

Al-Sanousi, Haifa M. A. (1995) *The Kuwaiti short story: 1947-1985 : an analytical study of its social and political aspects*. PhD thesis.

<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/5041/>

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

THE KUWAITI SHORT STORY: 1947-1985
An Analytical Study of Its Social and Political Aspects

**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements of
the Degree of PhD at the University of Glasgow**

By
HAIFA M. A. AL-SANOUSI

SUPERVISOR: J. N. MATTOCK

**DEPARTMENT OF ARABIC,
FACULTY OF ARTS,
SEPTEMBER, 1995**

BEST COPY

AVAILABLE

Variable print quality

This thesis is dedicated to my children,
Mishari and Razan,
with affection and love

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Overview- Reasons For Choosing This Study- Research Course
Chapter One:	A Brief Survey of Kuwaiti Society <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Economic Development- Literary and Ideological Development
Chapter Two:	The Kuwaiti Story Until 1947 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Pre-'40s Period- The Short Story in 1947- The Emergence of the Modern Short Story
Chapter Three:	Pioneers of the Kuwaiti Short Story (1947-1959) <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fāḍil Khalaf- Farḥān Rāshid al-Farḥān- Fahd al-Duwayrī
Chapter Four:	The Beginnings of the Novel <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 'Abdullāh Khalaf
Chapter Five:	The Kuwaiti Short Story (1962-1985) <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī- Sulaymān al-Khulayfī- Thurayyā al-Baqṣumī- Laylā al-'Uthmān- Walīd al-Rujayb- Muhammad al-'Ajmi

Chapter Six: Miscellaneous Critical Issues

- Pioneers of story-writing in the period 1962-1985:
Symbolism and Realism.
- The seeds of the past in the minds of the
story pioneers (1962-1985).
- Laylā al-ʿUthmān and the woman's world
between subjugation and liberation.
- The first period (1947-1959) and the second
period (1962-1985): a comparative study of
content.
- New issues in the Kuwaiti short story.
- Woman's participation in short story-writing in
Kuwait.

Conclusion

Biographies of Authors

Bibliography

Abstract

The short story is a comparatively modern phenomenon in Kuwait; the first appeared in 1929. There have been two distinct periods in the history of the short story in Kuwait. The first was from 1947 to 1959, the second was from 1962 to 1985.

During the first period, it was more of a vehicle for didactic and predicative than for literary purposes.

Characterisation was elementary, plot was negatory and structure was primitive. The second period witnessed a considerable development in the genre; the short story became, in all respects, more recognisable as such.

Today, the art of short story writing is practised in Kuwait in a manner indistinguishable from that of any other Arab country.

The thesis consists of an introduction and the following chapters:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chapter One: | A brief Survey of Kuwaiti Society
-Economic Development
-Literary and Ideological Development |
| Chapter Two: | The Kuwaiti Story Until 1947
-The Pre-'40s Period
-The Short Story in 1947
-The Emergence of the Modern Short Story |
| Chapter Three: | Pioneers of the Kuwaiti Short Story (1947-1959)
-Fāḍil Khalaf
-Farḥān Rāshid al-Farḥān
-Fahd al-Duwayrī |
| Chapter Four: | The Beginnings of the Novel
-ʿAbdullāh Khalaf |
| Chapter Five: | The Kuwaiti Short Story (1962-1985)
-Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī
-Sulaymān al-Khulayfī
-Thurayyā al-Baqṣumī
-Laylā al-Uṭhmān
-Walīd al-Rujayb
-Muhammad al-ʿAjmī |

Chapter Six:

Miscellaneous Critical Issues

-Pioneers of story-writing in the period 1962-1985: Symbolism and Realism.

-The seeds of the past in the minds of the story pioneers (1962-1985).

-Laylā al-Uthmān and the woman's world between subjugation and liberation.

The first period (1947-1959) and the second period (1962-1985): a comparative study of content.

-New issues in the Kuwaiti short story.

-Woman's participation in short story-writing in Kuwait.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the help of a number of people, without whose support the completion of this thesis would not have been possible. I would particularly like to express my thanks and gratitude to John N. Mattock, my supervisor, for his guidance and patience and to my husband for his continuous support and enduring encouragement. Thanks are also due to B. Ettaouchi for carefully typing parts of my manuscript.

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Kuwaiti story before the '40s was concerned with the old Kuwaiti society and was a cultural tradition delivered publicly in tales about sea and desert. In the '40s oil was discovered; literature developed alongside it as the country opened up to the outside world.

There was a contradiction between old and new ideas as a result of the changes brought about by economic development and the sudden and relative luxury which Kuwait found itself able to live in. Story-telling, in a new form and with different messages to pass on, had to fight against society's traditional ways of thinking by shedding light on the manner of this change. The short story emerged very forcefully and in various styles in order to reconcile incongruous ideas in society and art.

This social and artistic expression reached a peak in the late '50s, with the writings of various young authors. The '60s are also considered to be an important stage with the work of Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī and Sulaymān al-Khulayfī in particular leading the short story tradition into its modern form.

Reasons For Choosing This Study

There are various reasons why I chose this topic. Amongst them is my interest in the art of story-writing in general, having been brought up with both Arabic and foreign stories. As well, there was my discovery, by chance, of the first significant collection of short stories written by educated Kuwaiti writers at an early stage of Kuwait's movement into the modern world. This made me serious about conducting an analytical and critical study of the patterns of these short stories, many of which have been forgotten until the present. There had been little interest in them from either readers or critics, although they were mentioned in some literary studies. This is the first such study to look seriously at these early stories.

They were regarded as mere primitive, artless attempts which had never reached the level of real story-telling. However, in my view, they are of great interest as a reflection of the ideas and concepts of young, educated Kuwaitis of the time. They show their reactions to the environmental and the traditional restrictions on them.

The second stage that the short story went through was a very important one, as it showed great literary abilities produced in a new framework. The story led on to much more maturity in such things as motif and symbol. Many of them dealt with issues raised by the conflict between

the older generations of fathers and their newly-educated sons, those who demanded that modernisation take place and that they should be allowed to challenge the ideas of those who were fighting education and development.

Another important point is that the early stories highlighted the issue of the position of women before modernisation. They illustrated the vast differences in their situation before and after oil affected all aspects of Kuwaiti life.

Research Course

I have tried to concentrate in this research on story samples which are unified by issues in the first group of stories (1947-1959), and in the second (1962-1985) on those which illustrate the phenomenon of sudden development and change.

I have also chosen well-known story writers in both stages; those who were the pathfinders in forming and developing the story as an art. My choice was naturally limited in the first group to pioneers: Fāḍil Khalaf, Farḥān Rāshid al-Farḥān and Fahd al-Duwayrī. I then chose samples from each of them and analysed them to show their variety.

I have devoted one chapter to a story entitled Mudarrisa min al-Mirqāb [A Teacher from Mirqab], written by ʿAbdullāh Khalaf. My reason for this is that the story is considered to be the first attempt to expand the short story into a short novel or novelette.

The second stage which the Kuwaiti short story passed through is reflected in the writing of Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī, Sulaymān al-Khulayfī, Thurayyā al-Baqṣumī, Laylā al-ʿUthmān, Walīd al-Rujayb and Muhammad al-ʿAjmī.

I found some difficulties with this research as some of the stories of the first stage had been published in very old magazines now in the Central Library of Kuwait, where some of them have been put on microfilm. The task was made easier by a book entitled Oaṣaṣ yatīma fī al-majallāt al-Kuwaytiyya [Orphaned Stories in Kuwait Magazines], written by the Kuwaiti historian and writer, Khālīd Saʿūd al-Zayd. He collected many of the stories from old magazines in this book; however, this did not stop me from trying to find the original sources .

Objectives

1) To show the large gap in maturity between the early and later stages of the Kuwaiti short story, before and after 1962. The gap is related directly to radical changes that were taking place in Kuwaiti society.

2) To prove that the short story is a true art form in that it reflects society and changes taking place, as a kind of mirror.

3) To show that the early short stories should not be ignored. They may be primitive, but they still reflect society as the authors saw it.

CHAPTER ONE

A BRIEF SURVEY OF KUWAITI SOCIETY

KUWAITI SOCIETY AND ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Kuwaiti society before the discovery of oil was tribal. The city of Kuwait was a small one, its citizens living in a small area in houses built close together. It was divided into residential areas with names such as Qibla, Sharq and Mirqāb.

Kuwait did not provide any agricultural income, and drinking water was only available from wells about 4 miles south of the city. The main reliance was on the sea and most of the lower and middle classes were occupied in fishing or pearl-diving. There was no local industry except boat-building.

Pearl-diving was the most important occupation. For four months each year divers used to journey into the Gulf, very often becoming victims of all kinds of misfortunes such as shark attack or heat exhaustion. As a result the Kuwaiti men were tough and strong, able to resist difficulties. They worked naked except for a wraparound, their hands were calloused from rocks and drag ropes and they were wiry and thin.

If we look at the social pattern of old Kuwaiti society, we find that its

nucleus was the family. Deep connections existed between its members and the tribal habits which were common then: early marriage, a low rate of divorce, pride in a large number of children and the need to keep the honour of the family intact.

Normally the head of the family was the husband and father, and he had the right to disown any of its members if he or she was shown to have done something against morality, traditions or customs.

As far as women were concerned, they occupied a place unimportant outside the family and isolated from the wider society. Their point of view on marriage and divorce was ignored, as was their right to education, and their role was restricted to taking care of housework, looking after children, blindly obeying their husbands and doing whatever they were asked without question or objection.

As the only way of earning a living was the sea, the head of the family was normally away for long periods from his family. Accordingly, the whole responsibility of the house and the family was the mother's. She did almost all the work needed to keep the family alive and well, doing such things as sewing and mending or taking on housework for richer families in order to

make enough money to keep them going in the absence of her husband.

In old Kuwaiti society high principles and values prevailed, such as honesty and generosity. The basis of dealing between its members was their word of honour and this was totally binding.

The nature of Kuwaiti society changed dramatically after the export of the first shiploads of oil in the mid-'40s. The "period of luxury" had begun. Social and economic conditions improved and the government provided all basic services, giving special attention to the health and housing sectors, and approving social support for poor families.

In 1948, there were only four government schools educating girls in the country, with less than 1000 students graduating in total. However, by 1968, their right to an education was realised and girls were attending schools from kindergarten to university level.

Along with this, the Kuwaiti woman started to build up more independence, and to mix with men in many aspects of life. Her ambitions grew and she expected the best. Communication with other Arab and Western women was made possible through journeys outside Kuwait for

study or for tourism.

In 1963 the first women's society in Kuwait was established. It was called the Arabic Woman's Revival Society and was headed by Nuriyya Salih al-Saddani.

Relations between different members of society altered as a result of the economic development. Whereas previously family members had obeyed the head of the family unquestioningly, the power of the father now decreased to some extent as other family members became more liberated and began to participate in decision-making, sometimes even making decisions without consulting the father.

So, new social values appeared in Kuwaiti society in the late '40s and early '50s, as the standard of living became higher and all aspects of life changed. If these issues kept the Kuwaitis' minds awake during that period, they were greatly widened later on to include other political and ideological issues on both the local and international levels.

KUWAITI SOCIETY AND ITS LITERARY AND IDEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT.

Kuwaiti citizens expanded their ideas remarkably in the ideological sense after the discovery of oil. Social and political voices began questioning and re-evaluating the old social values, and as this happened, writers reflected the changes in their stories, essays and poetry. Social conflicts in general and important issues connected with the family in particular were dealt with, such as the position of women and cruelty within the family.

The state of organised education needs to be looked at in order to understand the impact of this sudden ideological expansion between the discovery of oil and 1985.

Until just before the First World War, there was no organised public educational system in Kuwait. Education was limited to a number of small Katātib established by their owners for profit, and students learned reading, writing and mathematics in a very restricted way. In 1912, the first real school was established, and was called the al-Mubarakīyya School. It lasted until 1937. Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qināī was appointed as the headmaster, and the

teaching staff consisted of educated Kuwaitis as well as teachers from other Arab countries.

After 1937 this was replaced by a new system taught by highly specialised teachers and with clear educational objectives. This began a new era, and it has continued to develop gradually up to the present. Education during this early period provides good evidence of the beginning of the ideological renaissance in Kuwait.

A cultural change was also apparent at this time. Many gatherings and diwāniyyas formed to discuss literature and story-writing and to exchange ideas from different fields of knowledge.

From this, educated Kuwaitis began to feel the need for a public library to be open to a wider range of readers and people who sought knowledge. At the beginning of the Shaykh Aḥmad al-Jābir al-Sabāḥ era, in 1923, a library was established in the house of Ālī al-Āmir. This remained its location and many Kuwaitis donated money and books. It also took out subscriptions to periodicals such as al-Balāgh, al-Ahrām, al-Muqattam and al-Qabas from Egypt.

The main aim of this library was to create an ideological forum for research and reading. It was joined with the Ministry of Information in the year 1937, from then on being called the Public Information Library. Its range of subjects has widened over the years, with the number of readers increasing greatly.

The interest in literature became very marked, to the extent that some diwāniyyas became very specialised. For example, the al-Mulla Ṣāliḥ diwāniyya was concerned with old literature, while modern Arabic literature was debated in the Khālīd al-Musallam diwāniyya. Many more people became interested in modern literature and in following publications from Egypt, Iraq and Syria, where the tradition was much longer established.

One of the best known Kuwaiti thinkers and authors of the time was Shaykh Yūsuf b. ʿIsā al-Qināʾī. He played a major role in expanding culture and ideology in Kuwait. He was also one of the early voices calling for modern sciences to be taught. There was also Shaykh ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Rashīd who established a magazine and made it an open policy to print whatever thinkers and authors of Kuwait wrote. It was in his al-Majalla al-Kuwaytiyya [Kuwait Magazine] that the first Kuwaiti story, Munira, was published in 1929, written by Khālīd al-Faraj. (see page 19)

The magazine was printed in Egypt and continued to attract and publicise the work of pioneers in all literary fields for the two years that it existed. After it, al-Rashīd travelled to Indonesia where he established another magazine entitled al-Kuwaytī wa-al-Iraqī [The Kuwaiti and the Iraqi]. He was joined by an Iraqi traveller, Yūnis Bahrī and they continued it until the year 1953, a short time before al-Rashīd's death. Both magazines contained religious, cultural and literary features.

A Literature Club was established in 1924 by the young author Khālīd b. Salīmān al-ʿAdsānī. Its chairman was Shaykh ʿAbdullāh al-Jābir. This club became an important forum for communicating and exchanging views and literary and scientific ideas. It was located in the Diwān of Muhammad Ṣāliḥ al-Juʿān and in a way it announced the real birth of a literary movement and a widening ideological alertness in Kuwait which could not be ignored.

Another very important publication was first produced in Egypt in December, 1946. It was concerned with the situation of Kuwaitis studying in Egypt. As it developed, it became concerned with Kuwaiti affairs more generally, dealing with many of the conflicts Kuwaiti society was suffering from at that time. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ḥusayn was editor-in-chief for four years, to be followed by ʿAbdullāh Anṣārī. The magazine stopped in 1954, but it is

important because it printed the output of Kuwaiti authors such as Fāḍil Khalaf, Fahd al-Duwayrī and many more and because it remains a vital source in which to trace the works of those writers from the late 40s to the early 50s.

Kāzima was the name of the first magazine to be published in Kuwait. The first issue was in 1948, and it again had a cultural, literary and social outlook. Its editor-in-chief was Aḥmad al-Saqqāf and he gave it a very obvious national emphasis. Unfortunately this magazine stopped before even completing its first year, the last issue being in March 1949. Support was still lacking, even after all these years.

Later on, other magazines were published. al-Baṭh appeared in 1950. It was to be a monthly cultural paper, but lasted three months only. Then there was al-Rā'id, published in 1952 by a committee of press and publishing people related to the Teachers' Club. Ḥamad al-Rujayb, Aḥmad al-ʿAdwānī, Fahd al-Duwayrī were the editors-in-chief. They were all eminent literary figures in Kuwait. The aim of the magazine was to reform the social injustices prevailing in Kuwaiti society at the time. Its last issue was in January, 1954

In 1953, al-Imān magazine was published by the National Club. Its main aims were to deal with Arab issues. There was also al-Irshād magazine produced in 1953 under the supervision of the Islamic Guidance Committee.

In the year 1958 the first issue of al-Mujtama' appeared. Its aim was to facilitate the publication of social, economic and cultural studies and research.

al-ʿArabi magazine was published in 1958 by the Ministry of Information. It was concerned with all social, cultural and health subjects, as well as science, history and literature. It is still being published today.

As the ideological and literary movement matured, Kuwait witnessed the establishment of an Author's Union in 1965. It worked hard to nurture it and to use literature to serve Arab society, to develop national comprehension, to avoid harmful deviation which could adversely affect Kuwait and the Arab world and to represent Kuwait in conferences and symposiums abroad. The Union produced a monthly magazine called al-Bayān, which printed new writings and critical and literary research. It provided a voice for poems and stories, its pages attracting many authors and educated Arabs from outside Kuwait.

The public press in general has always played a great role in highlighting the word, and has always been the best way to publish knowledge and literature in Kuwait. The press has, since its establishment, reflected the traditions and habits of the Kuwaiti society of the time. It has also put forward the readers' views on social reform in daily behaviour and economic life, being concerned about changes in society.

The story writers in these early and developmental periods expressed their thoughts on the state of Kuwaiti society. It was to the credit of the press that it published those writings and pushed the Kuwaiti story forward. It gave literature a chance to see the light, and authors felt supported in their efforts to tell the truth as they saw it.

Its participation was effective in the ideological and cultural parade in general and in putting forth the literature of Kuwait in particular. Kuwait's educated sons with the gift of writing were given their due airing and credit, and Kuwaiti literature flourished as a result.

For eighteen years, between 1929 and 1947, the publication of all papers and magazines in Kuwait stopped. On its resumption, the first story published was a story called Tafānīn al-qadr [Variations of Destiny], whose

writer is unknown, and then one by Khālid Khalaf entitled Bayn al-mā' wa-
al-samā' [Between Water and Sky] (see page 22). Both of these appeared in
al-Bāṭha magazine in 1947.

END NOTES: CHAPTER ONE

(1) The University of Kuwait was established in 1966

CHAPTER TWO

THE KUWAITI STORY UNTIL 1947

THE PRE-'40s PERIOD

The first stories appeared in the form of public tale and myth, developing gradually into the level of story we are familiar with today. The art of story-telling is one of the oldest known to human-kind, and it is the human element in it as well as its interest in all that is related to social issues which people deal with on a daily basis.

As we have said, the Kuwaiti story in the pre-literate period was all about old Kuwaiti society, represented by the publicly told tale which put forth simple values about sea and desert and in which imagination played a big role.

Most of these were myths, but in them we can feel the romantic hopes of people in Kuwait at that time. They found in their expression relief and pleasure. The myths were widely known throughout society as they provided explanations for the harsh and often dangerous environment people lived in, and as well they expressed the people's reverence for the desert and the sea. They were also used as a way of control, often told by mothers to their children to prevent them from wandering too far from

home.

Later on, these tales became less superstitious in nature and were based more on reality, talking about adventures and bravery in horsemanship and war or about the sea and the dangers, challenges and difficulties faced by divers. Up until this stage the stories were all passed on orally through the generations, there being no written tradition.

KHĀLID aL-FARAJ

Munira

This was the first known written story in Kuwait, and was published in al-Majalla al-Kuwaytiyya [The Kuwait Magazine] in 1929. (see page 13)

Munira is about a girl, considered by the writer as a symbol of beauty, having a kind heart but a naive mind filled with all kinds of superstitions and heresies. She believes everything she is told and is easily distracted. She is also illiterate, as were all at that time, fond of preening herself, and she has been brought up with stories full of Jinn, devils and delusions.

al-Faraj explains that this girl has been married to her cousin without her consent. She does not love him, but neither does she hate him. He is her husband. He has been attracted to her by her beauty although he disapproves of her beliefs.

Six years into her marriage, she has started to be very concerned about the fact that she has not given birth to a child. She has to have one; her husband is very rich and needs a child to inherit his wealth. The issue reaches a climax when her servants tell her that her younger sister has had a son. Munīra begins looking for a solution to her problem amongst the mushāwīdhīn or healers. At this, her husband steps in, as if suddenly aware of her naivety and superstitious beliefs. He becomes angry with her and tries to prevent her from dealing with these people, who he feels can only do her harm.

However, Munīra refuses to change her mentality, and finally has an old woman persuade her that she should meet one of the saints to find an answer to her problem. Munīra discovers on getting home that her jewellery has been stolen, and kills herself in grief.

al-Faraj wanted to point to some of the most important issues affecting Kuwaiti society at the time. First, that the healers and liars who cheat naive people needed to be stopped, and second to show the difference between Munīra's thinking and that of her husband, who represented civilisation and awareness. As well, al-Faraj was concerned about destiny, and how choosing the wrong path could lead a person to disaster, as happened to Munīra at the

end.

This is a brief look at the first published Kuwaiti story; after this, publishing stopped for about eighteen years. It started again in al-Bāṭha magazine with a story called Tafānīn al-qadr [Variations of Destiny] whose writer is unknown, and then Bayn al-mā' wa-al-samā' [Between Water and Sky] by Khālīd Khalaf which we will look at more closely later on (see page 22)

THE SHORT STORY IN 1947

All the story writers in the late 40's and after were young, educated people who were interested in knowledge, science and literature. They were in communication with their Arab brothers in different parts of the Arab world. Among them was the writer Fāḍil Khalaf who translated a number of Western stories and included them in his book, Aḥlām al-shabāb [Dreams of Youth], his first story collection, a large part of which we will discuss later on. There was also Fahd al-Duwayrī who presented his attempts in the papers at the time, and the author Farḥān al-Farḥān. He is best known for his story, Ālām ṣadiq [A Friend's Grievs].

There were many other story-writing attempts by Kuwaitis. The press played a large part in publishing them, and they included works from people such as the poet Aḥmad al-ʿAdwānī, who wanted to "improve" the short story, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ḥusayn, Yūsuf al-Shāyji, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Mahmūd, Muhammad Musāid al-Ṣāliḥ as well as many others.

