitāb al-I'tiraf* (كتاب العترف) "Book of Confession", a book of self-analysis and observations on art and man, life and death; and another prose is *Kitāb al-Thamarāt* (كتاب التمرات) "Book of the Fruits".

He innovated mixed verse where rhyme is changed in each hemstitch. He also attempted to write blank or rhymeless verse (شعر مرسل).

Despite the profound influence of English Romantic poetry on him, Shukrī's style remains in many respect traditional. There is a deep pessimism in Shukrī's poem which is considered characteristic of his poetry by many critics. Yet Shukrī was of the utmost importance for the introduction of ideas from English literature into the development of modern Arabic poetry.

‘Abbās Maḥmūd al-‘Aqqād (عباس محمود العقاد) (1889-1964):

Al-‘Aqqād, a *Dīwān* poet, played a significant role in the development of modern Arabic literature. He was born in Aswān of an Egyptian father and a mother of Kurdish descent. He was an orthodox Muslim and a nationalist. Al-‘Aqqād left school early but he remained an avid reader throughout his life. He acquired knowledge of English and Arabic at a tender age. As a boy he read a lot chiefly *Adab* (إدب) "belles-lettres" works and some poetry. While still a boy, he wrote *qāṣīda* in praise of learning entitled *Madḥ al-‘Ulūm* (مدح العلوم).
Al-‘Aqqād left his native town Aswān in 1904 and worked as a clerk in Zagazig, the capital of the Sharqiyah province, and started to write for various newspapers and magazines. In 1907 he became the editor of the newspaper al-Dustūr (الدستور) established by the famous reformer Muḥammad Farīd Wajdi. He wrote articles in it on all sorts of cultural and literary subjects under his own name.

In 1909, as the paper al-Dustūr (الدستور) had to be discontinued, he returned to Aswān. Again he returned to Cairo and started to write for several magazines, such as al-Bayān (البيان) and ‘Ukāz (عکاز). In the editorial office of al-Bayān, al-‘Aqqād became acquainted with several authors, such as al-Siba‘ī and Muḥammad al-Muwaylihi. In 1914, al-‘Aqqād became an editor with the newspaper al-Mu‘ayyād (المعياد) for a short time. He also worked with the Alexandrian newspaper al-Ahālī (الأخلاق) and later for al-Ahrām (الأحرام). Though he worked in various fields, nevertheless he carried on serious literary work.

After the First World War, al-‘Aqqād wrote openly in favor of the Wafd party. During the 1919, he published secret revolutionary bulletin with his friend al-Māzīnī. In 1921, he wrote with al-Māzīnī the famous Dīwān al-Naqd wal-Shī‘r (ديوان النقد والشعر) in two parts. In 1930, he was sentenced for nine months for his anti-monarchist statement.

Al-‘Aqqād’s first collection of poems was published in 1916; in this collection English influence is apparent. The poem al-Karawān (الكاروان) was inspired by Shelley’s Ode to Skylark. He also attempted lyrical description of
nature. The collection contains only a few stanza poems, some of which are traditional in forms, and monometers are used in some of his poems. On the other hand, his second collection shows a liberal use of meter and rhyme, and the influence of English poetry is less apparent.

His third collection was published in 1921. It contains one of his best known poems written in epic style *The life of Satan* and one long poem in honor of Shakespeare.

The fourth collection was not published separately but included in the volume of collected poems of 1928. It contains a large number of occasional poems and some poems about his journeys. In this volume monorhyme and monometer are again frequently used. Other famous collections are: *Wahy al-Arbaʾīn* (رَحْي الاربِعين) "On Attaining the Age of Forty, 1933"; *Hadiyyāt al-Karawān* (هَدِيَات الكروان), 1933; and *ʿAbīr Sabil* (عَبِير سبیل) "The Wayfarer, 1937".

The *dīwān* *ʿAbīr Sabil* contains many poems in which al-ʿAqqād attempts to convert ordinary and even 'prosaic' subjects into verses no less beautiful than the poems on love and nature. Beautiful examples of these are *The passing Soldier* and *The Laundryman on Sunday Night*. In his introduction to this volume al-ʿAqqād calls for a greatly increased variety in 'poetic subjects', in tastes and imaginations.

