GHASSAN KANAFANI’S SHORT STORIES:
A CRITICAL STUDY

A Thesis

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To my wife

*Mona*
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Why write about Ghassan Kanafani? And why write about his short stories? These two questions are indeed very basic but significant ones, nevertheless, they provide the foundation for this research; thus, I find it important to address both of them. In the past three or four decades, Palestinian literature has occupied an important place in Arabic literature and witnessed a great deal of enthusiasm at the Arab as well as at the international arena. To many, Palestinian literature was not viewed as merely Palestinian, but was even regarded as a symbol of resistance literature. Kanafani was certainly an important pillar of the Palestinian literature and had greatly contributed to this literature.

Kanafani was more than just a literary figure. He was a writer, a painter, an editor, a spokesman, and a politician¹. This combination of qualities is what distinguishes him from the countless other Palestinian literary figures. He was a prolific writer who, as a person involved in politics, practiced what he wrote, or perhaps wrote what he practiced. In other word, he was a committed writer continuously trying to change the status quo of his

¹ For a detailed chronological outline of Ghassan Kanafani’s life, literary output, and of events in the Arab World see Appendix A.
fellow Palestinians whether through politics, or through writing. To him, the
two issues were means to the same end with no distinction between either.
He was able, at a very early age, to comprehend the Palestinian cause, misery,
and suffering. And certainly he was not of the type who would simply sit and
watch and not try to change things to the better. On the contrary, he devoted
his entire life to this cause and tried to present it in the best way he could.
Thus, his stories, as well as his novels, came to be realistic. Kanafani was not
interested in presenting the Palestinians in ways to gain the sympathy of his
readers. He did not consider his fellow Palestinians simply as refugees who
need the sympathy of others. On the contrary, through his stories, Kanafani
tries to make the Palestinians aware of their past, and to feel proud about the
sacrifices that their fellow countrymen have contributed. At the same time,
he wants to raise the morale of his people and encourage them to take charge
of their destiny.

In short, Kanafani was a well rounded writer with sophisticated
writing skills and techniques. He dealt with the Palestinian issue from
various angles and at various levels as well. Moreover, he was one of the
pioneers in presenting the Jews, in the Palestinian literature, in a humane
way. And certainly, he was the first to discover, and write about, the
Palestinian resistance literature under occupation.

This brings us to the second question: why Kanafani’s short stories?
The purpose of this research was to contribute to the study of Kanafani’s
literary works. Through my extensive review of the material covering
Kanafani’s literature, I was surprised by the little attention his short stories
had compared to his novels. There was a serious lack of adequate sources on
Kanafani’s short stories, which presented the biggest hurdle in completing this research. Of all the books written about Kanafani’s works, not a single volume was devoted to his short stories while there were several about his novels. The critic who dealt with Kanafani’s short stories most extensively, relative to other critics, was Fayha’ ‘Abd al-Hadi in her book *Waad al-Ghad*. In her book, she devotes fifty pages for the short stories. Nevertheless, her treatment of the short stories is very superficial, as is the case of any other critic who dealt with this topic. In other words, Kanafani’s short stories have been, for long, ignored by the critics and were not treated in a serious or extensive matter. Perhaps critics, in general, prefer dealing with novels as they are fewer in number and thus require less effort than short stories.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to try to cover an area of Kanafani’s literature that does deserve a great deal of attention. Having said that, I might add that this research is in no way a comprehensive study of Kanafani’s short stories. This paper will discuss theme, plot, characters, and political consciousness of Kanafani’s short stories. I hope that this research will provide the foundation for further study and examination of these short stories.
CHAPTER II

THEMES

Introduction

The discussion of theme is not necessarily a simple task for it is usually difficult to define the term itself. Although theme is considered as the "generalized, abstract paraphrase of the inferred central or dominant idea of the story"¹, it is not the moral or the meaning of the story--though it is very close to meaning.² Therefore, in this research the term theme will be used to indicate the subject and central idea of a short story.

Ghassan Kanafani's themes have always had quite an impact on his readers and brought him recognition. It was the theme of "Rijal fi ash-Shams" (published in 1963) that proclaimed him as a serious and capable writer. His following stories and novels simply reinforced that claim. When reading Kanafani's stories (with the exception of a few) it is inevitable to sense the Palestinity--if we may--of the characters, actions, and events. The reader is quickly immersed in the world, misery, and reality of the characters.

reader can not help but share the agony and hardship which Kanafani’s characters endure. In short, the theme of Kanafani’s stories is the reality of his Palestinian readers.

Muhsin Yusuf argues that in *adab al-kharij*\(^4\), the Palestinian story deals with the suffering [Palestinian] refugee wherever he is, and it depicts his feelings of bitterness, his sadness, his tragedy, and his loss of home and beloved ones. On the other hand, in *adab ad-dakhil*, the story deals with the oppressed [Palestinian] who is surrounded and controlled from all sides.\(^5\)

Most of Kanafani’s stories adhere to this theory as they indeed talk about the suffering and agony of the Palestinian refugees. And if it is true that Kanafani does not deal extensively with the way the Palestinians suffer under occupation, nevertheless, he touched on this subject in a few stories such as “Waraqa min Ghazza”, “Al-Ufuq Wara’ al-Bawwaba”, and “Sadiq Salman Yata’allam Ashya’ Kathira...”. The first of these stories deal with physical suffering as Nadiya loses her leg when the Israeli army shelled Ghazza; the second stories touches on emotional suffering as members of families are separated with no way of communicating for years; and the third deals with the psychological terror to which Palestinians are subjected. Moreover, Kanafani, deals with the way the Palestinian are oppressed and controlled by certain Arab regimes as in “Darb ila Kha’in”, “al-Batal fi az-Zinzana”, and “Ab’ad min al-Hudud”.

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\(^4\) Because of the occupation of Palestine and the subsequent migration of a large percentage of Palestinians to outside Palestine, two terms were coined to refer to those who are living under Israeli occupation and to those living outside: *al-kharij* means outside, and *ad-dakhil* means inside; thus, *filistiniyyu al-kharij* means Palestinians outside the occupied territories and *adab al-kharij* refers to the Palestinian literature produced outside Palestine. Similarly, *adab ad-dakhil* refers to Palestinian literature produced in occupied Palestine.

In this chapter, Kanafani’s short stories will be examined from two angles: chronologically and thematically.

**Chronological Treatment**

Many critics divide Kanafani’s short stories into two periods. Sami Swaydan, for example, believes that the first period stretches from 1956 till 1963 and the second period from 1965 till 1969. Khuri also divides Kanafani’s stories into two periods with the same aforementioned dates and he describes the works of the first period as trying to shout in our faces, to depict the tragedy but without giving any solutions or even pose a question. Ihsan ‘Abbas describes the first period as the period of fearing death, or focusing on death. However, ‘Abbas believes that the first period stretches from 1956 until 1960, and the second from 1960 until 1969.

It seems that both Swaydan and Khuri, as well as other critics, have based their two-period division according to the way Kanafani deals with the Palestinian cause, or the way Palestinian resistance is depicted. On this basis alone, the reader would agree with the aforementioned two periods. Even Muhammad Siddiq follows the same path when he divided Kanafani’s writings into three periods stating “[v]iewed chronologically, Kanafani’s fictional works reveal three major phases of political development.” However, if Kanafani’s themes are considered in a broader sense, it becomes

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8 ‘Abbas 16.

clear that his stories form into three periods rather than two (see Appendix B). The first period stretches from 1956 and into 1959, the second from 1959 until 1963, and the third from 1965 until 1969.

*The First Period (1956-1959)*:

Up until this period, the fate of the Palestinians was still obscure and dark. The Palestinians had not yet recovered from the horrendous shock, of losing their homeland, and were still faced with a grim future. The political atmosphere was not any better as there were numerous massacres committed by the Israelis against Palestinians in the late 1940’s and 1950’s\(^{10}\), Israel allied with France and Britain attacked Egypt in 1956, and there was a lack of Palestinian resistance during that period. In such an environment, Kanafani produced his first stories which are full of grim situations.

The first period in Kanafani’s fiction is characterized by its pure Palestinian theme. Most of its stories reflect back at some heroic action in or before 1948, while few depict the misery of the Palestinian refugees after 1948. Fayha’ ‘Abd al-Hadi\(^{11}\) describes Kanafani’s early writings as not only depicting *an-nakba*\(^{12}\) and the loss of a homeland, but they are also emotional. This is further supported by Kanafani’s own comment on his stories. In an interview with a Swiss writer, he said “my early short stories were based on emotions, but since the early sixties my writings started to reflect reality”\(^{13}\).

