CHAPTER- VI

CONCLUSION

In the 1st half of the 20th century, many Arab writers were engaged in a long and difficult task aimed at achieving cultural independence and intellectual decolonization after years of inertia caused, if not imposed on them, by foreign domination. These writers were well aware of the fact that literature, amongst other types of artistic production, was a powerful medium for human expression, especially for those who look for better representation of their cultural identity. It is wonderfully adaptive to the demands of a variety of world cultures is well known, but in the case of the Arab world its popularity is clearly also linked to the status of the literature in society and the fact that even for the most prominent authors writing literature can not constitute a career. Arabic novel, which was revitalized by the impact of European influence, basically the authors of the first conscious attempt at writing novels in Arabic in modern period derived their models directly or symbolism from western literature.

In Egypt, that task has been carried out by a group of writers, among whom Naguib Mahfouz stands out .This Egyptian Nobel Prize Laureate was not merely a novelist, but over and above that, a man of vision committed to reclaiming the rich heritage of Egypt of every inch of it.

The novels most abiding features has been its ability to describe change and in some cases to promote it. The susceptibility of the genre, itself to transformation has been an integral part of that process. In recent years a number of novelists in the Arab world have been prepared to experiment with the genre in radical ways. These authors seem to be

reacting to the creative impulse in the way envisioned by the American novelists. The main difference is in the manner of presentation, for content of novel has acquired an universal pattern, not only in the Arab lands but all over the world. It is as part of the 19th century cultural renaissance in the Arab world that the literary community encounters and adopts the generic tradition of modern Arabic literature. The main features of most of the novels of this period are the introduction of western character or settings.

Even twenty years ago the Arabic novel was regarded as practically synonymous with the Egyptian novel. Since then the novel has acquired as established placed in the literary production of most, if not all, Arab countries, as is described elsewhere. Yet Egyptian novel still deserves a place apart in a survey of modern Arabic literature because of the number of works of quality written in Egypt.

Genuine Arabic novel with the real Arab characters appeared only with the publication of Mohammed Hussayn Haykal's Zaynab in 1913. Haykal had some models to follow. A part from the translations and adaptations of Europeans fiction other example from which he could learn included Zaydan's historical novels, Sarruf's novels of social concerned, al-Manfaluti's sentimental fiction and al-Muwayllihi's Hadith Isa b. Hisham with its combination of classical form and modern subject matter.

In the 2nd chapter it is found that Haykal's Zainab is the first full fledged novel of literary merit in Arabic in spite of the many serious short comings which are inevitable in all pioneering works. In literary criticism of Egypt, there is a fairly regular story told about the origins of the Egyptian novel. Or, as Pierre Cacchia once commented, there is a futile

game that 'is played among historians of modern Arabic literature, which . . . consists of searching the highways and byways of Arabic writing for the less-than-obvious forerunners of such genres as the short story and the novel'.[279] In this story, we have often been told that out of a slew of derivative, inconclusive and immature attempts at writing prose fiction came the first serious, mature work to rightly earn the title of novel, Muhammad Husayn Haykal's Zaynab, published in 1914. According to the dominant history of the novel in Egypt, Zaynab marks a break with the literature that had come before, or in the unqualified words of Mustafa Badawi: '[Zaynab] is the first full fledged novel of literary merit in Arabic'.[280] In this critical tradition, what is most stressed is that Haykal's novel was 'authentically Egyptian' in character and that is was not derivative of European themes. It thus argues for cultural purity even while admitting that Haykal wrote Zaynab while he was studying law in Europe, and that the 'Egyptian' landscapes described in the novel owe much to the Swiss scenery that surrounded Haykal while writing. According to this story, Zaynab is the unequivocal point of origin for the canon of authentic Egyptian novels. Despite patent problems, this story continues to dominate the way the early history of the Egyptian novel is read by critics.