In addition, Kuwaiti women played a small, though worthy role in

story-writing. One from the early period was Diyā' Hāshim al-Badr, the writer of Rihlat Farīd wa-Laylā [The Journey of Farīd and Laylā], published in al-Baṯṯa Magazine in 1952. The next year another story of hers appeared in the same magazine, and in June 1953 we find there the story Amīna by Badriyya Musā'id al-Ṣāliḥ.

It is worth mentioning here the last story written before the modern period proper. This was Mudarrisa min al-Mirqāb [A Teacher From Mirqab] by 'Abdullāh Khalaf, written in 1959 and published as a separate book in 1962. The style of this book led the story into more modern times and will be looked at more closely later on (see Chapter Four).

This new pattern of the Kuwaiti story featured an awareness of the basics of modern story-writing, and reflected a new maturity by authors such as Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭi and Sulaymān al-Khulayfi. If the preoccupation of the authors of the early, pre-'60s period was with social and human issues, the new authors of the late '60s and '70s started writing about political issues, often in a metaphorical way. Some of these stories will be analysed later in this work.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE MODERN SHORT STORY

KHĀLID KHALAF

Bayn al-mā' wa-al-Samā' [Between Water and Sky]

The first story to appear when the press first started again to publish in 1947 was Tafānīn al-qadr [Variations of Destiny], but it was not signed by its author. It was followed by Bayn al-mā' wa-al-Samā' [Between Water and Sky] by Khālīd Khalaf in al-Bāṭha magazine and this represented a new beginning, after the long break, for the Kuwaiti short story.

The story deals with an important issue touching Kuwaiti society at the time: that of the danger faced by people who worked at sea for their livelihood. The introduction begins:

"Here is the sun sinking gradually in this wide sea; everything is quiet, the wind is still, the surface of the water is like a mirror reflecting the sky above."

Khalaf continues describing the background to his story, taken directly from what he can see in front of him. The sun is sinking in the sea, announcing sunset and all seems well. However, as he brings us closer, we see that there is a sailboat, very small on this vast sea, and on deck men are fighting to save it from sinking. It is holed and has been filling up with water since noon. They can do nothing to save it and it sinks to the bottom of the sea, even though they manage to get themselves, bleeding, on to a small boat in time.

By the second day, with the sun again sending down its hot rays, the sailors are desperate, realising that their food supplies will soon finish and they will die. At this point, Khalaf has two souls pass by on their way to heaven holding a conversation about important issues raised by the situation. The two most important issues are:

1. The unnecessary hardship of sailors lives - their deaths will occur because of the continued use of primitive sail boats when they could be provided with metal steam vessels and proper life boats. This point reflects the writer's opposition to a situation common to Kuwaiti society at the time: its isolation from international civilisation encouraged by ignorance and poverty in a society where innocent souls could be lost on an out-dated

sailing boat. The author was accusing his society of refusing to accept developments taking place in the outside world.

2. The life of the simple Kuwaiti man, who risked his life for pearl-diving. He could become fatally ill, be eaten by sharks, have his life ended in seconds, and all for the sake of his family waiting at home for him. This simple man was uninformed about what was going on in the world around him.

In comparison with this simple man, we find the ambitious one, who rejects reliance on tradition and sees what is happening in the world around him, showing interest in development and looking forward to bringing even a small part of it to Kuwaiti society. This meant getting rid of the social problems of ignorance and poverty, and death on pearl-diving expeditions.

These two types are portrayed by the two souls in their conversation, one of them clearly representing Khalaf himself, the modern, educated human being who is keen to develop and the other the simple man who out of ignorance, surrenders to his destiny, even if it is extremely hard on him. Khalaf was very keen to portray these two different mentalities present in Kuwait at a time of change.

The symbolism of the story's title becomes clear at the end of the story when we read the two souls' last words:

First Soul: This is true; let us tell our people.

Second Soul: What? Don't you know where we are going now?

Second Soul: I forgot... to heaven... So what will we do?

First Soul: It is too late. I wish my people could know.

What is "too late"? Khalaf meant that his suggestion about development was something not understood by anybody and would not come into existence because it was too late. That is why it is "between water and sky".

The simplicity of this story, with its concentration on just one example of the lack of impetus towards development in Kuwait before the oil, and its use of a conversation between two "souls" to get his point across, has made some critics judge that it is closer to a parable (2). We disagree with them; despite its simplicity it contains all the elements of the short story - event, character and setting in time and place. There are weaknesses in Khalaf's treatment of these elements, but there is no doubt that it represented a key stage in the development of the Kuwaiti short story.

END NOTES: CHAPTER TWO

(2) Among them is the author Khālid Saūd al-Zayd in his book, Qasas yatīma fī al-majallāt al-Kuwaytiyya [Orphaned Stories in Kuwaiti Magazines], page 14.

CHAPTER THREE

PIONEERS OF THE KUWAITI STORY (1947 - 1959)

FĀDIL KHALAF

Reality in literature is concerned with extracting its symbols from daily life. Reality in the story is the reflection of what exists in the environment of an individual to cause problems or issues. Kuwaiti stories of this period are marked for their realism. They reflect essential aspects of Kuwaiti life and the economic and social conditions an individual or family faced. Fāḍil Khalaf was one of the writers concerned with analysing the backgrounds and dimensions of issues families faced.

Ḥanān al-Umm [Mother Sympathy]

This story looks at the situation of a member of a Kuwaiti family in old Kuwaiti society. We meet Laṭīfa, a friendly and amiable personality who suffers from depression caused by the injustice of her mother-in-law. Khalaf starts his story thus:

"Laṭīfa has thrown the broom from her hand and sat down to take a rest after

long, hard work which does not stop night or day. Her clothes are ragged and dowdy, her hair is uncombed and the teardrops on her lashes are dusty; there is nobody home except her. Her husband has gone to work, her mother-in-law to visit one of her friends, while her daughters have gone shopping."

Khalaf elaborately describes the personality of Laṭīfa. From the beginning he emphasises her suffering as she works day and night as if she were a servant, while others, in contrast, enjoy themselves. Laṭīfa is alone and suffers psychological, spiritual and physical misery.

Khalaf looks back on her life before she was married, in her family's house with her parents, where she was relaxed, comfortable and happy. She used to go out to visit neighbours and friends, but now she has no one; even her husband refuses to support her, poking fun at her like the others. As a result, hopelessness has plunged into her life. She has become fugitive and grief-ridden. She possesses enough courage to smash through the blind old traditions, but her modesty prevents her from taking action. As well, she is devoted to her young son.

Her neighbour is the only person who offers her sympathy. Umm Ālī

is understanding and gracious towards her, which made things a little easier. Indeed, many times Umm ʿAlī tries to help her, but it is futile. Typical of what she has to put up with is when her mother-in-law enters the house shrieking, " Laṭīfa! Laṭīfa! Leave what is in your hands and prepare tea, you damned, wicked girl. Ingrate, you have not got the tea ready? Umm ʿAlī is visiting us and you do not care?"

Finally, Laṭīfa is pushed to act when the day of her brother's wedding arrives. The mother-in-law and her daughters prepare to attend the wedding party, but Laṭīfa is ordered to wash dishes, prepare food and sweep the yard. She tries to persuade her mother-in-law to permit her to attend, but fails. Suddenly she can no longer bear all the pain. She revolts, leaves her husband's house to return to her father's. Within two days she is divorced.

At last, Laṭīfa can put behind her the miserable existence she led in the house of her mother-in-law. Fate wishes to comfort her, and a young man requests to marry her. The marriage takes place and Latifa feels a huge difference in her life. However, despite the happiness she feels with her second husband, she misses her son. One day she goes to her previous husband's house to see him, but he avoids her, closing the door in her face at one point. Khalaf ends his story on a pessimistic note when Laṭīfa says to

herself, "No, no, I am not happier now."

Khalaf has shown a realistic situation from daily Kuwaiti life of that period. He is a master at analytical description of events and character. The main theme is divided into episodes. At the beginning, we are presented with the picture of a woman who suffers from distress and has her feelings and sensibilities ignored. The husband does not care about her pain, and his mother increases the wretchedness in every way she can. The author has described actuality, clarifying the theme, but he has not ignored the secondary details. Because of this, his ideas are clear and his sympathy for the women's issues of the time is obvious.

The second episode starts when the problem becomes more complicated when she is prevented from attending her brother's wedding party and finally she finds her solution by leaving her husband's house. The writer analyses accurately the feelings of his main character, comprehending her sorrow and finally making her behave in a logical and sensible manner. The third section of the story increases our optimism when he describes a second view of marriage in contrast with the first. However, the ending is pessimistic. Latīfa suffers from a deficiency in her life; she misses her son but cannot see him because her relatives have inoculated in him hatred and

antipathy towards her.

Khalaf's aim with this ending was to show that getting rid of one problem does not necessarily mean getting rid of all problems. In fact, Laṭīfa felt that the loss of her son was her worst pain.

Laṭīfa is the active, vital character in this story. Khalaf has chosen a sympathetic position towards her, clear from the beginning when he introduces Umm Ālī who represents the brighter side of events, being the only supporter of Laṭīfa in her wretchedness. Khalaf makes Laṭīfa behave as a courageous individual with an ability to face her problems and eventually demolish the influence of her mother-in-law. From this, his respect for women is clear; he does not see her as a machine but as an effective human being, capable of changing things and taking decisions. He wants to illustrate a different, perhaps new view of women.

In comparison, the personality of her husband is shown to be ineffective, in that he does not appear to care about the suffering of his wife, nor share in her feelings. He does not recognise her value and abilities and cannot balance between obeying and respecting his mother and showing regard for his wife. Therefore, every time the wife is the victim, his mother

is the victor and this seems not to worry him. Khalaf desires to demonstrate the man's ignorance of the delicate senses and spirit of another human being, his wife.

The mother-in-law represents injustice and despotism. She shows no sympathy towards her daughter-in-law and instead forces her to hard labour while insulting her as much as she can. Through this character, Khalaf wants to depict a common problem of a wife in old Kuwaiti society. She was often oppressed by her husband's mother, who most of the time, was in charge of all the house's requirements. Tradition and custom prevented her from complaining; once she had left her father's house, a wife was not supposed to return, and as a result the mother-in-law would often take the opportunity to oppress her.

Umm Jāsim wa- Kannatuhā [Umm Jāsim and Her Daughter-in-Law]

This story also deals with the suffering of a woman at the hands of her mother-in-law. The events revolve around the subjected Sharīfa and Umm Jāsim, her husband's mother. Sharīfa has no courage to answer the insults

and vilification she receives because she knows that divorce carries such hateful shame that she cannot bear to even hear the word. She is forced to accept her treatment for fear that her husband will carry out his repeated threats of divorce.

Eventually she decides upon a plan to solve her problems. She begins adding drops of kerosine to the food; Jāsim notices a strange smell, but because his mother has cooked the dish, he does not say anything. However, he soon becomes fed up and requests his wife to prepare the dinner. The petroleum smell disappears only to come back again each time the mother-in-law cooks. Sharīfa is able to smile a victorious smile. She hopes that Jasim will throw his mother out, and indeed, each time that he catches the smell he becomes angry and accuses his mother of inattention. He praises his wife, and Umm Jāsim becomes depressed. She stops attacking Sharīfa and realises that her status has decreased in front of her son.

She is, however, suspicious of Sharīfa, and watches her. Finally one day she discovers her daughter-in-law putting the drops of kerosine into the day's dish. The bottle falls from Sharīfa's hand, fire breaks out and all is revealed.

Khalaf has tried to illustrate a situation he has covered in other stories; namely the oppression of a wife in her mother-in-law's house. However, here the acuteness of the harassment reaches the point where she can threaten divorce on behalf of her son. "If you do not follow what I dictate," she says, "I will divorce you from my son and I will marry him to a girl who looks like the moon."

As has been said, Sharīfa hates the idea of bringing shame and disrepute to her family, especially as she remembers the divorce of her elder sister, how she had come home sorrowful and depressed and how the house had become cheerless because of what she had done. As well, her mother had reminded her on her wedding day, "Listen Sharīfa, now you are leaving the house of your childhood and going to a strange house. You must learn how to behave, my lovely daughter, and must not bring shame and disrepute to us as your sister has. Enter the marriage house with your abaya and leave it only in your shroud."

Umm Sharīfa's words show how women at that time could be forced to continue in an unhappy marriage. Divorce was to be avoided at all costs, even if it was the only possible way out of their difficulties.

There is an obvious difference between the behaviour of Sharīfa in this story and that of Latīfa in Hanān al-Umm. Sharīfa sees divorce as a hateful phenomenon, so she resorts to tricks to solve her crisis, while Latīfa sees it as a solution. She reflects the courage Khalaf visualised, whereas Sharīfa is much more representative of the actual state of women in the society.

al-Sahm al-Akhīr [The Last Resort]

Again, the subject dealt with by Khalaf is that of discord between a wife and her mother-in-law. There is a difference, however, from the previous two stories discussed; here, the husband is positive and acts effectively. He cares about the suffering his wife is experiencing and decides to become independent from his mother's house to get away from the quarrels taking place between the two women. He rents another house but unfortunately the separation causes him pain because he feels obligations towards his mother who has struggled hard to bring him up.

The husband's state of mind worsens and one day during an

argument between him and his wife, he strikes her, unintentionally killing both her and the baby she is carrying. His heart is broken and he knows he will suffer forever. Thus, the attempt of the husband to solve an initial problem has led to more psychological pressures, which have resulted in complications he never imagined.

Khalaf in this story depicts behind the conflict between the wife and the mother-in-law, a secondary theme: that of the cruelty of fate. The human being can be affected by calamity at any time during his life.

The husband represents the central theme and his approach to the problem he has can be compared to the behaviour of Laṭīfa's husband in Umm Jāsim wa Kannatuhā. His solution, however, is presented as being far from perfect. He supposes that leaving his mother's house will bring an end to the problems. He will do it with tactful diplomacy and nobody's feelings will be hurt. It leads, on the contrary, to violent confrontation between him and his wife and eventually to disaster.

Sirr al-mutallaqa [The Secret of the Divorcee]

This story again puts forward the case of the Kuwaiti woman. Khalaf ends this one with a note of optimism, however, unlike the others, and he has made the woman the narrator. It is about an educated girl who has suitors from different classes come to marry her. She is thirteen years old, but her family postpones a decision until she reaches eighteen, relatively old to be married in the society of that time.

The girl is not happy with this situation, becomes depressed and starts to feel resentment towards her parents. She falls ill, and after a long time, doctors recommend that she would get better in the calm of a marriage. Her parents then start to take note of her problems, and eventually they agree to a suitor for her. She is consulted, accepts and the marriage takes place. However, she feels big differences between her and her husband; he is an old man of sixty and she is young, beautiful and educated. There are considerable differences in their thinking, mainly as a result of the age difference.

She tries to adapt to married life with him but fails. She cannot fight her heart and cannot feel any love towards this man. She cannot forgive her family for choosing him, and in spite of everyone's efforts, she is divorced, losing everything except faith in God.

The story puts forward the case from the woman's point of view: her suffering in a society where a girl could be married to an old man with no chance of seeing her suitor until the wedding night. Someone else was responsible for the choice and the girl was obliged to accept, without any argument or opposition, the husband and his house.

With the heroine as the narrator, Khalaf begins his story with this statement:

"Tomorrow will be the first day of the new year, and with it a new page will open in history. The people will be optimistic that better things will come after the harshness of past years."

He then moves into a first person narrative:

"Suffering is my fortune even though I am still at the beginning of my life. I am an educated girl. I have stayed up late at night to obtain knowledge, working until I have reached the level I am at now. This is me; I look around myself and only feel light-headedness; storms blow me left and right. Black luck chases me like the hungry wolf when he preys on some weak animal. The eyes of people all full of contempt follow me when I go from place to place."

Khalaf allowed this woman directly to approach people with her psychological difficulties. He wanted by this to justify his position towards what she was exposed to. In this he is successful; he has analysed character and motive realistically. He advances three basic issues:

1. The submission of a woman to the old traditions which often treated her unfairly and did not take into account her individuality. These situations led to loss of dignity and lasting unhappiness.

2. The disparity in thinking between an older husband and a young wife. This is actually what Kuwaiti women did suffer from at that time, being forced into marriage often when they were only thirteen to an old, unknown man whom they were not allowed to see until the wedding night. Khalaf considered this to be unjust and an infringement of their rights as human beings.

3. Divorce and its effects on the woman, resulting in loss of dignity. He clarified this when he said:

" The black day when the divorce ceremonies were to be carried out had arrived."

In this story, Khalaf, by presenting events in the voice of the heroine and allowing her to express her innermost emotions, has given us a realistic and humanitarian view of a strong woman's position within marriage.

ʿĀṣifa fī al-qalb [Storm in the Heart]

Fāḍil Khalaf discusses in this story another important issue in Kuwaiti society at that time, that of the material differences among Kuwaiti families and the problems suffered by the poor especially.

In "Storm in the Heart", the husband cannot satisfy his wife or give her any pleasure because she is always demanding things from him which he cannot afford to purchase on his low income. One day, she requests a silk ʿabāya. He tells her he will get it for her but finds it will take most of his salary. Therefore he decides to borrow the money from his friend, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, a kind and honourable young man. As soon as he gets the money, the husband goes to the market and buys the gown. However, when he arrives home with it he is shocked when she announces that she hates it and proceeds to throw it on to the fire.

Here we have a story about the social problems caused by differences in income. The husband is a simple labourer who is requested by his greedy, covetous wife to buy her many things his circumstances do not allow for. He could divorce her, but can not bear to break up the family, and in particular leave his small child without a mother to care for him.

The author starts his story in a way common at the time, by putting it in the form of a narrative told to him by an un-named character:

"My friend started his story by saying..."

Khalaf wanted by this to emphasise the reality of his story.

This method of recounting was seen as the best means to transfer events from real life to the readers. In addition, Khalaf is interested in describing the psychological motivation of his characters and in making the reader feel sympathy towards them. We see this when the husband talks of his unwillingness to deny his wife her demands for the sake of the child whom, he thinks, would be in danger if there was rupture between them.

The reader is asked to think about the behaviour of the wife as the husband asks himself,

"I wondered about her behaviour... I wanted to ask the reason for this revolt, about why she was so angry, but I could not feel anything except that the abāya had been thrown on to the fire."

al-Tamīma [The Charm]

In this story Khalaf criticises simple unsophisticated beliefs in charismata and such like which have, he says, no relation to real life. We meet the character of Amīna, married for five years, but still without having had a baby. She worries about this, being exposed to the mockery and derision of her husband, and waits in vain for signs of pregnancy. She goes to physicians, who are unable to help her, and avoids meeting other people.

One day, her friend brings news of a Shaykh ʿAbd al-Khālīq who she says has the power to change her life. At first Amīna hesitates, but eventually agrees to see him, as she is desperate. She explains her problem to him and he gives her a charm in an amulet to hang around her neck (for which she pays) and warns her not to take the thing off under any circumstances.

Amīna's brother, who has studied in high school, is interested to read what is inside the amulet and one day finds the opportunity to open it. Inside he finds a note which the shayk has put in and which reads,
"What a foolish mind! I will take the dirhams, spend them on myself and give her this useless paper. These people waste their money with swindlers and deceivers who just take advantage of their naivete. You, sister, wait for the day when you will be blessed with a child, but it will never happen this way!"

It is clear that Khalaf rejects these customs, deriding them in sarcastic mockery at the end of the story. He has illustrated and analysed the simplicity and foolishness of minds which believe in the possibility of charms and omens. He tries to expose the deceivers' behaviour publically, showing how people are cheated by them for financial gain. The story is similar to al-Faraj's Munīra, despite the length of time between the two. They both examine the motives of the central characters, Amīna and Munīra, who suffer from not having produced a child.

al-Shabah [The Ghost]

Fāḍil Khalaf continues on this theme in his story *al-Shabaḥ* [The Ghost]. In it, the character of Nāṣir refutes claims, including professional ones, of the existence of ghosts, demons and devils, while his friends all believe in them. They tell stories about them designed to scare people.

Because Nāṣir refuses to believe in ghosts, his friends ask him to go to an old trench, one where demons and spirits are supposed to live, pour in a pitcher of asphalt in order to destroy them and then return to them. In spite of the fears he feels, Nāṣir is determined to go there and do what they ask in order to show them he is willing and able to stick to his convictions.

When he reaches the trench and its torn down door, he hesitates at first, but then lights his lamp, deciding to get it over with. At the same moment he hears the sound of movement drawing towards him. Feeling scared, he lifts his head and sees that the evil spirit that has been frightening people is a woman who is living there. He feels suddenly very strong, attacks the evil entity, kills it/her, and carries the body to his friends.

In this story, Khalaf does without the oratorical tendency which he uses in *al-Tamīma* [The Charm]. In spite of the similarity of subject between the two stories, *al-Shabaḥ* [The Ghost] shows accurate, psychological analysis of the

central character. He represents those who refuse to believe in legends and here, his refusal can be taken as part of a struggle to overcome their influence. Nāṣir has to challenge his friends and therefore had to go to the pit in question.

His acceptance of the challenge formalises a clear repudiation of a predominant belief among the people; one far, in the author's view, from reality.

It would seem that the author put himself into the personality of Nāṣir and showed that, in spite of his rejection of these ideas and his strong belief in his convictions, he still felt apprehensions on the subject. This illustrates how the domination of these beliefs on the thinking of individuals constituted the severe psychological crisis which is needed in order to push human nature to challenge and thus find the truth. At the beginning, this challenge appears as a refusal to participate in the discussion, when Nāṣir says,

"You are talking about things I do not know anything of. I have passed twenty years wandering all over the country, day and night, and I have never seen even one of the events that you describe. How do you want me to talk about things I do not know? I think all the evidence I can submit to show the falsity of your claims will be faced by mockery, so I am going to keep quiet and avoid taking part in the discussion at all."

The above makes clear Nāṣir's realism and his understanding of life. He does not believe in superstitions unless he has seen for himself their proof. He is surprised by his friends' request; the meeting is changed from a noisy gathering to a challenge which becomes even more complicated when Nāṣir agrees to go to the pit. In spite of this, he feels, deep down, considerably alarmed.