\(^{10}\) Three major massacres in three villages took place after the establishment of Israel: Dawaymeh in October 1948, Qibya in October 1953, and Kafar Qasim in October 1956.


\(^{12}\) The occupation of Palestine in 1948 is referred to by Palestinians as *an-nakba* meaning *the catastrophe*.

\(^{13}\) Abbas 138.
The very first story in this period "Waraqa min ar-Ramla" talks about how Abu 'Uthman carries out a suicide mission by blowing himself and a Zionist military command building. In "Waraqa min at-Tira", stories about the heroism of the Palestinian fighters in 1948 are narrated by the narrator. This story is followed by other stories depicting Palestinian heroism such as "Ila an Na'ud", "al-Madfa\"", and "Shay' la Yadhhhab". The common thread among such stories in this period, is the fact that their heroic fighters are described carrying out individual missions or are fighting individually. This is the lonely fighter period. There is no sense of organization among fighters, and no sense of leadership.¹⁴

Nevertheless, these stories give a clear picture on the willingness of the Palestinian people to defend their homeland, by all means, and regardless of what the cost might be. Defending the homeland is carried out by various and diverse individuals. Kanafani portrays both who act spontaneously and those who carry out preplanned missions (such as "Waraqa min ar-Ramla" and "Ila an Na'ud"), between those who have little experience in fighting and those who are experienced fighters (as in "Waraqa min ar-Ramla" and "al-Madfa\"”), between male and female fighters (as in "Waraqa min at-Tira" and "Shay' la Yadhhhab"), and between the young and old (as in "Shay' la Yadhhhab" and "Waraqa min at-Tira").

Kanafani successfully presents various sectors of the Palestinian people using all means to defend their homeland. Even children take part in defending others as Nadiya did in "Waraqa min Ghazza" when she covered her brothers with her own body to protect them from mortar shells. The

¹⁴ Siddiq also points out to this issue stating "[b]ut while acts of individual heroism are extolled in retrospect, they are invariably presented as isolated incidents occurring in a complete political vacuum." see Muhammad Siddiq 4.
missing sector of the Palestinian population in these stories is the bourgeois and upper classes. None of the fighters depicted in these stories belong to the middle or upper classes. This should not mean that Kanafani was biased against the middle or upper class. Indeed, he was simply reflecting the reality of the situation in 1948. It was the peasants (who constituted the overwhelming majority of the population\(^\text{15}\)) who carried out most of the fighting to defend their homeland. After all, they stood to lose the most if the Zionists occupied Palestine (which eventually happened).

In this period, also, Kanafani starts his campaign against traitors and against governments which betray the Palestinian cause. The first story in this line is “Darb ila Kha’in” where a Palestinian wants to kill his own brother who is an informer for the Israelis. To accomplish that, he realizes that he needs to figure a way to slip into Jordan first as he is not allowed in because of his previous political activities. Kanafani does not leave us with only one such story, but produces “ar-Rajul alladhi Lam Yamut”, “al-Batal fi az-Zinzana”, and “Qarar Muwjaz”. Where as “ar-Rajul alladhi Lam Yamut” deals with the treacherous and evil act of selling ones land to the Jews, “al-Batal fi az-Zinzana” and “Qarar Muwjaz” deal with the role of the governments in betraying the Palestinians and the Palestinian cause.


The second period, 1959-1963, is clearly characterized by its un-Palestinian theme. Less than 20% of the stories in this period deal with Palestinian issues compared to 85% in the first period. This is also reflected in

\(^{15}\) The first post-war census taken in 1922 put the figure of those living in the countryside between 75% and 80% of the total population. See Pamela Ann Smith, *Palestine and the Palestinians 1876-1983*, (New York: St. Martin’s, 1984) 32.
the time frame of the stories in each period. For example, most of the stories of the first period switch from present to past and back to present (telling about past actions in Palestine necessitated, obviously, such switching). On the other hand, the events in most of the stories of the second period take place in the present.\textsuperscript{16}

Such deviation in subject matter could be a result of the general feeling among the Arabs during this period. The very end of the 1950’s and early 1960’s witnessed an all time high point of Pan-Arabism. This was a culmination of Nasir’s nationalization of the Suez in 1956, union between Egypt and Syria in 1958, revolutions in numerous Arab countries that ended monarchies, independence of most of the Arab countries from colonialism, Ba'\textsuperscript{th} party took power in Iraq and Syria in 1963, and the enthusiasm for Arab unity reached its peak in 1963. Amidst this optimistic atmosphere, Kanafani seems to have turned his attention to non-Palestinian themes. It was time for him to explore new frontiers and different set of topics and themes.

That does not mean that Kanafani completely refrained from writing about Palestinians or the Palestinian cause. In this period, he produced few stories with distinct Palestinian themes. However, the theme of such stories in this period is of a different nature than that of the first one. Most of the stories that are Palestinian in theme in the first period, deal with fighting while in the second period they deal with political ideas and ideologies. For example, Ma'ruf the young Palestinian man in "Qatil fi al-Mawsil" (written in 1959) supports the revolution in Iraq believing that it will help liberate his occupied town of Lydda in Palestine. "Ab'ad min al-Hudud", and "La Shay" deal with the same issue but from a different perspective. In these two

\textsuperscript{16} See table in 'Abd al-Hadi 175-177.
stories, Kanafani shows how some Arab reactionary governments prevent the Palestinians from trying to fight for their cause. Thus, when a soldier in "La Shay" opens fire across the border and kills two Israeli [enemy] soldiers, the officials try to portray him as a deranged person. In "Ab'ad min al-Hudud", Kanafani exposes the Arab regimes as trying to take advantage of the misery and agony of the Palestinian refugees for their own political gains.

An important characteristic about this period is the presence of stories dealing with love and fornication such as "Fi Janazati", "Asharat Amtar Faqat", "Ulbat Zujay Wahida", "Al-Urjuha", and "Thamani Daqa'iq". No other stories dealing with the same subject were written in the first or third periods. This is a clear contrast to the portrayal of women in his first period. In the first period, Kanafani's women die but in the second period he deals with love and sex.

The earliest of these examples was written in Damascus in 1959 while the last one was "Thamani Daqa'iq" in Lebanon written in 1961. What opened the door to such stories of love and fornication were, perhaps, two factors. First, by 1959, Kanafani was 23 years old and had already been in Kuwait for three years. Unlike Palestine or Syria (where he grew up), the Kuwaiti society is a very conservative one especially at that time; contact between unrelated men and women was almost non-existent in such a society. For a young single man in such an environment, his sexual desires had to be expressed in one way or another. And since Kanafani was of the shy type, it seems that he chose to express such rage in writing, thus, producing the aforementioned stories. If this true, it should not come as a surprise then,
that the last of these stories he wrote was in the very same year (1961) in which he got married.

Second, in the late fifties, according to his cousin Faruq Ghandur, Kanafani was in love with a young lady\textsuperscript{17}. And the sad ending of that love was finally put to rest in his story “Fi Janazati”.\textsuperscript{18} The events and tone of that story, as well as its timing, leave no doubt that Kanafani was addressing whom he had once loved. The story “Fi Janazati” is the prelude to the other stories and it sets the stage for their development.

The rest of the stories in the second period (stories that do not center around love, fornication, or Palestinian issues) are psychological ones dealing with the conscious and inner thoughts of their characters. These stories are best represented by “Mawt Sarir Raqam 12” (1960), “Qal‘at al-‘Abid” (1960), “Sittat Nusur wa Tifli” (1960), “Al-‘Atash” (1961), “Nisf al-‘Alam” (1961), and “Kafr al-Manjam” (1963). The common trend among these stories is Kanafani’s attempt to reveal how people try to see things from their own personal perspective. In “Nisf al-‘Alam”, ‘Abd ar-Rahman sees the world from his own point of view. In “Mawt Sarir Raqam 12” and “Kafr al-Manjam”, however, Kanafani describes how one person perceives other people. And finally, “Risala min Mas’ud”, shows how one person likes to imagine the way he wishes his own world to be.

In “Sittat Nusur wa Tifli”, Kanafani assumed the role of a psychologist as he describes how the background and mentality of a person play a crucial role in the perception of things. The story describes how six individuals give six different and contrasting accounts on the fate of an eagle known to be seen

\textsuperscript{17} Samah Idris, “Hiwar ma’a Faruq Ghandur”. \textit{Al-Adab} 7/8, (1992) 26.