This literary critical narrative was consolidated during the 1960s, a point we will return to, and its cornerstone is the claim that Zaynab was the first authentic novel written in Arabic by an Egyptian. The reason we highlight this is because it is a claim widely accepted but sadly mistaken. But the point here is not to show the error of the claim and by extension the overly simplistic narrative about the development of the novel which rests upon it. Instead it is to suggest that while these claims about Zaynab

[279] Pierre Cacchia, An Overview of Modern Arabic Literature, p. 104.
[280] M. M. Badawi, A Short History of Modern Arabic Literature, p. 97

may indeed be mistakes, they were not oversights, but rather the product of a process that was deliberated in nature. To get at this process, two issues must be fleshed out: first, why Zaynab was not the first Egyptian novel when it was first produced; and second, how it later came to be thought of, through a series of reproductions, as the first novel.

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After that there were many attempts made by many serious writers in different phases of its history and finally the most significant figure in the history of Arabic novel appeared in the scene known as Naguib Mahfouz. The novel laureate in literature for 1988, he is widely recognized as the founding father of Arabic novel. While the Arabic language remains a barrier for a western readership, the award of the Nobel Prize to Mahfouz has led to a certain increase in interest on the part of western readers.

Mahfouz is one of the leading figures of this art who has played an outstanding role in its development. In spite of the fact that he belongs to the second generation of Egyptian novelists, after the early pioneers of the thirties . When he started writing he did not find the tradition to which he could restart. During the thirties he could read various works of various authors from various nations Russian, French, German and

English. These varied literary readings led to his assimilation of various influences which helped him in a short span of time to catch up with the latest developments of the novel as an artistic form.

In the first category Mahfouz contributed his historical novels which are- Abath al- Aqdar (1939), Radubis (1943) and Kifah Tiba (1944). The second category comprises social novels which are – al-Qahira al- Jadida (New Cairo, 1945), Khan al- Khalili, 1946, Zuqaq al-Midaq (Midaq Alley, 1947), Bidaya wa Nihaya (The Beginning and the End, 1949), al- Thulathiyya (The Trilogy, 1956- 57) etc. The third category includes his post realistic novels which are- Awladu Harratina (Children of Gebelawi, 1951), al- Liss wal- Kilab (The Thief and the Dogs, 1961), al- Suman al- Kharif (Autumn Quail, 1962), Miramar, 1967 etc. Among his popular novels The Trilogy is considered as masterpiece of Arabic Literature. It is divided into three volumes which are- Bain al-Qasrain (Palace Walk), Qasr al- Shawq (Palace of Desire) and al-Sukariyya (Sugar Street). Most of the interesting elements of The Trilogy are domestic and national transitions. According to Hamdi Sakkut it can be ranked as the most significant work in the history of the Arabic novel. Mahfouz through his masterpiece The Trilogy raised various general problems like- social, political and religious themes of the 20th century Egypt that enable him to enter the hearts and souls of the individuals. The author carefully observes most of the people in his nation engage in corrupt practices, especially a large number of Muslims whose life styles are contrary to the faith they profess. He has taken an equal observation in the individual, family and the nation as a whole. His novel also depicts the hypocrisy, patriarchy, oppression, corruption, sexism, class – consciousness etc. Mahfouz is traumatized by this type of societal decadence, creates public awareness against the same. The critics are

convinced because of its realism. And it is said that The Trilogy breaks all the records of Arabic literature and make the novel accessible to millions of people.

The first part of The Trilogy, Palace Walk, reflects the dominance of men in Cairene society and elsewhere in the Middle East. Mahfouz portrays in Palace Walk that man and woman have separate spheres, the women confined to the house, where they rear the children, the men spending their time either at their work or among friends, free to choose their pleasures. The husband or the father is a dictator in the family, and preservation of his power stands between him and spontaneous expression of his affection for his children. At the outset of the Bain al-Qasrain [Palace Walk], it is Amina who is confined to the house by her husband. She starts her duty after performing the dawn prayer and keeps herself busy until midnight. However, she catches only few hours of sleep and wakes at mid night to wait her husband's return from his evening entertainment and serves him until he goes to sleep. She is not even permitted to counsel her husband on any issue. Amina gets worried by this regular habit and one night she politely objects to her husband's coming home late. Amina is disappointed by the threat of her husband and becomes so conscious while speaking to her husband. She realizes that her only duty is to make him happy and comfortable and not investigate into his private life. It is worth noting that her duties make subservient to her husband. She helps him from dress to undress and fetches water and a basin when he bathes. Apart from respect, she neither sits beside him while relaxing on the sofa nor speaks to him unless asks. Amina accepted all these oppression silently and asks God to forgive him. Amina is so bothered by the activities of her husband which she cannot bear with. So, one day she discloses all the grief to her mother. Her

mother could not dare to take any action instead console her in this way- He married you after divorcing his first wife . He could have kept her too, if he wanted, or taken second, third and fourth wives. His father had many wives. Thank our Lord that you remain his only wife.[281]