He also wrote many prose works ranging from journalistic articles, literary essays and research papers to literary criticism and philosophy. He also wrote an
autobiographical novel *Sara* which was published in 1938. He also wrote many modernist books on Islamic topics.

One of the uncommon features of his work was that he continued to describe his own development in his poems, so that an unusual personal involvement is expressed in his poetry. His lasting popularity is not for his own poetry, but for his contributions to the theory and criticism of the new poetry and also for his modernist books about Islam.

**Ibrāhīm ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Māzini** (1890-1949):

Ibrāhīm ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Māzini one of the greatest figures of *Dīwān* (الديوان) group of poets, played an important role in the revivalist movement of Egyptian poetry. His father died when he was still young and he was brought up by his mother.

He studied medicine for some time but could not succeed. The poor boy later wanted to register at the Law School, but due to its high tuition fees he could not register. Consequently when around this time the Teachers’ College started to provide scholarship for all students, al-Māzini decided to register there, although he did not have an aptitude for the teaching profession. In this college al-Māzini’s most important event was the meeting with his fellow student Shukrī. Shukrī played an important role in molding al-Māzini’s literary taste. It was Shukri who introduced him classical Arabic literature and more importantly showed him the way in English literature.
After the completion of his graduation in 1909 al-Mázini taught at the then famous Khedivial school and later at the Dār al-‘Ulūm (دار العلوم). Subsequently he gave up the teaching profession which he did not like and in 1918 he entered into journalism. During his college life he had already written for several Egyptian newspapers and magazines, such as al-Dustūr (الدستور), al-Bayān (البيان) and ‘Ukāz (عказ). He first started to work for the Alexandrian newspaper Wādī ‘l-Nīl (وادي النيل) as a full time journalist. The subsequent newspapers and magazines for which he worked are al-Akhbār (الأخبار, 1920), al-Ittihād (الاتحاد, 1926), al-Siyāsah (السياسة, 1927), al-Balāgh (البلاغ, 1934) and finally he wrote for a while for al-Asās (الأساس) which was established in 1937.

Al-Mázini has just one short dīwān in two volumes. The first collection was published in Cairo in 1913 and the second collection was published in 1917, but thereafter he turned away from poetry and apart from his career in politics and journalism, he became one of the most important pioneers in the development of the modern Egyptian novel.108

His first collection was much inspired by Shukrī. It contains some of his poems written in classical manner. In this collection al-Mázini clearly appears to be influenced by the English romanticists, particularly by Shelley.

The second collection contains some nature poems in a little conventional form, which were inspired by Shukrī. Some of the poems in this collection seem to be inspired by European source.
As regards form he may not have been a great innovator: he never experimented much with meter or rhyme. But the contents of his poetry are a clear break with neo-classicism.\textsuperscript{109}

Though al-Māzini's poetry does not rise to great heights, yet his poetry forms an integral part of modern Egyptian literature. In spite of his limitations he made significant contributions to the revivalist movement in Egyptian poetry during the first decades of the twentieth century.
d. *Apollo* (أبولو):

The establishment of the magazine *Apollo* in 1932, fourteen years after the discontinuation of *al-Funūn* (الفنون) in New York, was one of the most significant events in the history of Egyptian poetry. It was the first Arabic periodical devoted exclusively to literature and arts. In the same year *Apollo Society* was formed to improve and promote the cause of literature among the Arab writers both inside and outside Egypt. Both *Apollo* magazine and *Apollo Society* were established with the initiative of Aḥmad Zāki Abū Ţādī (1892-1955). The *Apollo Society* was marked by a liberality of literary tastes and types. Aḥmad Shawqi was the first president of the society and after his death he was succeeded by Khalīl Muṭrān, while Abū Ţādī himself was the secretary of the society and editor of the magazine. The creation of the society was a clear attempt to bridge the factionalism and quarrels which bedeviled the political and cultural life of newly independent Egypt and despite the broad range of its membership *Apollo* (أبولو) became the natural centre of attraction for some of the most significant Arab romantic poets.¹¹⁰