Fāḍil has cleverly portrayed the fears and superstitions of ordinary people. Nāṣir had "heard about this horrible hole. Mothers prevented their children from passing by or entering it. Fishermen who had to pass it late at night, having no other road to travel along, often lost their catches and received injury at the hands of the hateful spirit who lived there."

al-Farḥān was interested in discussing the issue of romantic love, and he had this concern for various reasons. Among them was that "Love between the sexes is very common, probably more widespread than any other feeling. It arouses the reader's sympathy and interest more than any other feeling and has a more powerful effect on people's lives than anything else. No one sacrifices as easily and willingly as a lover does." (3)

al-Farḥān discusses women's issues in a way different from Fāḍil Khalaf's. He relates them to love and thus depicts romance, a subject ignored by most Kuwaiti writers. He wants to introduce the love of a man for a woman through his characters, and is quite daring in his challenge to his conservative society and its individuals beliefs.

Khātimat Ḥubb [End of Love]

al-Farḥān has here as his main character Yāqūb, one who changes from being an idle vagabond to a well-mannered, gentle man. Love blazes through his heart and changes his feelings and attitude towards life.

Yāqūb admires his neighbour Faṭīma from a distance in the street and tries very hard to get near to her by opening a small shop, hoping she will talk to him. He fails to do this, despite his continuous attempts to attract her attention. All he can get is an innocent friendship, and a new customer; no more. One day, he sees a handsome young man walking with his beloved Fatima. Rage and jealousy flare up at the thought of a romantic relationship between them. He attacks the young man and ends up in prison. The man turns out to be Faṭīma's cousin and fiancé.

al-Farḥān's final comment was, "A few hours later, this bewildered Romeo was in prison witnessing an ungraceful end to the love which had worn him down for such a long time."

In this story Farḥān deals with the role of love in changing human attitudes, and how love develops. Love improves Yāqūb's manners, converts his indifference and meanness, brings about a will to succeed and restores his conscience. However, his love is not returned and so it ends in failure; it takes the wrong path.

This story preserves logic in sequence and analysis. It shows a clear change in Yāqūb's character and that love was the reason for this change. The reader's attention is caught and s/he is made to feel with the hero as events develop, to the point where s/he is significantly affected by the ending.

Wadāʾn Yā Qalbī [Farewell My Heart]

We see romantic love and destiny in conflict in another story of al-Farḥān's. Here, the conflict grows to such an extent that it ends in failure and tragedy.

He deals with woman's idealism and loyalty in love. The story starts with a long introduction and ends with a quotation from the nurse:

"If a heart made of stone had been in front of her at that moment, it would have exploded out of pity for her, and tears would not have ceased from the beginning to her broken-hearted end." (4)

al-Farḥān continues with the protagonist as the narrator, in her early days when she enjoys the care and compassion of her parents, until the time she is eighteen. Then, it is her destiny to fall in love with her cousin Aḥmad, and to suffer when he leaves the country to study abroad on a scholarship. It is the first shock in her life and it is followed by another when her mother dies and her father marries again, this time to a cruel and malicious second wife. Our heroine has to live with them and the situation becomes even more complicated when she is made to marry his wife's brother. The girl tries very

hard to refuse, but all fails and she has to obey her father, despite her pain and sorrow.

However, destiny steps in again when the step-mother is divorced for her unacceptable behaviour and the protagonist is divorced in revenge. Though her current problem is solved, others arise as she remembers her first love. Aḥmad comes back but his soul has gone out of the relationship. This is another shock in her life and it is followed by yet one more when her father dies and she becomes ill.

At the end of her narrative Aḥmad, her loved one, arrives but is too late as she is now extremely sick, to the point where death is approaching. Her life ends with her spiritual love unchanged.

al-Farḥān has narrated this story of love between a man and a woman and the obstacles that destiny has put in the way which lead to a complete collapse. He is concerned with woman's idealism and her ability to preserve pure, honest, spiritual love.

Time is cruel on this love, as it overtakes the protagonist, who fights with destiny for it. Shock leaves her in pain and sorrow and despite struggling pitifully to reconcile her feelings and attitudes towards events, her attempts lead to physical and spiritual collapse. Situations control her

reactions, and important aspects of her way of life are revealed.

We are introduced to other characters, including her cousin Aḥmad, her first and only love. It is clear that he is an attempt by the writer to show men's attitudes - he does not recognise the girl's love until it is too late. Other characters also appear for the sake of interacting with the main character. al-Farḥān concentrates on her feelings and analyses them realistically. He also creates a kind of mutual, spiritual sympathy between her and the reader. This is because she is a real, live person who talks, moves and expresses herself while living in situations and confronting shocks that many would not be able to put up with.

In general, the story lacks chronological order in the narration of the events, as al-Farḥān chooses to concentrate on the events rather than their relationship to one another. The protagonist faces a lot of spiritual shocks as a result of successive events, the number of which is exaggerated as he concerns himself more with her character and her reaction to different situations. She is distinguished by her wisdom and virtue. She resists all frightful events. In this, the author aims to clarify his attitude towards women, to help them gain confidence. This is a woman who is not created for marriage, producing children or for house-work; she is a symbol of noble, sublime love. Woman, from al-Farḥān's point of view, is a human being with sensitive feelings and emotions.

The story is distinguished for its narrative style, described as "one of the most important story-writing traditions, and is of a combined symbolic and illustrative nature. The pictures representing the characters, describing their clothes, materials and furniture reveals and justifies their psychological formation." (5)

These al-Farḥān stories are both about unsubstantiated love, although the images and results differ. In Khatimat hubb [End of Love], love finishes tragically as a result of immaturity and extremity of feeling; the lover is led to prison because of his imprudence and impetuosity. In Wadaʿān yā qalbī [Farewell My Heart], love is shown on a higher level, as the motive for bearing misfortunes and confronting misfortune. It is a mature feeling, so "love is not an extreme feeling of heart, but one of the virtues of romantic people." (6)

Love in both stories shares one element: one-sided emotion, leading to tragedy. It does not reconcile lovers; instead pulls them apart and prevents reconciliation through marriage.

Love reaches its peak in this al-Farḥān story. It flows from the heart of a woman to surrender to a man and lead her to abandon her pride. Love is not equal, this time because it is the love of a rich, beautiful woman for her handsome servant.

al-Farḥān based this story on a real event from Kuwaiti society. He could not tell it openly, so he stated that the events took place "in 1946 in a nearby city" (7) in order to avoid censorship. He explains:

"There is a contradiction in this. The subject is not particularly interesting to talk of between countries, so it is meaningless to mention its date unless it happened in Kuwait. But could he portray a lady who was in love with a servant in Kuwait?" (8)

The story begins with a dialogue between a lady and her servant. She shows him her body and demands, "Kiss me!" The servant replies, "I ask God's forgiveness; be merciful Madame, and do not torment me. I am not used to committing sins!"

She continues trying to persuade him to make love to her, but he resists, describing it as an impossible evil and offering to leave her service

rather than "commit the most awful sin ever seen." (9)

She is a charming, wealthy girl who has always easily got what she wants. He is a handsome, conservative, young man, aware of traditions and with a strong will preventing him from indulging his desires.

The lady's sufferings through her love continue and she is brought to submission and disgrace. al-Farḥān describes in depth her flow of emotion as well as the feelings on his part for a love which can never be.

The girl's father realises she is not well and takes her to well-known doctors, but they are not able to cure her. Days and months pass and she lives with violent psychological conflict caused by her love. Then comes the day when the truth is revealed: the maid tells the father that she has overheard what is going on between the two. The servant is slapped forcefully and then fired from his job. More time passes and the girl tells her mother that she is determined to marry the young man; if she can't, then she will have to either commit suicide or run away. The mother then tells the father.

One evening, just before midnight, the girl runs away to the servant's home. He is stunned to see her and hastens to call her father. The whole story ends with the father deciding that he admires the servant's behaviour

and agreeing to their marriage. He is generous enough to give her a valuable gift and him an amount of money large enough to start his own business.

The story ends happily, although this is not al-Farḥān's usual style. As we have seen, Khātimat ḥubb [End of Love] and Wadāʿān yā qalbī [Farewell My Heart] both finished in sadness.

al-Farḥān described the protagonist and her character in depth, though he was somewhat contradictory in his presentation. First, he shows her as temptress of some kind, and later he seems to try to make her more worthy of the reader's sympathy as she talks about the pain of her love.

In fact, he emphasises the girl's virtue and the honesty of her love. It is without extreme desires; he makes this clear as she says, "Trust my honour; I did not want you as a whim. My mind refuses to pull me into sin."
(10)

al-Farḥān's reasons for this contradiction are not clear, though it could be that he is yielding to his sensitive feelings. He feels sympathy with the protagonist, supports her and tries to justify all she does in the hope of gaining the reader's sympathy towards her. As well, he had promised to adopt women's issues and so he is able to justify his way of talking from the woman's point of view in his stories, even though, in this story he is fully

aware that what she is doing is revealing her love is a flagrant mistake.

We are dealing with a romantic story, representing the everlasting issue of love, and the problems it can be confronted with.

"Love is not only a virtue of romantics but it is the best of all. It is a means of purifying souls even if they are those of harlots. It is about loyalty in love."

(11)

al-Farḥān's feelings are clear when he uplifts love and directly expresses his attitude towards society's restrictions, even though he exaggerates a lot towards the end, finishing the story in a fast and unconvincing way. This comes as a result of his agitated romantic feelings. Love leads to marriage and happiness. al-Farḥān overdid things when he had the father give his daughter and son-in-law a generous grant to start their new life with. The father's approval and generosity are to repay the servant's loyalty.

al-Farḥān's romantic stories were an outburst of emotion, as he felt that love exists outside a closed society's rule which mean it cannot be openly discussed. This emotion expresses itself through his characters, revealing itself in different ways. Therefore, he was talking on behalf of love and lovers at a time when other writers kept away from dealing with the issue altogether.

Ahlām Fatāt [Dreams of a Young Girl]

al-Farḥān presents in this story Fāṭima, a woman suffering from poverty and deprivation of happiness. She is hoping to find happiness with a husband that she herself will choose. She satisfies herself by dreaming of fulfilling her hope for a good life. This is a new approach to the subject originated by al-Farḥān, which gives the woman an escape from her unfortunate situation.

The writer starts with a description of the wealthy life that Fāṭima enjoys. She has a beautiful, well-furnished house and a lot of colourful and beautiful clothes. She is very happy with her rich and handsome husband.

It is one of Fāṭima's dreams. al-Farḥān surprises us because Fāṭima lives in poverty and misery and is not the lady of the house as we first thought. She is no more than a slave who wears old clothes and does all the housework, taking orders from her mother with no chance to object. She therefore lives her best hours in bed flying away with her vivid dreams.

One day, destiny is generous and gives her the chance to make her dreams come true. A rich man proposes to marry her. The marriage ceremony is held without her seeing him; all she knows is that he is a little older than her. However, when she does see him, she realises she has married an old, unattractive man, wearing tattered clothing and who owns nothing. Her dream evaporates, but despite this, she accepts God's will and him as her husband.

Criticism of the old traditions that restricted women and forced them to accept them is clear here where the woman looks for happiness and can only find a way of salvation through dreams. Those dreams disperse when she has to accept the painful and unpleasant reality imposed by society where a woman has no right to express her opinion on her marriage. al-Farhan is logical in his presentation of events. Though he sympathises with the protagonist, he finds he must face her with life's unpleasantness and make her accept it. He does not exaggerate here as he does in Thaman al-wafā' [The Price of Loyalty].

Lam Yafuthā al-qitār [It is Never Too Late]

al-Farḥān deals here again with the issue of the influence of tradition and how it can deprive a woman of her rights. It is about a wealthy girl: beautiful, smart and modest. She is, despite this, held in check by time-worn traditions which represent a type of slavery. She lives in an atmosphere filled with suppression, staying at home, knowing very little of life and only leaving the house under her servant's supervision.

A first suitor proposes to her but her father puts him off with excuses; others come along and he keeps refusing them, looking for someone exceptional. Gradually the suitors reduce in number, as they hear about his stipulations.

She approaches her thirties and is very unhappy, feeling that only a man will give her what she wants. She has been deprived of everything but cannot get out from under the restrictions imposed on her. Finally, after much pain and sorrow, things change. A young man from the labouring class proposes to her and al-Farḥān ends his story with her bright hopes for a happy, new life.

al-Farḥān directly expresses his attack on the old traditions in an oratorical style, consistent with that of many other authors in the 1950s. He gives his protagonist the freedom to show her feelings and to show the suppression she is suffering. Her confessions are clearly heard, and forecast women's rejection of their unfair situation. In the story she confronts her

family with:

"You are hurting me, destroying my life and my future and you don't even realise it. You want a good husband for me and I am sure your intention is to bring me happiness, but in fact, you are looking for an angel, and I am not an angel. I am a human being like you. I love people, life and fun. You want a person with no blemish, but there is no one who has reached this perfection. You want this and that, and make demands according to your own wishes as if you were getting married, not me."

These words are her expression of rejection of her miserable life and its calamities. al-Farḥān's interference is clear when he gives her the courage and power to rebel, wanting to save her from her family's despotism. Though it is late, it is one of the elements that finally makes her father notice her sufferings and feel sorry for her. He tells her, "It is never too late, my dear daughter."

From what has previously been said, most of al-Farḥān's literary pieces express a great flow of emotional excitement. Women are the central characters in most of his stories and this is because he felt their sufferings and inability to enjoy their rights. Hence, he describes events and characters according to his philosophy of life.

He always commits himself to honesty in his stories. Yet, he exaggerates in some, and he follows the narrative form. Though it is the oldest and the easiest, it needs, besides talent, a mixture of experience, awareness of the period's circumstances and of audience.

al-Duwayrī's stories, like those of his contemporaries, are full of criticisms of society's restrictions and of his insistence on reforming them. He feels the contrast between the young, more aware generation and the older one represented by grandfathers and fathers who insist on maintaining their old ways of thinking and on fighting development.

Furṣa dāāt [A Chance Lost]

The writer deals here with how fathers hold their children back. The story begins with an introduction which reads:

"One afternoon I was sitting with a friend of mine, 'J', in front of another friend's shop when a young man with a wooden leg, about in his thirties, passed by in very ragged clothes, greeted us briefly and went away..." (12)

He wants to show us that it will be a real story from real life by abbreviating his friend's name to make events more convincing. This is his style in most stories. He insists that all he writes is real.

Furṣa dāat [A Chance Lost] is about the son of a rich family who has lost his mother. He is poorly educated, knowing very little of reading and writing. His father makes him join his shop, though the son wants to extend his education. There is an open-minded uncle who urges his brother to send the son abroad to study, but the father strongly rejects this, as he thinks education is a way spoiling morals and that his son does not need certificates because he is going to inherit a fortune anyway. When the son is nineteen, his father starts looking for a wife for him, without taking into account her education or attitudes; his main concern is how much money she is worth.

The son marries and has three daughters. Circumstances change: the father loses all his money and dies a few months later, leaving his son penniless. The son now has to find a way of earning a living with no education and no money. He works as a labourer but only earns a little. His wife starts nagging about the poverty and soon goes off to her father's home, leaving their three daughters with him. A few months later he falls off the roof of one of the houses he is working on and loses one of his legs.

The story ends in this way, as al-Duwayrī wants the reader to focus on the ill effects of ignorance. A man without education cannot achieve anything. The disappointment of the protagonist is a direct result of his father's ignorance in not taking his brother's advice because he thinks that money is everlasting. The uncle represents hope for the future - an

individual fighting backwardness and ignorance, calling for universal education.

al-Duwayrī believes that the way fathers restrict their sons is one of the most serious problems facing big families in his country. At the end, he says,

"If he had been educated he could have earned his living easily, as being disabled does not affect the mind. If he was educated he could find a good job despite the loss of his leg."

His point is that often fathers' assumptions about bringing up their sons are simply wrong.

al-Muhandis [The Engineer]

al-Duwayrī repeats the theme of his last story, in which he urges the need for education and focuses on the conflict between fathers and sons and the results of this. A man sends a letter to his friend telling him about his circumstances and apologising for not writing to him for three years. He explains that he is still the only son in his family, is clever, has succeeded in

his high school studies, and is keen on engineering. However, despite his father's pride in his son's achievements and still-growing interest in engineering, he wanted his son to study medicine. Therefore the son has been forced to study something he is not interested in, has failed because of this dislike and has been sent home.

al-Duwayrī points out the negative results of forcing someone into something they are not interested in and how it is not advantageous educationally.

Risāla [A Letter]

al-Duwayrī also deals with women's conflicts with old traditions, their sufferings and the way society persecutes them, considering them to be virtually non-existent members of the society.

In this story, he talks about women being treated as pieces of merchandise: to be shown to a man only when he wants to get married. The matchmaker in the story tells the protagonist about a particular girl. While praising her, he tells him about her beauty in order to encourage him to

marry her. She describes the girl's eyes as being "as big as a cup", her mouth "as small as Solomon's ring", her nose "as sharp as a sword"; and, on top of all this, how well-educated she is.

The man hurries to propose marriage to her. On the wedding night he finds himself with an ugly, dim-witted girl who can only talk about her father's fortune. The new husband then chooses to travel abroad for no other reason other than to run from the situation. He cannot divorce her because she has not harmed him; and, at the same time, he does not want to take a second wife.

al-Duwayrī discusses here several issues, but the most important is that of the persecution of the woman, who is never asked her opinions on a marriage partner and does not know anything about her husband until their wedding night. She has no right to refuse at any stage. Frequently she is treated badly by her husband's family, especially by the mother-in-law.

The issue of running away from reality when confronted by a problem that cannot be solved is also addressed in this story. The man here is unable to bear his situation and so he just runs away. He thinks he is acting out of mercy for the woman he has married because she has not harmed him and because she has had the marriage imposed on her. al-Duwayrī's attitude on this is clear in the scene where he has the protagonist say,

" A matchmaker came one day to display (don't you hate this word 'display', but what else is there? It is the only correct word for the fact) " (13)

His objection to the ill-treatment of the woman is clear. She is treated as a piece of merchandise to be bought and sold. The matchmaker describes her to the man who either chooses her or does not and starts looking for another one. The woman concerned has no say at all in any of this.

al-zawja al-Thāniya [The Second Wife] (14)

This story is about a man living happily with his wife and young son. It is a family regarded by people as an example of a successful marriage. However, later on the man changes his mind and starts thinking about taking another wife, as he believes that his first one is no longer beautiful. Gradually the wife notices her husband's increasing disregard for her as he spends more and more time outside the home and stops playing with his young son. Their arguments become louder and stronger, problems multiply and eventually he marries another woman as his wife has expected.

He brings his new wife home and ignores the first one. The new wife knows she has all of his attention and gets him to transfer all his property to her. Later, she demands more and persists in her greediness by asking him to divorce the first wife. This he does.

Later again he asks for her support when he becomes bankrupt and is surprised when she refuses. At last he begins to be aware of her malice, but it is almost too late. She leaves him, taking everything. However, when his first wife, Umm Muṣṭafā, finds out what has happened, she returns to him, supports him and they live together happily again.

al-Duwayrī focuses on the inability of Kuwaiti women to face up to men and their cruelty. Umm Muṣṭafā represents the helpless woman. She is kind and loyal despite her husband's rejection, patiently accepting her misfortunes. In this case, her patience is rewarded by the family's reunion.

The second wife is a wicked and greedy woman who only thinks about money. Her demands have to be complied with, regardless of her husband's feelings, even though he offers to please her in everything. He is punished for what he does to his innocent wife in a way he will never forget when he loses all his money.

'Imra'a bā'isa [A Miserable Woman] (15)

Women's issues are once more discussed here. al-Duwayrī involves the readers at the beginning when he asks them to send their solutions to the problem of the main character, Fāṭima.

Her problem lies in that she is educated and has been married to her ill-reputed, illiterate cousin whom she had no right to refuse. Her marriage, as for all women in the society at the time, is a matter for her parents, not her, to decide. Though her father does not really want her to marry 'Alī, he has to agree because custom has it that she should marry the closest relative. His refusal would mean destroying his good reputation, so he accepts, knowing he is sending his daughter to a prison.

The unfortunate results of this unequal marriage soon appear. They have nothing in common, never agree on anything and relations between them never improve. Fāṭima returns to her father's house six months after her marriage and after intolerable sufferings. Her husband has never cared about her, but refuses to divorce her and continues his dissoluteness without regard for anyone's opinion.

At the end of the story, al-Duwayrī asks the readers to send their solutions to the problem, saying,

"Now, dear reader, do you have a solution? You know that in law there is something called a conjugal home that a husband must prepare for his wife. But you are also aware that a conjugal home needs only to have two things: food and shelter. These are the needs of an animal. Human life is much nobler than that. Dear reader, please find a way of salvation for this suffering human being so that she can keep her pride and stay on the right path in life."

The writer puts the question to the reader in this way in order to point out the dimensions of the problem. He also insists on the necessity of sympathising with the woman. She is a human being, much more sublime than an animal, and she needs more than food and shelter. She needs a man who appreciates her feelings and emotions. He is angry about situations such as the one in this story, and attributes the cause of the 'crime' to the bad influence of tradition and the injustice fathers are able to lay upon their children.

Sakk al-Karāma [The Contract of Pride] (16)

Poverty and misfortune are discussed here, in the story of Abū Ṣāliḥ, a rich merchant and a prominent citizen in the country. Misfortune strikes and he loses everything except his house. His family is suffering and so he goes to his friend ʿAbd al-Raḥmān to borrow money to feed them. He is asked for a guarantee, but he does not own anything. He plucks a hair from his beard, wraps it carefully in a clean piece of paper and hands it to his friend, who, although surprised, has to accept it and lend him the money.

Time passes and Abū Ṣāliḥ remembers his debt as he is dying. He sends for his friend to come and bring the contract which he burns and then he wills that the family house should be sold to repay the debt.

al-Duwayrī introduces this story by talking about his methodology in writing. He says,

" My stories are not fact or myth, but a mixture of both. They are rooted in history, with some of the author's imagination added, and as such, are a type of popular literature."

al-Duwayrī always explains himself in ways like this in his introductions.

