Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter concerns itself with introducing the research work, its object of study and its methodology. It offers a detailed review on Najib Mahfuz and his novels and their translations available in English. It also introduces the novels that this study critiques under the adopted translational approach and the proposed methodological model for literary analysis and assessment of literary translations.

1.1. Introducing the Research Work, and its Scope

1.1.1. Aim of the Study

This study focuses on Najib Mahfuz’s image in the English translations of his novels and the critical works related to them. The study, however, aims in the first place at scrutinizing and evaluating the image of Mahfuz as presented by those translators and critics who based their studies on the available literature in English language. This very goal can be achieved through three main objectives:

i. To analyse Mahfuz's thematic visions and their presentation in his novels in English translation.

ii. To examine the representation of different stylistic features of his texts in English as compared with the stylistic features of the original texts.

iii. To check Mahfuz's techniques of novel writing and their observance in the target texts.
If such objectives are achieved, the aim of this research work would be attained despite the fact that the general goal of correcting Mahfuz's image in English will remain limited to individual endeavours of which this research work is one - an important one I hope (See conclusion for emphasis on original contribution, recommendations and suggestions for further research work).

1.1.2. Rationale of the Thesis

The underlying reasons for choosing this topic, which has to do with checking Arabic literature in English translations in particular can be explained and justified by first asking: 'Why Najib Mahfuz?' The following statements will make clear various points ranging from the literary status of Mahfuz to some critical views about his status in English translations and literature. These views are taken together to constitute one of the major reasons why such study is conducted:

i. Mahfuz is the most famous Arab modern novelist and is a Nobel Prize winner. now read and studied in many corners and languages around the world. no matter whether those who have been studying him are Arabs. Americans. French. or English. He stands for the Arabic modern novel now. Before he got the Nobel Prize in 1988. those who have been studying in the departments of Arabic and Middle East Studies outside the Arab World just knew him as a story teller dealing in his attractive stories with the life of the minor middle class in Cairo. After the revolution of July 1952 against the British occupation in Egypt. he has become a prolific writer of novels. short stories. essays. memoirs. articles and scenarios. He was contributing to the press as well. In addition to that. he is
distinguished by transparent approaches and matchless skill: not because he possesses a unique Arabic style but because of the depth of his understanding of social interaction. His novel techniques and narrative methods make him stand high among world writers. He has really assimilated the skills of different authors of the world, famous for their techniques in storytelling like Maupassant, Chekhov, Gorky, Turgenev, Galsworthy, France, Stendhal, Proust, Joyce, Lawrence, and many others.

Mahfuz wrote around 35 novels; most of which have already figured in different languages of the world, east and west. After getting the Nobel Prize in 1988, a lot of critical studies in English have been discussing Mahfuz’s novels as well as the author himself; and thus, other literary works of his have found far better translations in English and also criticisms based on those translations. This study is one among them that will bring some other shade of criticism.

Mahfuz got known to the West through the translations of his works. He was judged by critics and readers alike on the basis of those translations, and there is no doubt that his laureateship was a turning point in the critical concern of his works. By getting the Nobel Prize for literature, he gained more attention but that didn’t change the fact that he has been misrepresented in later translations. Edward Said and Roger Allen and other critics believe that Mahfuz the original is far greater than Mahfuz exposed in English. Mahfuz has transformed from the stage of being a writer just known by a few of Orientalists knowing Arabic to the stage of a widely read writer at a larger space, who has become a genuine concern in the writings of those who do not know his native tongue. Hence, the study’s
chief goal is re-examining the presentation and the representation of Najib Mahfuz and his novels in English literature.

iv. Mahfuz in his writings has always adopted a wider human view that was responsible in the first place to make him a universal writer and literary figure important for all those who love to see their common issues reflected in his writings. He represented his culture in a modern garment diffusing the traditional with the modernist, and the national with the international, in a way that makes of him the literary man respected by all, lovers or enemies. However there are critics claiming for the recreation of Mahfuz in English under supervision of academic institutions. I hope this study goes to a nearer spot approaching those voices and achieving the goals it has claimed.

Thus by shedding critical light on such an author and his works, it is not just meant to show how Mahfuz has become the world's attraction as he is already there; but to register an academic achievement that will certainly be a corner stone in restructuring the edifice of Mahfuz’s critical reputation in English; for Mahfuz became the first and only Arab to win the Nobel Prize for literature, and his novels have often come to stand for the history of the Arabic novel itself. Any sort of mutilation or obliteration could result in suspicion of the author's merit and in a distorted image of the prominence of the Arabic novel and its place in World Literature. Edward Said, comments on the exposition of Mahfuz in English by saying 'the poor Mahfuz'. The project of producing him in English is more commercial than literary and has no artistic or linguistic harmony. He goes on to say that the Arab readers realize the distinguished voice of Mahfuz and this is not the case for his
readers in English. Such critical voices and others that came to my sight and knowledge motivated me to either produce under academic supervision translations for prominent works by Arab authors like Mahfuz or even his heirs like Tharwat Abazah, who wrote around the same qualitative number of novels as Mahfuz, or at least attempt such a critical study that will have me understand the problem of production and reproduction. This critical study will give me the chance to be tested as a critic at such a stage that I am sure will lead me to a wider arena where I can put myself in the place of the translators and critics whom I am commenting on their interpretations and critiques. However, as readable as these views are, there is still doubt that there should be any official orientation to reproduce and re-examine Mahfuz in English. My individual effort here to trace and examine the English translations and, to the utmost of my access, all the pertinent critical English voices is but a meagre embodiment of an aspiration to reproduce Mahfuz in English - an aspiration that may not be realized for good.

The other reasons for conducting such a research work related to Najib Mahfuz in particular can be summed up in the following points:

a. Realizing the critical and academic calls to recheck or even to retranslate Mahfuz in English. I got shocked that very few academic research studies have crystallised as a response to those calls. In my review of a list of critical works on Mahfuz and his context, I just found, in addition to my MA dissertation, the

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1 Despite the fact that Said's original article in English is available online, I have preferred to re-paraphrase into English from an Arabic translation of the same article by M. Enani: see M. Enani and M. Farid, Naguib Mahfouz: Global Perspectives (Cairo: G.O.B.O., 2002) 9-15. Priority in documentation is given to written sources over online sources even if they are translated. The online article in English can be referred to on the following internet source link, after all: <http://www.counterpunch.org/mahfouz.html>.

following studies quite pertinent to the scrutiny of Mahfuz's works in English translation and literature:


b. His place in world literature now obliges me to do my best to our Nobel laureate who recently passed away in 2006. Najib Mahfuz is misrepresented and misunderstood in the English translations of his novels. That is what I myself experienced with Mahfuz's Novel: *The Beggar*. It has revealed a lot of mutilation on all levels of creation. My job here is a continuous effort to go through other texts to check whether the problem is still present in English translations of his other novels. The analysis will extend to other translations of Mahfuz's novels which are claimed more prestigious, like the translation of his voluminous masterpiece, the trilogy. The investigation of such translations will reveal to what extent they are really worth appraisal.

c. Nothing more urged me do the work rather than its blend of three fields which I like alike–translation, fiction, and criticism. The first is what I love to be my major; the second is the literary genre which I like reading and the last is the practice which I like doing. Exploiting all these genuine loves in this study of the translated Arabic literature makes me feel I am on a nationalistic mission.
Studying Mahfuz in particular fuses these loves with the mission of creating a critical work related in a sense to World Literature and to human interests in general. I feel that my job responses to such critical and human appeals as:

The years of the first half of the twentieth century which were not devoted to the waging of wars or to the recovery from so doing, saw translations flowing in a broad and vigorous stream from the pens of scholars of every kind. At first, the quality of many of these translations was not as high as the scholarship of the age might reasonably have demanded; they seemed to be uninspired, and in too many instances were describable as hackwork. It seemed as if many mediocre writers had discovered, and were exploiting, the regrettable fact that indifferent translation is easily achieved and is able to satisfy a multitude of uncritical readers. Even so, a debt is owing to those translators who realized that a literature had developed, or was developing, in countries whose languages were unfamiliar; and that students and lovers of literature ran a risk of being unaware of this. [...] There were, admittedly, a number of translated works that had become so well known in Britain that they might claim consideration from students of English literature. (Savory 45-46)

If there is something more to be revealed regarding the choice of studying Mahfuz, then it is my love for, not his philosophical thought in general, but his skills in presenting it and his mastery of the modern art of novel writing. I have always wished there had always been genuine attempts to encode a literary work into other languages and alien cultures so as not to make it lose its aesthetic features. Mahfuz has been granted his Nobel Prize on the basis of those mediocre translations. What could the case have been if Mahfuz had been translated in a more careful and responsible way! Unfortunately,
many of the non-Arabic scholars who read our author in English translations do still 
enquire if there can be any official representation of Mahfuz in English. This study is. 
however, ambitious enough to meet the needs of those who ever wished to see Mahfuz 
gets corrected in English. These thoughts made me launch such a project under 
competent academic supervision. This is to get it had a seal of academic authority and 
literary credibility, hoping for it to find its way into a wider range of English readership 
through some publication houses some day.

1.1.3. Methodology

The fore-mentioned ethical and critical voices stated as a rationale for the study 
moulded in me the enthusiastic critic who has the right, being affiliated to that language 
and culture, to investigate, and comment. The methodology of this research functions 
according to an empirical model envisaged for the literary assessment of the novels taken 
up for its scope. Before charting the model, it is in this space that the following 
contentions tend to introduce the general translational approach in which light the whole 
critical work of this thesis can be seen, understood and assessed:

1. Believing that the translators should not have tried to please the target 
language reader at the expense of the author’s creative art, this thesis tries to 
find out all sorts of techniques, visions and ideologies on which the English 
criticism on Mahfuz’s novels in English has been based. A literary text can, 
I believe, though cannot remain the same in translation, have at least the 
closest image of its original if the author is not sacrificed. The reader, 
however, be it the reader of the original or that of the translation, has to find
his way to the understanding of the story and its culture. To achieve the goal of the research, the approach will give priority to the author, his text and his milieu. Equivalence, for me, should mean the closest image or representation and not 'sameness'. That is because, to agree with James Holmes and Dürisin and many more others,

the use of the term equivalence is 'perverse', since to ask for sameness is to ask too much, [...And] the translator of a literary text is not concerned with establishing equivalence of natural language but of artistic procedures. And those procedures cannot be considered in isolation, but must be located within the specific cultural-temporal context within which they are utilized. [...] Equivalence in translation, then, should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two TL versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL version. (Bassnett 28-29)

II. And in order to scrutinize and criticize the English translation texts one would think of definite proper critical methods to create a better image. The criteria of my criticism emerge from the field of Translation Studies and not from other literary critical theories. This satisfies not only the requirements of my critique but also responds to such calls as:

The growth of Translation Studies as a discipline, however, should go some way towards raising the level of discussion about translations. and if there are criteria to be established for the evaluation of a translation,
those criteria will be established from within the discipline and not from without. (Bassnett 10)

This study then will be guided by the critical approach that combines two translational approaches. The first is that which pays attention to the creator of the original text; the second is the one that pays attention to the reader of the text. However, my view is quite modified here. We are living in times of globalization. The reader cannot benefit from the different cultures unless the character of the original remains authentic. Giving priority to the first approach does not mean that the reader is neglected. If we really want to please the reader of the modern and post-modern ages, then it is probably better to stick to the originals so as to create a better system of criticism to any translation text. The reader, whoever might be, will have to find his way to understand what is ambiguous. Modifying the original texts so as to get them match the particulars of the culture of the translation text (target text), will shift the text from the state of its genuine creation into the state of someone else's creation: from the author's real text to the translator's modified text, and from the alien culture to the localized culture of the readers. Then the author is lost; the translator is not the real creator and the result is a text that is not trustworthy. Even though the author-based approach is the highlighting criteria, the reader-based approach is not neglected by this study. To elaborate, the study stands against the approach only when it sacrifices the genuinity of the texts and when it removes the

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3 As a response to my enquiry if a target text should be preferred to read as a translation or as an independent text, Dr. Cardona of University of Pennsylvania, in a meeting at the research forum with students, scholars, and staff of the English Department of Calicut University enthusiastically expressed his opinion that translation should carry with it the particulars of the foreign culture or else it is fruitless. I cite him here not more to support the approach of this study, he being a comparativist, than to confirm that the Western English-readership targeted by this study already exists and ready to encounter and favour the foreignness of the foreign text in translation, he being a speaker of English living in America.
particulars of the source culture or presents the views of the translator and his attitudes toward what he or she translates. The reader is always in my view; but from a different angle of insight. The reader is the one who reads not just to get pleasure from what he reads, or wants to easily understand what he reads because the text is matching his cultural input. The reader spoken of here is the illuminated reader, the ambitious and the knowledge seeker, the searcher of the other, and above all, the one who recognizes the other. I am speaking of a reader who knows his liabilities in a globalised era and struggles to understand the other, irrespective of the fact that things might be quite confusing and quite exerting. I claim complete unity with the author and his text, the informed readers and their needs, and with the cultures that are translated or translated into, but with different points of focus.