Amid Zāch Abe Shed was born in an educated family. He grew up in a literary environment. After completion of his secondary education in 1911, he registered at the school of Medicine in Cairo and continued his medical studies in England from 1912 and remained there for ten years. He developed a keen interest in literature, painting and bee-keeping. On his return to Egypt he became one of the most important members of new Egyptian intelligentsia who achieved
distinction in literature and in scientific and academic life. He worked as a
government bacteriologist in Suez, Port-Said and Alexandria, then as Professor
of Bacteriology in the Faculty of Medicine at Alexandria University.111

Apart from establishing Apollo Society and editing the review, he was the
author of some nineteen collections of verse, several scripts, a number of
translations and literary studies. His collection of verse Andā' al-Fajr (اندا الفجر)
“Dewdrops of Dawn” was first published in 1910 and reprinted in 1934. In fact
his real poetic production started with Zaynab (زينب، 1924) which was published
after his return from England. The collection was written in lyrical although
sometimes rather formal tone.

His collection Miṣriyyāt (مصرييات) “Poems on Egypt” was also published
in 1924. A large number of poems in this collection are dedicated to Saʿd
Zaghlul, the leader of the Wafd party and addressed to a wider public.

His most important collection, al-Shafaq al-Bākī (الشفاق الباكى) “The
Weeping Twilight” was published in 1927. The size of this volume is bulky
containing some 1336 pages. In this collection his poems include all manner of
subjects, such as literature, art, social problems, science and religion, occasional
poems, romantic and love poetry and poems in blank verse. Besides poems, it
contains a number of literary essays and translations.

The collection Ashiʿah wa Zilal (اشيحة و الزلال) “Rays and Shadows, 1931” is
full of reproductions of paintings, most of them European and some by Egyptian
contemporaries.
Some of his other collections published in the thirties are: *al-Shu’lah* (شلة, 1933), *Atyaf al-Rabīʿ* (الربيع, 1933) and *al-Yanbu* (الينبوب, 1933).

He declares that music is not the most important element in poetry, but that poetry must be mysticism, optimistic learning, feeling, belief in nature and enthusiasm for truth and beauty.\textsuperscript{112}

In 1934 the *Apollo* review had to be discontinued and following its disappearance, the previous vast output of Abū Shadīʿ’s verse was drastically curtailed. In the last twenty years of his life, he published only two *dīwāns* in Arabic, *‘Awdat al-Rāʾī†* (عودت الراعي) “Return of the Shepherd, 1942”, *Min al-Samāʾ* (من السماء) “From the Heavens”, published in 1949 in New York.

Abū Shādīʿ was a very prolific writer. His contribution to literature was in two ways: firstly, by his own valuable works and secondly, by establishing the *Apollo* magazine as well as the literary society in the same name. He made an important contribution to the development of romantic verse, especially in his love poetry and nature poetry.

The influence of the *Apollo Society* and its magazine was not only on Egyptian literature and Egypt, but on outside Egypt also. The other *Apollo* poets who made remarkable contributions to the development of romantic poetry include Egyptian Ibrāhīm Nājī (1898-1953), ‘Ali Maḥmūd Ṭāḥa (1902-1949), Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Muʿṭī al-Hamashari (1908-1938), Maḥmūd Ḥasan Ismāʿīl (1910-1977) and one of the most outstanding contributors to *Apollo* from outside Egypt was the Tunisian poet Abū ’l-Qāsim al-Shābbī (1909-1934).
In fact, the *Apollo* magazine during a short span of two years played most important role in the development of Egyptian literature as well as literature outside Egypt.
II. Prose

The political and economic background influenced literature. The First World War resulted in the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the placing of its remaining Arab provinces under the British and French mandate. There was greater freedom of expression under the new foreign administrations; and contacts with Western culture were widened. In this period Arab countries tried to shake off foreign domination and attain statehood. This can be seen in all forms of literature of this period, only a few leading writers are chosen for discussion considering their contributions to modern prose literature during this period.