\textsuperscript{18} Ghandur states that the young lady with whom Ghassan was in love, broke up their relationship either because of his illness or kismet. Samah Idris 26.
at the same spot along the road way. Only a little boy seems to know the facts and explains that there is no eagle but only a mulberry tree. The interesting thing about the story is that the explanation given by each of the six individuals is a direct result of their character. The first account is given by an old man and thus talks about child’s loyalty to his parents. The second, is narrated by a young peasant and thus his story talks about love, strength and courage. The third which is given by a woman and talks about men’s betrayal to women. The fourth describes how the eagle died as a result of pollution from cars; the story is told by the taxi driver. The narrator, who is an educated man, tries to give a logical explanation in the fifth story. The last story, told by a political activist, claims that the eagle was shot by a policeman. At the end of the story, the reader finds out that all stories were unfounded but clearly reflect the mentality of their narrators.

*The Third Period (1965-1969):*

The political and military events of this period were viewed with optimism and were giving hope for the Palestinians. In 1964, the year preceding this period, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established; in 1965 the first military operation was launched against Israel; in 1967 the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) was established--Kanafani was to become an influential figure in this movement; and the Palestinian fighters score the first large scale Arab victory against the Israeli army in al-Karameh battle in 1968. However, there was one devastating event during this period, namely the 1967 Israeli aggression. That war
devastated the entire Arab World as Israel tripled its size by occupying the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai, and the Golan Heights.

In this period, and amidst that political and military environment, Kanafani switches back to Palestinian themes and issues. In general, the stories of this period exhibit two distinct features. The stories of 1965 talk about Palestinian resistance in or before 1948. The events of the stories of 1967 and 1968, on the other hand, take place after *an-nakba*.

Even between the stories with Palestinian issues written in the first and third periods there are two marked differences. First, those of the first period (except for “’Ila an Na’ud” and “Al-Madfa’”) do not immerse the reader in the details of fighting and combat. The accounts on fighting usually lack depth and details such as in “Waraqa min at-Tira” where the narrator gives about one page for each of his stories about some hero. The short accounts leave the reader with little understanding of the real situation and the environment which these fighters were experiencing. In the third period, Kanafani shows the reader from start to finish how fighting took place at that time. He describes the means the Palestinians used to obtain a rifle, how they got to their destination, and how they conducted their fighting.

Second, in the third period, we see collectiveness in fighting. In “Ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva...”, “Abul-Hasan Yuqawwis ‘ala Sayyara Inkliziyya”, and “As-Saghir wa Abuh wa al-Martina Yadhhabun ila Qal’at Jiddin” illustrate how Palestinian fighters gather from various places to carry out an attack. These stories, in addition to “Al-‘Aruṣ” show to what extent the Palestinians were willing to go to obtain a rifle in order to defend their
homeland. They were also willing to cross mountains and valleys to aid other villages in repelling an attack.

In short, while the stories of the first period paint a grim and dark picture of the fighting conditions before *an-nakba*, the stories of the third period paint a lively and an optimistic picture. This might very well reflect Kanafani's optimism as the Palestinian revolution had already begun in January of 1965. One fact remains true in the third period as it were in the first one; that is the absence of leadership. In "As-Saghir wa Abuh wa al-Martina Yadhabun ila Qal'at Jiddin", the bearded man may be considered the "leader" of the attack (as he did lead the attack) but in no way is he considered a true leader; rather, he is more of an *ad-hoc* leader. A true leader is one who continuously has a number of men under his command, who is trained to be a leader, and who would arrange for back up, supplies, and organization. In this story, all of these factors were missing and thus, the Palestinian fighters' defeat was inevitable.

All of the stories of 1965 assert one thing: the importance of the gun to the Palestinian people. In each and every story, Kanafani shows the extent to which the Palestinians go to buy or just borrow a rifle so they could fight. Even Mansur's uncle¹⁸, in "As-Saghir Yasta'ir Martinat Khaliji wa Yusharriq ila Safad", is worried about losing his rifle more than he is worried about losing his nephew.

The events of the stories written in 1967 and 1968, as mentioned earlier, take place after *an-nakba*. Both stories, "Sadiq Salman Yata'allam Ashya' Kathira fi Layla Wahida" and "Hamid Yakuff 'an Sama' Qisas al-A'mam",

---¹⁸ Although the name of the protagonist is unknown in this story and is referred to by *as-Saghir*, it is highly likely that he and the protagonist, Mansur, of the following story "ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva..." are one.
describe how the new generation of Palestinian feda'iyyin\textsuperscript{20} undergo training and how they carry out military attacks. In the first of these two stories the houses of a village are blown up by Israeli soldiers regardless if a member of that household carried out any attacks against Israel or not. Kanafani's message in this story is loud and clear: you Palestinians better bear arms and fight for your freedom because your enemy is brutal and will destroy you whether you fight against him or not. The second story, "Hamid Yakuff 'an Sama' Qisas al-A'mam" draws the line between old and new generation, that is between the generation that suffered the defeat in Palestine in 1948 and the generation that grew up in exile.

The stories of this period as well as those of the first period do not try to exalt the heroes or the fighters. Kanafani does not try to make those who sacrificed bigger than real life, nor does he exalt only victorious moments or battles. Rather, Kanafani presents the reality truthfully. 'Abbas 'Abd al-Jabbar argues that the writer's task is not to tell us about great events; instead, he should make the little incidents and events interesting by giving them significance and meaning.\textsuperscript{21}

**Thematic Treatment**

In addition to analyzing Kanafani's stories chronologically, it is also important to analyze them in term of their themes. Kanafani's stories could be categorized into seven categories (see Appendix C). From Appendix C, it becomes very clear that Kanafani was very devoted to the Palestinian cause in his writings. Almost 60% of his stories deal directly with the Palestinian

\textsuperscript{20} Fida'iyyin refers to the Palestinian fighters.
\textsuperscript{21} 'Abbas 'Abd al-Jabbar, \textit{Fi an-Naqd al-Qisas}, (Baghdad: Dar ar-Rashid, 1980) 9.
cause and people. In dealing with the Palestinian issue, Kanafani does not concentrate on one front but tries to employ various themes and use them to send his message across. He encourages the Palestinians to fight, to resist, and to rid themselves of traitors. At the same time, his intention seems to be to raise their morale and pride by telling them about the heroic acts of their fathers in Palestine.

*Inciting steadfastness:*

The purpose behind "Waraqa min Ghazza" and "Lu’lu’ fi at-Tariq", that are categorized as inciting steadfastness, is clearly to discourage Palestinians from running away from their reality by immigrating to other countries just to get rich. Thus, Kanafani is indirectly asking his fellow Palestinians to stay where they are and to try to work toward returning to their homeland. He asks them to make sacrifices just as Nadiya did in "Waraqa min Ghazza" when she threw herself on top of her brothers to protect them from falling mortar shells, and ended up losing her leg. In "Lu’lu’ fi at-Tariq", written two years later, Kanafani goes even further. Here, he presents the fate that would be waiting those who try to run away from their cause. Kanafani tells his readers that if they try to run away from their cause and duties they will die just as Sa’d ad-Din died. Not only did Sa’d ad-Din die in a foreign land and lonely, but he also died penniless. In short, Sa’d ad-Din spent his last pennies gambling on becoming rich by finding a pearl in a shell, and the Palestinian who gambles on finding quick fortune—which like the shell would almost always end up in disappointment—rather than working for his cause would almost certainly end up a loser if not dead at the end.
As we saw, the message in both stories is clearly to warn the Palestinians not to run away from their cause just for the sake of a quick fortune; instead, they should stay with their people and work on returning back to their homeland. This message is no doubt analogous to that of Kanafani’s novel “Rijal fi ash-Shams”. In “Rijal fi ash-Shams”, three Palestinian refugees try to go to Kuwait to earn a living but end up dead, penniless, and buried at a trash site. Of course, in the novel Kanafani has more space to elaborate on the events, conditions, and characters than in the short stories as well as making it clear that such fate does not discriminate among the different generations.

**Armed struggle:**

Kanafani’s obsession with the heroism exhibited by the Palestinian fighters in Palestine is evident in numerous stories and accounts throughout his writings. His stories that deal with heroic acts span almost the entire spectrum of his short-story writing. There seem to be two objectives behind these stories. The stories written before 1965 give quick and economical impressions of the heroism of these fighters. Kanafani does not illustrate in detail the course of fighting or engagement with the enemy. It seems that his main concern was simply to cling to these moments of glory. In the late fifties, with the absence of any Palestinian organized military campaign, Kanafani was simply romancing about the past.