The story's plot is simple, and he depends on hints to convey his message. When he has Abū Ṣāliḥ give a hair from his beard as a guarantee, he means his pride is mortgaged for the small amount of money that he has borrowed to feed his family. Abū Ṣāliḥ's character is a symbol for all those men who suffer from hunger. In pre-oil Kuwait, there was poverty, money only being available to the merchants. The rest of society consisted of divers and labourers who all suffered destitution. Every one of them was trying to make a fortune. Abū Ṣāliḥ is a merchant but loses his money and through this, the author wants us to focus on the situation of the poor and sympathise with them.

Ṣanī' al-Matā'ib [The Trouble-Maker]

Here he examines the effects of sudden fortune on a family and with it the contrast between pre- and post-oil Kuwait and the gap between "the rich man's palace and the poor man's hut".

He insists as usual on the realism of his story in his introduction.

"You ask me when these events took place? Well, I do not know, sir; but if I wasn't picking up what I am writing from reality, I could have done as

most writers do and create events and dates to make their readers believe they are real... What? I hear you accusing me of envy because I cannot cope like other writers; I cannot imagine events and depict illusion. It is a story that has taken place and that is enough.

It is a long, unnecessary justification, as the events of a story prove its reality, and this was a mistake of al-Duwayri's. It weakens the artistic side of the story, when his aim was simply to prove its honesty and realism.

The plot concerns a sailor, married with six children. Despite the size of his family and his poor financial situation, he is happy, believing in a wise saying,

"God never forgets those he has created."

He is satisfied with his life and has never wished for a better one. His home is next to an enormous house owned by a rich man called Ḥajj Saïd, married to a bad-tempered, envious and malicious woman. She nags her husband and compares her life unfavourably to that of their neighbour and his family, because her husband is always away busy with his business and trying to earn more money.

She talks so much about the neighbour's family that her husband becomes fed up and thinks of a plan to keep her quiet. He gives the sailor

an amount of money, saying it is for him alone to enjoy without sharing it with his family. The sailor is very happy with this and enjoys having money to spend. His home becomes more and more like a hotel as he grows bored with his wife and children. His manners and behaviour completely change as a result of his sudden fortune.

Eventually, as the rich neighbour has planned, the sailor persists in this behaviour, divorcing his wife irrevocably. Hajj Saïd laughs loudly and his wife from then on stops envying the sailor's family.

al-Duwayrī's political philosophy is clear here. Money is not a measure of happiness because it makes a man abandon himself in pursuit of it and to forget his home and family. Pre-oil Kuwait suffered from poverty, and most individuals were trying to make fortunes, thinking that money would bring happiness as well as luxury, without bearing in mind that happiness can be achieved even in poverty. Happiness can be found in a well-united family and in the joint responsibility of its members and their love for each other.

END NOTES: CHAPTER THREE

3. Dayf, Shawqī, page 103
4. al-Farḥān, Farḥān, page 155
5. Fadl, Sālāh, page 342
6. Hilāl, Muhammad, page 187
7. al-Farḥān, Farḥān, page 27
8. ʿAbd al-Allāh, Muhammad, page 474
9. al-Farḥān, Farḥān, page 27
10. al-Farḥān, Farḥān, page 33
11. Hilāl, Muhammad, page 188
12. Kāzima, Nov 1948, page 120
13. al-Bitha, Aug 1949

14. al-Bitha, April 1949, page 148
15. al-Bitha, April 1950, page 168
16. al-Bitha , Dec 1948, page 134

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE NOVEL

Mudarrisa min al-mirqāb [A Teacher from Mirqāb]

by ‘Abdullāh Khalaf

Mudarrisa min al-mirqāb [A Teacher From Mirqab] is written in the form of simple lessons given to some students by their teacher to reflect the author's ideas about the adverse conditions prevailing in pre-'60s Kuwait society. These included the position of the woman. He felt that she was immersed in circumstances that kept her from exercising any will of her own. As well, he touched on the emptiness families felt in the absence of the father when he was away on his pearl-diving trips, and on the comparison between the pre-oil and the post-oil community. He also talked in detail about sudden fortune and its adverse effects on the mentality of some individuals.

Khalaf concentrated on a central character to convey his views. He made her a teacher in front of her class at the end of the school year. He divided up the story into parts and gave a title to each one. The titles did not reflect a literary image; rather they were closer to essay titles. Among them we may mention [Without a Father], [The Story of My Education], [The End of Sea Life], [Teacher Najība], [Sudden Fortune], [The Inevitable], [The Reality], [The Story of the Hijāb], [Kuwait Before and After Oil].

The story starts with a scene in one of the classrooms where the teacher is sitting at a very big table with lots of exercise books in front of her. The bell has just rung and she is waiting for the students to settle down. She then opens her book and starts reading, saying to them,

"This is some of what I have written about the memories of my life. I have not had time to read it to you before you finished the syllabus. I have found no better thing to do than this, and you may find benefit from it. They are experiences and observations of what I have seen and known.

I felt it was best to tell you now, before we part after four years spent together: a year at al-Qibliyya School and three here. Without doubt, school is a very important stage of life and it leaves a clear impression on everyone's life. I say goodbye to you with what fruits I have reaped from the old, hard days. This book contains my blood and soul and all my feelings. It is my favourite and dearest possession. It is the story of my life." (17)

The teacher then continues to talk about her memories, and tells the students how she was brought up. She knew very little of her father except that he went to earn the family's living in the sea in a boat, facing the terrors of nature and leaving his wife and family alone. She continues talking about her childhood and ends it by saying,

"This is the image of my childhood, but I will leave the story of my education for another lesson." (18)

Later, she goes on to tell her students of this, from its early stages until her graduation from university. On another occasion, she talks about the end of the dependence on the sea which came with Kuwait's sudden fortune after the discovery of oil.

Khalaf comments here to present his point of view on this fortune and its consequences by saying,

"The spirits of the oil people are always restless... moving aimlessly, and the people are always saying 'today, tomorrow, the next day, the oil will dry up... When? How long will it last?' " (19)

The teacher also talks of the things she does not like, such as the traditions that have hindered her freedom. She talks about her psychological problems and explains to the students how she lived in pre- and post-oil Kuwait.

The story has a framework more like an essay, as Khalaf discusses different social issues that concerned the Kuwaiti family in the past, in particular, and the whole community in general. He also includes his own philosophical ideas, but he feels the need to put all this down in the form of a story.

Issues in [A Teacher From Mirqāb]

These issues can be summarised as follows:

1. Khalaf discusses the woman's issue in its various aspects. The story focusses on her suffering and calls for her liberation from restrictions. He expresses these in several scenes and is very blunt in accusing Kuwaiti society of the time of being cruel to women and ignoring her rights and humanity.

As we know, many story writers insisted on getting freedom for women from traditional restrictions. Khalaf dealt with them in a different way. He discussed them logically and avoided an oratorical style. He was analytical and descriptive, very reasonable and logical. In this way he managed to set out the issue both effectively and interestingly at the same time.

Khalaf's views on the issue of liberation are clear when the teacher says to the students,

"I think it is easier for you now compared to me and other women who went abroad and returned without the hijāb after we had been in real life, felt its sun and air, and breathed its fresh breezes. Imagine a life after that in a hijāb! You say I should wear the hijāb as a believer... Who is the believer?" She is

an illiterate, ignorant woman; just see how happy and satisfied she is. Yes, this person only thinks about the present and never about the inevitability of her life and what it means... An ignorant woman is the one who finds the hijāb obligatory and never feels restless or bored. The hijāb for her is as normal as a shoe... " (20)

She continues,

"Many times I regretted my education and wished that I didn't have it, or at least wished to be more like my sister. I envied her for her ignorance and closed mind because she accepted it and was patient. She did not know life... did not know the value of this light. That is why she wraps herself in her black veil not aware of her rights. She is quiet and accepts life not knowing if she has a place in it or not. Does a woman have a value? Is she a member of the community? Is she an individual like a man? My sister does not think about all this and she seems satisfied and calm, but there is nothing to keep her mind busy and I know it hurts her heart." (21)

Khalaf expressed his distress at depriving the woman of her rights and controlling her freedom. He also shows his absolute rejection of hindering the woman's great abilities and he has the teacher say,

"Wearing the hijāb at this time in history is a mockery. Why do we find that the western woman has gone along with her era, while the eastern woman

is still floundering in outdated traditions?" (22)

2. Khalaf discusses the issue of emptiness felt by a family during a father's absence on diving trips, when he often spends months away from them. The mother is forced to take the whole responsibility of home and family upon herself and the children are affected because they miss his love and care.

The problem is expressed in a very precise and descriptive way in his chapter entitled "Without a Father". He goes back a very long time in the teacher's life and has her tell how she used to feel about the absence of her father.

"When I first realised that this man or that man was the father of Ā'isha or one of my other friends, I started questioning it. Where was my father? Ā'isha told me that I did not have a father. Finally I asked Umm Jāsim about him and she told me that I did have a father like Ā'isha." (23)

Najība describes what it was like for the family when their father did return home from his long journeys. She expresses their great happiness:

"After my return from the beach that day with my mother and sister, we heard a knock on the door that my mother recognised. She shouted, 'Your father! Your father!' and he opened the door. There he was, a tall man with big muscles, and he started hugging and kissing us and my grandmother's

head, while my mother was crying with happiness.

He stayed with us for maybe a month, but it passed very quickly, just like a few hours. We were happy during that time and we felt his love and care, but one day some sailors came to tell him it was time to go. He said farewell with difficulty and left the house, leaving our home again deserted without a father." (24)

The teacher continues to describe the dimensions of this problem in an analytical style. The problem was not only a question of the great responsibility the mother was left with, but the harmful effects of the father being away on the wife and children.

3. The author also discussed the problem of the influence of sudden fortune on some of society's members, and he focussed on the restlessness of people who drifted along in their lives without planning ahead. He was pessimistic on this issue. In his opinion money changed human beings and their moral constitution. He agrees here with Fahd al-Duwayrī in the latter's story, [The Troublemaker].

This was clear when Teacher Najība expressed the discomfort that she experienced because of what happened to her mother. Her father married another woman, leaving her mother with a nervous breakdown. It was all a

result of the sudden fortune that her father had acquired there; were many men who rewarded their women and life-partners in this way, when they got money in the new Kuwait after oil. Some were divorced and denied as if the marriage had never happened or as if it were a dream that had lasted only a few minutes.

"This is what happened to my mother. I was torn apart, not knowing where to concentrate." (25)

This calamity was followed by another when Najība's father suffered the loss of his money and his second wife deserted him. He divorced her and went back to his first family with pain and regret about what he had done. Khalaf agrees here with al-Duwayrī in his story, [The Second Wife], and it is expressed by the teacher.

"Days went by, and four years passed. It was only in the fourth year that I found out that the 'misfortune' that had deprived my father of his wealth was that he never looked after his business and was only concerned with fun and spending lots of money on his personal pleasure. God was punishing him but it was his own fault." (26)

The Main Character

Najība is the pivotal character in this story, as well as being a symbol for every woman who looked towards liberation. Her ideas as shown in the

story were a violent repudiation of worn-out, inherited traditions. She was the voice of every suffering woman who did not have the chance to talk about her ideas or express any anger at her situation. Khalaf spoke his views through this character, pouring his revolutionary ideas into Najība's sayings and attitudes. Khalaf placed heavy emphasis on this character and ignored many other artistic aspects of the story as a result. He made her say what he believed was right and to avoid any doubt, he made her into a perfectionist, with very high standards of education and knowledge.

There were some secondary characters who interacted with Najība. We see the students in the class and another teacher, Karīma, who was very much influenced by Najība. Another secondary character was Najība's closest friend and it was through her that he put forth his call for women's liberation. She was fed up with the worn-out traditions surrounding and almost choking her. She said,

"Why was woman created? Oh God, why did you create me? Why did you not make me free? Why am I a tied-down, oppressed, naive, inferior girl with few rights compared to a boy's?" (27)

Using Najība, Khalaf tried very hard to change attitudes in his society, emphasising in a logical way the necessity of fighting traditions which restricted people. Najība was open-minded, able to talk with confidence and support what she said with persuasive evidence. She could then influence

her students and gain their trust and belief in her ideas.

He deviated from the format of a novel to some extent, writing what he was thinking of without restricting his mind. That is the reason why his story is so long; he narrated in detail and this makes us feel the influence of the essay. Because [A Teacher From Mirqāb] is the first attempt at writing a novel in the early period of Kuwaiti literature as well as being the first attempt of ‘Abdullāh Khalaf, its weaknesses are excusable.

The story was written to emphasise a specific idea that Khalaf had in mind. He expressed it into symbolic style on one hand and in a realistic way in another. He was very good at presenting issues that society suffered from at the time and at giving solutions, directly or indirectly, to them. In more than one situation, his symbolic style is very clear. An example is when he talked about the ‘abāya. He saw it as a symbol of the hiding of women's abilities and the killing of her talents and merit. Teacher Najība is an open-minded, free woman who looks towards liberation and wants salvation for those who still live with the old mentality, refusing to change.

We cannot deny that Khalaf made his story attractive, but we need to look at the mistakes he made. He talked in exaggerated detail on some topics to an extent where it becomes tedious to read. We also lose enjoyment when he rushes his thoughts, making his story look like an essay.

He does not succeed in creating an atmosphere of psychological interaction between the central and secondary characters. He does not pay much attention to dialogue. It takes place between the teacher and her students only occasionally, and with no serious effort. He was only concerned with the teacher's lecturing, through which he aimed to discuss the issues which he wanted to pass on to the reader. The events build up to a crisis as he talks of the sudden fortune that changed people. Khalaf ends his story in a very interesting way:

" This was all that time allowed. She told her students some of her own memories, from her Kuwaiti environment, talked about the conflict between ignorance and knowledge, traditions that prevent people from looking towards a new life and from reaching their goals. Now it is time for the final examinations and there is not enough time left, so she has to finish talking of her memories at this point. There is still a lot in this book that she carries that she hasn't touched. Will she come back and finish the remaining parts?"
(28)

This is how Khalaf ended his story, in preparation for another one in which the teacher would finish her memories. It is a very simple story, but it includes some difficult situations which he has managed to link successfully. In some situations, he was able to tighten the relationship between the reader and teacher Najība's character, and we are able to feel the maturity and concern of her ideas.

The writer uses some Kuwaiti dialect words in the story, such as Ummī al-ūda [my granny], al-Tarrār [beggar], Firīj [hamlet], and some proverbs also, which all reflect his environment's influence on him and his deep desire to establish a realistic story from the local environment.

He uses mythical comparisons in more than one situation. We can feel this when the teacher is talking to her students about the ḥijāb.

"The human being is like an animal, but time has refined and polished him. He has been guided towards being a human being, though he is still in his childhood from the point of view of the passage of time."

ʿAbdullāh Khalaf carries on describing the beginning of the relationship between a man and a woman on the basis of this mythical illusion that typifies his fertile imagination:

"Primitive man did not have a particular woman to join his life to, and there is still a kind of similarity to this old image. Then he started a family and depended on others to help him in hunting, since he was weak compared to bigger animals. He used what was around to trap them. Then this man found that his little ones were growing up and could help him and that the woman stayed in one place crippled by pregnancy and non-stop child rearing. He started bringing her what was left over instead of leaving it or throwing it away."

END NOTES: CHAPTER FOUR

17. Khalaf, ʿAbdullāh, page 10
18. " page 22
19. " page 44
20. " page 62
21. " page 62
22. " page 71
23. " page 15
24. " page 21
25. " page 54
26. " page 55
27. " page 99
28. " page 175

CHAPTER FIVE

THE KUWAITI SHORT STORY (1962 - 1985)

SULAYMĀN aL-SHATTĪ

By 1962, the fundamentals of the Kuwaiti short story were firmly established and it had started to widen its range of subject. Sulaymān al-Shattī was one of the first writers in this more 'modern' era. His stories reflect a political and social awareness at a time when Kuwait was taking large strides forward in all aspects of development. He wrote about his dreams and concerns for Kuwaiti society in the '60s and put forward very important political issues, coming from the society he saw in front of him, and which had not been discussed by earlier story-writers for some reason, despite the political awareness that educated Kuwaitis had had much earlier.

al-daffa [The Rudder]

This is al-Shattī's first published short story but it shows his awareness of the rudiments of the genre. The story starts and ends on the deck of a trading ship in the middle of the sea. There are sailors and passengers on board. It has a political perspective, expressed symbolically, and the reader needs to look beyond the actual events to discover al-Shattī's message.

At the beginning we have a terrible storm which is endangering the lives of all on board. The wind is howling and the surface of the sea is heaving. The ship has been holed and is on the verge of sinking as the water pours in. The people's voices cry out as they are overcome by fear, realising their helplessness in the face of the storm.

The ship's pilot gives his orders one after another in an attempt to gain control of events, but despite him, they can smell the odour of death approaching. Suddenly Abū Aḥmad, the steerman, has the idea of throwing the ship's cargo overboard in order to lighten the ship and raise the hole above the water-line. However, an argument arises between him and the pilot. The latter worries about the financial loss, whereas Abū Aḥmad believes people's lives are more important.

He orders the sailors to throw the cargo over and they do this until the ship starts to float again. However, it does not end well for Abū Aḥmad, as he loses his life hanging on to the rudder in the cold rough sea, concerned with others before himself.

The plot is simple: a crisis faces some sailors and they confront and overcome this crisis. Beneath the surface, however, we see that the characters and events are symbols for what al-Shatti is really saying. So, what was his message, his political dream?

al-Shaṭṭī dreamed of democracy and believed that nations have a voice that should be released. He rejected the exclusive decision-making power of the ruling class, as it was often unable to make the right decision in an emergency whereas the common sense and wisdom of the layman was. He invites us to pay attention to the layman whose practical responses could lead a community to safety.

In al-daffa [The Rudder], the governing class is represented by the ship's pilot. He wants to impose his solution and ignore the others' wisdom, preferring to risk the sailors' lives than to lose what is to him a more valuable cargo. In Abū Aḥmad's character, we can see a man whose way of thinking is clever, practical and humane.

He is an average man who can, despite his simplicity, offer a solution at the right time when others cannot. He saves their lives, but his sense of responsibility prevents him from saving his own.

The storm in the story is a symbol of a political, social or economic upheaval that becomes disastrous for the community facing it, because of some fault in its structure. This is the hole in the ship's side.

al-Aṣābi‘al-maqtūā [Chopped Fingers]

al-Shattī's political dream is again visualised in this story. It is based on a simple event which signifies an important issue, representing the sublime national sense of the writer.

The protagonist is Maṣṣūr, a child who is both smart and curious. His surroundings and the people he lives amongst pose many questions in his mind. One day he is walking with his mother when he sees a big man with a thick, black moustache and a large nose with pock marks over it. When Maṣṣūr points to the man's moustache, his mother reprimands him, saying that his finger will be chopped off if he points. This amazes Maṣṣūr, as he can see no reason why this should happen.

" But why?" he says. "Why do they chop off fingers? Why fingers? I am always hearing that policeman chop fingers off."

The important political symbol here shows itself in the title. "Fingers" are the fingers of truth and courage that scoop out the eye of oppression. A dictatorial authority tries to control the populace by chopping off fingers. The big moustache covering the policeman's face causes Maṣṣūr to feel fear and hatred and is a symbol of assumed supremacy and tyrannical authority

that aims to repress weak people by terrorism and violence.

When he attempts to kill this policeman - in a dream - he wakes up to bitter reality. His weapon does not match the power and influence of his enemy. This painful fact is a cause of depression to the helpless masses of people represented by the character of Manṣūr. Their yearning to get rid of violent authority will never be realised, owing to the incompatibility of the dream with reality.

al-Shatti feels sympathy towards the weak who are forced to live in subjugation and silence. Their feelings must be suppressed and they are prevented from expressing what they see and hear. However, despite the desperate atmosphere prevailing in the story, there is a small residue of optimism at the end when Manṣūr, talking to an old woman whose finger has been cut off, says,

"Tomorrow I will take revenge for you, and for your finger, for all the chopped- off fingers, and even your lopped-off teeth..."

The writer continues, "His feet were strongly energetic that new morning... and inspired for the crucial battle... He could only see a chopped-off finger and a plunging knife..."

The story ends with Manṣūr saying:

The writer is hinting here at the improbability of his dream's coming true of deposing authority by force. Even if the masses united in pursuit of freedom, the battle will still surely end in defeat, without outside help, because of inequality of arms.

His dream is clear here; it is the dream of having a society where the ruling authority reflects the citizens' views, where ideas are shared and exchanged. Only in this way will the mantle of injustice and terrorism be dislodged. This dream joins the stream of political dreams that exists in the minds of reformers living in dictatorial societies where their freedom is curbed and violence and subjugation are the means of communication. When voices become loud in demanding their rights, they are assassinated or sent into detention. Their "fingers" are chopped off.

Hikāya li-al Ākharīn [A Tale For Others]

We are faced again here with the issue of unequal conflict between a powerful authority and the individual. This story discusses the psychological conflict between Ḥamad, a sailor who works on the deck of a ship and the pilot, Īsā who possesses the money and the leadership.

Conflict builds up a desire in Ḥamad to take revenge on ʿĪsā and therefore on authority as a result of his feelings of injustice. He marries his cousin Ḥissa as soon as he finds out she is in love with ʿĪsā; this is a great victory for him over his rival. Despite it, he still lives in depression. He is still a junior labourer on deck driven by the pilot. The gap exists and it is wide. His desire for revenge builds up further and he abandons all integrity, planning to steal the ship's supplies and sell them on the black market. Unfortunately for him, this attempt fails and he is beaten and imprisoned.

It is authority that curbs and aggrieves, while the other party aims with all its abilities to revolt, but the stronger always wins. The ambitions of Mansūr in al-Asābiʿ al-maqtūʿa [Chopped Fingers] and of Ḥamad in this story illustrate the inequality between them.

ʿUbūr ḍaffat al-Nahr [Crossing the Bank of the River]

al-Shaṭṭī's sense of Arab nationalism is shown in this story, where he discusses the issue of Palestine. He focuses on the exodus from that country in 1967, and has his protagonist helping refugees cross a bridge destroyed by the Israelis.