Najib Mahfouz through his The Trilogy describes the political unrest in Egypt and the outbreak of the nationalist revolution. In order to obtain independence and establish democracy the Egyptian people struggle against the autocratic rule of British. It is worth mentioning here that after the end of World War- I, British occupation over Egypt intensified. Intellectuals and revolutionaries yearned for Egyptian independence.

From over all survey of Mahfouz's novel we found Mahfouz's novels deal with various aspects of life such as love, birth, death and tussle between man and woman. Politics is an important part of his writing either directly or by symbolism. His early writings are considered historical because he dealt with subject inspired by ancient history. Mahfouz excels in portraying the details of background and presenting of panoramic views. His characters are vivid and his plots are true to life.

The language employed by Mahfouz is classical though he does not shun colloquial idioms when dialogues require them. A touch of humor prevails all his writing. Mahfouz's momentous source of inspiration came from Russian writers like, Checkov, Gorkey, Turgenev and others. He follows Dr. Taha Hussain and Abbas Mahmud al-Aqqad with their liberating ideas which inspired his free thinking. He especially owes to Walter Scott because Walter Scott inspired him to write his historical sequences. His readings were not systematic, in the sense that

[281] Naguib Mahfouz,Palace walk,p-9.

he never planned to read the works or even a number of works by a specific author in a systematic manner. As his guides were usually text books of literary history, his readings were highly selective for he would read a work by an author followed by another work by a different one. As a reader, he had the luxury of being able to read works from the different phases in the development of the novel.

It is found find from the 3rd chapter of the thesis that Naguib Mahfouz has wide knowledge of various culture religions and philosophies. He combined both intellectual and cultural influence from East and West. Mahfouz's literary talent is clearly associated with a significant development in the mode of literary presentation and the code of reference to external reality.

It is also found from the 3rd chapter that, Mahfouz became the most acclaimed man of letter in Arab world. So his works widely filmed in cinema .The stories of Mahfouz which were converted in to widely film in cinema. Many of his writings have been adapted to the screen. He succeeds in putting the Arabic novel on the world literary map and winning it a wider relationship and international recognition. For his great writing skill and ability he got Nobel Prize for literature, so he was the first Arabic writer to be so honored. Mahfouz called the "Balzac of Egypt" described the development of his country in the twenty century. In fact with Mahfouz the Arabic novel has achieved genuine maturity. His contribution to the genre laid the ground work throughout the Arab world.

From the 4th chapter of the thesis it is found Mahfouz was the 1st Arab novelist to make an analytical study of Arabic Novel. In Al-Qahira al-Jadidah we find that it is very simple, it is so humor. When we read Al-Qahira al-Jadidah I know how great Mahfouz is an author and as person. It is considered one of the most successful novels, ostensibly a

psychological crime story. The work has social, political overtones and engaged in subtle discussion of the Islamic religion. It can be legitimately considered the first stream of conscious novel in Arabic literature. This novel is unique or is it only an instance of a trend that can be tracked in other works by Naguib Mahfouz or any other Arab writer.

We also find in this novel, Mahfouz shows his full awareness and full assimilation of various techniques of the stream of conscious novel similar to that of European novel. This novel constitutes the rising crescendo of disillusion and anger towards the rulers of Egypt and the grime atmosphere that their society's machination had created. In al-qahira al-jadidah Mahfouz writes about the sexual and emotional lives of his characters, probing their psychological complexities and writes particularly sympathetically of women and describes with relish their physical charms and personalities. It is an elegantly-structured entertaining work that reveals Mahfouz's gifts as a master storyteller. Mahfouz wrote in a classical Arabic, which is comparable to Shakespearean English and doesn't lend itself easily to translation the dialogue. Yet the sometimes stilted, decorous language in Al- Qahira al-Jadidah, punctuated by its moments of sensuality and vibrant description. The book contains vivid descriptions of the social life of the city's young set, a riverboat party on the Nile, the yacht progressing "through the waves as if swimming through the resplendent light. In this Mahfouz gives voice to the political and philosophical currents of the times.