The stories written in 1965, however, give a different impression. In these stories, Kanafani gives life to his characters through dialogue and the great details he provides. In these stories, the fighters engage in dialogue,
unlike their counterparts in the pre-1965 stories. These stories show more optimism, and certainly reflect Kanafani’s optimism with the birth of the Palestinian revolution in 1965. Even after the 1967 Arab defeat, Kanafani produces a couple of stories that are optimistic. It seems, as ‘Abd al-Hadi put it, that he tries to distance himself from the negative past and hold on to the positive past, as is illustrated in “Hamid Yakuff ‘an Sama' Qisas al-A'mam”\

Moreover, ‘Abd al-Jabbar ‘Abbas concludes that after the 1967 war, Arabic literature witnessed a reflection on the past, or it reviewed the past to better understand the present.\

Treason:

Kanafani not only encouraged his people to fight those who occupied their land, but he also encouraged them to fight treason. He did not see a difference between treason committed by an individual or by a government; he simply urged the people to fight both. Kanafani produced five stories dealing with that theme between 1957 and 1962. The first two stories “Darb ila Kha’in” and “Ar-Rajul alladhi lam Yamut” describe how Palestinians view treason and how they try to rid their society from it.

The later three stories in this category shift attention to the treason of some Arab reactionary governments. In all three stories, Palestinians are shown being imprisoned by some Arab regimes solely because of their political activities (as in “Al-Batal fi az-Zinzana” and “Ab‘ad min al-Hudud”), or because they try to engage with the enemy (as in “La Shay’”). These stories, combined with “Qatil fi al-Mawsil”, shows Kanafani’s belief that the

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22 ‘Abd al-Hadi 151.

eradication of such reactionary governments is no less important than fighting the occupiers. Kanafani’s belief could be traced to Ma’ruf’s reply when asked if he was happy about the revolt that was taking place in Iraq in 1958. Ma’ruf replied: “[I am] very happy…it is the right step towards Lydda”\(^{24}\). This simply shows the influence of George Habash thought’s over Kanafani\(^{25}\). It is Habash who believed that the way to liberate Palestine was through liberating the Arab countries from the reactionary regimes.

**Palestinian suffering:**

Just as Kanafani felt the need to depict and present the Palestinian resistance, he thought that presenting the Palestinian refugees’ misery, suffering, and agony just as important. In a few stories, Kanafani gives a wide sample of the different hardships that these Palestinians have to go through. In “Kana Yawmadhaka Tiflan” he shows us how a bus load of innocent Palestinian civilians gets slaughtered by Israeli soldiers as they make a young boy watch the massacre. In “Ard al-Burtuqal al-Hazin” the reader experiences how the Palestinians had to leave their homeland and take refuge in another country. And by no means did Kanafani stop there. He continues to tell us about the suffering that takes place after the *an-nakba*. In the rest of the stories in this category, Kanafani deals with the life and hardship of refugee camp life. He shows how the children have to struggle for survival. They have to work and provide for their families, have to fight their way to stay ahead, and on top of that they have to go to school.


\(^{25}\) George Habash is the founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 1967. Ghassan first met Habash in 1952 and became very close ever since.
Moral decay:

This topic of moral decay seems to emerge after the third year of Kanafani’s stay in Kuwait. This may not be surprising given the fact that the first three stories “‘Asharat Amtar Faqat”, “‘Ulbat Zujaj Wahida”, and “Al-Qitt” (all written in 1959) clearly reflect sexual deprivation. In each and every one of these stories, a young man seeks to have sex with a prostitute but fails in the attempt. This subject of fornication continues with Kanafani as he moves to Beirut, and thus producing “Thamani Daqa‘iq” which marks the end of such stories, most probably because of his marriage to Anni in 1961. As mentioned earlier, during his stay in Kuwait, Kanafani was in his early twenties. The protagonist in each of the three stories tries to fulfill his desires either by taking advantage of a young maid who comes to his apartment as in “‘Asharat Amtar Faqat”, or by going to the prostitutes’ places himself as in “al-Qitt” and “‘Ulbat Zujaj Wahida”. But the bottom line in all of these stories, is no sexual activity takes place. In “‘Asharat Amtar Faqat”, the maid runs away fearing that there may be more than one person in the apartment; and in “al-Qit” and “Ulbat Zujaj Wahida” the narrator seeks the prostitutes and reaches their places but changes his mind and heads back.

The rest of the stories in this category deal with an array of other immoral acts in which people engage. There are those who are ready to rob a grave from its skeleton as in “Yad fi al-Qabr”. In this story, two medical students in need of a skeleton for their studies go to the extent of stealing one from a grave. Even the protagonist’s father, who is supposedly a religious
man, does not try to stop his son from committing such a shocking and improper act.

Another story in this category “Dhirā‘uḥu wa Kaffuhu wa ‘Asabi‘uḥu” shows those who no longer care for their parents. In this story Kanafani compares the way people neglect their parents and between the way animals care for each other. An old man is left to live all alone in a tiny room with little care from his son, who treats him without respect and without affection. This picture is contrasted with the experiment the old man carries out with two unrelated cats. The old man puts a little kitten next to an adult male cat wanting to see how the male adult cat would react. To his surprise, he sees the male cat laying calmly while the little kitten, in its desperate search for milk, scratches the male cat and starts to lick its blood. In a sense, Kanafani is implying that animals are more humane than humans themselves when it comes to caring for one another.

*Renouncing old traditions:*

In all of these four stories “al-Khiraf al-Masluba”, “‘Atash al-Af’a”, “Ra’s al-Asad al-Hajari”, and “Law Kunta Hisanah” there is reference to some old values that have become impractical in our time. The time span for this category is limited to two years only: 1960, and 1961. On the 15th of January, 1960, Kanafani writes in his personal notes that he wants to write a story about a person who is devastated because of some value that he had always regarded highly and had discovered that it was meaningless to others\(^2\). He was simply referring to “Al-Khiraf al-Masluba” (written in 1960), in which he

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shows how a simple bedouin could not comprehend that people would rather save their water for the cars than let his thirsty sheep drink it.

In "‘Atash al-Af’a", Kanafani touches on a very important social issue in the Arab World. The story shows how people still expected their children to inherit their father’s profession without any regard for the children’s wishes or motivation. Kanafani illustrates how the father forces his son to learn the skill of drum playing; but his efforts go in vain.

Another issue presented in the story is how old crafts and traditions give way to new and modern ones just as the people in the story do not need the drummer any more as they start using cars for their wedding processions. And just as the bedouin was devastated in the previous story, the father here felt the same when people stopped hiring him to play the drum in weddings.

In "Law Kunta Hisanan", and in "Ra’s al-Asad al-Hajari" Kanafani demonstrates negative results of clinging to old archaic traditions. In the first story, the father does not let his son, who is an outstanding surgeon, perform an operation on him because of some superstition. Kanafani goes even further to show that the highly educated son, against his better judgment, still agrees to go along with his father’s refusal to let him perform the operation himself. In the second story, the son and the entire family live in debt and on the verge of poverty just because of sentimental attachment to their house which could bring a huge sum of money if sold.

In all, Kanafani is sending a clear message to his readers showing them that it is time to abandon some of their archaic traditions and values. He asserts that this modern time requires a different set of values.
Perhaps the story with the most controversial attack on old traditions is "Darb ila Kha'ìn" as it stabs at the heart of ancient Arabian traditions. Almost all Arabs are aware of the saying "my brother and I will unite against my cousin...". In this story, however, we learn that Mahmud wants to kill his own brother who is an informant for the Israelis and had told on his cousins. Here, Kanafani turns the equation upside down; Mahmud wants to kill his brother for the sake of his cousins. Kanafani is sending a strong message to his fellow Palestinians: get rid of the traitors even if they are their closest relatives.

Psychoanalytical:

As mentioned earlier, the stories in this category are psychological ones dealing with the conscious and inner thoughts of their characters. The common trend among these stories is Kanafani’s attempt to reveal how people try to see things from their own personal perspective as in "Nisf al-‘Alam”, “Mawt Sarir Raqam 12” and "Kafr al-Manjam”. In other stories, however, Kanafani penetrates the inner thoughts of the protagonists. Two stories could thus be termed as employing the techniques of stream of consciousness: “al-‘Atash”, and “al-Majnun”.