In a flashback, the writer goes back to 1948 when Palestine became a Jewish state against the wishes of most of the Arab people living there. Many had to leave, and here it is happening again. The story does not offer messages, other than to show al-Shatti's commitment to Arab nationalism and his extreme concern about the occupation of Palestine. He reflects the misery imposed on Palestinians in their own home and pictures their bitter sufferings in two separate exoduses.

SULAYMĀN aL-KHULAYFĪ

al-Khulayfi's stories are noted for their philosophical and contemplative tendency as well as for the intensive symbolic ideas which surround his characters and events. He has a unique ability to delve deeply into his characters and to analyse their psychology, and the reader is always aware of a massive accumulation of ideas forming a symbolic layer, varying in depth, like a puzzle to be solved. On some occasions, it forms an obstacle to understanding the writer's aim, but most often by the end of the story his intentions have become clear.

al- Asi'la al-Mughlaqa [Concealed Questions]

al-Khulayfi always introduces different aspects of life and devotes this story to the suffering of the poorer classes whose limited abilities are surrounded by misery.

The protagonist is a bright child who lives in a poor family. He has a lot of questions but gets no satisfactory answers. His brilliance allows him

to compare his situation to other, rich children living in big, rich houses and he wishes to be one of them. What hurts him more is that his father has not returned from a diving journey and he wonders why rich fathers do not disappear. He would like to live among them but love for his family keeps him with his mother and sister and his young brother, who all care about him.

Questions crowd into the boy's head but answers never appear. His mother feels pain because he is enquiring after something that is not able to be changed.

Dialogue between him and his mother goes like this:

"Mother, why is our house small?"

"If we had a bigger piece of land the house would be bigger."

"Why do we not own this land in front of our home?"

"It belongs to the government"

"What is government, mother?"

"It is all people."

"Aren't we included?"

"Yes, but we have to pay money first."

"So, why don't you pay?"

"We don't have a lot of money."

"Where do those people get money from?"

The dialogue is ended with the boy's older brother declaring that he is fed up with all these questions, which only serve to emphasise their poverty and need. They are helpless to change the facts.

In order to stop the questions and teach his brother the reality of their situation, he sends him out "to dig for money in the soil", saying to his mother,
"Haven't we had enough of the fire (of our hard life) without him pouring more petrol on to it?"

The child is confused when he finds nothing in the garden as his brother has told him, but he soon realises the lesson to be learned. The things he wants are impossible.

Later, his naivete and innocence surface again when he plans to go and visit the Sphinx, in Egypt. He knows it is a symbol of loyalty, and he loves loyal people. He finds a small amount of money in the house, dropped by his mother, and prepares to start his journey. This brings smiles to the faces of his mother and sister. He relieves some of the darkness in their lives.

al-Khulayfi wanted to illustrate the bitter desperation felt by poor families who see no way out from their chains of misery and sense of

inferiority. He feels the injustice of this and that it is wrong for a community to be split by class and economic differences. The poor have their hard circumstances imposed on them and there is usually no way out .

Min al-dākhil wa al-Khārij [From Inside and Outside]

This story demonstrates al-Khulayfi's complicated, philosophical style with its intensive symbolism and crowded allusions. These often make it difficult for the reader to follow the train of thought.

The story has several characters, all of whom demonstrate contradictions in their natures and ways of life. He makes a very close study of them, attempting to show that in order for an individual to take his true place in society, he needs to rid himself of internal conflict and be clear in what he wants. He needs to rehabilitate himself.

The characters are presented as separate snap-shots with the focus on their relationship with others. With the first one, we have a man who has a dream of being an Imām, of leading the prayers in the mosque. However, he also has a problem with alcohol, and one day the worshippers, smelling the wine on him, interrupt the prayers and throw him out of the mosque.

We feel sorry for him because he knows the gap between his desires and their realisation. His frustration is felt when he says, "I planted my wish, and put a lot of effort into making it grow, but it was an onion seed that I sowed, and it has grown full of a dreadful fragrance. Oh... I hate the smell of onions!"

The second character portrayed in the story is an Imām who in his pure white Muslim gown leads people in prayer and directs them on the best ways to live their lives, correcting their wrong-doings and answering their religious questions. However, he is far from perfect himself, as he has stolen money from a young, orphaned man whom he has been looking after for the young man's uncle. He has ignored his promise and responsibility and has simulated oblivion as an excuse to wrong him. This Imām is clearly not what he appears to be.

The young man confronts the Imām when he is asked to say his prayers. He maintains that prayer should be present in every part of life. He tells the Imām, "You are the one who rejects correction and observances. You are arrogant always and you bring shame and insult to your position".

In the third episode, we come across a thief who first steals out of hunger and then finds that it is an easy way to make a living. He becomes as rich as those living in big houses and ignores the poor who are like he used

to be. The thief had never wanted to choose robbery as a way of life, but had to, when nothing else worked.

al-Khulayfī's sympathy can clearly be seen towards this thief: "He stole because he was needy and he chose the right path as he was deprived of opportunity. He cannot address the people who deprived him and so he steals from them, choosing only those who have the ability to sustain loss of money. Consequently, he is not wrong from a humanitarian point of view."

This justification of the thief's behaviour looks strange if his philosophy legitimises theft to fulfill needs. The rich man's fortune could have been made from a day's theft, which could also be a ladder to reach all the beauties of life.

The fourth character is a janitor who is shown being insulted by clerks as he patiently executes orders. He is also abused by the principal who accuses him of ignorance and uncleanness. He cannot answer the insults as his position does not allow it, and eventually he lays aside his dignity and concentrates on the opportunities that the job gives him to make extra money. It seems to be impossible to do both at the same time. al-Khulayfi presents the janitor as one of the deprived classes whose dispensability makes them obey others or abandon dignity to keep their jobs.

Finally, we meet Aḥmad, a man in love with his sister-in-law despite knowing the unacceptability of such a relationship. The sister-in-law's character penetrates deep into Aḥmad's soul and he thinks of her constantly and attracts her by his glowing love. He is portrayed as a man who, although ugly physically, has an inner beauty which shines through in his feelings and honesty. The ugly big nose that these characters all have symbolises ugliness of character.

al-Ṣanādiq [The Boxes]

The link between past and present comes forward in this story. The writer creates a relationship between an elderly man, Jāsim, who has lived through many changes in his life and a young man who lives a modern Kuwaiti life. Though this young man has disliked Jāsim, his aunt's husband, in the past, because he was thought to be cruel and ill-tempered, he finds after spending time with him that this is not so clear-cut. His presence when he was young was fascinating to men and women alike.

The young man starts to get closer as he realises how lonely the old man is and how many ideas he has which are well worth considering. There is something else about Jāsim which attracts attention and that is the way in

which his family is influenced solely by the way he looks in their treatment of him, without regard to any other aspect.

The young man visits his uncle as often as he can, and the relationship starts to thrive as he accompanies him to different places and tries to ease his feeling of isolation, a feeling he has encouraged in himself to a certain extent, believing that younger people see older people as having had their time, not being suited to the changes that have occurred. He wants also to keep his memories of the past and believes that the younger generation has no appreciation of them. As the relationship develops, mutual admiration is achieved. The writer focuses on Jāsim's character which he portrays as rough and insistent upon making the most of all life has to give, and the young man starts to see the value in this.

Jāsim has a set of boxes of which he is very proud . He keeps inside them precious secrets about the way that old Kuwait lived and that modern Kuwait misses. The age of the sea has been ended by the discovery of oil, the city has grown and the past has been scattered together with its memories. Jasim keeps these boxes, each with an object inside it that goes back to lost times. By opening them, the fragrance of the past emerges, and through them, Jasim shakes hands with the old days.

Jāsim worked in old Kuwait as a sailor on the deck of a ship, but after

the sea-life, ended he still insisted on working, as his energy needed to be consumed. He spent time as a builder until he was injured, and then as a security guard in a school.

al-Khulayfī is saying that the present is deeply rooted in the past, despite outward signs of change or progress. The present cannot ignore the past because it represents pure, high ideals not corrupted by falseness.

al-Khulayfī sees old Kuwait as pure and clear of all ugly social blemish and dirtiness. "The Boxes" shows this strong link between present and past, and how development should mean never to give up man's inheritance, as it may be carrying many positive signs vanishing from the new society. It is essential to mix the two to achieve continuous progress.

Ta'shirat dukhūl [A Visa]

New factors were imposed on Kuwaiti society after the discovery of oil and these appear in al-Khulayfī's stories. An important one for him was the issue of expatriate workers coming to Kuwait with their ambitions and customs often clashing with the reality they found on arrival.

He sees that some, who come to find happiness by making their fortunes, quickly become depressed and disappointed when their dreams vanish in the face of the reality they find. He wants to say that money is not the only means to find happiness. When spiritual satisfaction is lost, money becomes meaningless.

In Ta'shirat dukhūl [A Visa], we have a man who comes to Kuwait looking for a job. His cousin, who has made his money from working there has helped him to obtain a visa. Time passes, the visa is about to run out and he still has not found work. His disappointment grows until the last day when he has to leave without achieving his dream.

In a flashback, we go back to the man's life at home with his wife and sick child and his need for money. The story ends unhappily, but there is still a gleam of hope as we see the man looking forward to getting another visa to enable him to at last find a job.

al-Khulayfi's sympathy is clearly with the working class of expatriates, with their dreams and expectations. They are faced with not making their fortunes; their hopes evaporate because they cannot get work and they end up back where they started.

Here, we also see the dream of a poor man of earning money to achieve happiness. A beautiful girl, Najība, comes from an outside Arab country to live with her Kuwaiti husband. Despite his being old, she was given to him by her father because the old man was rich and she had agreed. A young but poor man, Muḥsin, had proposed to marry her but had been refused by her father because of his poverty. It was a coincidence that Muḥsin was her husband's nephew.

As time passes, and Muḥsin is able to visit the house as a relative of her husband, a love relationship starts between them and she feels her heart beat with real happiness. However, it is too late to become Muḥsin's wife and her moral decline and the precipitate behaviour that characterised her personality were a result of materialism.

THURAYYĀ aL-BAQSUMĪ

al-Baqsumī represents the generation of the seventies in many ways, and her story-writing efforts have been published in the Kuwaiti press since 1971. She introduces her story collection al-ʿAraq al-Aswad [The Black Sweat] by explaining her love of the past and how it has inspired her to write. She says,

"The past, with its everlasting, immortal charm, has made my mind produce this child, and I am putting it in your hands as my beginning in the writing of stories." (30)

Her stories take place in old, pre-oil Kuwait but contain a modern perspective. She has based her events on the reality observed by the Kuwaiti citizen of the time.

Oh Mashmūm [The Basil]

In this story the writer reflects with courage the issue of love between Aḥmad, a rich gold merchant's son from a high-born family, and al-ʿAnūd, a bedouin peddler of the herb, basil. Aḥmad loves singing and accompanies himself on his lute. al-ʿAnūd has beautiful eyes showing from behind her

black veil and everybody wishes they could take off the veil to see the beautiful face she must have.

Meeting between the two take place and Aḥmad tries to gain her love by buying bunches of basil every day and paying her more than she asks. al-Baqṣumī describes the passion in his heart as he wishes he could follow her home, take off her veil and kiss her lips. He makes up his mind to marry her and proposes.

The problems arise when his love is confronted by culture and traditions. How can the high-born Aḥmad marry a bedouin peddler? Abū Jāsim, another one of the merchants, shows the negative view they have of al-ʿAnūd.

"Aḥmad," he says, "I am a man, and work is honour to a man. But it is a disgrace to a woman. A woman who works outside her house is possibly selling her honour at the same time as her goods." (31)

Aḥmad's father becomes angry with him and threatens to throw him out of the house.

"Now you have done it, you miscreant! Isn't it enough that you are jobless, and I work and sweat and your belly gets bigger from the flesh of my back? Get out of my sight! Even with a wife you can't make the right choice. Do you want your sisters to stay spinsters? That whore will not enter my house,

and if you marry her, you will not get a penny from me. You will die of hunger because you are only good at singing." (32)

Days pass and al-ʿAnūd longs to see Aḥmad to tell him that she accepts him to be her husband. The story ends in tragedy, however, when she and her friend hear gunshots. They go to see what has happened and find Aḥmad's dead body in Abū Jāsim's arms. Love has been killed before it can lead to marriage.

With her ending, al-Baqṣumī rejects old traditions which inhibit the purest emotion on earth and kill it with the dagger of poisoned prejudice. The story was considered by some to be harmful to Kuwaiti society because it had so much criticism of traditions that pulled families apart and deprived people from marrying below their rank. The writer also attacks other issues: man's opinion of a woman who works outside the home, considering it a dishonour, and the general opinion towards singing as an inferior occupation. Aḥmad is considered by his father to be jobless, yet he plays the lute and sings. This art was not considered to be a vocation at that time; rather it was a defect in the character, singing being only for those with no manners or morals.

ʿArūs al-qamr [The Moon's Bride]

al-Baqṣumī again attacks old traditions when she deals with the issue of forcing a young girl to marry at a very young age without giving her the right to see her husband and risking her shock on the wedding day by all his blemishes. No one ever takes into consideration her youth and lack of experience in life. Yet she is expected to accept what happens to her calmly and accommodate herself with her new life. She is thereafter confined to obeying her husband blindly and to having an unlimited number of children and unending amounts of housework.

"The Moon's Bride" contains these criticisms of society. At the beginning we see Waḍḥa, a young girl with naughty features sitting with her sister Fāṭima who is getting ready for her wedding day. Waḍḥa shares Fāṭima's dreams and even feels jealous about the future husband whom they have both heard is "as beautiful as the moon". (33)

However, on Fāṭima's wedding day, Waḍḥa is surprised to see that the husband is an old man. She feels sorry for her sister, saying, "Oh Fāṭima, oh, my happy sister! I was jealous about your beautiful husband, but he has a face wrinkled as a potato surrounded by wet, dyed, black hair."

al-dumya [The Doll]

al-Baqṣumī continues her criticisms of a woman's position as she points out how the old Kuwaiti mentality prohibited relations between a man and a woman, even when they were children. In al-dumya [The Doll], we meet Maryam, a child who represents a new kind of woman, one who is stubborn and insists on having what she wants.

She is here making herself a toy to play with.

" I have been trying to cut this tough thread for an hour without success; both of us are stubborn but the scissors are more stubborn than I am. Let it go to hell. I have sharp teeth and they can cut this tough thread. Now I will draw the eyes. I will draw them big to attract everyone's attention."

The woman in al-Baqṣumī's story is strong; more willful than current perceptions will allow and she challenges the man's power in her challenge to the tough thread. Her teeth can cut through it. Maryam wants to draw big eyes for the doll, in order to look through them at the wide-spread universe which she will miss once she is told not to play outside any more.

Maryam meets ʿAbdullāh, her neighbour's son and they exchange toys;

she gives him her doll and he gives her his kite. However, no matter how happy she is with this kite, she is unable to play with it because it would mean she has a relationship with the boy and her mother would punish her for outrageous behaviour. She expresses her discomfort:

"Oh, I cannot sleep, this kite worries me. I gave up the toy I could play with at any time for a kite that will arouse suspicion. I will take it to ^ʿAbdullāh tomorrow and get my doll back."

She goes on to say,

"We are both stupid - neither of us can enjoy our toy."

Relationships of any kind before marriage between a man and a woman were forbidden. Revealing the toy meant revealing the forbidden in the Kuwaiti traditions of the time. The kite had to be kept out of sight to conceal a relationship.

al-Baqṣumī's anger against the subjugated position of the woman is even more clear when she describes Maryam's antipathy towards her neighbour, Umm Rāshid. She says,

"Oh how much I hate this woman. She comes to visit my mother and starts advising her that her daughter Maryam is now grown up and should not play in the alleys any more. It is time for her to get married. I am only nine and they want to stop me from playing and give me in marriage... Nonsense,

I will not agree. I will refuse even if I am beaten for it."

Later Maryam is playing on the beach when she feels something hard in the sand. It is the doll which she gave to 'Abdullah, he has buried it there for fear that his family might see it... Maryam realises that her battle in a man's society is a losing one. It also hurts her to see the face of her toy without features; the sea has washed all her drawings from it. The wide-spread universe has disappeared with those large eyes which were filled with passion and challenge.

Umm Ādam [Mother of Adam]

The situation of the discarded woman is repeated in this story, which shows a loyal woman who refuses to forget her husband after his death. Umm Ādam remembers him and keeps his memory alive by living in an isolated cave close to his tomb.

The pure image of this woman then becomes distorted by people who think she is a witch, with her shaggy hair, swollen eyes and old, torn clothes. Young boys claim that she kidnaps and kills children and that she should be

stopped from committing these brutal crimes. At the end she is beaten, stoned and kicked by these boys and her blood is mixed with the sand on the road. Nobody feels sorry for her, despite the obvious pain she is going through.

"Death to the witch!" they jeer.

al-Baqṣumī's vision of the continual battle of the sexes is portrayed by the brutal slaying of Umm Ādam, with man as the antagonist. Oppression of woman in this story is shown by the corruption of a beautiful image and it ends with death; Umm Ādam is a victim of dark, damned thoughts.

al-Baqṣumī is of course not only attacking beliefs and prejudices common in old Kuwaiti society. She is well aware that they are prevalent even now. The idea that the woman should stay at home, unaware of what is going on around her, is still strong in men's minds. She still has to live a difficult, often violent life with men's domination over her. The battle of her life generally ends with the victory of the man and her defeat, and this is how it is portrayed by most Arab writers.

Although Thurayya al-Baqṣumī's stories generally associate with the "old" days whose end she witnessed as a child, the language she uses to bring out their significance is modern, crystallising a new style of writing for the Arabic short story and forecasting a maturity in both its shape and content.

LAYLĀ aL-UTHMĀN

Love and women are the resounding themes in al-ʿUthmān's stories. With her, the Kuwaiti short story argued for women to have the same liberty as men in their lives, and she works very hard to challenge men's authority.

The woman in her stories cheats as the man does, falls in love as men do and makes love if she wants with her beloved. However, behind this liberation that she feels, al-ʿUthmān has her characters acknowledge their psychological strain and feelings of inferiority; most show cracks from the hard environment around them. This combines with their inability to accommodate their social needs because of the old and restraining traditions that rule oriental society.

Fuḍūl [Curiosity]

Here, a lively, curious woman seeks the love that she craves. Her curiosity and intense feeling of emptiness is clear in a scene where she is shown discovering a love letter to one of her friends from a neighbour. She blackmails her friend into providing her with a letter as well, from her brother. She says,

"Since when were we not curious? Sometimes I think that God created us only to uncover things, and after working hard to reveal them, we either find wonder or shock."

The protagonist's unorthodoxy is clear when she gets a chance to meet a man who loves her and wants to marry her. He is refused for no other reason but that she is still busy with her curiosity.

al-muwā' [The Miaow]

We have in this story an older, single woman who has suffered a very tough childhood. She is an orphan and lives with her brother and his wife who is cruel to her, depriving her of the joys of life, often even food. She says at one point,

"I eat until I am more than full, not because I want to eat, but because I am filling my stomach for the coming period when I may not find a bite to eat, if my brother's wife gets mad at me. How awful she is when she gets angry. She wants to take revenge on me for my childhood and she does this by depriving me of food!" (34)

The story continues with a scene between the woman and cat lying

on the grass outside the house. The writer creates a dialogue between them in which she finds a way to describe her misery. At the end of it, a comparison is drawn between the two:

"I have tried to find out all the differences between me and her and all the cats in the world. I do not see differences as much as similarities."

She scrutinises the cat's "moustache" and muses,

"She is a female like me. Why then do women not have moustaches?" (35)

Laylā al-ʿUthmān is very much concerned with the grievances of the woman in the East where the moustache is a symbol of male power and domination over women. The protagonist's dream vanishes when she realises that the moustache is only for men and she wishes that women could have them.

"I don't know how long I have been talking with this cat lying beside me. I remember that I started with her after they called me a cat. Yet, where have I got to? Have I hurried towards the end, in order to contemplate my tedium and the lack of all I have wanted, only to become an old maid, living alone at home, looking around for anything to distract me"? (36)

al-Fuṣūl al-qādira [The Coming Seasons]

If al-^عUthmān understands the enfeebling of women as a result of male dominance, she still wishes to reject their empty power, as shown in this story. She portrays the situation of Kawthar and her daughter Ḥanān after the death of her husband. Kawthar cannot look for a new love through another marriage because of her brother-in-law's domination. He controls her life and threatens that he will take her daughter away from her if she refuses his advances.

Kawthar's problem eases when a man proposes to Ḥanān. With Ḥanān's marriage she can extricate herself from the chains of imprisonment imposed on her by her brother-in-law and his selfish seeking after her mind and body.

The writer's rebellion against woman's position in Eastern society is clear, especially when she has Kawthar say,

"Today women are hastening to leave men's barns." (38)

At the end of the story the author gives Kawthar her freedom from being controlled by her brother-in-law.

Imra'a fi Inā' [A Woman in a Pot]

In this, the title story from the collection, al-^عUthmān illustrates the misunderstandings arising from a restrictive society, where people are not supposed to talk about their feelings. She describes the passionate love a woman has for her sister's father-in-law. This love is a cause of agony to her sister who collapses thinking that there is a romantic relationship between her sister and her husband, ^تTariq.

al-^عUthmān wants to show us that women sometimes can't find a suitable man and they may make wrong decisions because of their lack of experience.

al-Thawb al-^أĀkhar [The Other Dress]

Here al-^عUthmān describes a woman who soaks herself in dishonour and vice, when she sells her body to men, to satisfy her husband to make large amounts of money. She is not happy about this, as she shows when he asks her to accompany him to one of his night parties.

"I went mad," she says, "and pulled out my hair with desperation. I was as defeated and as subdued as ever... I am torn and the darkness of night which I had hoped would ease my suffering has become like a giant hovering over me. I am moved from one chasm to another even more

daunting... what am I going to do?" (39)

Here al-Uthmān is reflecting the emotions of a woman who feels that she is lost, and feels great pressure from what she is living under. Her suffering is caused by a man who, even though he is her husband, treats her and makes her behave as if she were a prostitute. All he wants is to use her to gain money and to be in favour with rich and famous people.

al-Qalb wa Ra'iḥat al-Khubz al-Maḥrūq

[The Heart and the Smell of Burned Bread]

This is a love story that takes place in old Kuwait between Fahd, eighteen years old, and Sārā. It has the two of them not only meeting, but making love in the bed of Fahd's mother during her absence. Unfortunately for them, the mother arrives home, catches them, and starts beating Sārā, who in the end loses everything.