The reader of the original text (source text) and the reader of the translation text are placed equally at the level of perception and effort. Today we are living in a global village, marked by globalisation and technologisation: "The abolition", remarks Roda P. Roberts, of trade barriers around the world, the merger of major companies, and the removal of border controls have led to economic globalization, which allows capital and products, information, and technology, as well as labor, to cross frontiers easily and speedily. (440) Economic globalisation entails the removal of barriers. Cultural barriers should be easily crossed. Literature should have readers marked as globalised in its positive sense: a sense of sharing, including, understanding and mutual respect. Active reading as a result is a requirement for world literature today. There are technological means that can help readers of foreign literatures and cultures get the information needed. "High involvement
means active search for information whereas low involvement rather means passive irrigation" (Grabovszki 6). Therefore there is always a need to employ the original texts under such approach that acknowledges the foreignness of the foreign text, its author and culture and moreover claims the creation of new type or group of readership. More objectivity is attained on the level of comparison and analysis in this research work; though it retains subjectivity on the level of interpretation and insight. Anyhow, for the creation of a better picture, the analysis will be highlighted on the basis of the presence of both texts— the original and the translation. These are the demarcations of the arena of the present study. The framework of the study is circumscribed by the general human and moral issues of author and reader rights and extends more to the rights of critics involved. The criticism and analyses provided by this study heed the rights of all of them.

The contentions above and the general translational author-based approach under which they are expressed can work successfully against the following proposed empirical model. The model is claimed to be original and can prove success in evaluating existing literary translations, though not without limitations as is the case with all empirical and theoretical models of assessment of translations so far existing in the field of Translation Studies. This model can be charted as follows:
Fig. 1. The Theme-Style-Technique Methodological Model.

The last word to note here has to do with the use of the Arabic script in the thesis. I opt for translating any citations from Arabic without the provision of the Arabic text or even its transliteration unless it is felt needed. Readers of English are the supposed reading audience of my research work. Those who know both languages and wish to see the Arabic scripts for more assurance on their part can refer to the referential notes for easy references to the cited statements of the original texts. My own translations will

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4 This critical model can be imagined as of two faces with different colours: the front face has the original text in view whereas the back face has the target text in review. The curved arrow on the top left corner leads to either face. The diagram can also be viewed with two parallel arrows: one is representing the original and the other the translation.
always figure between two square brackets unless otherwise specified. The puzzles of decoding uncommon abbreviations or unnecessary jargons will be minimised to the maximum for more interesting and smooth reading. What remains for this first part of the introductory chapter is to remind of what the thesis has to deal with.

1.1.4. Scope of the Study

The study limits itself to the scrutiny of certain English translations of Mahfuz's novels. Applications of the study will comprise novels ranging in their fictional visions from the socio-cultural to the political, and their critical dimensions from the national to the international. To match this convenience, the following novels in their English translations are selected for scrutiny: Bayn al-Qasrayn (BQ) and Qasr al-Shawq (QS), 1956-57, translated into English as Palace Walk (PW) and Palace of Desire (PD), in 1990-1992; Zuqaq al-Midaq (ZM), 1947, translated into English as Midaq Alley (MA) in 1966; and Allis wa al-Kilah (LK), 1961, translated into English as The Thief and the Dogs (TD) in 1984. They are good representatives of the Mahfuzian art in English. They have been responsible for the critical concerns in English, and are of diverse national and comprehensive human visions that may attract our interest. As a matter of fact, not too long after Mahfuz got the Nobel Prize, the West started to read his major works in English. All translations that appeared before getting the Nobel Prize were not really enough to form the English critical perspectives adequate enough to judge Mahfuz and his art. That is what some critics like Edward Sa'id and Altoma also confirm. The novels chosen fall in different periods that mark the development of Mahfuz's novels. Their translations appear both before and after Nobel Prize attained by Mahfuz, in 1988. The
status of the quality of their translations varies, generally speaking, according to the opinions of readers and critics. This critique will reveal to what extent their opinions prove true. The selection of these ‘graded’ translations is, thus, highly justified by these factors to meet the expectation of the study. The thesis opens up to six chapters:

The first chapter is devoted to introducing the research work's objectives, methodology and scope, of which these lines are integral. Following is a literature review that discusses the development and importance of the Egyptian novel including Najib Mahfuz and his world of thought and influence. It further renders a discussion of Mahfuz's novels and their translations in English. It goes a step further more to introduce the novels under research in terms of their general outlines. This is in order to help the readers get a basic understanding of what they are reading about. The whole chapter anyhow serves as an introduction to the analysis undertaken in the subsequent chapters. The second chapter takes up for its scrutiny the central themes of the four novels under discussion. These themes are checked against their original presentations by Najib Mahfuz. The chapter provides the opportunity to (1) understand Mahfuz's themes, (2) understand his authorial visions about his themes, (3) and find the differences of treating these themes between the original and the translation presentations. This is the thematic layer of the model charted earlier. The analysis is raised to the level of thematic discourse broken into thematic situations or lines of plot so as to facilitate the task of finding translational deviations.

The third chapter expresses another layer of the model. It deals with the stylistic features of the English translations of the same selected novels pointing out misrepresentations on
three syntactic levels: phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Style is understood to mean the author's selection, preference and arrangement of all these into the making of the text's fabric. This kind of arrangement is what makes the text its author's. It is this arrangement that determines the semantic and pragmatic dimensions of a narrative style typical of its own author alone. Any other stylistic deviations breaking with the norms of authorial writing and narrative style are dealt with in this chapter.

The fourth chapter concerns itself with all translational deviations from Mahfuz's techniques of novel writing. The aesthetics of Mahfuz's texts are primarily literary and they are all given their due in this chapter. This chapter manifests the third layer of the proposed model.

The fifth chapter reflects on politics of translating Arabic literature and culture. Thus, it establishes itself as a deductive chapter leading us to produce a type of ethical judgement on the translations in English of Arabic literature, being oriental in its general character and Arabic in its particular orientation.

The sixth chapter is a conclusion. It recapitulates the main points of the thesis and its findings, stresses the originality of this critical study, and renders suggestions for further research work.

The thesis has an appendix on translations and translators. It serves as a directory to those who wish to see some details on Mahfuz's published novels in English and their translators. The bibliographical list is what ends the thesis in its final stage and virtual image.

1.2. The Development of the Egyptian Novel and the Birth of Najib Mahfuz

1.2.1. National and Foreign Literary Influences on the Egyptian Novel and Najib Mahfuz
Many critics talk of three generations in the history of the Arabic novel in Egypt. Mahfuz stands first in the second generation which witnessed other distinguished novelists like Abd al-Hamid Jawdat al-Sahhar, Adil Kamal, Yahiya Haqqi, Abd al-Halim Abd Allah, and Yusuf al-Siba’i. This generation started publishing their works in the late thirties of the twentieth century. The first generation helped in the making of Mahfuz’s generation. The first generation of Egyptian novelists started writing and publishing in the pre-thirties of the same century. Such writers were Tawfiq al-Hakim, Muhammad Husayn Haykal, Taha Husayn, Mahmud Taymur, Abd al-Qadir al-Mazini and Mahmud Lashin. Najib Mahfuz links the pioneers with those who started writing their novels as contemporaries and those young writers who were to come soon. Najib Mahfuz got influenced by those who appeared before him in the thirties. Mahfuz acknowledges this fact when he says:

[The stage of awareness emerged under the influence of Taha Husayn, al-Aqqad, Salama Musa, al-Mazini, Haykal, and later on Taymur, Tawfiq al-Hakim, and Yahya Haqqi. I call this stage the stage of liberation from the traditional way of thinking, the traditional way of evaluation; a stage marked by focusing on world literature and looking into classical Arabic literature in a new way.] (F. Musa 14-15)

This influence is also given a stress by Husayn Fawzi when he talks about his own generation during the 1919 revolution. He says that in this period most of them were readers of such western writers as Maupassant, Balzac, Dostoevsky, Ivan Turgenev, Chekhov and Tolstoy. He stresses the fact that they did not get influenced by Haykal’s novel, Zaynab or by Hadith Isa bin Hisham, a novel written by al-Muwaliihi, who lived
between 1858 and 1930 (ibid). This view is also supported by Yahya Haqqi, who himself is a novelist and dramatist. He confirms that the Arabs came to know the modern novel through translation. He refers to the compilations of thousands of translations in the national library in Beirut before the middle of the 20th century. He goes on to say that after the exposure to the modern western types of story, the Arabs felt that *The Thousand and One Nights* and the form of the maqamah (a traditional Arabic narrative genre) were insufficient to create full-fledged stories. These Arabic traditional narratives fall short of expressing the present. According to his views those who laid the foundations of the modern novel were persons influenced by European literature, particularly French and English literatures. Sir Hamilton Gibb almost makes the same remark:

> The incentive was thus lacking in literary circles to the composition of works of a similar kind in Arabic. As the demand grew, the most natural course was to meet it by translating French and English novels [....] (qtd. in M. Moosa 93)

On the other hand we find other moderate views that emphasize the influence of the Arabic traditional forms of story telling on the development of the modern novel in Egypt. Such views are clearly expressed by such writers as Mahmud Taymur, a distinguished Egyptian novelist and playwright. He readily accepts the fact that modern Arabic fiction has been influenced by translations of western literature but he stresses the fact that the Arabic novel has its roots in the Arab past. And the Arab writers’ Orientalist nature gave their works characteristics different from those of the western literature. He condemns judging on the basis of the form of the western story. Its structure and frame could not be the only criterion. Arabic literature has its own characteristics and form, he says (ibid 92).
Most, to the best of my access and reading, of the critical works available in the literary market speak of the influence of western thought and writers on Najib Mahfuz and his thought as well. Very few talk of him as born out of an Arabic tradition which had known story telling long before. In fact, Najib Mahfuz came in a time which already knew such Arab modern novelists and short story writers as Haykal, Mahmud Taymur, al-Aqqad, al-Sahhar and others. These pioneers must have influenced Mahfuz irrespective of the fact that their productions were less artistic as far as the techniques of modern novel writing are concerned. But we should not forget the fact that the pioneers of the modern novel themselves had not taken their examples only from the traditional mode of story writing in Arabic which was popular in the 19th century. Mahfuz came and walked the same path as that of his pioneers. Then it is probably right to say that they were the ones who illuminated the way for him and laid the foundation of the modern Egyptian novel. But this does not mean that Mahfuz just borrowed and imitated. On the contrary, the Mahfuzian reader can feel the difference. Mahfuz borrowed and created, assimilated and established his own techniques and methods. He had his own insights into the modern art of the novel and its expansions. The next chapters will reflect the skills of the writer and show how far he has deserved world respect and honours.

1.2.2. The Leading Role of the Egyptian Novel in the Arab World

Hamid al-Nassaj speaks of the influence of the Egyptian novel on the appearance of the novel as a modern genre in other Arabic countries. He says that the role of Egypt is similar to the role of England in the establishment of the art of the novel in the rest of Europe. More than two centuries passed since Daniel Defoe, but Egypt could assimilate
that development within a very short period not exceeding half a century. Egypt exported the art of novel writing by two ways: translation first; and second, novel writing. All Arab researchers and scholars acknowledge this fact. Umar Talib, in his book titled, *The Art of Story in Modern Iraqi Literature*, says that the translations in Egypt and Lebanon had the most felt influence on the mature story writers in Iraq. They started to know about story writers like Tolstoy and Demas through translation. He does not forget to mention Mustafa al-Manfaluti and his style in those translations. Shakir Mustafa, in his book *The Story in Syria*, mentions the influence of the story movement in Egypt and Lebanon that supported the art of story writing in Syria, especially the novel. Writers like Yusuf Idris and Mahmud Taymur used to write forwards to Syrian novels.

Egypt also contributed to the cultural climate in Morocco. The famous Moroccan novelist Abd al-Majid bin Jalun started writing his short stories when he was in Egypt. He also imitated Najib Mahfuz as is mentioned by Ahmad al-Madini in the Iraqi journal, *al-Aqlam*. Ba-Bakr al-Dardini attributes the recognition of the art of the novel to Egypt, particularly the Egyptian pioneers like al-Manfaluti, al-Mazini and Lashin. The form of the modern novel in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, was always under the impact of the European novel since the establishment of the form out of traditional and western blend. Later on, any development in the form of the novel or its content in the west has apparently influenced the narrative production and its quality. Being first assimilated in Egypt, it then transported to the rest of the Arab countries. More novelists we find in Egypt than in any other Arab country (al-Nassaj 16-9).

1.2.3. Stages of the Development of the Modern Novel in Egypt and the Birth of Mahfuz
I do not find a more clear-cut novel classification of the different stages of the development of the modern Egyptian novel than the one outlined by al-Nassaj. He talks of four stages: the first stage categorizes all the novels that were written until 1939, the beginning of World War II. He calls this stage [the individual adventure].