"Al-‘Atash” talks mainly about a man who woke up in the middle of the night to get a drink of water but could not get one because the water was cut off. Loneliness, melancholy, and depression are present throughout the story. Khuri describes the story as follows "in “al-‘Atash” we sense the presence of loneliness and depression. The educated man goes to Kuwait to

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27 The complete saying goes as follows: My brother and I will unite against my cousin, but my cousin and I will unite against a stranger.
make a living where he faces loneliness and depression. He is thirsty all night without finding a companion to complain to about his thirst.\textsuperscript{28} “Al-Majnun” also employs stream of consciousness and presents a little boy who imagines himself as a dog and thus spends his day sitting at a street corner awaiting another boy to bring him food. ‘Abd al-Hadi also considers this story to employ stream of consciousness stating that “we see that he [Kanafani] make use of the direct stream of consciousness where there is no interference by the writer…and assuming that there is no one listening.”\textsuperscript{29} From the protagonist thoughts, the reader learns more about him and the essence of his troubling behavior. It seems that he killed his little sister who was very much loved by their mother. Ever since his sister died, he was despised by his parents and called names including being called a dog.

Conclusion

The themes of Kanafani’s short stories are various and different, as have been presented. He dealt with both Palestinian and non-Palestinian themes in his short stories—this is in contrast to his novels which are all Palestinian in theme. Even when dealing with the Palestinian cause, he does not focus all his energy and attention on one issue only, but instead tries to expose and treat the Palestinian cause from a number of fronts. He eludes to the necessity of a leadership, organization, involvement of the young generation and all sectors of the population, and acquisition of sufficient arms.

\textsuperscript{28} ‘Abbas 98.

\textsuperscript{29} ‘Abd al-Hadi 188.
From the different themes that Kanafani treated, it becomes clear that he was not concerned with the political issues only, but was also interested in social issues. From the topics and messages implanted in a number of his short stories, one could very well regard Kanafani as a social reformer. This is perhaps why a researcher, when considering dividing Kanafani’s works into periods, should not take the political aspect of the stories as the only criteria.
CHAPTER III

PLOT

Introduction

Without a plot, there would not be a story. Or at least, there would not be an effective story that would provide the reader with a fulfilling experience. The significance of a plot is not that it is just the core of the story, but that it is also the framework around which the sequence of events will be arranged. A meaningful and logical arrangement of events gives a sense of unity to the story and in addition, allows the reader to easily follow the developments in the story and spare him any confusion.

The plot of any story should not just happen. It needs to be planned. Carpenter says that "[t]he author of the plotted story knows precisely what the effect of each sentence, each word, each sequence, or each omission will be. A plot is not the mere sequence of action; it is what the artfully arranged combination of sequences of actions and the characters mean. A plot gives meaning to the actions."1 It is thus, not surprising that Kanafani did take time to plan his stories so they would have the greatest impact on their reader. On the 15th of January, 1960, Kanafani writes in his personal notes "I am thinking about writing two stories: the first is a story of a disappointed

1 Carpenter 39.
man...I have not yet determined the right plot...but from there I want to express the complete deception a man feels when he finds out that the very thing he believed in does not mean anything to others...”31. Moreover, Kanafani was fully aware of the importance of a plot and its impact on the reader. He wanted to mobilize the plot to his own needs. Kanafani himself is quoted saying "the difficulty of a story is that I want it to be one hundred percent realistic, and at the same time I want it to give a feeling that does not exist".32

What did a short story mean to Kanafani? Was it more following Sedgwick’s (?) description, that the most important things in a short story are its beginning and end? Or, according to Chekhov, who thought that a story should not have a beginning or an end? Or perhaps, according to London, who believed that the short story should be firmly connected in terms of plot and life and must be exciting and interesting?33

One may consider Kanafani’s stories to combine, to some extent, the above descriptions. Kanafani, and most other writers as well, experimented in a number of ways. He wrote plotted as well as unplotted stories. Some of his stories may involve what is termed “complication resolved”, while others involve more “situation revealed”. And as we shall see later, some of his stories have distinctive beginnings and ends while others do not.

First Period

Kanafani’s early stories are, for the most part, of the complication-resolved type. This may not come as a surprise as most writers usually start

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31 Yaghi 36.
32 ’Abbas 51.
with the classical style of story writing; that is, it starts with the exposition, and then moves through conflict, followed by the denouement. Out of fourteen stories Kanafani wrote between 1956 and 1958, eleven (about 80%) are complication-resolved and only three are situation-revealed. During this period, all of the stories are Palestinian in theme with armed struggle action in some of them. This in turn leads to the necessity of providing a conflict with rising and falling actions.

In this period, as well as in the second period, Kanafani maintains the classical order of presenting the exposition first, followed by rising action leading to the conflict, and finally followed by the falling action and the denouement. This rigid order is observed in about 85% of the complication-resolved stories in the first and second periods.

“Al-Qamis al-Masruq” is a very good example of Kanafani’s rigid order in most of these stories. The story begins with the exposition which not only sets the scene in which the characters live and where the conflict takes place, but also conveys the atmosphere of the story. The protagonist (Abu al-‘Abd) is shown, at night and in the rain, shoveling mud from around his tent. He starts to dream about going inside the tent and putting his hands to the fire to warm them; but then his desire to get inside the tent vanishes as he remembers that his wife will annoy him with questions about finding work. In a very succinct account, Kanafani appraises the reader of the hardship and misery not only in which the protagonist lives, but also which he is experiencing at these crucial moments preceding the conflict of the story.

After setting the stage, Kanafani moves on to present the conflict of his story. The protagonist, wanting to provide more flour for his family, and
perhaps a shirt for his son, starts thinking about how he could slip into UNRWA's\textsuperscript{34} warehouse and steal a sack or two of flour. While he is thinking of his plan, Abu Samir, who is despised by Abu al-‘Abd and the rest of the camp residents, stops by and chats with Abu al-‘Abd. This leads to the climax as Abu al-‘Abd discovers that the reason his family, as well as the other families in the camp, had on many occasions to go to bed hungry because of Abu Samir. The delays in distributing the rations was due to Abu Samir’s collaboration with an American employee to steal flour from the warehouse. Abu al-‘Abd could not believe that this American was selling the stolen flour while telling the camp residents the distribution will be delayed ten days. At this point, the resolution of this conflict takes place. Abu al-‘Abd simply raises his shovel and hits Abu Samir on the head killing him. The same structuring is also observed in stories such as "Waraqa min ar-Ramla"", "Darb ila Kha’in", "Lu’lu’ fi at-Tariq", etc...

It is noteworthy to mention that although in many stories Kanafani follows the rigid structure just outlined, the exposition in other stories develops differently. In the above story, Kanafani establishes both the world and surroundings in which the characters live and the general atmosphere. In other stories, however, he uses the exposition mainly to introduce the protagonist, such as in "al-Madfa’", and "Qarar Muwjaz". In both stories, Kanafani spends a few pages describing the physical appearance or the mentality of the protagonist with no mention whatsoever of the physical world they live in. In both of these stories, the protagonists die for the sake of their homeland; thus, Kanafani may have intended to focus only on the

\textsuperscript{34} UNRWA stands for United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. It was founded in 1950 to care for the Palestinian refugees; among other things, it used to distribute food rations which included flour.
protagonist in the exposition as to exalt such heroes and make them the center of the story from the first page.

In the first and second periods, the resolution of most of the complication-resolved stories is the death of the protagonist. In "Jahsh" we see that Mas'ud, the protagonist, commits suicide after two years of being detained and dragged through the judicial system for running over a donkey. In "Waraqa min ar-Ramla", "al-Madfaa", "Lu'lu' fi at-Tariq", "Qarar Muwjaz", "as-Silah al-Muharram", and other stories as well, the stories also end in the death of the protagonist.

Although some of these resolutions may be accepted as an appropriate ending based on the cause-effect equation, other resolutions do not seem to be logical consequences of the conflict or the protagonist. For instance, one may very well accept the resolution of "Waraqa min ar-Ramla", where Abu 'Uthman carries out a suicide mission against Israeli command headquarters in retaliation for the murder of his wife and daughter. Not only did Abu 'Uthman have the motive to carry out such act, but he also had access to the required explosives. In "Lu'lu' fi at-Tariq" the protagonist dies from a heart attack after spending his last penny on a pearl shell which turns out to be empty. One would have questioned such a resolution and the possibility of dying under the given circumstances, had Kanafani not mentioned in the story that the protagonist had heart problems.\(^35\) Thus, by providing this crucial piece of information, Kanafani sought to avoid giving an unrealistic ending.

Nevertheless, in other stories, Kanafani provides resolutions that do not appear to be logical or realistic based on the conflict or the characters.