Fahd's mother represents the hard, stubborn mentality which has no understanding of love. Fahd and Sārā hurl themselves into love and it leads to their undoing morally. However, the writer thinks that this is going to be

inevitable in such a repressed society as hers. It would have been "natural", she thinks, for Sārā to tell her mother frankly about her love for Fahd, and for Fahd to do the same with his mother. The illicitness of the relationship obstructs explicitness, and the consequences are dire.

al-Afā [The Snake]

al-Awrām [The Tumors]

Love again crashes on the rocks of Eastern tradition in these two stories. In al-Afā [The Snake], the protagonist is in love with a man and she tells her mother about it. We can feel her emotion fully in their conversation:

"I am in love, mother. I love a man and I do not know if he loves me..."

"If he does, he will tell you. Do not rush it."

"I will tell him, mother."

"Have you lost your mind, girl?"

"It is crazy to do it, madness I admit. But is it not madness if I subjugate my

heart to this roaring sound?"

"Keep your pride. Let him start... He is an Eastern animal... You do not know men yet." (40)

Love is permitted when a man feels it, but is illicit when a woman does. In the end, the girl does not take her mother's advice; she admits her love to her man. She jumps where jumping is forbidden.

In al-Awrām [The Tumors], the protagonist, Salmā, is not as brave as the protagonist in [The Snake]. She locks her love up inside until it chokes her, as if a walnut has stuck in her throat and stopped her breathing. The writer describes how gloomy Salmā's life is, with her mother not allowing her to express her love. She remembers how her hand was burned by fire-tongs when her mother discovered the love letter she received from the boy next door. This is what pushed Salmā to conceal her love and consequently to feel a tumor getting bigger and spreading from her throat to the rest of her body. The doctor is unable to recognise any physical cause for this.

Here we find al-ʿUthmān is criticising the traditional idea that if a woman shows that she feels love, then it means that she is challenging the whole of society and its traditions.

al-Ṣūra [The Picture]

Another aspect of woman's sufferings is pictured here. The protagonist lives a restricted life and this pushes her to behave abnormally and display a breakdown in dignity. She is a woman aged 45, looking for a frivolous adventure which will involve being unfaithful to her husband. The feeling that she is getting older pushes her to look for another man to fulfill her vanity and make her feel young and desirable. This feeling intensifies itself when she looks into the mirror on her birthday.

"In this big mirror, with its glittering, golden frame, I saw reflected my face and upper body. I came closer and closer until it was filled with my face only. I looked at it attentively... that was the moment I decided to be unfaithful to my husband. My face is not that bad but of course it is not as well-preserved as my husband's. It is wrinkled around the eyes, more so than his even though he is over 53 years of age. This is my face and this is the fact, and it arouses real rebellion inside me against him. I stick with my decision; I am going to be unfaithful to him." (94)

She wants a new man settled in her life for when her husband gets tired of her and leaves her for a younger woman. She feels this is necessary in order to survive.

al-Mubāḍara [The Initiative]

The same desire is dealt with in this story, although it moves from mere desire into actualisation. The protagonist loves a man other than her husband. She feels imprisoned because of this husband whose heart does not meet with hers, and her desire to break out is justified with these words: "How, how can she be the queen of his heart and the mistress of his mind when she is tied down? How can she feel the shadows of his love which is growing now, when she is enjoying other shadows? Hesitation and desire are mixed inside her ... all the conflicts are inflamed and her heart and mind contradict one another. She loses herself and runs to him again." (42)

al-Mawt fi lahẓat al-bad' [Death at the Moment of Beginning]

The issue of a woman's moral decline is connected to money in this story. The protagonist, Faṭīma, sells her body to men to make money for her blind father who does not know anything about it and who would chop her head off if he did.

Min Milaff Imra'a [From a Woman's File]

A woman is pushed towards aggression out of a feeling of depression and defeat. We see a seventeen-year-old wife from the bedouin society kill her old husband as revenge on her parents who have forced her to marry him when she is still very young.

The girl says,

"Could my mother bear to look at this face every night? Would my father be able to sleep in peace while this man's whistling and snoring broke the night's peace? Why don't I get rid of him? Why don't I match my parents' crime, the one they forced me to accept at the age of fourteen?" (43)

Her conflict increases when she compares her situation with that of her neighbour Waḍḥa, and her young husband, Fulayḥān. Why hasn't she got a man of his age so that she can enjoy life? She acts.

"Waḍḥa's and Fulayḥān's breath breaks into three years of injury to my body. My desires have been destroyed. A strange power takes me by surprise and I let my feet free in a mad run. I take the axe between my hands, shaking like a leaf on a windy night. I run before the storm that pulls all the roots of calm

and patience out. His head is empty, his mouth is open, his teeth rested near his head and his snoring can be heard everywhere." (44)

Hazima [Defeat]

A woman is subjected to emotional privation here. She is lame and afraid to be in love. Her sense of inferiority leads her to failure and the thought that it will be impossible to find a man to love her pushes her to despair.

"I crossed the paths, the yard and was ready to cross the street when a car that was storming madly towards me stopped and I heard the front passenger say,

'Let this cripple get across the road.' I heard him and there were tears in my eyes. I forgot the number of the room which the man with the thick lips gave me. I only remember how that unexpected meeting moved woman's desire inside me." (45)

Bayt min al-dhākira [A Home From Memory]

Laylā al-^ʿUthmān also focuses on the issue of the Israeli occupation of Palestine in her stories. In highly charged language she pictures the suffering of Palestinians away from their homeland.

The young child in this story sells newspapers at the traffic lights and is a good example of the hard work that contrasts this child's character with his pure and innocent features."

Despite the difficulty of the circumstances of his life, he dreams as his mother does. He dreams of having a bicycle, and she dreams of going back to Safad, her family's village in Palestine. Both dreams are impossible to realise, however. Money is needed for a bicycle and Home is occupied.

al-Uthmān shows her sympathy for the issue through the character of a lady who stops daily at the traffic lights and gives the child 250 fils and a bag of sweets. This makes the boy very happy, as well as his mother. Yet, if he is going to buy his bicycle, he can't keep giving all his money to family support. For a while he lies in order to keep it for himself, but cannot keep doing it and tells his mother who gets angry at him because she hates lying. Lying is the reason for their destitution at the moment. She tells him, "You lied, darling. You lied for a bicycle. Have you forgotten what lies have done to us? They lied to us, they ordered us to evacuate our homes for 24 hours only, but they lied... hours have become years now!" (46)

At the end of the story the mother decides that her son shall have his bicycle because she realises that his dream of it is equal to her one of Home, and she doesn't want him to suffer deprivation in the same way that she has.

al-Bayā [The Selling]

This story also pictures a Palestinian child who sells chewing gum at the traffic lights. His mother keeps an eye on him from the window of their house and feels badly when people refuse to buy from him. They close their car windows and consequently the door of life for them, in her eyes.

Opposite their building there is a beautiful woman leaning out of her window and pointing to a man who blows her kisses from another window. Another man appears and acts as middle-man to negotiate a "date" between them.

The two events have obvious comparisons. The child sells chewing gum at very little profit and the woman sells her body for a large profit. But how different they are in nature! al-Ūthmān, in these stories about a child working for his family, touches deep inside the sufferings of the Palestinian people.

al-Naml al-Ashqar [Blond Ants]

This story has another angle on the Palestinian issue with its dispersion of people to other lands. We see a hard-working girl called ^عUrayb, who is aware of the dangers of the Israeli occupation and who plays an important role in helping her people towards liberation.

However, many people don't think that this influx of immigrants is harmful and ^عUrayb is reminded of a story told to her by her aunt. It concerns a child that her grandmother had, whom she hanged from the ceiling in an attempt to keep her away from the blond ants, but later on found her dead and could not recognise her face or body because it was completely covered by the black ants.

This author deals in his stories with the general issue of the miseries of the under-privileged members of a wealthy society. He shows his concern in a collection of stories entitled, Irādat al-Maḥūd fī Ḥāl Abū Jāsim dhī al-Dakhl al-Maḥdūd [The Will of Allah in the Situation of Poor Abū Jāsim] which he dedicated to individuals of limited income.

al-Khubz Yanbut fī al-Ḥajar [The Bread Grows in the Stone]

Here we have an immigrant nurse, Bahiyya, who comes from an impoverished background in another Arab country. She arrives with her ambitions for a better future for her husband and relatives back home. At work she realises that discrimination takes place in the treatment of rich and poor patients, the latter obtaining proper care and the former being exposed to indignity and ill-treatment. Bahiyya decides to emulate her superior in order to get some of the gifts and donations which she sees coming the boss's way.

One day she beats a patient during delivery, thinking that she is from a poor family and therefore that she does not qualify for decent care. Bahiyya

is surprised, however, to discover that the woman comes from a "deluxe" family, as the writer puts it, and her action leads her to having her contract cancelled and being given two days in which to leave the country.

She escapes from the nurses hostel and has to find other means to earn money. The dreams she has lived on have evaporated because she lowered her principles and she in the end loses all her dignity.

al-Rujayb is sympathetic to the suffering of the immigrant whose dreams depend on travelling to and working in a rich country, but he is strongly against a fall into the world of vice. Bahiyya represents those weak individuals who give up their principles and their morals and he presents her in a negative light. She disregards her professional responsibility for the sake of money but even then she does not end up with money; rather she has to sell more of her dignity to earn it.

Wajhuka Īlān ghayr Daw'ī [Your Face is an Unlit Sign]

The writer's attitude towards misery and suffering is shown again in this story where a poor child dreams of owning a bicycle. Poverty prevents this from being possible, but he still goes to one of the commercial streets

every afternoon to stand in front of the bicycle shop. In spite of his father's objections, he is unable to resist the bright, reflecting lights on the glittering shop surfaces which dazzle his mind.

The child's pain increases as his mother catches a piece of cloth and squeezes it with all her strength until the blood vessels in her hand appear. The child's father shouts at him, saying he is weak for wanting to buy the bicycle. Sadness and disappointment is shown on the child's face while he is recalled for his failure in school.

One day, when he goes to the shop again to gaze at his bicycle, he is surprised to find that it has been sold. His dream of obtaining happiness vanishes. In his innocence, he attempts to understand the difference between his poverty and the wealth of others. This is shown in a dialogue that takes place between him and his friend:

"Friend: Wa'il, the merchant's son who lives there has two bicycles.

Child: His father is rich.

Friend: What is the father's profession?

Child: Rich

Friend: I mean, what does he do for a living?

Child: Not working... rich.

Later, the child sees the bicycle he has dreamed about with one of the rich children.

"Screaming as if he were a mother bereaved of her child, he went straight up to the bicycle which the rich child was examining . He tried to pull it from his hand, shouting,
'Leave it, it's mine!'

On the other hand, his friend excited by his excitement, he went directly to the amazed rich child starts fighting and the watermelon pulp peels still hung in the lower lips... When the shopkeeper and the child father went quickly towards them.

'What is this? Who are you?

He could not answer, his face prepares to cry, but his friend shout;

'It is his bicycle.

The father shows some sympathy.

"But we paid for it. Surely there are other bicycles in the store?"

He turns to the shop-owner who says that they do have many more and points out to the poor child that if he can pay, he too can have one. His friend, relaxing his grasp from the child's neck, turned to him ... while advertisements lit up the whole of the dark street, his face remained an unlit sign." (47)

The child is left with the bitter knowledge that his family's poverty is what deprives him of what he wants.

Tawāṣul [Contact]

Here, the economic factor as a cause of class differences is examined. The writer presents a dialogue between two children in a kindergarten. In spite of their childhood innocence which affects their thinking, class variation is seen to be a cause of psychological disturbance for the poorer of the two.

al-Rujayb emphasises the differences between them by describing their mannerisms and ways of talking or sitting. For example, the boy wipes his mouth on his sleeve while she uses a drinking straw; she possesses four dolls, a train set and a cradle. The poor boy feels the pressure of his poorness, even at this age.

The rich girl is, however, made to feel his superiority in some ways, as when she finds that he is not afraid of dogs as she is. She comes close to him with her eyes open wide; without self-consciousness she comes close to him as he finishes his story:

"I put the robe around the dog's neck, then I took him home. When my mother saw him, she was scared and started screaming, 'Take him away, take away him quickly!'

He stops a moment, and then adds, 'Are you, are you scared of dogs?'

Irādat al-Mabūd fi Ḥāl Abū Jāsim dhī al-Dakhl al-Maḥdūd

[The Will of Allah in the Situation of Poor Abu Jasim]

Abū Jāsim is a Kuwaiti of low income who has waited years for his turn to obtain a government house. The writer describes to us Abū Jāsim's need for money and for a child in order to enjoy his life. He is described as using the public buses for transport as he does not possess a car. His morality is shown in his strong devotion to his Bahrini wife; she has not yet given birth to a child and yet he insists on not divorcing her, contrary to his family's advice. He always replies to their comments about her infertility with,

" If God does not want, then I do not want."

His wife found in him peace, security, protection and sympathy. As a single woman, she had felt alone; he provided affection and friendship. At first, she does not know much about household affairs and he teaches her. He knows how to cook and sew and other things that a sailor needs when he has to depend on himself. He also knows reading and writing and he teaches her some arithmetic so that she can buy the household requirements. For

extra income, she sells hats which she makes herself.

He has chosen her to marry and left his relatives. He builds a small house for her, made of sea mud and stone. However, later he is compelled to mortgage it to cover the costs of a diving trip and must continue paying it back, as if it were rent.

Abū Jāsim's wish is to possess a proper house and to register it in his wife's name. But the wish vanishes as the government delays and compels him to wait for the next year. He becomes infected with disappointment and believes that he does not deserve such poor treatment. He is a strong man and he often tells his wife of an episode in his diving career when he saved the captain's life by removing a bullet from his body with his teeth.

Burghī [The Screw]

We meet with a character in this story who suffers psychological and social pressures created by economic circumstances. He is a school teacher, fair and impartial, with a set of principles which he takes care to keep. This leads him to confrontations with his wife, many requirements extending beyond his financial ability and a feeling of general incapability.

His wife gets fed up with his work which he often brings home to continue. She feels hostile towards the exercise books and she hates his red pen. She says,

"Look at yourself ... what is the difference between you and these notebooks? Chalk dust covers your spectacles even when you are at home. We can never enjoy watching a television programme because you insist on correcting the language mistakes of the announcers."

She reaches the point of poking fun at her husband, comparing him to the actor, Charlie Chaplin, with his funny movements.

"I swear you are Charlie Chaplin. Do you remember the film where he was working on a machine and years afterwards his hands were still jerking nervously because he was so used to the work?"

In the end his wife leaves him. The pressures in his life increase, and the work difficulties and the exercise books and the red pens all continue to surround him.

al-Furṣa al-'Akhīra [The Last Chance]

The chain of frustration which poorly-paid people have, even when they are feeling optimistic that social oppression will be eradicated, is described in this story.

A cleaner in a cinema listens every day to patrons coming out from the current film as they recount what they have just seen. He is very interested and eventually decides to watch it for himself. He goes to the ticket window, buys a ticket and tries to ignore his fear that his boss may pass and discover his absense from duty. Inside the cinema, work fatigue sends him into a deep sleep until he is woken up by a voice saying to him'

"Wake up, my brother, the film has finished."

He still feels deprived.

al-Darība [The Tax]

The issue of misery and deprivation resulting from poverty is repeated in this story, but here the fate of the hero is to end in jail.

The story features a nurse, Muhammad, who is compelled because of material needs and increases in rent to share an apartment with others. His wife is upset because their oldest daughter, Nadiyā, and her two other children share one bedroom. As well, she is scared for her daughter, because in the neighbouring room there are two men who are not married.

Depression hangs over them more and more. Muhammad takes up smoking cigarettes and this further damages the budget. The nerves of both husband and wife become more taut. She remembers back to the time when Muhammad borrowed a fast car belonging to one of his nursing colleagues and he took her to the beach as lovers do, but at the end, the police caught them and sent them home. Without a strong effort from Muhammad, she knew his fate was going to be very black.

He takes to using a certain drug on doctor's orders so that he can sleep better. It works, and so he gets an idea in his head. The drug is a food; he will give it to his children and their misery will end. In spite of his wife's fears for her children, her confidence in Muhammad's medical information allows her to accept the idea. The deprivation stops for several months but the children become addicted to the drug. Muhammad ends in prison accused of stealing drugs from the hospital.

Thus we see that the main characters in al-Rujayb's stories illustrate one issue, in three dimensions: poverty, deprivation and disappointment.

We face again in al-Ājmi's stories women's suffering in oriental society. This issue also occupies a large part in Laylā al-Ūthmān's work. If she has succeeded in describing women's feelings, then al-Ājmi has succeeded in surveying man's feelings towards women in regard to her new position in society.

The woman in his stories is subjected to injustice and feels pain, but she does not have the courage to resist as al-Ūthmān's women do. We are shown the pain and severity to which woman is exposed by man, in his first collection entitled al-Sharkh [The Split].

al-Arsifa al-Mahjūra [Lonely Pavements]

Here, loneliness is looked at in the case of a young woman who lacks beauty and feels that she will never be asked for in marriage.

"My fingers touch my face; it is not strange to them with its roughness, dryness and the small pustules scattered all over it... No, I will never have children. Let marriage go to hell - it will bring suffering to my children if they inherit this pug nose, these thick lips... "

The young woman feels deprivation, but the instinct for a man moves inside her soul. She wonders if she will be without all her life, if her nights will always be long, always followed a weak dawn light, up to the time she dies.

"Is there not to be a storm to destroy this calm?"

Then an idea comes to her and she visualises having sexual experience with a man to fulfil her thirst.

"All my friends talk at their gatherings about their adventures, and the strong oxen that plough their land; all except me. I hide my face coyly because I do not have a bull to work my land."

She decides to have her sexual experience with ʿAbdullāh, the family's driver. He does not respond to her request, but at least she assures his silence. The story ends with a coincidence which creates a new atmosphere of unhappiness for her. She finds out that ʿAbdullāh the driver is already sharing his bed, and with her cousin. She remembers hearing her cousin say that she thought that men were villainous, and nobody deserves to make herself so unclean as to marry one.

She now looks at her cousin in a new way, supporting her tired head on her hand. What she sees pains her very much, her legs collapse and she passes out. She has fallen into a new psychological crisis because she tried

to fulfil her pressing requirement of a man too quickly.

Kharīf al-ʿUmr [The Autumn of Life]

Here we meet a woman in her fourth decade who is in love with a young man the age of her dead, only son. Her maternal instinct vanished when her son died and she now feels a different kind of love. She says, speaking to herself,

"I admit to you in these mute sentences that I love him. Do not be amazed at what I say; I do not care about your astonishment because I am satisfied completely by what I am doing. I do not need anyone to tell me to stop."

When the moment comes that she intends to confess her love for him, she is disappointed because he is also in love with a girl of his own age. She recognises the big differences between them and now feelings arise in her heart.

Baqāyā Rajul fī Qalb Imra'a Ajwaf

[The Remains of a Man in the Empty Heart of a Woman]

Here we have the suffering of a woman with an oriental man who feels that she is one of his exclusive, private possessions.

The woman hides her injured feelings for the sake of the family and especially the children, but her psychological strength weakens and she has a mental breakdown which leads her to be admitted to a psychiatric hospital. The husband thinks that her collapse is due to the household problems and the demands of the children, until he is informed of her health file where he discovers that, before their marriage, she had had a relationship with a man that she loved very much. This confession has come out in her dialogue with the physician who was treating her.

He felt great pain, and realised that she has not been able to devote love to him throughout their whole eight years together, despite the birth of two children. She has received him but her heart has been empty of love. Her marriage has been an escape from her painful past, but it has failed to provide happiness or spiritual balance for her.

The story finishes with the husband deciding in his selfishness to divorce her as a punishment for her previous experience. al-Ājmi has shown us the mentality of an oriental man who must have control over a woman, even over her feelings. He is very cruel, has never given her an opportunity to express what she is feeling. He might have succeeded in changing her, in treating her wounds if he had made some effort from the beginning, but he never did and now his only answer is to separate from her.

al-Sharkh [The Split]

In this story we have a man who feels fear when his wife goes out of the house. Suspicion is always there, worrying him, and as a result a split occurs between them.

One day, Khalid returns early to his home and is surprised to find that his wife, Fāṭima, is absent. Doubts surround him as he imagines his wife in the embrace of another man. He says to himself,

"No, it is not possible; I married her after a strong love relationship... Is it possible that she could give herself to another man as she gave herself to me?"

His suspicions vanish when his brother, Jāsim calls him to come and have lunch at his home, and says that Fāṭima is waiting for him there.

At this, Khalid stands in front of their wedding photo and says, "How I wish that she were beside me now, to hold her in my arms, pull her to my chest and kiss her. I am in need of it to clean the dirt from my conscience."

Although al-Ājmī shows here a character who is repentant about his

behaviour, the beast of doubt does come back, and pictures and imaginings crowd his mind as he walks around the room.

Woman suffers from injustice because of man's authority and cruelty. Women are always the focus of doubt and suspicion. They obey the man not because they believe he is right but because they have been brought up to surrender to all customs and traditions, no matter how unjust. It would be abnormal behaviour if she revolted or even protested. As well, however, the man has to play the role of controller in order to satisfy society's desire; otherwise he too would appear as abnormal.

In his collection of stories entitled Tadārīs al-Wajh al-Ākhar [The Landscape of the Other Fac], al-Ājmī reveals to us his political convictions. He feels compelled to denounce authority which rules through fear and intimidation of its population. He applies this to the wider Arab world in general, and in this collection we are made to feel the atmosphere of suspicion as the authorities observe the movements of individuals and check on their different patterns of behaviour on a day to day basis.