The second stage of the modern Arabic novel starts with the war and ends in 1952, the year of July Revolution. He calls this stage [the stage of transformation and discovery]. He labels the third stage [the stage of realization and moving ahead]. This stage starts with the revolution and ends at the setback of June 5th, 1967. The fourth stage is labelled [renewal and continuation]. It occurs after 1967.

The first stage is marked by the novels of such writers as, Rifa’ah Rafi’ al-Tahtawi, Ali Mubarak, and others. These writers aimed at religious teaching and were quite attached to the traditional ways of story writing. The novel as a modern literary genre was absent in their writings. The real start of the modern novel, though not in the very sense, was with al-Muwaylihi in the same period. He first had his book called, *Hadith Isa ibn Hisham* [The Narratives of Isa ibn Hisham] published in a newspaper run by his father, between 1898 and 1900. The book was under the influence of maqamah, a traditional Arabic narrative which pays attention to rhyming verse, metaphors, similes, and is replete with wisdom sayings, maxims, and proverbs and plenty of Qur’anic verses and prophetic traditions. This work was not called a novel, not even a story. It was called ‘hadith’ which means ‘narration’. This work, however, is the most developed form of maqamah (established long back in the fourth century after Hijra, at the hands of Badi’ al-Zaman al-Hamadhani). I have strong doubt that this form was recognised by Europeans when they used to come to al-Andalus (Spain today) for learning and
knowledge in the Middle Ages. It could be the genre which influenced the European novel in its early periods. Anyhow, this stage is also marked by writers like Mahmud Tahir Haqqi, who wrote *Athra’ Dinshwhy* in 1906. It is a nationalistic novel. Before this novel there appeared a novel called *al-Qisas Hayah* by Abd al-Hamid al-Buqarqasi, rarely mentioned by critics. His first novel, *Hukm al-Hawa*, appeared in 1904. The story of the novel hinges on a real story that happened in October, 1903. It is the first novel that deals with issues related to Christian environment in Upper Egypt. No other writer could have dealt with such issues before 1919. The writer Salih Hamdi Hammad, a cotemporary to al-Manfaluti and a translator, appeared before Haykal. He was neglected by critics who tried to find out the roots of the modern Arabic novel. This writer was aware of the art of the novel and knew the distinction between the novel and short story as two literary genres. He was brave enough to bring the theme of love in his writings unlike his contemporaries. He published a few novels in 1910 and 1911. After this date occurs Haykal’s *Zaynab* in 1912, the novel which is referred to by critics to mark the beginning of the modern Arabic novel. This novel has been separated from all the previous attempts by its style that approaches the structure of the modern novel. Haykal was under the influence of what he was reading in French, particularly the romantic novels. Al-Nassaj attributes the fame of *Zaynab* to the high political and social prestige of its writer. The writer himself was not really concerned with the novel as an art. His second novel *Hakatha Khuliqtu [I was born Like That]* appeared in 1956.

From Haykal to al-Aqqad, to Mahmud Lashin, and further to other individual adventures: Al-Aqqad wrote his only novel, *Sarah*, in 1938. Lashin started with short stories and wrote his novel, *Hawwa’ bila Adam [Eve without Adam]*, and published it in
July 1933. Another novel, *al-Sir al-Muntahir* [The Murdered Secret], was promised to turn up but was not published. Ibrahim Abd al-Qadir al-Mazini wrote two novels. The first, *Ibrahim al-Katib* [Ibrahim the Writer], was published in 1931 and *Ibrahim al-Thani* [Ibrahim the Second], in 1943. His novels were not quite distinguished from the other novels which appeared in this period. Mahmud Taymur is considered to be the pioneer of story writing. He published two novels. The first was *al-Atlal* [The Ruins], published in 1934; the second is *Nida‘ al-Majhul* [The Call of the Unknown], in 1939. Then comes Taha Husayn, who first published his memoirs called, *al-Ayyam* in 1929. Afterwards, he wrote *Du‘a’ al-Qarawan* [The Call of the Curlew], in 1934 and *Adib*, in 1935. Tawfiq al-Hakim, the famous playwright, took venture to write some novels. His novel, *Awdat al-Ruh* [The Return of the Spirit] was published in 1933 and *Yawmiyyat Na‘ib fi al-Aryaf* [Diaries of an Officer in the Countryside], in 1937 and *Usfur min al-Sharq*, in 1938.

There are other individual adventures also that occurred in the same period by writers like Mahmud Khayrat, Mahmud Afifi, and others. Their works due to artistic failures, however, are not mentioned when critics talk of the development of the Egyptian novel. By and large, it is true that the writers of this stage (1893-1939) are the pioneers of novel writing, but they were not novelists in the first place. They were highly romantic. They did not try to get themselves and their problems out of their texts. They meant their ‘novels’ to express their own issues. They did not try to present a realistic view of the life of their societies. Most of their works were meant to teach and reform. The artistic structure of their novels was loose. They relied on their individual efforts. They did not include themselves under a specific school or trend of novel writing to follow its principles. The novel was not their main concern either. This group of writers, however,
laid the foundations of the art and helped in the appearance of the novels of the next period, which really marks the beginning of the novel as a modern genre separated from the short story and from mere individual efforts.

The writers in the second period would rely not on their own individual adventures but on the experiments of those preceding them. The second period (1939-1952) was, socio-politically speaking, marked by dictatorship and injustice, the self-consciousness of the bourgeois of its own status and the aim to imitate the European middle class in their conduct and their literary writings. People in this period started to perform strikes and demonstrations. They were very much aware of the national and social issues. There were realistic intellectual premises on the levels of economy and society. The press continued to magnify such issues and modern issues. This resulted in the emergence of the July 23rd revolution in 1952. The novel did not separate itself in this period from the circumstances around it. The novelists started to swim back to the shores of the nationalistic history, Arabic or Islamic. They took the raw material from it and moulded it according to the needs and issues of the present. The historical novel was dominating in this period. Those writers who were interested in it continued writing it. The others who contributed to the making of it in this period became the pillars of realism in the history of the Arabic novel in Egypt. These historical novels started with Ali al-Jarim and ended with Najib Mahfuz, Abd al-Hamid Jawdat al-Sahhar and Adil Kamil. These writers and many others started reading the Pharaonic history and the Islamic one. They referred to those periods to picture the events that happened. They wanted to restore the sense of nationalistic enthusiasm and the religious Islamic feelings to immune the Egyptian people from the imperialists and the British occupation of their lands. Starting
from this stage Najib Mahfuz emerged as a novelist. He produced his first historical novel in 1939. He then continued to shift from one stage of development into another along with other contemporary writers like al-Sahhar, Adil Kamil and many others.

The stage that starts from after the revolution of 1952 to the setback of 1967 witnessed scores of writers of realist novels along with Mahfuz, such as Abd al-Rahman al-Sharqawi, Yusuf al-Siba’i, Ihsan Abd al-Qudus, and Abd al-Halim Abd Allah. Another generation stated to appear now. A generation that wanted to find its own way without being restricted to the generations either of Mahmud Taymur and al-Aqqad, or that of Najib Mahfuz, Yusuf al-Siba’i, Tharwat Abazah, Suna’ Allah Ibrahim and others. This is the generation that was produced by the revolution and the one that continued to be loyal to it. This generation started to write side by side with the preceding masters. Najib Mahfuz continued to be the master of all since the appearance of his voluminous novel, the trilogy (Bayn al-Qasrayn, Qasr al-Shawq and al-Sukkariyyah,) which appeared in 1956, 1957.

The last stage that starts from 1967 and onwards is marked by the productions of the young writers, the generation of the revolution. These are writers like, Muhammad Yusuf al-Qa’id, Nihad Sharif, Rimsis Labib, Mustafa Amin, Musa Sabri, Isma’il Wali al-Din and many others.⁵

1.3. Introducing Najib Mahfuz and His Novels

1.3.1. Reflections on his Personal Context and his Philosophy

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Najib Mahfuz is not a pen name for the writer called Naguib Mahfouz. Many readers other than those who know Arabic and its present dialects may think so. As a matter of fact, these are two spellings of the same name. Let’s have a clear thought of this right now. There are some critics, translators, editors, and also researchers who adopt in their writings the first spelling of the name – Najib Mahfuz. Many others go for the second, more common, spelling - Naguib Mahfouz. The distinction between these two names is not that they refer to two different writers or that the second is a pen name. The fact is that Najib Mahfuz is Egyptian. The Egyptian pronunciation of the Arabic spelling of the name is rightly represented in English by this spelling - Naguib Mahfouz. In other simple words, the writer himself pronounces his name likewise. Again the name is pronounced as Najib Mahfuz according to the standards of the system of sounds of the Standard Arabic Form. Hence, we have the alternative spelling – Najib Mahfuz. The current study employs the standard form of the name, i.e., Najib Mahfuz; of course as far as its own statements are concerned. My adoption of this spelling is not merely a matter of personal taste. The study aims at correcting the image of the author and claims the recreation of his literary image. The name is part of the image.

Najib Mahfuz was born on December 11, 1911 and died on August 30, 2006. Out of 95 years 70 are spent in reading and writing. I do not want to see a question mark on the date of his birth. Those who fix the date of his birth in their writings in English as 1912 or 1910 are many but seem unaware of the trusted Arabic bibliographies. As far as my own readings go, most Arabic sources refer to the year 1911 as the year in which

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6 Names of Arabic writers and places in this thesis tend to follow the same system that heeds the Phonetic and Morphological System of Standard Arabic. Exception is the name which is part of a title or quotation, or a preference to its own holder. Such names may occur differently in other works, however.
Mahfuz was born. Such sources are The American University in Cairo Press. It is the publication house which possesses the copy rights of Mahfuz’s translations in English and which is expected to have a good record of Mahfuz’s personal life. However, the other date finds its place in some English articles and critical books and recorded in some of them as exactly as December 15, 1912.

With regard to his place, Najib Mahfuz talks about the historical place in which he lived. He says that Jamaliyyah is a fascination for him. Once he enters it, he does not want to get out of it. Mahfuz looks at his own locality as a symbol for all Egypt. The place is a distinct element of an important vision in his novels (al-Shatti 417).

As far as his literary career is concerned, he had been writing for more than half a century. For me, he is professionally a novelist in spite of the fact of his miscellaneous writings. He succeeded to move with the Arabic novel from its beginnings. He started writing historical novels shifting to socialist and post-modern novels as far as many critics talk of them. These stages took almost three centuries in the west. Mahfuz could start and finish all these stages within a few decades starting from 1939 up to 1988. After having finished dealing with western-type novels he could cruise back to the Arabian traditional setting for his later novels. Throughout his literary career, he had always been a man of wide knowledge and reading. He had his own artistic techniques and methods. He had enough courage to directly put forth his own philosophical and modern visions in

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7 For detailed information on Mahfuz’s life and other personal details consult the following trustworthy internet site prepared by Egypt State Information Service (SIS), copied hereunder as a direct link: <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En2000000000000000000160.htm>, and chapters 4-6 of the following print source: Masri Hannurah, Najib Mahfuz wa Fan Sina’t al-Abgariyyah, (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2008). Hannurah, a close friend of Mahfuz, fixes Mahfuz’s birth date as on 11 Dec. 1911.
spite of the fact that many of his visions were against the conventions of his society. Many incentive awards were conferred upon him. He was the first to win Egypt’s incentive award in its early establishment. Many of his works, especially novels, have been translated into many languages today. After this recognition, he got the Nobel Prize for literature in 1988. He was the first Arab writer to win such a prize. The world today recognizes him as a distinguished novelist of great thought, philosophy and skill.

Here are some of the statements from Mahfuz’s own mouth on his art and themes, beliefs, issues of his own times and his views on the outer world and all that moves in it. These statements are not meant to fill in a gap in this introduction. They are meant to give the readers some clues to the understanding of Najib Mahfuz and his novels as far as the approach of this study is concerned. The themes of his novels are drawn from the various issues of real life and shaped by his own philosophy. The different fictional visions are not far from the actual visions of Mahfuz and his times. Najib Mahfuz is a realist in the first place. At times he expressed directly what he wanted to say. At other times he used symbols and references to allude to the same facts of his day especially in his novels of socialist–realist character. In an article titled ["A Journey in the Head of this Man,"] cited by al-Shatti, Mahfuz speaks of such references in his socialistic novels. For instance, he says that he exploited ‘homosexuality’ in that period as a signal of political corruption. He stresses the fact that in politics for example if one wanted to succeed then he would reach his ends by way of relationship, opportunism, bribery, and exploitation of his or her beauty. He goes on to say that it was his duty to know and record such deterioration.
Al-Shatti goes on to say that Mahfuz differentiates between a philosopher and an artist. The first can give a direct answer if they are asked about their art; the latter express their feelings in their works. Their works speak themselves to the readers. Mahfuz defines philosophy here by saying that it may have another meaning when it represents a stand taken by a human being toward life and its people and their manners. As such, no human is without philosophy. Mahfuz says that it is probable that the series of his works will represent a philosophy based on experience and education. He admits that he is not different from other writers as far as his interest in localities and their people is concerned. The social values are his concern in spite of his concern with metaphysical representations. There is always an attempt to reconcile the absolute truth with the social values.