\(^{35}\) Kanafani 158.
themselves. For example, it is hard to believe that Mas'ud, in "Jahsh", would commit suicide. A person, like Mas'ud, who spent ten years of hard and honest work until he became the number-one man in the country would not take away his own life because of a legal issue over the killing of a donkey. The same is true in "al-Qamis al-Masruq" where Abu al-'Abd kills Abu Samir. It is true that Abu Samir was collaborating with an American to steal flour from the warehouse and thus letting the camp residents suffer for few days each month, but that does not necessarily lead to murder. Since Abu al-'Abd had discovered who was behind that operation, why did not he simply report it to the appropriate authorities instead of killing Abu Samir? Besides, it is a bit difficult to believe that a person who is afraid of his wife would have the courage to kill a person. On the other hand, one may consider Abu Samir's confession as being the "last straw" that caused Abu al-'Abd to commit this murder.

Between 1956 and 1958, Kanafani started to experiment with unplotted short stories. In 1957 he produced one situation-revealed story, "Waraqa min at-Tira". In 1958, he produced two more situation-revealed stories, "Shay' la Yadhhab" and "Ard al-Burtuql al-Hazin". "Waraqa min at-Tira" and "Shay' la Yadhhab" are similar in the sense that the protagonists reflect back to narrate one or more accounts about a hero or heroine. In "Waraqa min at-Tira", for example, Kanafani presents his protagonist--who is a Palestinian refugee in some Arab country--as being fed up by the harassment of a policeman when selling sweets at a street corner. From there, the protagonist starts wondering where was that policeman when the protagonist was fighting the Jews in Palestine, and starts recalling some of the heroic acts of
some Palestinian fighters in 1948. In "Shay' la Yadhhab", while Khayri is traveling in a train, he recalls how Layla—the woman he loved twelve years ago—gave her life for Palestine. Both of these stories exhibit some weaknesses because the reader does not get the sense that the protagonist or any other character experience any change. The situation in which the protagonists find themselves at the end of the story is practically the same as that in which they began the story. The reader does not witness any change in the protagonists' physical or mental states; Khayri continues on with his journey without having experiencing any new revelations about Layla or himself, nor does the protagonist in the other story. It seems that Kanafani’s main purpose in both stories is to use them as a frame in which he could present the short narrations about various heroes.

In "Ard al-Burtuqal al-Hazin", however, there is a better sense of a situation revealed. The story starts with the family leaving Palestine, and ends with the family realizing that they have become refugees. Kanafani very skillfully shows how the entire family turned into refugees. He shows the sadness of leaving their homeland in the beginning of the story, then shows the hardship of finding a place to stay. Then begins a glimpse of hope of returning back home as the Arab armies move into Palestine, only to have that hope be shattered, leaving the family devastated with the reality of becoming refugees. In this story the reader learns a lot about the family and their feelings and experiences vicariously the dramatic changes inflicted on them. The family starts out as simple inhabitants of Palestine with a homeland, property, jobs, and a future. But at the end of the story, the family’s life is shattered, their homeland is occupied, their property is taken,
and they have become refugees in a foreign country with no hopeful future in sight. In this story, Kanafani artfully and skillfully depicts the moment of transformation of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian families who became refugees in 1948. That is what this story is all about: that single moment of transformation.

In twelve stories (about 85%) between 1956 and 1958, Kanafani maintains the rigid organization of his stories by keeping the denouement at the very end of the story. In 1958, two stories were published in which he reveals the denouement right at the very beginning of the story. The two stories are “Lu’lu’ fi at-Tariq”, where Sa’d ad-Din dies penniless in Kuwait after spending his last penny trying his luck in finding a pearl in a shell, and “ar-Rajul alladhi lam Yamut”—where ‘Ali is injured after an attempt on his life for selling his land to the Jews. By presenting the reader with the denouement up front, Kanafani seeks to make his stories more interesting and at the same time hint that the sequence of events leading up to such a denouement are more important than the ending itself. It is as if he is telling the reader here is the ending, now let us investigate the cause. Kanafani’s main concern is to let the reader understand that the actions in the stories—

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36 The protagonist in this story, ‘Ali, may very well be symbolizing the Lebanese Sursuq family. The Sursuqs sold to the Jews 240,000 dunums (about 60,000 acres) of land in the Marj ibn ‘Amir area. Consequently, the new Jewish owners forced all 8730 Palestinian peasants to leave (see ‘Abd al-Jawad Salih, Filastin: at-Tadmir al-Jama‘i... [London: Markaz al-Quds Lid-Dirasat al-Inma‘iyya, 1987] 13). The land which ‘Ali sold in Kanafani’s story was also in the Marj ibn ‘Amir area. Moreover, ‘Ali told Zaynab that he wanted to return to his balad (which refers to either town or country, thus could be interpreted that ‘Ali wanted to return to his homeland Lebanon).

37 Yusuf ash-Sharuni states “And some [writer] resolve to keeping the surprise to the very end of the story, but this style is outdated now and some writers even start their stories with the denouement. They do not use the detective-type story by keeping the surprise at the end to excite the reader; rather, they challenge this technique trying to prove that their own stories could persuade their readers to continue on reading even though the denouement is already known. The main incentive for the reader could be to discover the development of events that led to such an ending”. (Dirasat fi al-Qissa al-Qasira, [Damascus 1989] 54-55).
above all the actions of the protagonists--are worthy of attention. He wants his audience to learn that Sa'd ad-Din’s death is the consequence of abandoning his cause for the sake of a quick fortune; and that ‘Ali’s disgrace is due to his betraying the land and those who lived on his land. It is true that in both stories Kanafani provides detailed description of the actions, but those are mainly to make the stories more interesting and exciting and thus persuade the reader to read on and discover why the denouements turned out as they did. In other words, the reason why Sa’d ad-Din died in “Lu’lu’ fi at-Tariq” and why ‘Ali is disgraced in “ar-Rajul alladhi lam Yamut” is more important than how. Hence, Kanafani provides the answers first and then proceeds to show the reader the mistakes these protagonists committed.

**Second Period**

In the second period (1959-1963), we see that Kanafani abandons the plotted story all together and instead resorts to the situation-revealed stories (comprising almost 90% of the stories of this period). The themes of most of the stories in this period either are psychoanalytical, renouncing old traditions, or they deal with moral decay. For such stories, Kanafani choose to reveal a situation or illustrate an incident rather than create a conflict. In discussing the value of a situation-revealed story, Carpenter explains

“that aesthetic pleasure may be evoked in ways more subtle than the manipulated narrative imitation of a conflict. The highest aesthetical satisfaction may well derive from the reader’s growing recognition and his understanding of the characters and their situations. Such recognition and understanding does not require a plotted conflict and resolution at all. It needs merely the presentation of human beings, or of a human situation,
and the revelation of the truth inherent in that human being or in that situation—a gradual, slow illumination, as it has been called.

...the unploted story derives its unity, its coherence, its storyness, from the fact that it is one human being or one moment that unfolds before us as the narrator gives us telling insights.\textsuperscript{38}

This is very true in Kanafani’s situational stories as he changes their theme in the second period. Earlier, it was mentioned that between 1956 and 1959 the vast majority of his stories were Palestinian in theme. In the second period (1959-1963), however, the vast majority of the stories are psychoanalytical; thus, requiring situation-revealed settings rather than complication-resolved. Beckson explains that “the interest in the inner psychological processes of character has reduced action to a minimum.”\textsuperscript{39} The utilization of situation-revealed stories is more in line with psychoanalytical themes because the writer is interested more in revealing the thoughts of his characters than creating a conflict and action.

Half the stories in this period depict a decisive moment (or a very short time-frame) in the character’s life, such as “‘Asharat Amtar Faqat” (1959), “‘Atash al-Af’a” (1960), “al-Khiraf al-Masluba” (1960), “al-‘Atash” (1961), and “ash-Shati’” (1962). In such stories there is no interest in for creating and developing a conflict; rather, they depict a critical and crucial moment in a person’s life. In “al-Khiraf al-Masluba” for example, the bedouin—who is a shepherd—is left bewildered, and perhaps appalled, as he realizes that other people do not necessarily share his moral beliefs. In that story, a group of

\textsuperscript{38} Carpenter 64.

travelers going through a desert refuse to give water to the bedouin’s sheep claiming that they need it for the cars. The bedouin, who has lived his entire life believing in offering water to any one who requests it, is astonished that there are people who do not believe in such a fundamental tradition of nomadic life. In one moment, the encounter with the travelers turned the bedouin’s belief upside down.