Ṭāḥa Ḥusayn (طه حسين) (1889-1973):

Ṭāḥa Ḥusayn, the most celebrated writer, made great contributions to the Egyptian literature in the period between the two World Wars. He was born in a village of Upper Egypt. His father worked in a sugar factory. When he was only two or three years old, Ṭāḥa Ḥusayn became blind. In spite of his blindness he went to the village school where he memorized the whole Qurʾān. At the age of thirteen he was sent to al-Azhar in Cairo where he gained a mastery of the Arabic language. At al-Azhar he was very much impressed by leaders like Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Shāwish and Shaykh Sayyid al-Maṣrāfī.

In 1908, when the first Egyptian university was established, Ṭāḥa Ḥusayn was one of the first students to register there. In addition to the Egyptian
lecturers, he was influenced by the European orientalists like Nallino and Littmann, who lectured on Arabic literature. In 1914 he was the first to get his doctoral degree from the university for a thesis on Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arri entitled *Dhikrā Abī l-‘Alā’* (ذكرى أبي العلاء).

For further studies Tāḥa Ḥusayn went first to Montpellier and then to the Sorbonne. In Paris, Tāḥa Ḥusayn had married a French woman who was a great support to him. In 1918 he wrote his second doctoral thesis on the social philosophy of Ibn Khaldūn. He also got diploma of higher studies in ancient history, Latin and Greek. On his return to Egypt he was soon appointed to teach history in the Egyptian University and later to teach Arabic literature.

Tāḥa Ḥusayn came under a great controversy when he published his views on pre-Islamic poetry under the title of *Fi’l Shi’r al-Jahili* (في الشعر الجاهلي) “About Pre-Islamic Poetry”. For his controversial views many people demanded his dismissal from the university. The following year, Tāḥa Ḥusayn reprinted a version of his book with some modifications and additional chapter on prose literature under the new title of *Fi’l Adab al-Jahili* (في الأدب الجاهلي) “About Pre-Islamic Literature”.

In 1930 Tāḥa Ḥusayn was appointed Dean of the literary faculty, but shortly afterwards he was dismissed by the government of Ṣidqī ḏ-Pasha. He was free-thinker and he devoted his life to education. In 1938, Tāḥā Ḥusayn published another controversial book, *Mustaqbal al-Ṭhaqāfa fi Miṣr* (مستقبل الثقافة في مصر)
“The Future of Culture in Egypt”, in which he embodied his ideas on education and literary criticism.

Ṭāḥa Ḥusayn, a prolific prose writer of Arabic, wrote many books in several categories, such as literary research, historical studies and fiction.


Ṭāḥa Ḥusayn wrote many essays and literary reviews which were published in several Egyptian newspapers and magazines, such as al-Jaridah (الجردة), al-Bayān (البيان), al-Siyāsah (السياسة) and al-Jihād (الجهاد). Most of his early essays appeared in al-Jaridah (الجردة). His essays, published in al-Siyāsah (السياسة) between 1923 and 1925 were later collected in Hadith al-Araba'a’ (حديث الأربع). His other collections of essays are: Ḥāfīz wa Shawqi (حافظ و شوقي), 1933, Min Ḥādīth al-Shi‘r wa Ḥ-'Nathr (من حديث الشعر والنثر), 1936, and al-Qaṣr al-Mashur.
His book *Ma‘al-Mutanabbi* (مع المتنبي), about al-Mutanabbi was published in 1936. Tāḥa Ḥusayn wrote this book on the basis of a careful analysis of the poet’s work.

Tāḥa Ḥusayn published a number of essays on foreign literature. He also translated a number of Greek works into Arabic. He wrote on modern French literature including works on Sartre, Albert Camus and Paul Valery. Some of his collections of essays include *Min Ba‘id* (من بعيد, 1935), *Sawt Barīs* (صوت بريس, 1942) *Riḥlat al-Rabī* (رحلة الربي, 1948) and *Min Hunāk* (من هناك, 1948). He also occasionally discussed French author such as Baudelaire and Andre Gide.