What is peculiar about Mahfuz is that he was a student of philosophy. He always wanted to study Islamic philosophy as a major. But he shifted to write articles about the idea of the evolution of dogmas and sects and different philosophical trends. Fortunately, he found his way out through art. His literary works continued to go hand in hand with his philosophical thoughts. Mahfuz successfully blends philosophy with literature to express the different issues of his society. He wrote romantic historical novels, realistic novels, and post modern novels. All of them are just different ways to reflect the issues of man. Mahfuz says that philosophy finds its way into literature through different ways: it may come as part of its content where the philosophical thought gives the literary work a philosophical shape like Sartre’s plays. Philosophy may get into no-philosophical literature (the literature that has no philosophical idea at its core) through some philosophical characters and is revealed through dialogue and attitudes like Aldus
Huxley’s *Point Counter Point*. Again, philosophy may have its way into literature neither through ideas nor through characters but through the plot of the literary work per se. Here philosophy becomes clear through the events and the fate of the characters that are shaped by the environment and the circumstances in which they live. There might be found in a literary work any number of coincidences which result in certain distresses like those found in the works of Thomas Hardy. They reflect his philosophy that man is a puppet in the hands of fate. The system of his work reveals this philosophy. The other way of the access of philosophy into literature is that the author of a literary work or the creator of an artistic work gets influenced by some philosophical culture to an extent that the artistic work gets tangibly enriched by it. However, I find myself unable to completely agree with al-Shatti regarding his view that Mahfuz does not belong to the category of those writers who build their works on some philosophical idea: What is to be said about Mahfuz’s novel *Children of our Alley*. Mahfuz academically studied philosophy and Practised it on the level of writing. The influence of philosophy is quite clear on the novels of Najib Mahfuz.

Najib Mahfuz has his own ideas on the world of today and its political shape as well. He says that the world has two main divisions in this respect: the first gives man freedom and leaves him in a forest; the second gives him justice and leaves him without freedom. Man is miserable both ways. Mahfuz says that the solution is in combining the two. Mahfuz confirms that he is a socialist and admits that socialism loses much of its value. It mocks freedom, he says. On the other hand, Mahfuz realizes these two main divisions and their conflict with the traditional institution—religion. Mahfuz says that Sophist socialism guides us to God. Conducts like, love, knowledge, manners and
societal conducts like socialism make us reach the supreme truth. They lead man to the
doors of divine power. There exist some social systems that pave the way to God. They
can achieve what he calls ‘human justice’ and fight exploitation and other evils that drag
the soul far from divinity (al-Shatti 12-9). This indicates that Mahfuz was not far from the
politics of his times as well. Najib Mahfuz was disillusioned with the revolution of 1952
during its heyday and its setback in 1967. He was direct in his criticisms. The publication
of his novels that he produced during this period came to confirm his political beliefs. He
was satisfied with the principles of the revolution but never with the practices of those
who came to power. In his article titled “The Novelist as Political Eye-Witness: A view
of Najib Mahfuz’s Evaluation of the Nasser and Sadat Eras”, Rasheed el-Enany translates
and comments on Mahfuz’s speech from an interview in 1973, when Mahfuz says:

There is no doubt that the declared aims of the 23 July Revolution would have been to me
and to my entire generation very satisfactory only if they had been carried out in the spirit
in which they were declared ... I wanted nothing more than true socialism and true
democracy. This has not been achieved yet (qtd. in el-Enany 77).

Mahfuz admits that he has his doubts about Marxist theory as a philosophic
system yet believes in its application irrespective of its defects and failure of
experimentation. He stresses certain beliefs that can be summed up as follows:

- Man should be freed from the class system and what it entails of privileges such as
inheritance.

- Man should be freed from all forms of exploitation.
- An individual's position in society should be determined according to both his natural and acquired qualifications.
- Recompense should be equal to need.
- Individual should enjoy freedom of thought and belief under protection of law which is supposed to control the governor and the governed alike.
- Democracy to be realized in its fullest sense.
- The power of central government should be reduced and restricted to security and defence (ibid 77). These doctrines serve as the background for understanding the novelist's deep sense of frustration at the collapse of the national aspirations at the hands of not the colonizers but at the hands of the very regime which initially seemed capable of achieving what earlier generations had failed in. These intellectual issues have their clear presence in the novels of Najib Mahfuz. One can refer to many critical works based on content analysis to get complete ideas on the different dimensions of thought. This section here just opens up the intellectual world of the author without intending to give excessive details. These views are important for our approach of studying the English translations of Mahfuz's novels in English. The readers should have such basics to understand what Mahfuz said about himself and his art and what critics in English say about him. Incidentally, politics does not detach itself from history.

History has its clear presence in the novels of Najib Mahfuz. His early novels were historical. But we can generally say that they are politically and socially realistic.

Mahfuz did employ history in his early novels not for the sake of narrating history itself but for the sake of reality. This is what Mahfuz himself has confirmed in his interviews. History, al-Shatti confirms, was an inspiration that enabled him to reflect the anxieties of his society in the times of the British occupation of the land. His historical allusions aroused the nationalistic sentiments against the occupants. Najib Mahfuz confirms this when he says that the historical characters in his novels were not meant for themselves. The novels he wrote were not historical in the very sense of the word. He did not mean to transfer the readers back to the life of certain historical phases. He wanted to picture the present (34). These views are given stress by the known critic Ibrahim Fathi when he says:

[Najib Mahfuz projected the facets of the modern Egyptian society on the themes and characters of the past. The contemporary present was rendering the perspective. The world projected, the author, and the readers were all subject to the same standards of evaluating derived from the logic of the existing events. Thus, we do not find a wide gap between the works that are called historical and the novels which are called realist, though gaps may exist between them.] (8)

Najib Mahfuz reveals more of his thought and his views on life when he sums up his stand toward the novels that he wrote. In 1968, after Mahfuz has finished his voluminous work the trilogy, he started to shift his strategy from writing novels on modern Egypt to writing novels of some philosophical essence beginning with *Awlad Haratina* in 1959 to end with *Miramar* in 1967. In an interview with Mahfuz by Raja’ al-Naqqash, Mahfuz speaks on his art. The reality of Arabic literature, according to him, records the continuous flow of novel producing and its availability. He says that the art of the novel
in that time (his own times in the sixties) was not appropriate at all; confessing that the novel he started writing then was something other than the novel. He bid farewell to the novel after he had finished writing the trilogy. He says that he was writing something the English call 'novelette'. The best translation of this word in his opinion is 'qissah' i.e. story. What he wrote then can be called a dialogue story. The works that he wrote depended basically on dialogue to reveal thoughts and attitudes. He goes on to confirm that the novel is no longer the appropriate art to express the issues of the age. The novel is an appropriate form in societies that have stable and clear-cut features. In his view the Arab societies cannot stop changing every now and then. The conventional novel describes the society. A changing society tends more to understand and think of it than describe it. Thinking of a society leads to, so far as he terms it, intellectual literature in which the protagonist is not the particular person but the general person – the human being in his general and basic issues. This general man cannot fit in a novel based on description and narration. It fits in a novel based on thinking and dialogue. That's why he labels it 'al-Qissah al-Hiwariyyah' [the dialogue story] (Wadi 282-83).\(^9\) Najib Mahfuz thereon proves that he is too much concerned with his society in particular and the world in general. He justifies his art according to the changes of his society. His speech, to confirm our views, proves that he is a realist in total, a universalist in his thought and, moreover, his own boss as far as his literary skills are concerned.

Even when he was publically criticised for his political and religious position, he attracted many readers throughout the Arab world. He may be considered the

\(^9\) Mahfuz's statements are also quoted by Hannurah (see bibliography). However, the original source of these statements as given by Hannurah is Raja' al-Naqqash, "An Ara' Najib Mahfuz fi al- Riwayah al-Misriyyah," \textit{al-Musawwir} magazine, 31 Jan. 1969.
contemporary Egyptian novelist par excellence. Though sometimes called the "Dickens" or "Balzac" of Egypt, he is really the "Mahfuz of Egypt": his realistic style, his interest in social issues, indeed his whole ethos is genuinely Egyptian. (M. Moosa 372)

1.3.2. Classification of Mahfuz's Novels

Najib Mahfuz is a good representative of all the stages that have been mentioned above. He started with the historical novel \textit{Abath al-Aqdar} in 1939 and continued writing with those who started before him, those who were his contemporaries and those who started when the Egyptian novel had already been established and fully recognized in Egypt and the world. The novels that he wrote were classified by many critics as historical, realist, and post-realist. Many others divide them in other words into romantic-historical, social-naturalist, symbolist-realist, and critical-realist. There are other critical classifications in the field. Following these classifications on the basis of the genre of the novel and its trends in the world brings nothing but confusion to the critics and readers alike. Najib Mahfuz did not mean to stop at some points in time to match the trends of the novel in the west irrespective of his awareness of such developments in time. His assimilation of the different literary and philosophical trends of the west resulted in an art that belongs to him alone. A Mahfuzian reader will discover that Mahfuz is a school by himself. Critics talk of Mahfuz's romanticism, his naturalism, his socialism, his realism, his post modernism and even his traditionalism. That's quite felt in all his novels. One feels that a novel written by Mahfuz cannot fit just in a single category. The historical novels are romantic and realistic. The realistic novels are socialist and most of them are symbolic in varying degrees. Readers of Mahfuz should give themselves enough freedom to look at Mahfuz within his own school of, so as to speak, technical thought and
narrative engineering. Classifications of distinguished Mahfuzian critics should not affect our own ways of understanding him. They might be misleading if totally relied on. Here is an example:

Fatima Musa, a distinguished critic and translator in the field, in her critical, authoritative and widely cited book *Najib Mahfuz wa Tatawwur al-Riwayah al-Arabiyyah* [Najib Mahfuz and the Development of the Arabic Novel] cited earlier here, presents her content analysis on the basis of the following classification of Mahfuz's novels: romantic-historic, realist, and post-realist depending on their general character. She presents a par excellence detailed analysis of his novels. Yet, and just like many other books in the field, the book is a mess as far as the classification of Mahfuz’s novels is concerned. Such divisions in the field are a real mess for the researchers. The content of the book also violates its title, which should remain confined to the discussions of Mahfuz’s novels. There are no clear-cut marks between the discussions of Mahfuz’s short stories and his novels. Thus, and benefiting from al-Nassaj’s views stated earlier regarding the dividing of the stages of the development of the novel in Egypt, it is proposed that there should be clear-cut lines from the beginning so as to give vivid classification of the novels of Najib Mahfuz. However, here is my proposal in this regard. Najib Mahfuz, most critics admit, is generally a realist in all stages of his novel writing. The ratio of realism in his novels along with artistic techniques develops with the development of the contemporary issues of his times. The techniques shift accordingly to suit the thematic circumstances. The other features of his works ranging from the employment of history to the use of symbols are to be taken as mediums and vehicles he has employed to serve this general tendency and to develop the treatment of his themes
and fictional visions. This is what Mahfuz admits regarding his historical novels. Mahfuz himself supports the previous remarks by Fathi when he

admits that while he was writing *Kifah Tiba* (1937-1938), his major concern was the Egyptian’s struggle to overthrow the British, who had occupied the country since 1882.\(^{16}\)

Many of his contemporaries saw a real continuity from the Pharaonic period, the brightest in Egypt’s history, to the present age of decadence and humiliation caused by British imperialism and the dominance of the Turko-Egyptian aristocracy. (M. Moosa 349)

Therefore, Classifications of his works chronologically on the basis of the dates of their publication is likely to facilitate the task of analysis, understanding and reading for Mahfuz's critics and readers alike. An appendix that gives the list of Mahfuz’s novels and their translations in English has been attached on this basis.