In “ash-Shati’”, a similar situation occurs. Here, a mother who did not have the chance to attend her daughter’s wedding, as it took place in Brazil, tries to console herself by attending the wedding of her daughter’s friend. Unfortunately, she misses the wedding by ten minutes. The mother had waited years to attend this wedding in an effort to make up for missing her daughter’s, but her hope is shattered because of few minutes’ tardiness. These few minutes that seem to be insignificant compared to the years she had to wait, made all the difference between her happiness and anguish. The same applies to the cat that is introduced in the story. Both the lady and the cat are mutual analogies. The cat is illustrated as trying to jump over a water-filled pot hole in the street; and when it musters enough courage and jumps, it falls short and ends in the puddle and only one arm’s length from safe ground. The story ends with the scene of the cat struggling for its life trying desperately to reach for safety. Here, as in the part about the mother, it is these few inches/centimeters that made the difference between death and survival. Clearing three quarters of the pot hole is not any better than clearing one quarter or half of it. The cat had to clear all of it or else die.

In “‘Asharat Amtar Faqat” Kanafani is not only targeting the protagonist, but more importantly, the reader himself. The length of the story
is only the few seconds it took the protagonist to traverse ten meters during which he heard two men intending to molest a six-year old child. And when an old man asks him to do something, he replies that there is nothing he could do about it due to his weakness and besides it would not have much impact on improving the world any way. Here, one may question the protagonist’s action as whether he really did care about the child but did not react because he was physically weak as he claims, or is it because he does not have the conscience to stop that immoral act--given the fact that he himself was seducing the maid few hours earlier? It could very well be a combination of both. But I believe that the real test was aimed at the reader rather than the protagonist. The story begins with the protagonist remembering how he was trying to seduce his maid that morning; but just as he was almost successful in convincing her to come into his apartment, his roommate drops a mirror in another room. The maid realizes that there is more than one person in the house and runs away. Most likely, the reader (assuming that the reader is male) is just as disappointed as the protagonist himself. On the other hand, when he continues on reading and comes across the part about the two men wanting to molest the child, no doubt that the reader will feel disgusted and appalled by even the thought of such action. The reader would want the protagonist to do something to help the little innocent child, to grab him away from the men, or even to call for help. But by not doing anything, the reader feels appalled and disappointed by the protagonist’s inaction. The dilemma that Kanafani created here, is the double standard of the reader. In a way, Kanafani is asking how could the same reader enthusiastically encourage the protagonist to commit fornication with the maid, and at the same time
vehemently oppose the molestation of a child? Both acts are immoral, and thus the reader should not tolerate either of them. The write, perhaps, is confronting the reader who seems to be willing to tolerate certain immoral acts. And the question that Kanafani is posing would be: so what is the standard for morality?40

In two stories in the first period (1956-1959), it was shown how Kanafani experimented with hinting at or presenting the denouement at the very beginning. In the second period (1959-1963), this technique seems to have become popular with Kanafani inasmuch as it was utilized in quarter of the stories. The first two years (1959-1960), however, witnessed the bulk of these stories since six out of thirteen stories written in these two years reveal the denouement at the beginning. In the first period, we have seen that Kanafani uses this technique to emphasize the disastrous mistakes that led to the denouement rather than to emphasize the ending itself. In the second period, however, the vast majority of such stories are non-Palestinian in theme and, hence, he uses the technique for two different reasons.

In the stories that are not Palestinian in theme, Kanafani reveals the denouement early on mainly for stylistic reasons. In stories such as “Mawt Sarir Raqam 12”, “Qal'at al-'Abid”, “al-Khiraf al-Masluba”, “Aktaf al-Akharin”, and “Law Kunta Hisanan”, Kanafani confirms ash-Sharuni’s reasoning that the readers could still be interested in discovering the development of events that led to such denouement.41 Thus, when in the third line of “Mawt Sarir Raqam 12“ the narrator tells the reader that he saw

40 This certainly reminds us with one of The Arabian Nights stories, “The Hunchback”, where the barber seems to be deliberately delaying a customer who has a date with some woman. The reader of this story gets frustrated with the barber’s action as he wants the customer to meet his beloved one—even though the customer is planning on committing an immoral act.

41 ash-Sharuni, “Dirasat” 54-55.
the protagonist die⁴², and in the second page of "Qal'at al-'Abid" he informs
the reader that the old man is thought to be half crazy⁴³, and in "Law Kunta
Hisanan" the very first sentence says 'if you were a horse I would have put a
bullet in your head', Kanafani is simply exciting the reader. He is arousing
the reader's curiosity and enticing him to continue reading to find out how
that man died, why the old man is half crazy, and why "I" wants to put a
bullet in that person's head.

But Kanafani does more than just walk the reader through the various
events that lead to these denouements. In some of these stories such as
"Mawt Sarir Raqam 12" and "Qal'at al-'Abid", Kanafani at first offers the
reader a false set of answers to the denouements at first. As the reader reads
beyond the denouement, he believes that he is uncovering the details and the
reasons behind these endings only to discover that he has been fooled by the
first account and that he must read still further to find the truth. In "Mawt
Sarir Raqam 12", for example, Kanafani's first account about Muhammad Ali
Akbar's life occupies about 60% of the entire story length. Not only that, but
Kanafani goes into great details describing the protagonist's background and
life, almost bringing him to life. After reading such an elaborate and
convincing account, the reader discovers that all that he has read was the
narrator's fantasy and that it could not be any further from the truth. Finally,
at the end of the story, Kanafani presents the real story behind the protagonist.
The same deceptive strategy is employed in "Qal'at al-'Abid". The old man is
first described as being deranged, and it is alleged that his insanity was the
result of family conflicts. The narrator tries to substantiate this story by

⁴² Kanafani 127.
⁴³ Kanafani 228.
weaving an elaborate account about the old man’s quarrel with his children. As in “Mawt Sarir Raqam 12”, once the reader feels that he has uncovered the secrets of the old man, he is confronted with another account that discredits the first.

As for the situational stories with a Palestinian theme in which the denouements are revealed at the beginning of the story, these are “al-Buma fi Ghurfa Ba’ida” and “Muntasaf Ayyar”. Here, the denouement is revealed at the outset for a different reason. In both stories, Kanafani tries to recreate the misery in which those live who left or did not defend their homeland. Had Kanafani been simply interested in telling us about Ibrahim (in “Muntasaf Ayyar”), there would not have been a need to frame the story in the form of a letter with the narrator reflecting on the past and describing his present feelings and emotions. Kanafani could have written the events of Ibrahim’s death as they were happening. But by structuring the story in the fashion he did (going from present, to past, and back to present), he is trying to create and contrast two poles: the death of Ibrahim and the misery of the narrator. The narrator, who failed to fight like a man, is envying Ibrahim’s death, and admits that he is now living in anguish and disgrace. 44 Without so structuring the story, Kanafani would not have been able to portray the narrator’s present miserable situation, and thus contrast it with Ibrahim’s peace.

“Al-Buma fi Ghurfa Ba’ida”, presents an analogous situation, where the story begins with the antagonist’s describing his miserable living conditions, followed by his reflecting back on the fighting that took place in his village in Palestine. It is the owl’s picture that is in his room that

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44 Kanafani 79.
reminded him of another owl he encountered in Palestine in a night of heavy fighting. The contrast in this story becomes between the owl that steadfast in his village despite all the bombs and bullets that were filling the sky, and himself who fled and ended up in small dirty room with a broken table and a dirty, stinking bed cover.\textsuperscript{45} In a way, the message in this story could be compared to that of the novel "Rijal fi ash-Shams".

Third Period

The third period is quite similar to the first period. Here there is a return to the complication-resolved story; for eight of the ten stories in this period are so structured. The reason for this return is that, as in the first period, most of the stories deal with combat and confrontation with the enemy. In such circumstances, there is always some action building up to a peak and then being resolved. Only "al-‘Arus" and "as-Saghir Yaktashif anna al-Miftah Yashbah al-Fa’s" are situation-revealed.

The collection of "an ar-Rijal wal-Banadiq" is conceived by some critics as a short novella\textsuperscript{46}. This could be considered as a fair description especially when the structures of these stories are examined. For example, the second half of the first story in this collection, "as-Saghir Yasta’ir Martinat Khalibi wa Yusharriq ila Safad", introduces a new topic not at all related to the first half. However, the second half sets the stage for the following story "ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva...". The first part of the story talks about as-Saghir and how he was able to borrow a rifle to defend the town of Safad. In that

\textsuperscript{45} Kanafani 43,44.

part, the protagonist is shown crossing valleys and mountains on his way to Safad. The second half of this story introduces a new character, namely as-Saghir’s older brother Qasim. This part illustrates how Qasim upon his return from Lebanon decides to open his clinic in a city other than his own village. Then, the second half of this story and the beginning of the third story form the conclusion to the first half of the first story as they depict as-Saghir’s adventure in Safad and then his return back to his village. The first part of the second story, on the other hand, starts where the first story stops, by showing Qasim in Haifa with his Jewish girlfriend.