Besides his contributions to Egyptian literary criticism, Tāḥa Ḥusayn contributed to the Egyptian novel, short story and fiction. He published only a few poems. Tāḥa Ḥusayn’s most successful work of fiction is *Shajarat al-Bu‘s* (الشجرة البصر “The Tree of Misery”). His novel includes *Du‘ā‘ al-Karawān* (دعاء الكروان) “Call of the Plover” and *Adīb* (اديب). *Adib* is a novel in the form of letters about an Egyptian student in Paris. His autobiography, *al-Ayyām* (الليالي “The Days”, is one of he most popular books in modern Arabic literature. It appeared in two parts.
The first part deals with his childhood, especially his education in the village school and the second part of it deals with his student days at al-Azhar. His collection of short stories, *al-Mu‘adhabūna fī’l-‘Ard* (المعذبون في الأرض), "The Tormented of the Earth" was published in 1952.

Դահա Դւսայն actively contributed to contemporary literary criticism from the beginning of his career. He was actively involved with the literary world throughout his life. When he became Minister of Education in 1950, he laid emphasis on primary and secondary education making it available to all Egyptian at state expense.

Դահա Դւսայն’s merits for the development of literary criticism in Egypt were recognized at an early stage and this recognition was to accompany him for the rest of his active life. A modern poet like Սալահ Ռաբդ ալ-Ռաբուր, who recognizes his many-sidedness, thinks his greatest talents were for criticism: with a reference to T.S. Eliot he considersԴահա Դւսայն as the special critic who must arise from time to time to establish the link between the literature of the past and that of the present.

Դահա Դւսայն was a versatile writer. His contribution to Arabic literature is immeasurable. He is an indomitable figure who showed the way to a new Arabic style as different from conventional Arabic prose. His valuable writings, indomitable spirit and his excellent style have influenced the whole Arab world.
Mahmūd Taymūr (1894-1973):

Mahmūd Taymūr, the most productive among the Arab short story writers, was the son of a rich Egyptian man of letters. The Taymūr family was very cultured. He was much influenced by his older brother Muḥammad who advised him to read Muḥammad Muwaylihi’s Hadīth ‘Isā ibn Hishām (حديث عيسى ابن هشام) as well as Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal’s Zaynab (زينب).

Taymūr registered at the Agricultural School but he had to discontinue his studies as he contacted typhoid. After his illness he devoted himself to the study of classical and modern Arabic literature together with English and French literary work. For some time he held government posts at the ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs, but soon he gave them up and devoted his time to writing and travel.

Taymūr was very much shocked by his brother’s early death in 1921, who had already published some prose works. After his brother’s death Taymūr continued his brother’s task. In 1925 he visited Europe, where he stayed for two years, mainly in Switzerland. By his own account, he read a great deal of European literature during this period; he considered this stay in Europe as very important to his literary education. After his great journey his life in Egypt developed smoothly. He began to publish his literary works in 1925. His contributions to literature were officially recognized. He was awarded the first prize for fiction by the Academy of the Arabic Language and also he received the State Prize for literature. Taymūr wrote plays, short stories and travel books.
His more famous play *Qanābil* (قنابل) "Bombs, 1943" is perhaps his greatest comedy. *Al-Makhba’ Raqam 13* (المخرج رقم 13) "Shelter No.13" is the longer play more related to the subject of social class. His historical plays are: *al-Hawwā’ al-Khālid* (اللهواء الخالد) "The Immortal Lover, 1945" about the pre-Islamic hero ‘Antar; *al-Yaum Khamr* (اليوم خمر) "Wine Today, 1945" about the poet Imru al-Qais; and *Ibn Jalā’* (ابن زلّ) about al-Hajjaj, the notorious governor of Basra.\(^{116}\) The dialogues and characterizations of these plays are excellent.

Taymūr’s inclination towards realism is apparent from his famous collections of short stories: *al-Shaykh Juma’a* (الشيخ جمع) 1925), *‘Amm Mitawalli* (أم متولي) 1926), *al-Shaykh Sayyid al-‘Abīt* (الشيخ سيد العبيت) 1926) and *al-Hajj Shalabī* (الحج شلبي) 1927). These collections are named after the title and leading character of the stories.