1.3.3. An Outline of Mahfuz’s Novels and their Translations in English

Classifying Mahfuz on the basis of some chronological order of publications may seem more practical and less confusing - either in Arabic or in English for further critical studies about Mahfuz and his novels. Here is an outline of his novels based largely on Matti Moosa’s discussion (which employs the suggested approach) of Mahfuz’s novels. Mahfuz, encouraged by Salama Musa, published three historical novels. He called the first *Hikmat Khufu* [*Cheap’s Wisdom*]. In his magazine, Salama Musa changed the title of the novel into *Abath al-Aqdar* [*Irony of Fate*] before publishing it in 1939. His second novel *Radubis* followed in 1943 and *Kifah Tiba* [*The Struggle of Thebes*], in 1944. After completing *Kifah Tiba*, a historical novel, Mahfuz, feeling that history lost its charm, abandoned history to rely on the social issues of his time in Cairo. Between 1945 and

Al-Thulathiyyah [the trilogy] appeared between 1956 and 1957. It is Mahfuz's most important work and one of his personal favourites. It has three volumes. The first one is Bayn al-Qasrayn. The second volume is Qasr al-Shawq. The third volume is al-Sukkariyyah [al-Sukkariyyah Street]. Mahfuz has encountered something called "the generations' novel". He talks of a single family over an extended period. Following the steps of Taha Husayn's Shajarat al-Bu's (1944), Najib Mahfuz finished the trilogy in 1952. Soon after its completion Taha Husayn was asked by Mahfuz to read and review it. He wrote an article in al-Ahram newspaper saluting Mahfuz as a great novelist. Its publication came only after it has been serialised. For it Mahfuz won the state's prize for literature in 1957. It details the lives of three generations of a family in Cairo. It outlines the major social and political events of the period from 1917 to 1944 as seen by the Egyptian lower class dispersed between the Islamic tradition and the new western values. The first volume Bayn al-Qasrayn narrates the events of the family of Sayyed Ahmad Abd al-Jawwad from 1917 to 1919. The latter is the date of the nationalist revolution famous as Sa'd Zaghlul revolution. The second part of the trilogy, Qasr al-Shawq covers the period from 1924 to Sa'd Zhaghlul's death in August 1927. In this novel Mahfuz depicts the deterioration of the national movement. He shows the clashes between politicians and the clash between the traditional values imported from the West with
those of the Egyptians. The final volume of the trilogy *al-Sukkariyyah* covers the period from January 1935 to the summer of 1944. In this novel Mahfuz’s looks closely at the political upheavals, the conflict between western values and traditional Muslim beliefs, the cultural and social changes as a result of the Second World War, and modern civilization. As for Mahfuz the man, he did not seem to establish a strict attitude for himself regarding these two extremes— the Western and the Islamic. He seems to have been swinging between these two extremes to the end of his life. Many Islamists still think of him as an apostate; but Mahfuz has not denied the existence of God irrespective of the fact that he has questioned His existence. Even before his death, he asked that his funeral be performed according to the Islamic ceremonials. Does this mean that he has abandoned his old liberalist beliefs and returned to the traditional beliefs? This question seems to perplex the minds of critics, who still differ greatly in this regard, and the question mark does not seem to turn into a full stop.

After al-Thulathiyyah, Mahfuz waited for seven years till the appearance of his allegorical novel *Awlad Haratina [Children of our Quarter]* in 1959. It was all because of his disillusionment with the revolution of 1952. Between 1961 and 1969 Mahfuz published six novels: *Allis wa al-Kilab [The Thief and the Dogs]* 1961, in which he started to announce his socialism artistically, *al-Samman wa al-Kharif [The Quail and Autumn]*, *al-Tariq, al-Shahhath, Thartharah fawq al-Nil* and *Miramar* in 1967. After 1969, he published more novels starting with *al-Maraya*. Yet, the novels after 1971 were not as artistically good as the preceding ones as many critics confirm. As a matter of fact, after the setback of 1967 Najib Mahfuz attributes the failure of the novels coming after this date to this setback. He pronounces his feelings clearly:
["My reaction toward the defeat was radically different from my reaction in the wake of July 23 revolution, in 1952. These really are the two horrible events in my general experience. After 1952, I stopped writing completely for five years. The ideas were maturing, growing and were being kept idle for the search of form; whereas after 1967 I started to write haphazardly. I think I reached the real form appropriate to the moment of the horrible defeat."] (qtd. in al-Nassaj 59)

Thus Mahfuz, being affected by the defeat, shifted to writing short stories. They were not good in the eyes of many critics. The novels he wrote were not good either. These novels are al-Maraya, al-Hub taht al-Matar, al-Karnak, Qalb al-Layl, and Hadrat al-Muhtaram, in 1975.10

With regard to the translations of Mahfuz’s novels, most of them have found their way into the literary market and have become part of world literature taught in English, in different universities in the world. If translations of the western novels into Arabic partly created Mahfuz the modern novelist and many others before him in the Arab world, it is translation into western languages also that recreated him and caused him get the Nobel Prize for literature in 1988, and yielded him global recognition as well. He got the Nobel Prize soon after the appearance of the second volume of al-Thulathiyyah, in French,

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10 I record my debt here to:

Roger Allen speaks of two basic periods of the translating of Mahfuz into English. The first period is the one preceding his reception of the Nobel Prize and the second is the one after it. In 1972 the American University in Cairo had a plan of publishing not more than eight of his novels translated into English. The novel *Miramar* appeared in English in 1978 as a response to this initiative. The second novel *Awlad Haratina* appeared in English in 1981. The third novel *Allis wa al-Kilab* appeared in 1984.

Before the announcement of Mahfuz for the Nobel Prize he had already entrusted the American University in Cairo Press with copyrights of translating his works in all languages of the world. After he won the prize, he signed a contract with Doubleday in New York to publish only the translations of his works in English. The pioneership in translating Mahfuz before he got the Nobel Prize is attributed to Trevor le Gassick, who published his translation of *Zuqaq al-Midaq* under the title *Midaq Alley* in Beirut in 1966. Roger Allen confirms that in the first edition of this translation some of the cultural aspects, like greetings and salutations, have been left out by the translator, especially those aspects of Islamic character. The second revised edition which appeared in 1975 brought back to the text some of those original features. This translation according to him is the most representative text in English of Najib Mahfuz. *Maraya*, another novel, was translated by Roger Allen, and was serialised in a magazine in 1972. The novel has fifty-four parts. It represents the writer and his issues pertaining to his society. The English translation of the novel appeared in two different years, in 1977 and in 1999 under the
title *Mirrors*, and by the same translator. *Awlad Haratina*, which was banned in Egypt and the Arab world, appeared in English in 1981. The work was translated by Philip Stewart some fifteen years before its date of publication. Since the translation of the trilogy had not yet been completed into English, the Nobel committee cited this work when it decided the prize. This novel has drawn the attention of western readers and critics to Najib Mahfuz and his works.

The translation of the title did not retain the original title that focuses on the place. The title in English *Children of Gebelawi* focuses on the main character which symbolizes God who lives in a place outside the quarter. The same novel has found another translation of a title which matches the title of the original, *Children of our Alley*, by Peter Theroux in 1996. The second translation is indicative of more consciousness of the works of Najib Mahfuz.

After getting the Nobel Prize, the attitudes toward the translations of the works of Najib Mahfuz changed radically. The works chosen for translation and marketing were all subject to more awareness and organisation. After the long delay the English translation of the trilogy appeared in 1990-1992. The trilogy was already included in the project of 1972 mentioned earlier. Oulive Kenny translated the first two volumes. The third was translated by Angil Butrus Sam’an. The three translation volumes were revised by William Hutchins. These translations were distinguished by their easy-to-read character and the good marketing of the product. They laid down some new criteria for the publication of the Arabic literature in the west. These translations succeeded in getting the western readers know about the life in Cairo between the first and the second world wars. But there remains the question of representing cultural aspects of the original
texts. The translations of Arabic literature were more bent to draw cultures near to each other by making them homogeneous instead of establishing and describing the heterogeneity of the two different cultures as many critics say. (Analysis in the next chapters will reveal to what extent these and such remarks are true; also see ch. 5 on politics of translation).

Since 1992, more translations flowed into the English western market; most prominently *Thartharah fawq al-Nil*. It was translated by Frances Liardet in 1993 under the title *A Drift on the Nile*. This translation retains most of the original characteristics of the text (Enani & Farid 17-21). Richard Dyer in his article, “Naguib Mahfuz Creates a Mythic History” talks about the position of the translations of Mahfuz’s works in English confirming that Mahfuz had millions of readers but not in America before the Nobel Prize. After the Nobel Prize and the completion of the English translations of the trilogy, Doubleday could sell more than 250,000 copies of it (ibid 23-24). Mahir Shafiq Farid, in his bibliographical essay, "Mahfuz fi al-Inghiliziyyah" [Mahfuz in English], 1982, expresses (I stress the information, not the impression) his critical views on the translation of Najib Mahfuz in English today: Mahfuz’s image in English could have been far better if translators like Lewis Awad, Majdi Wahbah, Mahmud al-Minzilawi, translated at least one book each. They have complete mastery of the English and Arabic languages. Things are better now when we can see such university professors as Fatima Musa and Angil Butrus Sam’an have started translating some of Mahfuz’s works into English. When twenty works of Mahfuz get translated into English, Mahfuz would be
seen as one of those who have no peers in the whole world. Many departments of literature in the west started to designate a special course for Mahfuzian studies as is the matter with Balzac and Dickens. Mahfuz will enter the classics and this is a sign of immortality and glory.

In his bibliographical essay, Farid also mentions other English translations of Mahfuz's novels as *Miramar* translated by Fatima Musa, and revised by Majid al-Qamas and John Rodenbeck, with an introduction by John Fawles. *Al-Karnak*, translated by Sa'd al-Jiblawi in a book, which contains two other novels, called *Three Contemporary Egyptian Novels*, 1977. In 1989, Malak Hashim, a university professor, published Mahfuz's novel *Yawma Qutil al-Za'im* under the English title *The day the Leader Was Killed.* All novels written by Mahfuz from his first novel, *Abath al-Aqdar*, 1939 to his last novel, *Qashtumar*, 1988 and their English translations will be given a space in a special appendix of the thesis for easy reference, along with notes on the translators.

1.4. Introducing the Novels under Discussion

1.4.1. *Midaq Alley*

The Novel and its Setting

*Midaq Alley* (1947, translated by Trevor le Gassick, 1966 & 1975) is one of Mahfuz's realistic novels. "Midaq Alley" is the title in English of Mahfuz's novel *Zuqaq al-Midaq*, originally in Arabic. This is simply the name of a street located in the Azhar Quarter of the ancient city of Cairo. Mahfuz's novel is named after this street. This street

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11 Farid's essay is noteworthy for its bibliographical information devoted to Mahfuz until 1982. Compiled by the same writer is a Mahfuzian bibliography in English up to 2002, in the same book (one, of our most important cited references, which contains essays in Arabic and English: see Muhammad Enani and Mahir Farid, *Naguib Mahfouz: Global Perspectives* (Cairo: G.O.B.O., 2002) 27-46.

12 The translation edition chosen for this study is the one claimed by critics to have recovered most of the spirit of the original. This was published in 1975 (see bibliography for details).
is described by the author in the opening lines of the very beginning of the novel itself when he says:

Many things combine to show that Midaq Alley is one of the gems of times gone by and that it once shone forth like a flashing star in the history of Cairo. Which Cairo do I mean? That of the Fatimids, the Mamlukes or the Sultans? Only God and the archaeologists know the answer to that, but in any case, the alley is certainly an ancient relic and a precious one. (MA 1)

This novel belongs to Mahfuz's social novels written between 1945 and 1951. The themes of these novels are drawn from Cairo life itself. The action of the story of Midaq Alley is set in the last years of World War II. The story depicts the lives of various characters. They are all common folk from the lower middle class. Most of them are uneducated. The story has no formal plot and no dominant character. All characters are treated alike by the author in the context of the life of the alley. Mahfuz depicts a real picture of life in the alley. Every character is moving in the same orbit as the other characters. They are isolated from the outside world with a peculiar life that has a special flavour. Yet, the alley's roots "connect with life as a whole" (MA 1).

Again, the alley is rather a protagonist than a space in which the characters move. It is hated by some of the characters that leave it and then return to it. The alley is a factual presentation by the author, making of this alley a stage for the most part of its events. It lingers for a long time in the minds of the readers, not because of the lengthy descriptions but because of the lively factual characters that belong to it, and through the interesting dialogues between them. These characters were behind the reputation and popularity of Mahfuz when the novel was published in 1947. The readers cherished it for
years after its publication. The characters represent common types of character. Yet, they are of idiosyncratic characteristics typical of real people of flesh and blood. The author used the realistic style in depicting them to an extent that the reader starts to feel that they really exist, especially when the background is tangible and of clear-cut marks. Thus, Mahfuz's characters have become part and parcel of the heritage of the Egyptian people (F. Musa 74-75).

Characters and their Options

The traditional values of Mahfuz's characters appear to be in conflict with what appears outside the alley. Some characters choose to leave the alley and others choose to remain: Hamidah, a poor beautiful young girl, hates the alley very much. She leaves it because she does not find in it what gratifies her wishes and ambition. She is not meant by the author to be a heroine but without her the novel would collapse. She is resentful of poverty. She desires wealth and marriage. She does not find a suitable person in the alley. The only man she finds attractive is Husayn Kirshah, who she cannot marry because he is her foster brother. But she is loved by Abbas, who accepts to leave the alley and work for the British army as an attempt to win her heart. He knows her love for material things. She is also loved by Salim Alwan, a prosperous merchant in the alley, thirty years senior to her. When this merchant asks to marry her, her foster mother Umm Hamidah, who is herself a match maker, agrees to his proposal. The problem is that Hamida's engagement to Abbas was already announced. But Abbas is now in the army. This gives the opportunity for Hamidah to rethink her future. She decides to leave Abbas for the well-to-do merchant of the alley. But for her disappointment, the old man gets a near-deadly heart attack and renounces the idea of remarriage. This makes her so disappointed with
the alley and its people. Frustration and her ambition are the two forces that push her toward the tragic end where she is allured into prostitution. When her lover returns from the army to find her a prostitute, he decides revenge; but is beaten to death by the British soldiers whom she was entertaining. Mahfuz gives this character, Hamidah, two redeeming chances but maintains none of them. Mahfuz refuses to redeem her because "doing so would damage his portrayal of the moral decay of Egyptian society due to the impact of the world war (Moosa 353). Hamidah does not stand for Egypt as a whole as is contended by many critics. It only stands for the collapsed policy, which has been lead by the politicians to this destination. Abbas is a representative of the youth of Egypt. Being killed by the English soldiers is a signal of the harsh circumstances surrounding Egypt as a whole (al-Shatti 133-40).