Rādī al-Rāfid [Radi the Reluctant]

Here we have a character who is weak and incapable of protesting against an authority which imposes its will through a repressive intelligence network.

Individuals are provided with a card for air and water. Rādī's has expired, so it should be renewed. Difficulties arise as he goes through the chain of procedures necessary to do this. At the end of the chain, he has seen and heard enough of the inconsistencies that his society suffers from to make him complain. As a result, the authorities decide not to renew his air and water card.

At the end of the story there comes a knock on the door. His wife wonders who would visit them so late at night. He opens the door, is asked his identity and then pulled outside.

al-Daw' al-Aḥmar [The Red Light]

In this story we have repression with prisons and noises of iron chains and bars. The hero dreams of a world empty of violence and terror. He recalls pictures of war and the repressive means which authority practises

to shut up voices which demand their rights.

His ears pick up the irony of third world countries importing large amounts of iron. Apprehensions grow in his mind; the present is horrifying and the future is unknown. In his dreams, he imagines that he is arrested and put in a prison because of fighting in the street.

"Sārī"

In this story, we meet Sārī, a man who works as a supervisor in a shoe workshop in a big company. He suffers from memories which make him hate soldiers. In his youth an event took place in which a soldier put his heavy, leathered foot on his father's neck and when his brother shouted at him in an attempt to defend his father, the soldier pushed him in the chest, he lost his balance and his head struck the wall.

The author gathers together the company manager, Sārī and a police colonel. The manager orders Sārī to listen while the colonel talks about a project he has regarding the manufacture of soldiers' boots. He has brought with him a heavy, black shoe as an example.

Sari looks at the shoe... his eyes darken, his stomach turns over... he remembers his old mother's tears, remembers his father and his brother... that heavy, black shoe... the soldiers' attack... He breaks out in anger against the police colonel and hits him with a chair screaming all the while in hysteria. He is taken to jail.

Khārij al-Dā'ira [Out of the Circle]

Here, we meet Muṣād whom the authorities suspect because he has received an empty envelope. The investigations on him start and he is put under observation by the security police.

At the end, all becomes clear when we discover that his brother forgot to put his letter inside the envelope. This ending is to show how a repressive authority suspects everything and creates fear and doubt even over ridiculous things. The individual remains manacled, investigated in all his movements.

END NOTES: CHAPTER FIVE

30. al-Baqṣumī, Thurayyā, page 4
31. " page 13
32. " page 17
- 33.
34. al-ʿUthmān, Laylā, (2) page 13
35. " page 23
36. " page 27
37. " page 25
38. " page 31
39. " page 65
40. al-ʿUthmān, Laylā, (1) page 74
41. " (3) page 94
42. " page 68
43. " (1) page 31
44. " (1) page 34
45. " (3) page 83
46. " (2) page 124
47. al-Rujayb, Walid, (2) page 71

CHAPTER SIX

MISCELLANEOUS CRITICAL ISSUES

Miscellaneous Critical Issues

***Pioneers of story writing in the period 1962-1985: Symbolism and Realism.**

If symbolic language was strongly established in the writings of Sulaymān al-Khulayfī and Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī, realistic language also displayed its fully fledged existence in that of Laylā al-ʿUthmān.

Laylā al-ʿUthmān believes in her writings with the realist's pragmatism mixed with the writer's imagination. Thus, the negative phenomena she sees in her community are able to create a distinguished art, directing the tracks of deviated ideology.

When she deals with the love issue, amidst the plethora of obstacles and misunderstandings between the generations that have resulted from the financial leap, she presents a fact and reflects her ambitions and inner desires, in her aim to rectify the situation and her enthusiasm for changing it.

Her handling of this issue involves a deliberate critical realism in which she mixes fact and imagination.

If we look at her protagonists, we feel that they are real. Some lived in Kuwait during the period of the writer's

childhood and others lived in the period following the discovery of oil in Kuwait.

These characters remain firmly-fixed in her mind, and impose their existence throughout her stories.

The writer's concern also includes various other aspects, but social issues inform the major part of her story and even of her two novels Wasmiyya takhruju min al-bahr [Wasmia coming out of the sea] and al-Mar'a wa al-qitta [The woman and the cat].

Politics is not a major topic in Laylā al-'Uthmān's stories, as it is confined to very limited stories that cannot be compared in quantity with her writing as a whole.

If we return back to the protagonists of the realistic stories that the writer handles, we can see that two elements; honesty and spontaneity, characterise the protagonists ruled by socially flawed relations. The protagonists move honestly, spontaneously and simply, far away from affectation and artificiality.

She displays the realist tone in the Kuwaiti story in the '70 more completely than those realistic stories of the '40s and '50s. This is clear from her linguistic proficiency and her distinguished methodical performance.

This maturity is refined by the writer's experience, deep in the roots of her ego, and linked with the depressing facts surrounding her, and the painful shadows cast over those times.

The two levels that join in Laylā al-ʿUthmān's stories are: to live with reality through memories on one hand, and a critical view which handles asocial and psychological defects as the result of unhealthy relationships in the community, on the other hand.

If we feel, in some of Laylā al-ʿUthmān's early stories, a kind of social surveillance in the actual recording of consumed realistic experience, then such stories tend to be "narrations" rather than proper stories. Still, in later stories, she manages to create characters and events from memory mixed with a realistic critical view that goes beyond the limited scene to an artistic, fictional subjugation. Her stories are considered to be innovative artistic presentations representing objectivity based on constructive views.

Yet if her stories are written in a realistic frame, this also combines with the symbolism that we find in Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī and Sulaymān al-Khulayfi.

The mature existence of the Kuwaiti story was established by Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī in 1962, as mentioned earlier, in his story "The Rudder". Sulaymān al-Khulayfi's first attempt was in 1964, a story entitled [New Visions in the Society of the Great].

Despite the difference, Sulaymān al-Shattī and Sulaymān al-Khulayfī were both recognised for their symbolic style. However, Sulaymān al-Khulayfī's protagonists are involved in both a distinctive ideological conflict a philosophical outlook that casts a critical view on defective social and political areas.

Sulaymān al-Shattī's and Sulaymān al-Khulayfī's use of the symbolic style is probably with the aim of raising the consciousness of the reader as they initiate a new form of short story writing. This is in contrast with the purely realistic style that dominated the stories of the earlier period. However, in al-Khulayfī's writing we still find unresolved the issue, inherent in symbolism, of commitment versus exaggeration.

On the other hand, 'The Rudder' and other stories published by Sulayman al-Shatti in his collection al-Sawt al-Khafit [The Low Voice] (1970) are surrounded by a symbolic frame that achieves the element of harmony and psychological communication with the reader and is concerned with his ideological experience, with the sequence of events and with the explanation of symbols. Therefore, the artistic aspects represented by symbolism do not predominate the essential content of the stories.

Thus, when we come to the symbolism used by al-Khulayfī we find that much of the content results from a vast congestion of symbols, represented in ideas, contrasted situations, mental

philosophical concepts, and silent questions dealing with defective situations in one way or another.

The reader of Sulaymān's al-Khulayfī's stories finds it difficult to follow the track of the symbolic shadows that dominate the events and characters. Frequently, the reader finds it difficult to comprehend the content of the story, and subsequently to perceive the writer's aim. Despite the compact artistic structure that we see in Sulaymān al-Khulayfī's stories, we sometimes feel an intentional intemperance in his absurd collocation of symbols; we are faced by linguistic and psychological obstacles that take us suddenly from one viewpoint to another.

That is how symbolism varies between Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī and Sulaymān al-Khulayfī. al-Shaṭṭī uses a reasonable amount of symbolism through characters from real life who are hiding behind convincing symbols and through symmetrical, literal instructions in harmony with the narrating style and dialogue.

We do not feel any exaggeration of fabrication in the use of symbols as we see in al-Khulayfī's. al-Shaṭṭī uses a symbolic style clearly revealing his aim at the end of the story.

Anyhow, both have succeeded in establishing the art of the symbolic story in Kuwait and have enriched the story content in a modern, developed style that meets with a wide public,

fundamentally interested in handling the story content in an artistic way.

***The Seeds of the Past in the Minds of the Story Pioneers
(1962-1985)**

Although the story writers in the period 1962-1985 handle issues rejected by their surrounding community with its traditions, the far past, represented in the sea society, was not invested in creatively by the story writers of that period.

The past which represented simplicity and purity remained in the minds of the story writers in the period 1962-1985. Its features were deeply engraved in their hearts. Here, the mental communication faced the realistic separation between the past and the oil generation by the advancing of new city and obliterating the countenance of the old city.

From that point, the story writers in the period 1962-1985 went back to the past spirit, and used it profoundly as a symbol for handling neoteric issues.

Thus, the past inspired them and urged on their literary ingenuity, since those writers lived a short period of their childhood in the past and were aware of the differences between Kuwait of the past and the new modern Kuwait and endeavoured to achieve the element of communication by urging upon the oil generation the necessity of going back to the deep-rooted past - the symbol of purity - and the necessity of holding on to the positive phenomena.

The past was used as a symbolic method to handle neoteric issues in the stories of Sulaymān al-Shattī, Sulaymān al-Khulayfī, Thurayyā al-Baqsumī and Laylā al-Ūthmān.

In al-Sawt al-Khāfit [The Low Voice], a story collection which was published in 1970, al-Shatti went back to the past in his first attempt as a story-writer. Entitled al-daffah [The Rudder], he focused on the disability of the old Kuwaiti society to accept development. The old ship, with people on deck, going on for a long pearl-diving journey, is very primitive and threatening, exposing the people's lives to danger and death. This was represented, on the whole, by the body of the ship and the water leaking inside as a result of a strong wind. Yet al-Shatti embodied this simple event with a modern political issue aiming at the necessity of the public's participation in government and legislation.

More stories with the same concept followed. If we read Sulaymān al-Khulayfī's stories we feel his longing for the past. In his story al-Sanādiq [The Boxes], he created a type of connection between the past and the present through an intimate relationship between an old man who lives in the past and a young man who lives in the post-oil Kuwait. This communication occurs through the old man's long life as a pearl-diver in old Kuwait and his continuance to work as a school caretaker in modern Kuwait.

The rough and harsh life of the sea accompanies him, putting emphasis on solidarity and continuity, and his insistence on extending and connecting with the present.

Sulaymān al-Khulayfī includes a concealed invitation urging the new oil generation not to deny the past and not to hasten detachment from it, as it has lots of positive aspects that deserve commitment to.

Thurayyā al-Baqṣumī, in her story collection al-ʿAraq al-Aṣwad [The Black Sweat], depends on the past, as the issues handled in those stories take us to the past with its customs and traditions but in a different shape, criticising the individual's psychological issues from different economical or social aspects.

She strongly highlights the women she feels it is necessary to write about. She does not only monitor old experiences, but uses them as symbols to handle important modern issues.

Finally, Laylā al-ʿUthmān, who lived in the past, concentrates most of her story-writing attempts on describing the cruelty of some traditions and customs that tie up individuals on different levels. We can see that she disdains those traditions that insult the woman and disparage her.

She urges the necessity of keeping the old moral standards that characterised the old Kuwait, where purity prevailed.

We also see a denunciation of illicit relationships that arise as a result of the false civilisation and calls for the necessity of keeping the inherited positive features and being proud of affiliation with the genuine past. Accusing the past in some of its negative aspects does not mean abandoning it or completely dissociating from it.

***Laylā al-ʿUthmān and the woman's world between subjugation and liberation.**

The woman has always been the main and distinguished character in Laylā al-ʿUthmān's stories and prevalent in most of the issues and ideas being handled.

The woman's feeling of disconnection and being a missing letter in the alphabet of society leads her a painful feeling accompanied by deprivation and subjugation.

Laylā al-ʿUthmān thinks that the woman's response to this painful reality means deprivation and more in this cruel society. Then it was necessary to reject, rebel, be abnormal and indifferent towards all the awful reactions that resulted in more depressions and limitations for the woman.

Going deep inside the eastern woman, makes her feel depressed, so we see her in Laylā al-ʿUthmān's stories breathe the unfaithful polluted air, sinking deep in mud. The writer seeks revenge from the society's tough limitations through these pictures.

These rebellious women, who live in her stories, go through many negative experiences as a result of the psychological cracks they suffer from. In Min milaff 'Imra'a [From a Woman's File], the protagonist kills her husband because of her subjugation when she was forced to marry an old

man. In al-Mawt fi Lahdat al-bad' [Death at the Moment of Beginning], the woman becomes a victim when she gives her body as a delicious meal for those men living in a restrained society, in order to help her blind father.

In al-Mubādara [The Initiative], the woman is unfaithful to her husband and lives with another man who is her dream of the future. Yet, being married hinders her from achieving this dream. Unfaithfulness is embodied in its ugly frame at the end of the story when she is hugging her beloved and her child is calling " ... mother, my father wants to talk to you on the phone...."

In al-Sūra [The Picture], the woman sinks to a very low moral level when, at the age of forty-five, she thinks of being unfaithful to her husband. She justifies this by her feeling that she is getting older, and by her desire to fulfil her belief of being young and attracting the attention of others.

In al-Qalb wa ra'ihat al-Khubz al-Mahrūq [The Heart and the Smell of Burned Bread], the protagonists makes love with her neighbour, the moment being created by the writer as a normal result of an illicit relationship in a restrained society.

In al-Thawb al-'Ākhar [The Other Dress], the woman responds to the man's law even though she does not agree with it. She agrees to date rich men and to make love with them in return for profitable bargains made by her husband.

On the opposite side of this rebellious stance that the woman adopts in Laylā al-ʿUṯmān's stories is the means to challenge the imposed facts; yet there is a criterion of women who feel subjugated and restrained but surrender to this male society.

In al-Hazīma [The Defeat], we see a lame woman, who, when she thinks of love as a major part of any human relationship, is faced by the indifference of people to her feelings, since she is only a lame woman who has no right to love. Desire, therefore, is hindered by depression caused by impossibility.

In al-ʿAwṛām [The Tumours], the protagonist feels restrained and unable to express her love, owing to the absence of a man in her life. She feels choked, as if there were a tumour in her throat spreading all over her body, and the doctor, being a man, is unable to cure her because he is the cause of her disease.

In Fudūl [Curiosity], the protagonist is consumed by curiosity and a passion for satisfaction which still leaves her unfulfilled. However, when a man proposes to her she refuses him.

In al-Miwāʾ [The Miaow], there are lots of aspects of cruelty and subjugation to which the woman is subject. The protagonist

feels lonely, despite her old age, because she is not married. It is the absence of a man which makes her feel lonely. This woman finds many similarities between herself and the cat.

What mostly attracts our attention in Laylā al-ʿUthmān's stories is the image of the woman that reflects the increasing feelings of aggression towards the eastern man. Sentences of hatred are used by the different female characters.

Laylā al-ʿUthmān attempts to recreate illicit relationships as revenge for the cruel, restrained eastern society. There is unfaithfulness by the woman, which society totally censures, there is the woman over-stepping her limits and challenging the male law clearly and daringly as a kind of teasing.

Laylā al-ʿUthmān exaggerates in portraying the dominance that the woman suffers from. Yet we can say that this growing feeling of inferiority does not originally come from the present situation of living in the post-oil society, but is a reminder of her childhood and a painful memories she keeps in her mind.

Laylā al-ʿUthmān had a hard childhood. From the age of three she lived without her mother and moved between a step-mother and a sister-in-law suffering from restraint, dominance and deprivation.

She grew up in an atmosphere of depression and suffering, which came about as a result of her inability to reveal the depths of her pain.

By understanding the person behind the stories we can see that it was a natural progression for her to recreate in her writing destructive relationships that the woman suffers, as the result of a man.

***The First Period (1947-1959) and the Second Period (1962-1985): A Comparative Study of Content.**

When we look at the stories from the early period, we find that they have a great role in chronicling daily life in Kuwait, both pre- and post-oil through portraying life and picking up features floating at the surface of this simple society. Those features can be described as follows:

1. Poverty and environment's cruelty which pushed them to the cruel sea; the sailors' sufferings when borrowing money to join this journey ended with them having hardly enough money to survive.
2. The Kuwaiti woman's suffering at that time. She supported a big family, a large number of children, faced the difficulty of life alone because of her husband's absence on long pearl-diving journeys that took more than six months. She was also subject to circumstantial difficulties through tough, restrictive customs and traditions that forced her to acquiesce if she did not want to be an outcast in her own society.
3. Forbidden love and all the obstacles in its way, including the holy customs and traditions that individuals could not ignore. So all those daring emotional attempts ended up in failure as a definite result of this conservative society, despite Farḥān al-Farḥān's concern on focusing on love's role in changing feelings and human attitudes.

4. Fighting swindlers and manipulators who deceive naive minds and pressed unacceptable behaviour upon them which, due to their ignorance, naivety and credulity, they believed in.

5. The contradictory issue between the regenerated individual and society dominated by the remaining time-worn shackles of the old traditions.

The writers of the Kuwaiti story during the early period monitored the daily events around them at that time. Their stories were characterised by a reformatory criticism, which reflected their ambitions of changing conditions and joining the development that is taking place in various parts of the world.

Thus, the conflict between the old ideology, represented by the old conservative and restrained Kuwaiti mentality, and the modern ideology, based on a cultural, scientific and literary revolution, was considered to be a natural consequence of a newly-discovered oil economy.

It was pre-ordained for this art form, which started in the late '40s and early '50s, to go through a tough ideological struggle with issues handled in the new society as a desire to completely dismiss the past, in preparatory step to announce a new era.

The woman's life in Kuwaiti society, at that time, formed a basic and essential subject in the stories.

The critical, realist element was clear in the stories of that period, which emphasised the idea of those writers association with their closed society and their indulgence in it. Social issues dominated most of the stories but the political issues that concerned the writers in the 1962-1985 period were absent.

The Kuwaiti story at that period had a very limited local circulation, but it still represented an important phenomenon within the scope of this circulation. Despite the simplicity of the events and characters of these stories, they were definite pioneering attempts.

If we now look closely at the contents of the stories written in the period 1962-1985, they may be summarised as follows:

1. The sudden financial leap that took place after the oil discovery and the obvious changes in the social and intellectual life of the country. Of particular significance were the alterations in personal relations, particularly between those of the earlier and later generations. This was very clear in al-Sanādiq [The Boxes], written by Sulayman al-Khulayfi, who gave great importance to this issue.
2. The woman's struggle with the eastern traditions that held back her political and social movement, imposed by man's dominance over her, and also made her feel that she

was merely one of his belongings rather than an individual, capable of rational thought. This issue is clear in the stories of Laylā al-ʿUthmān and Thurayya al-Baqsumī, it had arisen in the stories of the early period, but only to a limited extent.

Woman in Kuwaiti society suffered from the conservative traditions and its cruelty, but the woman's inferiority and the abuse were exaggerated and dealt with locally.

Woman's sufferings in the second period stories emerged from a general feeling of subordination and consequently reflected her problems with the man.

3. Political ambitions that were dealt within the stories of Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī and Laylā al-ʿUthmān's reflected growing political awareness, the combination of the writer's ideology and the individual's sufferings and dawning of their political hopes.

Critical views were already complete in these writers' stories. The genre during this period was promoted in form and content to artistic maturity.

In the stories of this period, a straightforward realistic depiction gave way to the allusive social realism that characterised the stories of Laylā al-ʿUthmān.

In view of the obvious development and realistic maturity in the stories of the second period, it is necessary to identify the elements that caused the Kuwaiti story to advance in this way, until it possessed the ability to compete internationally on literary basis.

These elements can be identified as follows:

1. The forming of new human relations between the individuals of Kuwaiti society as a result of the financial leap after the discovery of oil, and the social and educational development that accompanied it. Mixing with expatriates who came to work in Kuwait; this resulted in an exchange of local and expatriate ideas.
2. Awareness of universal literature in general, and stories in particular, and mixing with foreign writers during conferences and cultural events inside and outside Kuwait.
3. The presence of the political culture that gave literature and ideology, in general, and stories, in particular, a new subject that expresses the individual's ambitions.
4. The widespread function of the local and other Arab press which had an effective role in remarkably raising the awareness of the cultural movement in Kuwait. It was natural that the story should be promoted to a new developed and distinguished form.

Thus, we can see the differences that arose, on both artistic and literary levels between the stories of the first period and the second period.

As mentioned earlier, the Kuwaiti story started a new era, in a distinguished way, in the early sixties.

New Issues in the Kuwaiti Short story

The Kuwaiti short story has performed certain functions in detecting the different social phenomena. It has helped us to understand what happens in the society with regard to development, starting from a conflict between the past and the present, and ending in the transformation which took place because of the swift, considerable material change, and what has resulted in the class variance which is rejected by many story writers, of whom Walīd al-Rujayb is the most conspicuous of them.

The Kuwaiti story did not stop at visualising the individual's anticipations of the Kuwaiti society, but extended to describe problems arising in the new Kuwaiti society, which were brought about because of their openness to other societies. Among those difficulties, with regard to the immigrants, who came for the sake of work in Kuwait, is some of what concerns the new phenomena which arose from their communication with foreigners. Also the authors detected the western influence on the Kuwaiti individual which was created by the advent of travelling for tourism, medical treatment and education. There was a clear effect, because of this intercourse on behaviour in general.

In Zawāj [Marriage], Sulaymān al-Khulayfī approaches the differences in marriage traditions between the Kuwaiti and the non-Kuwaiti.

We meet Najība who has married a rich old Kuwaiti and feels that the root of all happiness is money, but she discovers that there are many obstacles which prevent her from obtaining happiness. New feelings are discovered by Najība when she finds a new love with Muḥsin, her husband's brother's son, who is of similar age to her.

Because of the age disparity between her husband, and the lust and desire between her and Muḥsin, circumstances conspire to provide with ample opportunity to continue their trysts. Disloyalty is the natural outcome of all this, in spite of the anger which was sent from God. The author symbolised this as a strong thunderbolt, which also expresses the writer's anger and the sarcastic criticism of what is happening.

In the story of al-Shams wa al-'asfalt [The Sun and the Asphalt], by Walid al-Rujayb, we see that the perfect Kuwaiti role model also suffers family problems and disillusion of their social relationships because of openness and communication with other nationalities.

Walid al-Rujayb approaches a number of personalities who, going about their daily routine, find themselves stuck in a traffic jam caused by defective traffic lights.