In 1939, Taymūr’s first fully fledged novel, *Nidā’ al-Majhūl* (نداء المجهو) "The Call of Unknown" was published. His other novels include: *Kilyubatī fi Khān al-Khalili* (كليوبتري في خان الخليلي) "Cleopatra in Khan al-Khalili, 1946" and *Salwā fi Mahabb al-Rīḥ* (سّلوا في محب الريح) "Salwa Blown to the Winds, 1944".

Taymūr was influenced by the Arab short story writers such as al-Manfaluti and Jibrān. He was fascinated by the elegant style of Jibrān. He followed the *Mahjar* (المحجر) journal *al-Funūn* (الفنون), which advocated important changes in the matter and style of the short story.\(^{117}\)
Taymūr often rewrote his works to improve their style or the development of their plots and tried to replace many loan words from European languages by equivalents in standard Arabic.

In his later works, Taymūr’s realism took an analytical approach. His change in attitude gave his work more depth.

In his work, Taymūr portrays the true pictures of human life. Taymūr as a story writer depicted society in all its respects. He satirizes the weakness and pretensions of the upper classes of Egyptian society. He sharply draws the control between the serious and productive lives of people in the country and the empty, pleasure-seeking existence of the rich in the city. The hidden virtues and evils of human being are perfectly portrayed by Taymūr.

Taymūr’s style is mainly narrative. He achieves a sensitive balance between the various elements of narrative, and creates a convincing human character, a mature fictional situation rich in its texture, structure and conflict. His language is simple and vocabulary is precise. He portrayed delightfully the sketches of natural scenes in short sentences. Taymūr, in his narrative work, underwent a strong influence from Western, chiefly French authors, especially from De Maupassant.

Taymūr’s characterization is admirable. Many of the characters are given suggestive names. For instance, Abu 'l-Yusr means ‘rich’ and Dirgham ironically signifies ‘lion’, Luliyya means ‘pearl’ and Nasih means ‘aware’. Nevertheless
these characters are by no means mere abstractions, but rather realistic and fairly complex creatures.118

Maḥmūd Taymūr was the most productive among the Arab short story writers of his time. He made a great contribution towards the development of the short story in Egypt. His artistic perfection in his works made him one of the best short story writers in the world.

Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm (1898-1987):

Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm is the greatest Arabic writer of the first half of the twentieth century who made prose drama an accepted form of Arabic literature. He was born in a respectable family in Alexandria, where his father worked as a civil servant in the office of the Public Prosecutor.

He was sent to Cairo to live with his uncles, where he completed his secondary education and joined the Law College there. In many respects he seemed to follow in the footsteps of Muḥammad Taymūr. Like Taymūr, he was also fascinated by the theatre while still a student in Egypt. As a student of law al-Ḥakīm had devoted more time to drama than to law.

In 1924, al-Ḥakīm was sent to Paris to pursue his higher legal studies. Al-Ḥakīm stayed for a few years in Paris but instead of law he spent most of his time reading European literature and attending plays. His life in Paris is described in his two autobiographical accounts 'Uṣfūr min al-Sharq (عصفور من الشرق)
“Sparrow from the East, 1938” and *Zahrat al-‘Umr* (زهرة العمر) “The Flower of Life, 1943”.

In 1928, al-Ḥakīm returned to Egypt without his law degree and worked as a provincial government legal officer. In 1934 he became the Director of the Inquiries Department of the Ministry of Education and in 1939 Director of the Information Service of the Ministry of Social Welfare in Cairo. In 1943 he resigned from government service and worked for the weekly magazine *Akhbār al-Yaum* (أخبار اليوم). In 1951 he was appointed Director of the National Library (دار الكتب).

Al-Ḥakīm devoted his whole life to creative writing. He is remarkable for his long career as dramatist. He has written more than eighty works during the period from the 1920s to the 1970s. His works include novels, short stories and essays, but his main contribution has been to drama. While still a student, al-Ḥakīm wrote for the popular stage, musical dramas and amusing satires on current political or social issues, such as the British occupation of Egypt or women’s emancipation. Al-Ḥakīm introduced a new type of drama to Arabic.