Abbas is also one of the characters that choose to leave the alley, though reluctantly. Two forces drive him away from the alley. The first is his love for Hamidah, as he wants to return with enough money to satisfy her materialistic desires; the second is the temptation of his friend Husayn Kirshah, who persuades Abbas to leave his saloon and work for the army, for a better life. Abbas is a character who is offered by the author as a romantic gentleman. He loves the beautiful girl Hamidah for the sake of love. He sacrifices his life for her twice: once, when he leaves to work for the army after his engagement to her, and once again, when he retains his love for her and attempts revenge against those who seduced her. The latter action leads to his death at the hands of the British soldiers. The romantic vision of the novel is expressed through this character.

Husayn Kirshah is a young man who curses the alley and deserts it for a better life in the army. But he is forced to return to it after he is given the sack to find himself
working again with his father Kirshah the café owner. This character represents the absence of the nationalistic sense and patriotism. Many situations in the novel reveal this. He not only curses the alley and work for the occupation army, but thinks of getting British nationality. He also convinces Abbas to do the same. Moreover, when he comes back to the alley after losing his job, he still wishes the alley and all that it has did not exist. These observations are consolidated by his loss of the sense of honour. He does not care about Hamidah, his foster sister, when he knows she is a prostitute. Moreover, he thinks of bargaining the pimp for a lot of money in return for not taking revenge. He also persuades Abbas to do so instead of taking revenge.

On the other hand, most of the characters choose to remain in the alley. The most prominent of them is the spiritual man, Ridwan al-Husayni. He is the only bright spot in the story. This character is representative of love and innocence in the alley and, in Matti Moosa's words, "represents the moral conscience of a society plagued by wickedness (354). He loves all people and offers advice to them. He always prefers to remain faithful and patient against all kinds of hardship. The optimistic sense, in the novel wrapped in pessimism, is expressed through this character. His long monologues in the end of the novel are indicative of the author's appreciation of the role of this character in the novel. When he leaves the alley for Hajj, the people of the alley goes to him to say goodbye and ask for his prayers. It seems that Ridwan al-Husayni represents the spirituality of the alley as opposed to the materialism prevalent in it.

Other important characters are Salim Alwan the factory owner, whose name is a symbol for the ambition of the middle class, is a lecher and war profiteer representing the bourgeois class (al-Shatti 126); Kirshah the café owner, a narcotic peddler and a
homosexual, who stands for all the changes following the 1919 revolution of which the political corruption is one (ibid 125); Husniyyah the bakery owner, a matriarch; her husband Zitah, a master beggar and a maker of deformities as is rightly depicted by the author, and "a firebrand of the devil of the modern age that causes destruction and death" (F. Musa 84); Dr. Bushy, a dentist without degree who takes his title as doctor from his clients, steals and sells gold dentures of the dead.

There are also other less important characters: Shaykh Darwish, always contemplating and lost in fantasies, family-free and is given money out of respect by the people of the alley; Saniyyah Afifi, a woman in her middle age, a widow looking for a husband, and a land lady who receives the rentals from Umm Hamidah, Ridwan al-Husayni and Shaykh Darwish; Uncle Kamil, the sweet seller and a close father-like friend of Abbas.

**Treatment and Structure**

Many themes and issues have been presented through these characters: unrequited love, the place of men of religion, marriage, prostitution, homosexuality, drug addiction, war trafficking, etc.. All these issues and others are typical of life itself everywhere and every time. Midaq Alley, though specific in its setting, and of culture-specific milieu, is but a picture of life in its issues and their meanings related to all human kind. The relationship established between the place and its characters is but a representation of the integration of the place and its residents, says Sulayman al-Shatti. He further expounds that this kind of integration between the place and man is what gives symbols their dimensions. Midaq Alley is not a mere place or decoration for a story that sets itself in it. It is rather an influencing force affecting the events and the characters of the novel. It
becomes part of the characters' psychologies reflecting what goes on in their lives: the things that have gone and the things that are to come. It thus becomes a symbol of Egypt's past and its traditional essence; and is yet a symbol of Egypt's future along with its contact with the newly coming civilization and all the impacts that result from such contacts. And since the Egyptian situation, particularly the political, was not stable then, the nationalist characters that were fixated to the alley became victims when they tried to save it. By this the circle of symbol gets complete. The alley takes into itself the past of Egypt and its present (al-Shatti 120-21). And if pessimism is what wraps the whole novel, this finds explanation in the following statement by Mahfuz himself:

[This novel was written in a period in which our life was marked by wretchedness and despair-like state. This caused me, out of truth, to produce such a picture. But, on the other hand, I kind of think that every one in the alley was trying to better their life as far as they could within the limits of their very bad conditions.] (qtd. in al-Shatti 141)

The narrative structure of the novel is rather realistic. There is no central plot surrounded by other subordinate plots as is the case with other novels. The structure of the novel is not divided by chapters but by interstices usually separated by Shaykh Darwish's mystic remarks. The unity of the novel is achieved by the unity of the place and the unity of its topic or change that is a constant subject in his art as a whole (F. Musa 88). The distinguished critic Abd al-Muhsin Badr contends that Midaq Alley is the most consistent of all Mahfuz's novels that preceded it. The author's attention in this novel became focused on the alley per se in its life cycle between the old Cairo and the modern one. Abd al-Muhsin does not forget to note that Najib Mahfuz's technique has developed to deal with place and its dialectical relation with time. The alley, though a small place.
contains all the social elements of the whole Egypt. This vision gives the place its role to mould the events and the character's dispositions and destinies. Time is thus no longer a mere decoration suitable for all situations. It starts to acquire a special character which has the ability to penetrate the place and its walls. Abd al-Muhsin confirms that the factor of place is what gives the novel its unity (Abu al-Adus 185-86).

1.4.2. The trilogy: *Palace Walk*

**History of the Title**

The phrase "trilogy" refers to a work that constitutes three volumes. According to its author it took him seven years to prepare and write this book, i.e. from 1945 to 1952. The author presented it as a whole for publication under the title "Bayn al-Qasrayn". When the publisher rejected the idea of publishing the work under one title due to its length, he suggested that the work be divided into three volumes, each with a different title. Hence the trilogy: *Bayn al-Qasrayn, Qasr al-Shawq*, and *al-Sukkariyyah* i.e. *Palace Walk, Palace of Desire* and *Sugar Street* respectively in English (el-Enany 225-26). The first was published in 1956 while the other two were published in 1957. Their English translations appeared respectively in 1990, 1991 and 1992.

The novel titled *Palace walk* constitutes the first part of Mahfuz's tri-voluminous masterpiece, the trilogy. This novel was published in 1956 under the title *Bayn al-Qasrayn*, and translated as *Palace Walk* in 1990 by William M. Hutchins and Olive E. Kenny.
Significance of the Title

The above Arabic title literally means, [Between the Two Palaces]. However, "Bayn al-Qasrayn" is the name of a real alley of al-Husayn quarter in Cairo. Mahfuz's novel is titled after this place, in which most of the events of this novel take place. As a matter of fact, all the novels that constitute the trilogy are titled after real alleys of the same quarter in Cairo. The other realistic novels that Mahfuz wrote between 1945 and 1958 also have their titles after real places. This period is labelled by many critics as to be Mahfuz's realistic stage. Mahfuz focuses on places in Cairo like Zuqaq al-Midaq, Khan al-Khalili, Bayn al-Qasrayn, Qasr al-Shawq, and al-Sukkariyyah etc. These popular places have their own thematic significance in relation to their pertinence to the reality Mahfuz depicts. Mahfuz himself probably wants to emphasize this relevance by giving his novels titles that bear the names of such real places.

The Central Issue of the Story

The story of Palace Walk is a story of a conservative and cohesive family ruled by the patriarch Ahmad Abd al-Jawwad. The story of the novel presents the history of Egypt through the tracking down of the events that have been woven around this family from 1917 (or the year in which king Ahmad Fuad ascended the throne) to 1919, the date of the nationalist revolution led by Sa'd Zaghlul against the British occupation.

In Palace Walk Najib Mahfuz "painstakingly describes the historical background, revealing the social, political, and cultural trends in Egypt in the latter years of World war I" (M. Moosa 358).
The patriarch Ahmad Abd al-Jawwad is an embodiment of the sense of domination and hegemony. He is a representative of the values of his own generation. The family of Ahmad Abd al-Jawwad (al-Sayyid) appears in the story of *Palace Walk* as completely submissive to the father's will. The author focuses on the character of al-Sayyid. Al-Sayyid is a title and not a name. This title literally means "the master." Thematically it can rightly mean the patriarch or the paterfamilias. The author always maintains the fixation of this title to the proper first name as to suggest its importance to one of the central themes of the novel, i.e., the patriarchal hegemony and domination. In the course of reading, one starts to feel that the title "al-Sayyid" overrides the first name (Ahmad) of this character. The story of al-Sayyid and his family seems to go in complete harmony with the political background of the novel: Al-Sayyid's family is probably a symbol of Egypt under the British occupation. Al-Sayyid's patriarchal authority can be interpreted to stand for the authority of the occupation over the Egyptian people.

**The Central Characters**

The reader of the novel is always under the impression that the story is about al-Sayyid irrespective of the historical, political and social dimensions that embrace it. His image is the brightest and the most dominant over all events. Al-Sayyid's character represents the spirit of the age in its apparent characteristics which dominate the course of action. Many critics have seen in him just the image of the Egyptian father, representing the patriarchal terrorism witnessed in his age. These critics contend that Najib Mahfuz has exaggerated the caricatured depiction of this terrorism. But al-Sayyid remains an embodiment of a stage that is shorthanded in his personality, through which we can see
the author's analysis of its concepts and conventions (al-Shatti 151-52). If the novel were to take another title, I believe, rightly be one that has to do with the character of al-Sayyid (the patriarch) Ahmad Abd al-Jawwad. From now on the title "al-Sayyid" or its translation, 'the Patriarch,' will be adopted to be the references to this character.

Al-Sayyid is depicted in the novel as one of double personality. He is not in his house what he is really outside it. With his family he is rude, cruel and oppressive and a real conservative. Outside his family, he is kind, loving and a man of sexual and musical interests. As we start reading the story of the novel, we find everything in the novel takes us back to the character of al-Sayyid. Al-Sayyid Ahmad appears in focus right from the first chapter to the last chapter of the novel. His conducts with all those around him are what really make the plot. What creates the drama of the novel is al-Sayyid's way of living and conduct. The events can hardly be of any significance in the absence of this character. Al-Sayyid's story revolves around such social determiners as his patriarchal authority in the house where he appears conservative, and his pleasure seeking and musical interests outside the house where he appears liberal to the utmost. The political factors also play a role in defining such a character in relation to the national movements of al-Sayyid's own times during the First World War. Here are some details in terms of his relationships with other characters in the novel:

**His relationship with his wives:** Marriage appears in the novel as something that means slavery or bondage within the patriarchal system of al-Sayyid Ahmad. Al-Sayyid marries twice. He marries Haniyyah (Yasin's mother) and divorces her shortly after marriage because of her resistance to his patriarchal will. Later on in the story of the novel Yasin's
mother appears as a pleasure-seeker. She marries and remarries but gets divorced every
time. She considers herself as a woman of bad luck. Her relationship with her son, Yasin,
is marked by hatred on his part because of her dissoluteness and her sexual whimsies
expressed by her remarriages after her first divorce by his father, al-Sayyid.

Al-Sayyid's second wife is Amina, "an emblem of the past". She and her husband
"represent the past in its last secure days." She is the other pole on which the story of
Palace Walk hinges. Her relationship with al-Sayyid is marked by submission and
obedience on her part. She is docile and shows no objection to any of his decisions or acts
whatever they are. This relationship "is itself an image of the stability of the value system
that is the frame for this relationship"(El-Enany 83). In fact, Al-Sayyid married her when
she was below 15 years. He considers her constant obedience a mark of a good woman.
He prevents her from going out, except for visiting her mother in his company. When she
once dares to get out of the house in his absence to visit al-Husayn shrine, she is expelled
from the house as punishment. When she returns to her house under the intercession of
Umm Maryam, she thanks God that he has not divorced her. She remains submissive, and
obedient throughout the story of the novel. Palace Walk appears to stand on two poles as
far as the domestic system is concerned: on one side al-Sayyid and his iron rule, and on
the other his wife Aminah and her submissive role. This relationship between the
husband and his wife is a good representative of the conservative middle class image
which was prevalent in Egypt in the first epoch of the twentieth century. Historically
speaking, Aminah's image is

[a genuine record of the Egyptian woman's image with its authentic popular
characteristics: An image that will continue to be a rich reference for those who are
looking for the image of women in the Egyptian society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.] (Wady 356)

**His relationship with his girlfriends:** Extra-marital sexual relations appear to be a significant point of view in *Palace Walk*. As far as al-Sayyid’s adulterous relationships are concerned, these relationships are found to be regular and consistent. Al-Sayyid has two girlfriends, Jalilah and Zubaydah, who are singers and have their own houses in which al-Sayyid seeks to see them along with a group of his close friends. His orgies with his friends and girlfriends are marked by singing, drinking, playing music, and jesting. These orgies are held in the evening and extend to after mid-night. One more adulterous relationship is established between al-Sayyid and his neighbour Bahijah, or Umm Maryam, whose husband remained bedridden with paralysis for long before his death.