The author moves among the personalities, giving us a fly-on-the-wall view of their trouble, ambitions and intentions.

In the first model, we see Ḥamad and his wife arguing over a friendship that Ḥamad has established with an immigrant maid, but he denies this relationship, which makes the wife feel hatred towards the husband. At the beginning Ḥamad attempts to confuse the wife by insisting that it is all in her imagination and does not exist.

The disagreement becomes stronger and he turns the onus of guilt on to his wife by admitting that he feels angry towards her because of her behaviour; she spends most of the time outside the home shopping and visiting friends. He feels that his wife is not paying him the attention he is due and is guilty of dereliction of duty, as a wife, towards him.

She also accuses him by saying she is unhappy and spends time away from home because of his suspicious relationship with the maid and drinking alcohol every night.

The author then shifts to another model, which is represented by Fahd and Nawāl, and through their conversations we touch upon the behaviour and the imported bad habits which reflect the non-acceptable liberation in the Kuwaiti society. They drink alcohol and use sex as a means of ensuring profitable commercial transactions.

Both of these models illustrate the moral decline and behavioural corruption, which has arisen as a result of increased

foreign travel and the influence of western traditions and customs, which are alien to the Kuwaiti society.

Although the two situations differ in content, the consequences are as of one story, represented by the dissolution of the normal lives which the two families previously enjoyed. One of these is the use of immigrant labour in the home which is automatically disruptive, bringing with it new problems in the form of different customs and habits. Also, the truism of educational travel and communication with other societies was a cause of the deterioration in their relationships and the decline in moral standards, common to both situations.

Walid al-Rujayb, was drawn to remain in this critical corner, criticising the blind imitation of the west, and the effects of western manners in the story al-Lúba [The Game]. The accuracy of the author's description is clear. This story introduces a game which is played by two children. Each of them carries a pistol, and they fight a mock battle.

The story ends in tragedy which is a direct effect of the violence existing in western TV series and films. One of the children, having run out of ammunition, takes a letter-opener, sneaks behind his brother and stabs him. When he realises what he has done he screams in grief for his brother who is swimming in a pool of blood.

The issues in which the authors of the second period are interested are those that deal with the expatriates who come to work in Kuwait; the ambitious, money-hungry westerners; the down-trodden, third-world immigrants who come in anticipation of wealth and a new life; the literates in search of a new experience; only to find themselves confronted by a list of frustrations.

In the story Tamazzuq muzdawij [Double Laceration], by the author Muhammad al-Ājmī, we meet the immigrant who is happy to have residence in Kuwait, but is confronted by other problems, which make his life hell. He is forced to stay in a room with other labourers of different nationalities. He feels that they are unbearable to live with, but he has to adapt to life with them. He recalls his previous life, and he feels the deprivation and loneliness of a bed empty of his wife - what a difference between the two beds.

The conflict remains internal but creates frustration and a feeling of the harshness of life.

In the story Ta'shirat dukhūl [Entry Visa], by Sulaymān al-Khulayfī, we meet Abū Walīd who comes to Kuwait on a visitors' visa sent him by his cousin who is already working there.

The author sets the scene whereby we see Abū Walīd sitting at the window waiting for the cousin's return, who is

looking for a job for him this is the last day before the expiration date of the entry visa, and all his ambitions, and dreams fade into nothingness when his cousin tells him about the failure of all his attempts to obtain a job for him.

The author concludes this story with a new optimism rising in the heart of Abū Walīd who asks his cousin:

"Will you invite me for a visit next year?"

He smiles.

In the story Taʿalluq nuqṭa [A Point Suspended], Walīd al-Rujayb follows the entry of a group of illegal immigrants on a sailing boat across the Kuwaiti border. He penetrates deeply the psychological persona of one of these immigrants, Muṣṭafā, who dreams of the richness of Kuwaiti society. He has spent all the money he has ever earned in his entire life for the sole purpose of coming to Kuwait.

However, this journey fails when the coastal police discovers them, but Muṣṭafā escapes and hides inside a dustbin. The police do not discover him, but one question remains: What is his fate? Will he get legal residence and get a job or ...?

Woman's Participation in Short Story-Writing in Kuwait

We should now consider the participation of women's short story-writing in Kuwaiti society. This participation increased considerably during the second period, but it was already significant during the first period.

Before examining this question, we should briefly review the social standing of the Kuwaiti woman before and after oil-discovery.

As in most Arab and Islamic societies, the Kuwaiti woman was, until recently, hedged in by restrictive customs and traditions. It was only with the advent of oil that traditional Kuwaiti society has become less rigid, and the Kuwaiti woman has accordingly attained a measure of independence.

In old Kuwaiti society the woman was effectively confined to domestic activities, devoting herself to her husband and children.

She was not able to protest or rise against the traditions and customs.

It was not possible for such a woman, who was living within a closed family to participate with a man in any sort of work.

Manacled as she was by the traditions of the society, woman's education was limited to the Arabic language, mathematics and the Holy Koran. Even these limited studies were not put on a regular, systematic basis, but were taught privately by a pious woman known as al-mutawāa.

It is no exaggeration to say that, at that time, the Kuwaiti woman suffered severe injustice and deprivation of rights, particularly with regard to marriage. She was not allowed to express a preference in the matter of a husband, but was bound to obey her father's wishes.

All these factors helped to inhibit the creative capability of the woman. However, the situation changed after the oil discovery. In 1938, the first modern school was opened with 140 students.

Any woman could enrol in this school; such enrolment gave greater scope to the intellect of the Kuwaiti woman. She insisted on breaking the manacles that confined her life, and she demanded the right to discard the veil and to join the man in his work. At this period, she started to describe, in newspapers and journals, the difficulties of her life posed by the restrictions that she has suffered.

In the mid-fifties, her freedom was extended to being allowed to study abroad. In 1963, a women's association, named

The Arabian Renaissance Women's Society, was established, and Nūriyya al-Saddānī assumed its leadership.

One of the principal aims of this society was to spread cultural and educational enlightenment throughout society, and to support the demand for the Kuwaiti woman's rights.

Foundation of Kuwaiti Women's Literature

The Kuwaiti woman now had the legal right to express herself in literary form, but she was still practically inhibited from doing so by the traditions that still tied her to her home.

Muḍī al-ʿUbaydī was the first Kuwaiti woman poet. Her talent showed itself during a very early period of Kuwait history, almost one century ago.

At the end of the forties, the women started writing stories and articles in magazines and newspapers. These writings were primitive, simple and poor in style, but the content was the mainstay of the publications in which they appeared.

Perhaps worth mentioning is the first woman's story which was written by Diyā' Hāshim al-Badr, entitled Rihlat Farīd wa-Laylā [Farid and Layla's Journey].

We shall discuss and analyse this story, and then we shall examine the second story entitled Aminā, written by a woman, Badriyya al-Ṣāliḥ.

***Rihlat Farīd wa-Laylā [Farīd and Laylā's Journey]**

This story was published in 1952 in al-Bitha magazine. The author was eleven years old.

Two children go for a walk to visit a garden. They lose their way and are eventually confronted by a gloomy forest. (The setting is, of course, entirely fictional; it bears no resemblance to the landscape of Kuwait.) Afraid and tired, they continue walking and arrive in front of a mosque. They enter and fall asleep.

Their mother, who has been desperately searching for them, is overcome with fatigue and distress, as luck would have it, at the door of the very same mosque. A man comes out of the mosque and tells her, on enquiring, that there are two children within. She goes in, embraces them and takes them home.

Rihlat Farīd wa-Laylā is, of course, a juvenile work and very far removed from the stories of the two periods with which we are dealing, with their reality and ideology. Nevertheless Ḍiā' al-Badr displays a certain competence in the genre: an idea of structure, some notion of psychology and an ability in narrative.

This pleasant, if light-weight story has no great intrinsic merit, but is nevertheless interesting as the first Kuwaiti female literary effort, and may have served as an inspiration and encouragement to Ḍiā''s successors.

*Amīna

Badriyya al-Ṣalīḥ's only short story appeared in al-Bith magazine in 1953. A fifteen-year old girl lives with her mother who lavishes every care and attention on her. However, she now discovers a secret, of which she had had no idea before, namely that she is adopted, and that her real parents were a criminal and a prostitute, respectively. This comes as a bitter shock to Amīna. Fortunately, however, she is sought in marriage by a kindly man, who selects her from among a large number of girls, attracted by her innocence and chasteness.

Anyway, this is, historically, a more significant story than Rihlat Farīd wa-Laylā, in that the author here introduces a subject of social concern, and one which was likely to stir the consciences of her readers. The concept of the burden of the parent's crime being borne by the innocent child was one that was familiar to a Kuwaiti audience.

The structure, narrative and development of Amīna are of the simplest; however, the content reveals a maturity that is not to be found, naturally enough, in Rihlat Farīd wa-Laylā. Amīna is thus a rather more significant landmark in Kuwaiti literature.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE AUTHORS

al-Duwayrī, Fahd

He was born in 1921 in Kuwait and he published this first story in 1948 in Kāzima Magazine. He continued writing in other magazines, such as al-Bitha and al-Rā'id. He finished his last year in education in the al-Mubarakīyya School in Kuwait and al-Rahmaniyya School in al-Basra in Iraq. There he took religious studies. He has written many articles in Kuwait's newspapers and magazines and is one of the pioneers of the Kuwaiti short story in its early stages.

Khalaf, Fādīl

He was born in Kuwait in 1927 and has written social and literary criticisms in magazines and newspapers. He was writing poems and short stories at a very early time in Kuwait. In 1955 his first collection of stories, Ahlām al-Shabāb, was published. Khalaf studied in al-Sharqiyya, al-Jāfariyya and the al-Mubarakīyya Schools. He travelled to England in 1958 where he joined the Art and Literature Institute of Cambridge University. In 1962, he worked as a journalist and advisor to Kuwait's embassy in Tunis. In 1976, he returned to Kuwait where he now works as editor of the al-Ra'y al-Ām newspaper.

al-Farḥān, Farḥān

He was born in Kuwait in 1928. His father, Rāshid was one of the most famous cultivated people in Kuwait of his time, and he encouraged his son to read books. al-Farḥān was also influenced by the well-known Kuwaiti poet, Fahd al-ʿAskar. He has written stories and articles in Kuwaiti newspapers and magazines as well as those in other Arab countries, such as al-Musawwir, al-Fann and al-Ithnayn wa al-Dunyā.

al-Shaṭṭī, Sulaymān

He was born in Kuwait in 1943 and studied in the al-Aḥmadiyya and al-Mubarakīyya Schools. He obtained his Master's degree in Arabic Literature from Kuwait University in 1970 and then his PhD from Cairo University in 1978. His first short story was published in 1962. He has now completed three collections: al-Sawt al-Khāfit, Rijāl min al-Raff al-ʿĀlī and Anā ... al-Ākhar. He is at present working as a professor of Arabic literature at Kuwait University.

al-Khulayfī, Sulaymān

He was born in Kuwait. He wrote his first story in 1964 in the Hadha al-Uṣbū magazine, calling it Ru'ya jadīda fi Mujtama' al-Iḍām [A New Vision in the Society of the Great]. He has two collections of stories published and one of poetry. He has taken many courses of education in Kuwait, the USA, and the former

Soviet Union. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Dramatic Criticism from the Higher Institute for Dramatic Arts in Kuwait.

al-Baqṣumī, Thurayyā

She was born in Kuwait in 1952. She writes short stories and articles and has published four collections: al-Āraq al-Aswad [The Black Sweat] in 1977, al-Sidra in 1988, Shumū' al-Sarādīb [Basement Candles] in 1992 and Mudhakkirāt Fattūma al-Kuwaytiyya al-Saghīra [The Memories of the Little Kuwaiti Fattuma] in 1992. Her first story, al-Thawb al-Aṣfar [The Yellow Dress] won her a prize in the cultural fete held by the Ministry of Education in 1969. She is well-known in Kuwait and abroad for being an illustrator. She is a member of many commissions in the field of art and painting. She gained a Master's degree in Graphic Art from Moscow University in 1981.

al-Ūthmān, Laylā

She was born in Kuwait. Her first book of poems was published in 1970 and was called Hamasāt. In 1974 she started writing short stories and publishing them in the al-Waṭan newspaper. Her first collection appeared in 1977, entitled Imra'a fi Inā' [A Woman in a Pot]. Since then, she has had more collections and a first novel, al-Mar'a wa al-Oitta [The Woman and the Cat], published in 1985. Much of her work has been translated into other languages.

al-Rujayb, Walīd

He was born in Kuwait in 1954 and received his Master's degree from the USA in 1985. He holds an important position in the National Council for Culture and Literature in Kuwait. His first collection of stories was published in 1983, called Tā'aluq Nuqṭa ... Tasqut Tak [A Point Suspended ... Falling Tak] and his latest collection, in 1994, was called al-Rīḥ Tahuzzuhā al-Ashjār [The Skaking of the Trees by the Wind].

al-ʿAjmi, Muhammad

He was born in Kuwait in 1956. His first collection of stories was published in 1983 and was entitled al-Sharkh [The Split]. His second collection of stories was published in 1988 and was entitled Tadārīs al-Wajh al-Ākhar [Landscape of the Other Face].

CONCLUSION

At the conclusion of this research it seems necessary to emphasise the differences between the Kuwaiti short story of the early period and that of the second period. We may point out the contrasts in the dimension of social and political comment in the two periods. On the technical side, we may also say that there is obvious progress between the two periods.

The stories of the early period have a didactic style and concentrate on giving advice and preaching to the readers, often trying to shed light on problems in many aspects of the writer's society. The educational, instructional mode is most obvious in the stories of Fāḍil Khalaf (see Chapter Three).

Perhaps inexperience in the art of short-story writing was responsible for this defect; there are also certain shortcomings of grammar and syntax. Some stories side-track from the main point, as often happens in the stories of Fahd al-Duwayrī (see Chapter Three).

The early writer's concentration on educational aspects has a bad effect on the style of the stories; even the dialogues are full of oratorical excess.

The stories of the second period have much more technical cohesiveness in them. After 1962, the short story no more suffers from those technical faults caused by the didactic, narrative device; it becomes rather based on dialogue which provides the characters with the capability to express what they have in their mind. In this way, the

authors provide penetrating psychological analyses of the personalities concerned. Perhaps we see this most strongly in the stories of Sulaymān al-Khulayfī and Sulaymān al-Shaṭṭī (see Chapter Five).

At the beginning of the '60s and in the years that followed, the short story developed very fast, as writers turned much more to using symbolic language. This allowed the readers' imagination to participate in the attitudes which the personalities display. The open-ended method, which we find in the stories of Laylā al-ʿUthmān and Muhammad al-ʿAjmī also make the reader feel a need to participate in putting forward an appropriate ending (see Chapter Five).

In these ways, groups of ideas, dreams, feelings and interconnected views are integrated to realise a harmony between the framework and the content of the stories. Short-story writers now possess the technical skills and have become sufficiently qualified in literary form to depict the political and social phenomena of a society. This started with the story al-Daffa, which achieved technical success, based on the success of its manner of presenting the content.

Part of the secret of the technical development of the story is due to the enlightenment of the press and to educational development in general. As well, Kuwaiti authors have benefited greatly from communication with other Arab writers and from exploring and sharing experiences concerning this art.

In summary, then, we can say that the Kuwaiti short story started slowly, encountering many obstacles in the early period, and then changed to become a literary art at a high level in its developed stage. These days, there are young Kuwaiti writers who provide great promise for the continuation of progress at the level of both content and form. At the beginning of the eighties, the most prominent of them include such writers as Ḥamad al-Ḥamad and Ṭalib al-Rifāʿī. There are many others.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Story Collections

Khalaf, ʿAbdullāh

Mudarrisa min al-Mirqāb

Dār al-Kashāf, Beirut, 1962.

Khalaf, Fāḍil

Ahlām al-Shabāb

Kuwait Office for Publishing
and Advertising, Beirut, n.d.

al-Farḥān, Rāshid Farḥān

Sukhriyāt al-Qadr

Kuwait Government Press, n.d.

al-Shattī, Sulaymān

al-Sawt al-Khāfī

al-Risāla Press, Kuwait, 1970.

al-Khulayfī, Sulaymān

1. Haddāma

al-Asriyya Press, Kuwait, 1978.

2. al-Majmūʿa al-Thāniyya

al-Yaqada Press, Kuwait, 1978.

al-Baqṣumī, Thurayyā

al-ʿAraq al-Aswad

Kuwait Government Press, 1977.

al-ʿUthmān, Laylā

1. al-Rahil

al-Watan Press, Kuwait, 1984.

2. Imara'a fī Inā'

Dhāt al-Salāsīl Library,
Kuwait, 1976.

3. Fī al-Layl Ta'tī al-Ūyūn

al-Watan Press. 1984.

al-ʿAjmi, Muhammad

1. al-Sharkh

al-Rubayʿān For Publishing and Advertising,
Kuwait, 1982.

2. Tadāris al-Wajh al-Ākhar

al-Rubayʿān For Publishing and Advertising,
Kuwait, 1982.

al-Rujayb, Walid

1. Taʿalluq Nuqṭa ... Tasqut Tak

Dār al-Fārābī, Beirut, 1983.

2. Irādat al-Mābūd fī Ḥāl Abū Jāsīm

dhī al-Dakhl al-Mahdūd

Dār al-Fārābī, Beirut, 1989.

***Old Magazines**

(Microfilm Section in Central Library of Kuwait)

- al-Bitha

- al-Rā'id

- Kāzima

***Books and Critical Studies**

Amīn, Aḥmad

al-Naqd al-Adabi

Maktabat al-Nahdha, Egypt, 1963.

Badr, Aḥmad

al-Ṣahafa al-Kuwaytiyya

al-Ṣabāḥ Foundation, Kuwait, 1979.

Ghulūm, Ibrāhīm

al-Qiṣṣa al-Qaṣīra fī al-Khalīj al-ʿArabi

Markaz Dirasāt al-Khalīj, Baghdad, 1988.

Ismā'īl, Fahd

al-Qiṣṣa al-Arabiyya fī al-Kuwayt

Dār al-ʿAwda, Beirut, 1980.

al-Ṣayfi, Ismā'īl

Shakhsiyyat al-Adab al-Arabi

Dār al-Qalam, Kuwait, 1974.

Bernady, Foto

ʿĀlam al-Qiṣṣa

Translated by Muhammad Muṣṭafā Haddāra

ʿĀlam al-Kutub, Egypt, 1969.

- al-Mulayji, ʿAbd al-Fattāh al-Sahāfa wa ʿĀlāmuhā fī al-Kuwayt
Kazima Company, Kuwait, 1982.
- al-Ḥatīm, ʿAbdullāh Min Hunā Bada'at al-Kuwayt
Dār al-Qabas Press, Kuwait, 1980.
- al-Ṭāʾi, ʿAbdullāh 1. al-Adab al-Muʿāṣir fī al-Khalīj al-ʿArabī
Arab Studies and Research Institute,
Kuwait, 1974.
2. Dirāsāt an al-Khalīj al-ʿArabī
Modern Colours Press, Oman, 1983.
- ʿAbdullāh, ʿAdnān al-Naqd al-Ṭatbiqī wa al-Tahlīlī
Silsilat Afaq, Baghdad, 1986.
- Ismail, Izz al-Din al-Adab wa Fununuh
Dar al-Fikr, 1980.
- Khalaf, Faḍīl 1. Dhikrayāt Nuqāt bin Khamīs
al-Risāla Press, Kuwait, 1987.
2. Qarātīs Mubāthara
al-Risala Press, Kuwait, 1985.
- al-ʿAbd al-Ghafūr, Fawziyya Tatawwur al-Ṭalīm fī al-Kuwayt
Maktabat al-Falāh, Kuwait, 1987.

Ṣāliḥ, Laylā

Adab al-Mar'a fī al-Kuwayt

Dhāt al-Salāsīl, Kuwait, 1987.

al-Nashmī, Muhammad

al-Zawāj Qadīman fī al-Kuwayt

Kuwait, 1974.

ʿAbdullāḥ, Muhammad

Kuwayt

1. al-Ḥaraka al-Adabiyya wa al-Fikriyya fī al-

Rabitat al-Udabā', Kuwait, 1975.

2. Muqaddima fī al-Naqd al-Adabī

Dār al-Buhūth al-ʿIlmiyya, 1975.

3. al-Waqīyya fī al-Riwaya al-Arabiyya

Egypt, 1971.

Hilāl, Muhammad

al-Rumantiqiyya

Dār al-ʿAwda, Beirut, 1973.

Taymūr, Mahmūd

Dirasāt fī al-Qiṣṣa wa al-Masrah

Maktabat al-Adab, Egypt, n.d.

Dhuhni, Mahmūd

Tadhawwuq al-Adab

Maktabat al-Anjlo, Egypt, n.d.

Ibrāhīm, Nabīla

Qaṣṣnā al-Shabī min al-Rumānsiyya

ʿilā al-Waqīyya

Dār al-ʿAwda, Beirut, 1974.

al-Saddānī, Nūriya

Tārikh al-Mar'a fī al-Kuwayt

al-Saddānī Foundation in Kuwait, 1972.

al-Turkī, Yūsuf

Lamahāt min Maḍī al-Kuwayt

Kuwait Government Press, 1979.

al-Qināi, Yūsuf

Safahāt min Tārikh al-Kuwayt

Kuwait, 1968.

***Personal Interviews**

1. Fāḍil Khalaf

2. Ibrāhīm Rāshid al-Farḥān

***Tapes: "Interviews"**

1. Sulaymān al-Khulayfī

2. Sulaymān al-Shattī

3. Laylā al-ʿUthmān

4. Thurayyā al-Baqsumī

***Televison Interview**

Programme named Safahāt min Tārikh al-Kuwayt

[Pages From Kuwait's History]

Interview with ʿAbdullāh al-Saddāh, presented by

Sayf al-Shamlān, Feb. 25th, 1987.

***Radio Interview**

Programme named Umsiyyat al-Arbā' [Wednesday Evening] profiling Farḥān Rāshid al-Farḥān, presented by ʿAbdullāh Khalaf, Jan. 5th, 1975.