1925. His first two plays were never staged. The other four plays were staged while al-Ḥakīm was in Paris.

The second period of his work began with those plays which were completed earlier such as *Sirr al-Muntahira* (سر المنتورة) “The Suicide Girl’s Secret, 1928”, *al-Khurūj min al-Janna* (الخروج من الجنة) “Exit from Paradise, 1928”, *Hayāt Tahattmat* (حياة تهتمت) “A Wrecked Life, 1930”, *Rasāsa fi 'l-Qalb* (الزمان في القلب) “A Bullet in the Heart, 1931” and *al-Zammār* (الزمار) “The Piper, 1932”.

The series of plays, in which al-Ḥakīm tried to write a play of ideas which could please both thinker and seeker of entertainment, are *Ahl al-Kahf* (أهل الكهف) “The people of the Cave, 1933”; *Shahrazād* (شاهرزاد, 1934); *Pygmalion* (1942); and *Sulaymān al-Ḥakīm* (سليمان الحكيم) “Soloman the Wise, 1943”. These plays deal with themes of universal rather than local interests.

Al-Ḥakīm’s novels are also generally considered to be the best to have appeared in the period between the two World Wars. He may be regarded as the first Egyptian novelist to have raised the novel in Egypt to a European level. His first novel was *‘Audat al-Rūḥ* (عودة الروح) “Return of the Spirit, 1933”. It is an account of his youth in Cairo where he lived with his uncles and attended secondary school. His great novel in diary form is *Yaumiyyāt Nā‘īb fi 'l-Aryāf* (يوميات نائب في الأرياف) “The Diary of a Prosecutor in the Countryside, 1937”. In this novel he describes his experiences as a deputy prosecutor in the Egyptian provinces. His third novel *‘Usfur min al-Sharq* (عصفور من الشرق) “Sparrow from
the East, 1938” is also autobiographical. He wrote two other short novels, 
\textit{Rāqiṣat al-Ma‘bad} (1939) and \textit{al-Ribat al-Muqaddas} (1944).

Al-Ḥakīm’s many essays vary widely in character. \textit{Al-Ta‘āduliyah} (التعادلية) is an attempt at a philosophical theory which seems to have found little response.

One of the most interesting collections of essays is \textit{Taht Shams al-Fikr} (تحت شمس الفكر, 1938). He never wrote literary criticism.\\\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Muḥammad} (محمد, 1936), the biography of the Prophet in the form of a dialogue was not strictly a play to be acted.

\textit{‘Audat al-Shabāb} (عودة الشباب, 1948) “Rejuvenation, 1948”, a full-length play on social theme, deals with the question of time. The main theme of this play is the fruitlessness of the man’s struggle against time and old age.

\textit{Al-Mālik Oudib} (الملك ودبيب, “King Oedipus, 1949”) deals with the concepts of truth and fact. In this play Oedipus eventually killed his father and married his mother unknowingly. Oedipus lived as a man and wife with his mother.

\textit{Al-Rihla ilā al-Ghad} (الرحلة الى الغد, “Journey into Tomorrow, 1957”) is a science fantasy in which two men take off in a strange planet and return to the earth after three centuries. They land in a new earth where everything is changed and all is mechanical.

The search for knowledge is one of the main themes in his drama. He portrays fascinating pictures of a typical Egyptian society. The characters of his
play are vivid and true to life. His real achievement is in presenting a number of clarity drawn characters in lively interaction with each other.

Al-Ḥakım chooses words common to all Arabs and hopes thereby to solve the thorny problem of colloquial versus classical Arabic. He succeeds markedly in suiting the dramatic diction of Arabic drama to the needs of an easily flowing dialogue. The generous use of dialogues in the colloquial and the unaffected, clear style contribute much to the total effect.

Al-Ḥakım perfected Arabic drama and excelled the Arab world. His works have been translated into different languages. He is the greatest Arab dramatist whose greatness is recognized by all authors of the next generation.

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