**His relationship with his children:** al-Sayyid’s patriarchal and cruel rule extends to every member of the family whether girls or boys. He never tolerates misbehaviour. His children must listen to and obey him whatever the case could be. Kamal, around eleven years old and the youngest in the family is cursed, abused, beaten for any mischief. Fahmy, a law student of eighteen, is the wisest and the least reproached. Yasin, a clerk at al-Nahhasin school, aged twenty one, is always under the rage and rebuke of his father for his repeated mistakes and troubles. Khadijah and Aishah are al-Sayyid’s two daughters who are always in fear of their father till the time when they got married and moved to their husbands’ houses. There they enjoy more freedom being far from their father’s direct watch.
No one in the house can say ‘no’ when al-Sayyid gives a command. They live under his tyranny semi-contented. They love their father irrespective of their fear of him. The ‘no’ inside them turns into ‘yes’ outside. Their father is the one who tells them what to do and what not to do. He decides to marry Yasin to his friend’s daughter. He orders Fahmy not to participate in demonstrations against the British occupation. He refuses to marry off his junior daughter Aishah to the one she loved, simply because the suitor, in al-Sayyid’s opinion, should be seeking closeness to al-Sayyid himself before seeking closeness to his daughter. This father-child relationship remains of a unified character (a do-yes bond) within the limits of al-Sayyid’s regime, as it were.

**His relationship with his friends:** al-Sayyid is a loveable person by his acquaintances and friends. He is shown to be a person of generous and noble character. He has friends of all sorts: Sheikh Mutawalli Abd al-Samad, a mystic religious figure; Muhammad Iffat, Ibrahim al-Fa’r, merchants; and many others. When he is seized by the British soldiers and is doomed to humiliation by them, many of his friends and acquaintances visit him at home to console him. Even in the worst situations, we find that the author wants to rescue this sort of character and always retains some sort of respect and reverence for his personality.

Besides the character of al-Sayyid, the story of *Palace Walk* witnesses a good deal of focus on Yasin’s character (Yasin is al-Sayyid’s eldest son by ex-marriage). The story of *Palace Walk* witnesses Yasin’s first marriage and divorce. This journey of marrying and divorcing lasts in the subsequent two volumes of the trilogy. However, Yasin’s character is established to be of a pleasure-seeker sort. Yasin is a person who cares for
women and drinking. His mind’s orientation is highly sensual. His father decides to marry him to Zaynab, his friend’s daughter. Unfortunately, Yasin feels fed up with marriage life, particularly its sexual aspect. He expresses his disappointment with this sort of life by molesting his wife’s maid. The maid Nur is black and in her forties, and not any sort of beauty. The incident with Nur after Yasin’s first marriage to Zaynab is similar to Yasin’s incident with the maid Umm Hanafi before marriage in al-Sayyid’s house. If his sexual advance against Umm Hanafi causes him to marry, his advance against Nur causes him to divorce, or rather get divorced. His wife Zaynab breaks her own wedlock and leaves for her father’s house. From there she asks for divorce and gets it by way of negotiation between her own father and Yasin’s father, who are already close friends. In al-Sayyid’s terms, his son, Yasin, is a base, light-headed animal blinded by a base lust, like his mother Haniyyah: Al-Sayyid considers himself wise and has the ability to control his lust while his son is a beast who gives reign to his lust without considering the consequences. Al-Sayyid differentiates between making love with a maid and that with a songstress. For al-Sayyid, Yasin resembles his mother and not him, in this respect. Much of the sexual vision of the novel is woven around Yasin.

The other central character in the story of *Palace Walk* is al-Sayyid’s second son, Fahmy, who is a law student. The author chooses this character as representative of the generation of the 1919 revolution. Fahmy is a nationalist. His enthusiasm for the revolution is maintained throughout the story. "He stands for the revolutionary purity that hinges on faith and absolute loyalty to the issue" (Musa F. 105). He works in secret, afraid to tell his father. He supports Sa’d Zaghlul and participates in the demonstrations and rallies that call for his return from exile. Moreover, he becomes a member of a
resistant group and participates in proliferating and distributing revolutionary circulars among the masses. When he is summoned before his father, he refrains from swearing not to participate in acts that may be harmful to him. However, when Sa'd Zaghlul is freed from exile, demonstrations are allowed by the occupation authorities. When the students and the masses get out that day to celebrate Zhaghlul’s return, the British soldiers start shooting at demonstrators. Fahmy falls as a martyr in this peaceful demonstration.

Kamal, the autobiographical figure in the novels of the trilogy, is given his due in this novel that concentrates on the first generation, i.e. Kamal’s parents. The author spares the importance of this character to the second volume of the trilogy when Kamal gets into youth. In Palace Walk, the author introduces this character. He is an intelligent boy, and of a religious mind shaped by his mother whose father was a religious scholar, a boy who fears his father and a bit mischievous when he is away from him. The author focuses on Kamal’s boyhood by giving a good deal of mention of the way he sleeps, plays, studies, and other small roles he plays in the story like his love for Sa'd Zaghlul, participating in demonstrations, accompanying his mother to visit al-Husayn in the absence of his father, carrying Fahmy’s letters and messages to Maryam whom Fahmy loves, and reporting to the family the incident of Maryam welcoming the flirtations of a British soldier, etc.. Many details have been outlined on this character, but none is really important for the plot of the story of Palace Walk. These particulars, however, make the reader of the first volume think of an important future role to be assigned to this character by the author. The author is actually preparing him to be the centre of the next volume of the trilogy, i.e. Palace of Desire.
The story of *Palace Walk* ends in an important event on the domestic level: al-Sayyid’s son Fahmy is killed as a martyr in a peaceful demonstration against the British occupation. On the political level, Sa'd Zaghlul, leader of the Wafd party, is released. The first event brings the change within al-Sayyid’s system of ruling his family. Al-Sayyid becomes more lenient with his household members especially Aminah, who is given more freedom to visit al-Husayn’s and her son’s shrines and her daughters in al-Sukkariyyah. The second event means the success of the revolution and the victory of the people and their demands.

**1.4.3. The trilogy: *Palace of Desire***

**The Title and Scope of Events**

*Palace of Desire* (1957, translated by William M. Hutchins, 1991) is the novel that constitutes the second part of the trilogy. The title "Palace of Desire" is a literal translation of the novel’s title in Arabic, "Qasr al-Shawq," which can be rightly retranslated as "Qasr al-Shawq Alley." For, Like *Midaq Alley*, *Palace of Desire* is a novel that is named after an alley in al-Husayn quarter in Cairo.

*Palace of Desire* covers the period from 1924 to 1927 out of the total period covered by the trilogy from 1917-1944 i.e. from nearly the end of World War I to the end of World War II. This period covers the events that revolve around three generations of the same family: the family of al-Sayyid Ahmad Abd al-Jawwad, in a period that represents the history of Egypt or rather the history of the nationalistic movement (F. Musa 97). In *Palace of Desire*, Najib Mahfuz "depicts the deterioration of the national
movement into petty squabbling between the politicians and the palace, and shows the clash of traditional values and concepts with those imported from the west, especially as it affects Kamal" (M. Moosa 362).

The Protagonist and Other Characters

_Qasr al-Shawq or Palace of Desire_ is a novel which has no specific plot and depends largely on depiction of the events related to the family of al-Sayyid Ahmad, the patriarch who rules his family with an iron hand, symbolizing the patriarchal system of the 1910s in Egypt. The character of the father dominates the first part of the trilogy, _Bayn al-Qasrayn._

In _Palace of Desire_, his son Kamal is the dominant character because, in this novel, the author focuses on goes on in the mind of such a character, as opposed to the sensual life of al-Sayyid Ahmad who is always depicted as a person who leads a double life: one who is conservative, pious and stern in the house, while outside the house he is a pleasure seeker, a lecher and a lover of music, wine, and jests. In _Palace of Desire_, he appears melancholic and mourns the death of his son Fahmy for five years. He occurs as a deserter of pleasures, but in the course of action of the novel he returns to his old habit of spending his nights with his woman entertainers, Zubaydah, Jalilah and Zannubah. But he falls sick to remain bed-ridden; and near the end of the novel, he gets well and announces his desire to repent. This time after the death of Fahmy, al-Sayyid appears less stern and allows his wife to go out for visiting her daughters in al-Sukkariyyah Street and visiting al-Husayn shrine and the grave of their martyr son Fahmy. Even when many
incidents have revolved around the character of the father, the young Kamal's intellectual life is always shown the most important aspect of the novel *Palace of Desire*.

Kamal is growing up from adolescence into youth in the third decade of the twentieth century. This period has witnessed many intellectual changes. In reality, it also witnessed the youth of the author himself. The character of Kamal is representing the most important part of Najib Mahfuz. This is what Najib Mahfuz confirmed more than once. The author attempts to embody his own experience in the novel. Kamal is also representative of his own generation after the revolution of 1919. He represents the intellectual suffering of the whole Orient and its crisis in the modern age when the clash occurs between the western modern values and the traditional values of the Orient (al-Shatti 161-62). Kamal appears in the story of the novel as an idealist in his philosophy and a nationalist in politics, a supporter of Sa'd Zaghlul. In addition, his intellectual journey is extended to many issues related to religion, search for truth, beauty, love and marriage, and sex, etc.

In his intellectual journey, Kamal questions the Islamic notions, believes in Darwin's theory, and questions the key to happiness as well. In the long run he resorts to wine and women and finds himself in another situation rendering more question marks? Philosophy drags him away from realism into idealism and isolation offering him continuous pain and suffering.

Even his love is nothing but an intellectual crisis. He idealizes his beloved Aidah, the sister of his classmate Husayn Shaddad, and raises her to the status of a goddess in his fantasies. He never stops thinking of her, though he is not sure whether she reciprocates the same feelings with him. When he discovers that she prefers his friend Hasan Salim
for marriage, an aristocratic youth of her own class, he gets initiated into the reality of his
beloved. He realizes that she is no more different from womenfolk. But since he loves her
for the sake of love itself and not for the sake of marriage, his love for her survives.

The story of the novel also focuses on the sexual adventures of Kamal's brother,
Yasin, a senior half-brother from a previous marriage of their father, al-Sayyid Ahmad.
Yasin's character is quite different from Kamal's. He is a lecherous person, another
miniature of the father in this respect. He cares a lot for marriage and sex. He marries
three times. He marries Zaynab, his father's friend's daughter, Maryam, a neighbour
whom his brother Fahmy hoped to marry before his martyrdom, and Zannubah, a lute
player, already his father's entertainer:

Zaynab, Yasin's first wife, deserts him and gets divorced, because of his infidelity.
He has his son, Ridwan from her, a dominant character in the third part of the trilogy
devoted to this new generation. His second wife Maryam is divorced by him when she
finds him sleeping with Zannubah in her bedroom. At last, and to the dislike of all his
family members, Yasin decides to marry Zannubah, the lute player, who occurs in a state
of giving birth towards the end of the novel, becoming a member of al-Sayyid Ahmad's
family.

In spite of his consecutive marriages, Yasin remains obsessed with sex. He has
affairs with Bahija, Maryam's mother before she becomes his mother in-law. Later he
visits prostitutes after his third marriage. He is a person who follows his father's example
in this regard, but is also a person who is not interested in politics, unlike his brothers
Kamal and Fahmy. Most of the sexual vision of *Palace of Desire* is woven around this character.

There are other important characters: Khadija and Aisha, Kamal's sisters who get married to Ibrahim Shawkat and Ahmad Shawkat respectively and have their sons who, along with Yasin's son, become the concern of the third novel of the trilogy, i.e. *Sugar Street*. Characters like Muhammad Iffat and Ibrahim al-Far are al-Sayyid Ahmad's close companions throughout the course of the novel.