Mahfouz provided vivid pictures of characters in his novel Al-Qahira al-Jadidah. Mahjub Abd. Al- Da'im, the central character of this novel, is presented as a devastated protagonist whose frustration has no escape out of it, though Mahjub is a university graduate and then gets

shocked with the disintegration of society. He stands carelessly towards the movement and course of society with all its ethos and philosophy but ends up as a pimp. Mahfouz presents the human phenomena or condition with its biological, social and psychological aspect.

He selects the characters of his novel Al-Qahira al-Jadidah from different social classes and different natures and ties them together with a strong friendship that sustains the changes of private and public time. This attitude from Mahfouz could symbolize the unity of Egypt as a nation that transcends the separation caused by the interaction between the time and space.In this novel we see prostitutes as full characters.

To Mahfouz, woman is a model of the ruined one in a debilitating society. As legitimate girl for secret annihilation in the womb of society, lhsan in al-Qahira al-Jadida (New Cairo) tries to resist and fight the wrongness and wickedness of family in order to save her from destruction, but found the father as a curse inflicted on her engulfing with his words:

"You are accountable for all of us and specifically

for your seven brothers. "[282]

Thus, her soul is crushed and replaced with ruin and becomes a mistress selling her body. From the beginning, the writer is eager to depict her and her hostility towards the social stratum that led to her unfulfilled needs. He drew a line of struggle between individual indignant to the society and the provocation of the society visible in difficult matters. Consequently, the human dignity of an individual who was unable to fulfill his high-aspiration was thwarted. In this novel, Mahfouz repeatedly endorsed Samuel

[282] Naguib Mahfouz al-qahira al-jadidah, p.21.

Butler's phrase “poverty is the root of every crime".[283]

The 5th chapter of the thesis is Khan al-Khalili : An Analytical study. This novel written in a clear easy flowing style, paints a vivid picture of social political and religious issues and their impact on Egyptian society. We find It is a great introduction to the work of Mahfouz and the rich and complicated life of modern Egypt and Egyptian. Its completion marked a turning point in Mahfouz career and it reflects instead a deep concern with the lives and problems of contemporary Egyptian. Khan al-Khalili shows clearly that Mahfouz is already the master of Arabic Novel construction, albeit within a series of modes that from a 20 1st century perspective can be described as traditional and certainly based on European modes. The novel opens with detailed descriptions of time and place, as Ahmad travels along an unfamiliar route to his family’s new abode. Khan al-Khalili and its denizens are lovingly described, and Ahmad and his career are placed within this changing frame work as the family sets itself to adjust to new surroundings .The 1s t glimpse of Nawal and Ahmad’s silent agony as he watches it develop. It is on the day of the Eid al- Adha that the dreadful news of Rushdi’s illness is 1st revealed, and the developing tragedy leading to his death and burial follows its inexorable course.

This study aims at analyzing and demonstrating how Naguib Mahfouz contributed in his writing, specifically in Al-Qahira al-Jadidah and Khan al-Khalili, to constructing the Egyptian’s image of themselves through decades of social struggles and subsequently, to articulating this image to the World in an attempt to shape on independent Egyptian cultural identity.

[283] Nabil Ragheb , Qaziya al- shakl al- Fanni Inda Naguib Mahfouz , p-77.

The motive of the thesis was to promote and enhance the picture of Arabic novel in modern Arabic literature. We tried how Naguib Mahfouz reached to the international horizon through his novels Al- Qahira al-Jadidah and Khan al-Khalili. This study attempts to locate the Arabic Novel in the main stream of world literature.

At last we hope that the Ph.D. thesis will be a great asset for the research scholars of Arabic literature for their research work. We never forget Naguib Mahfougz's great works though he was died.