In its course of action, *Palace of Desire* witnesses the death of Aidah, Kamal's beloved, the death of Aisha's husband and her children, because of typhoid. On the outer political layer it witnesses the death of Sa'd Zaghlul at the end of it, after it has witnessed his coming back from exile in the beginning of it. Politics of the times, the war and its effects on the Egyptian society, the autobiographical elements, all of them were under the microscopic eye of the author, who remains

[of no equal in his ability to give life to his characters and change the fate of that important piece of land in Cairo. He was able to record the historical events from the perspective of a historian and make these events affect the life of his characters and their destinies.] (Musa F. 97)

**Greatness of the Trilogy**

The trilogy, though divided into three parts, remains one artistic whole in its best image. The author has succeeded to use everything to depict the general and the
particular atmospheres in which the events of the trilogy are wrapped. His artistic style is marked by the exploitation of the reader: an exploitation that makes the reader get into the image and coexist with the characters. The reader starts to get along with the particulars outlined by the author. The reader's intellectual and sentimental participation facilitates the task to recognise the bulk of characters (around fifty) when they speak. This easy recognition of the characters by the reader saves the author reintroducing his characters in longer dialogues.

The other dimension that adds to the artistic value of the trilogy is the coincidence of the outside events with the inside events. This coincidence is not only parallel but also an important element of the intellectual and sentimental relationship. The author strikes an organic bond between the history of Egypt and the two world wars and the suffering of the characters in the novel that are influenced by such public events. This kind of bond appears when the author relies on the symbolic significance. The inside events are symbolic of the outside and vice versa. This method is the most prominent in the trilogy. This novel is a melting pot of all meanings, characters and things. All these are linked by facts that make the reader gets surprised. The characters along with the events that happen to them, and the link between the form, the source and the consequences rise at the end to say something reminiscent of a work that is really great (al-Shatti 170-80).

1.4.4. The Thief and the Dogs

Background to the Novel and its Story
This novel strikes a difference with the preceding novels chosen for the analysis. The novel belongs to Mahfuz’s post-realist novels in terms of some critical classifications. It is one of the six novels that appeared in the period 1961-1969. The Thief and the Dogs is the title of the English translation of Mahfuz’s original work al-Liss wa al-Kilab. The novel in Arabic was published in 1961. The same was translated by Trevor le Gassick and M. M. Badawi and published in English in 1984.

If we look at the titles of the previously published novels we will discover that all of them bear titles that indicate names of real places in Cairo. Those were, as it were, novels of place, focusing mainly on the influence of the external social and political circumstances on the characters and their destiny. The present novel shifts the focus onto a central protagonist described as a thief and other opposing characters labelled as “dogs”. So the novel The Thief and the Dogs is, so to speak, a novel of character, focusing mainly on describing the psychological conflict inside the central character in proportion to the conditions imposed on him from the antagonistic outside embodied by his divorcee, her new husband, and one of his friends. Abd al-Qadir al-Quit, a great Arab critic, speaks of such a novel and says:

[The Thief and the Dogs as a novel represents a new stage for Najib Mahfuz. In this novel Najib Mahfuz stops recording of the historical epoch and the large sectors of society for the study of the individual’s psychology: a study that focuses on a character or few types of characters prone to have some symbolic significance subjected to one single psychological or intellectual dominant drift. This does not mean of course that his previous historical-social novels had no such types. Many of which were there, indeed, but with no independent psychology to which the novel’s structure and plot succumb. In
fact, this type of character imports its existence from their lives and their interaction with
the general social and historical frame of the novel. Whereas in the new stage, such
characters are the pivot of the work as a whole; out of which the events spring and on
which most of the structure is erected.] (qtd. in al-Qit 210-11)

In fact, the novel has a real historical background. Najib Mahfuz bases his story on the
incidents of a real story related to someone called Mahmud Sulayman known as
"Alexandria Murderer." This real thief was a great target for the people and media in the
sixties of modern Egypt. He was pictured to be a superman with extraordinary acts. He
was chased by the police until he took recourse to a cave in a mountain. There he was
shot dead by the police. Many people in Egypt were shocked by the incident. But Najib
Mahfuz could turn his shock by the accident into a real artistic work characterised by
universality and continuity. The author was captured by the real incident, but he
successfully could liberate himself from it. Mahfuz's fictional thief has many superficial
similarities with the real thief of Alexandria, but still with many differences of
personality and conduct (F. Musa 120-22).

The type of character illuminated in this story is rather of universal than local
c character. The thief is called Said Mahran (henceforth Mahran). The ‘dogs’ of the title is
a metaphor for the other characters who represent treachery, infidelity, and are corrupt in
the thief's viewpoint. These in the story of the novel are: Nabawiyyah, Mahran's
divorcee; Ulaysh, husband of Nabawiyyah; and Ra'uf Alwan, a journalist used to be
Said's friend and a student of law. The metaphor of “dogs” extends its implications to
embrace the machinery of the state and police-machinery marked by injustice and is
represented in the novel by the character Hasaballah, the detective.
The Thief and the Dogs has a story with one protagonist i.e. Mahran. This man is an educated man who is practising thievery over the rich, out of a fixed personal belief in its validity. His story is a story of revenge. The novel opens with him being released from prison after four years of imprisonment. He gets out into a changed world only to find that his wife, who asked him to divorce her while in prison, is married to an already-trusted friend of his gang called Ulaysh Sidrah. Mahran's four-year-old daughter, Sana', is living with Ulaysh now, and his money collected by robbery is no longer his. It is taken by Ulaysh, the new husband of his ex-wife. Now Mahran, the thief, is sure that his wife was infidel and she asked divorce in order to marry Ulaysh, his treacherous friend. Now, in his new world, Mahran is also sure that it is them who conspired against him and informed the police of his whereabouts to arrest him and thus to easily get rid of him to marry happily afterwards. This is the background against which the thief is now working. The story flows from this background toward the destiny of the protagonist at the hands of the police.

The Story and its Main Characters

When Mahran is out of prison, he directly goes to see his daughter, wife and new husband. He wants to take into custody his daughter, to regain his money, and to take back his belongings. But he gets nothing: he meets Ulaysh just to find that the latter denies him his money, his divorcée does not get out to see him, and his daughter does not know him. He considers the wife and her husband infidel and decides to take revenge on them.
Some time later Mahran meets his friend Ra’uf Alwan (henceforth Alwan), who is no longer a poor man and a person who defends stealing. He becomes a journalist of *al-Zahrah* magazine, has a palace on the Nile and is quite rich. It appears that this character is representative of Mahran's other side if he were to be of a successful career, because he is "like someone who is uprooted by the present moment from his previous point of reference and carried away by its powerful current" (Mahmoud 64). Moreover, the sounds of their names produce the same tone. "Alwan" and "Mahran" are of equal metric value. Thus in the story we find Alwan advising Mahran to put an end to his past and start a new life. The meeting of the two is marked by change of position and belief. Alwan is a journalist of high rank and believes in the law; Mahran hates the law and sticks to his old beliefs. Mahran feels that the man has changed and forsook his old beliefs. For this reason he considers him a traitor- a traitor of principles. He decides to take revenge on him too.

In the course of revenge, Mahran fails to kill any of his enemies. Instead of killing Ulaysh and Alwan, he kills two innocent people: a new tenant and a gatekeeper. Being chased by the police everywhere, he resorts to a loyal old girlfriend and prostitute, Nur (her real name is Shalabiyyah), who gives him accommodation and food in her rented flat by a cemetery sheltering him from the police. The word Nur which means "light" is preferred by the author for the role such a character plays in the novel. She is for Mahran what her name suggests: the only optimistic glimpse. Her aid to Mahran is practical, unlike the aid of the mystic Ali al-Junaydi whose help stops at guidelines. So, when the girlfriend suddenly disappears, Mahran becomes with no place to live, feeling completely isolated and alien.
His only bastion then is Shaykh Ali al-Junaydi, a mystic who is frequently visited by many for the sake of learning. The religious man is almost ideal and a Sophist who cares little about worldly affairs. He is representative of the spiritual side of human life. The spirituality is what gives man shelter from the dark materialist side in our life. In moments of hardship man tends to be silent and mystic as one way of getting rid of tension or fear. In the story of the novel, Mahran find the mystic's place a safe place to hide in. The mystic Ali al-Junaydi gives shelter to Mahran and advises him to cling to Allah and stops his evil adventures. Later on Mahran finds al-Junaydi’s place surrounded by police and runs away to the cemetery by which Nur’s flat lies. There he is chased by the police and their dogs. He takes shelter by a grave's structure and refuses to give in. In an exchange of fire in complete darkness Mahran stops shooting and either dies or surrenders: This end to the novel is disputed, however. For the reader to establish his own opinion regarding the end of the story, the following are the last statements of the novel:

The darkness was thicker now and he [Mahran] could see nothing at all, not even the outlines of the tombs, as if nothing wished to be seen. He was slipping away into endless depths, not knowing either position, place, purpose. As hard as he could, he tried to gain control of something, no matter what. To exert one last act of resistance. To capture one last recalcitrant memory. But finally, because he had to succumb, and not caring, he surrendered. Not caring at all now.” (TD 279)

There are critics like Fatima Musa who speaks of Mahran's death in fire exchange with the police (122). But she herself does not give explanation to validate her point of view. Sulayman al-Shatti, a distinguished Mahfuzian critic, starts his commentary on this novel by citing the fore-cited last lines of the novel, followed by these statements:
[These concluding lines from *The Thief and the Dogs* focus on Sa'īd Mahran's journey, which he started from the time when he was out of prison to the time when he was shot by the police at the cemetery. These lines are almost the complete reduction of his release, his encounter, the loss, and the incomplete means; nothing harvested but indifferent surrender.](277)

And in the end of his commentary on the novel, al-Shatti, to confirm the same, says, [The graves have caught the attention of scholars by their own symbolism. These graves have witnessed Sa'īd's rebellion and his end.... He finds his own death while he is taking shelter by them](303). Hence, any reader of the story can establish his or her point of view regarding the fatal end of the thief. The author's description of the situation makes us believe that Mahran is shot dead, though the word "surrender" surprises us. A reader can be lured by this word to start thinking that Mahran surrenders to the police. But the author does not say that Mahran surrenders to the police. The author has given scope for both ends. But, my contention is that the thief falls dead, surrendering to the moment of death in the midst of his dying moments.

**Other Characters and the Structure of the Novel**

What is to be noted regarding the other characters of the novel is that they appear where the thief is. We hardly see them alone. This might be because of the sparseness of the novel and its compressed content, that is to say, its centeredness on the protagonist. The author's camera is always focused on the protagonist.

There are two sides within the story: one is dark and the other is bright as far as the thief's point of view is concerned. Those who give the thief shelter from the chase are
mainly two: Nur, his girlfriend, and sheik Ali al-Junaydi, the mystic. On the other hand, Mahran's ex-wife, her husband Ulaysh, Ra'uf Alwan, and the police are all representing the opposing side. They are Mahran's enemies against whom he is struggling. For him, they represent treachery, infidelity and injustice. Moreover, there is Tarazan, the café owner and gun smuggler, who welcomes Mahran after he is out of prison. He lends Mahran a gun and gives him shelter and food whenever Mahran came to him in his continuous escape from the police. The two characters are linked by their bond of being against the law. Mahran is a thief and Tarazan is a gun-smuggler. All in all, the novel has only eighteen chapters in which

Mahfuz drops the role of the omniscient author. The centre of consciousness is Mahran and the point of view shifts between the author's voice and the protagonist's interior monologue. In tackling narration, Mahfuz employs different voices and so we have a first, second, and third person narration. The third person portrays the external limits within which the protagonist moves whereas the first and second person project his memories and states of mind. Sometimes Mahfuz mixes these voices. The time factor is quite important in creating a lasting effect of intensity in a-Liss wa 'l-Kilah. The action takes place in a short span of time, namely sixteen days, and the place of events is quite quick. This gives the story and the plot a quality of economy and compactness, unnecessary details are expunged. The swift movement of the plot and the work's atmosphere leave the reader with an after-taste of a nightmarish and feverish quality. This is done with a sharpness and deftness that is unparalled in the rest of Mahfuz's works.

(Mahmoud 71-75)

*The Thief and the Dogs* represents a turning point in Mahfuz's style and the way he is handling his art. He is "the artist of word" who has the ability to use the most
sophisticated techniques like the use of metaphor and symbols. A critic cannot but think of it as of a higher level than that of his previous works. In his previous works like *Palace of Desire* the author uses the third person narration, but he would move to another place to tell us what other characters are doing and thinking. In *The Thief and the Dogs* he is always looking through Mahran's mind and eyes. The other characters disappear when he is no longer with them. They are only important in as far as they influence his consciousness (F. Musa 127-29).

*The Thief and the Dogs* is remarkable for the use of stream of consciousness, dreams and flashbacks, which are all techniques that distinguish the psychological novel. Thematically, the novel places itself in a circle that is rather universal than local, general than particular and above all related to the psychology of man in general. The cultural aspect of the novel is not Arabic-culture specific but human-culture in general, thus, rendering the novel a sense of continuity and immortality far beyond its local context in which it was written.

After this introductory chapter of the thesis and this brief outline of the novels under scrutiny, hereon I turn to the second chapter, where the thematic dimensions of these novels in English translation are discussed and checked in greater details in the light of the fore-charted practical model proposed for literary translation assessment.