Another reason for considering these stories as a short novella is the fact that Kanafani does not give a complete description of his characters in a single story as he normally does in other stories. The descriptions of the characters, village, setting, and events are scattered across more than one story. In this regard, as the reader progresses in this series, he can feel that there a sense of development in the characterization of the characters. The events of the stories are also interrelated and thus give a sense of being sections of a novel.

Although more than half of the stories of the third period (1965-1969) deal with pre an-nakba actions, the resolution of these stories do not end in death as often as in the first two periods. Only “as-Saghir wa Abuh wa al-Martina Yadhhhabun ila Qal’at Jiddin”, and “Kana Yawmadhaka Tiflan” end in death.47 On the other hand, most of the stories in this period end in victory as in “ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva...” where Mansur destroys an enemy heavy machine gun, “Abu al-Hasan Yuqawwis ‘ala Sayyara Inkliziyya” where

47 “Abu al-Hasan Yuqawwis ‘ala Sayyara Inkliziyya” also ends in death, but it is the death of a British soldier.
the men succeed in ambushing a British military vehicle and retrieving ammunition from the vehicle, and “Hamid Yakuff an Sama‘ Qisas al-A’مام” where the three fighters carry out an attack against an enemy tank.

Nevertheless, as there were few stories in the first two periods that had somewhat unrealistic resolutions, the same is found in the third period in the story “ad-Duktur Yatahaddath li Iva...”. In this story, the protagonist destroys the enemies’ heavy machine gun by firing one shot from a distance. Not only was the heavy machine gun almost totally concealed, except for a very small opening, and thus making it hard to hit it, but the protagonist was not a well trained fighter in the first place. It is true that he used to practice shooting with his uncle, but shooting one or two rounds a week could hardly be called adequate training. And thus, this would raise questions on whether as-Saghir could really have been able to destroy the heavy machine gun.

In contrast to that, Kanafani’s “as-Saghir wa Abuh wa al-Martina Yadhhabun ila Qal‘at Jiddin” depicts the combat conditions in a very realistic manner. The other stories of this collection that have a victorious ending, illustrate individual or small group fighting missions. But in “as-Saghir wa al-Martina Yadhhabun ila Qal‘at Jiddin” a larger assault takes place with the participation of many men. But the story ends not in victory for these Palestinian fighters, but in humiliating retreat. Kanafani intended that ending because he wanted to show the new Palestinian revolution the mistakes of the past which lead to their defeat. The lack of organization, leadership, training, and arms were all factors working against the Palestinian fighters. In that respect, the defeat in this story is a mere representation of the greater defeat that the entire Palestinian population suffered in 1948.
In terms of revealing the denouement at the beginning of the story, one story "as-Saghir Yasta'ir Martinat Khalihi wa Yusharriq ila Safad" may appear to fit that category, but actually it does not. Stories in other periods that revealed denouement at the beginning did so either to explain why, to introduce the misery of the narrator, or simply to excite the reader. In "as-Saghir Yasta'ir Martinat Khalihi wa Yusharriq ila Safad", however, none of these reasons apply. The events of this story are arranged chronologically backward in a series of flashbacks. The story begins with as-Saghir on his way to Safad, followed by reporting how he borrowed the rifle from his uncle that morning, and finally followed by recalling the day his older brother returned from Beirut after completing his medical studies. There is no sense of unity among the the first two accounts in this story and the last account about as-Saghir's brother. Hence, there is a lack of cause and effect and it is difficult to figure out what caused as-Saghir to borrow a rifle and head to Safad. In this regard, this story could only be interpreted as a prelude to the following stories in that collection. This story seems to be setting the stage to the other stories, and providing some background about some of the main characters that will appear in later stories.

Conclusion

Kanafani experimented in a variety of techniques in his short stories. He employed complication-resolved as well as situation-revealed techniques. And it was clear that he used either of them for specific topics. For example, we have seen that most of the stories that are Palestinian in theme utilized the complication-resolved plot while the other themes (i.e. social ones) made
use of situation-revealed technique. Again, this is due to the fact that most of the stories that deal with the Palestinian issue contain some kind of action; thus, complication-resolved plot is more appropriate for such stories. The opposite is certainly true for the other stories.

Kanafani seems to have enjoyed surprising his readers in numerous occasions he drops unsuspected endings or conclusions. And some of his stories, literally, deceive the reader by projecting one explanation of some fact which turns out to be completely false, and the true explanation is uncovered at the end of the story. This should not be considered as a deficiency or a fault, on contrary, it shows that Kanafani was simply different means to keep his stories interesting and in turn renew the readers excitement.

Finally, Kanafani does not show any reservations in confronting the reader regarding moral standards as he did in "'Asharat Amtar Faqat". This issue of double standard may have concerned Kanafani, probably as a reaction to the society around him; a society that sets different moral standards for males and females.
CHAPTER IV

CHARACTERS

Introduction

In any literary work, not only are characters an integral part of the story, but they are also the foundation for having a plot. Without characters, there will not be action which is necessary for the development and resolution of the plot. Without an adequate and realistic presentation of characters, a story would leave the reader with a sense of incompleteness and would make the understanding of the plot and its resolution more difficult. It is no surprise then, that writers spend a good deal of effort in creating and in presenting their characters and Kanafani is certainly no exception.

If there is one characteristic about Kanafani’s characters, it is his economy is describing and presenting them. ‘Abd al-Hadi says “he [Kanafani] does not present to us his characters in the same manner as in the novels of the 19th century by Balzac, Dostoevski, and Tolstoy. We do not see one example similar to Ahmad ‘Abd al-Jawad in Najib Mahfouz’s trio where Mahfouz presents him through an introductory description which precedes the appearance of the character. Afterwards, he [Mahfouz] gives us the picture of his character depicted in great detail”.

1 ‘Abd al-Hadi 34.

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describing Kanafani's novels, the very same applies to the characters in his short stories as will be seen.

However, that is not to say that Kanafani leaves out needed details about his characters. On the contrary, the economy in physical description is often complemented by a psychological portrait through the words and actions of the character. For example, in "Sittat Nusur wa Tifl", Kanafani does not give any physical description about any of his characters. However, from the way each passenger talks about the eagle, we learn a lot about the mentality and way of thinking of each of them. The same is true in "Ab'ad min al-Hudud" where the only physical description of the young man is his cut legs from jumping through a glass window. But from his speech to the important officer, the reader is made aware of the young man's intelligence and political consciousness.49

Another characteristic of Kanafani's stories is the presence of more male than female characters. Despite Kanafani's best effort in few of his stories to give some females leading and heroic roles, nevertheless he falls victim to the male-dominant society and environment that encompass him.

Moreover, Kanafani had always admired children and consequently they are major players in many of his stories and novels as well. The importance of children in Kanafani's work is apparent not only in the frequency he uses them, but also in the numerous and various--and sometimes leading--roles they assume.

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49 Even in his novels, Kanafani sometimes emphasizes the psychological more than the physical profile. One such example, as 'Ashur points out, is the characters in "A'id ila Hayfa" where the characters are presented as tools for the plot and as if they are characters in a short story. The characters express ideas rather than personalities. ( 'Ashur 144).
Male vs. Female

Because of the extensive number of character categories in Kanafani’s stories, I will deal with those categories that comprise five percent or more of the total (see Appendices D&E). Four and six categories from the male and female categories, respectively, account for more than five percent each. From the male list, we have: fighter (15%), man (8%), youth (7%), and child (7%). From the female list, we have: mother (17%), wife (11%), sister (11%), prostitute (11%), woman (9%), and girl (6%). While the only male occupation listed above is that of a fighter, the only female occupation listed above is that of a prostitute. This, perhaps, shows Kanafani’s subconscious thinking of the roles between male and female in a society. The general impression from Kanafani’s stories seems to be that he perceives the role of the male to be the provider while that of the female to be for sexual pleasure.

Kanafani’s short stories reflect the male-dominant society in which he grew up. That domination is reflected in both the theme and roles of characters, despite the fact that many critics have applauded Kanafani for his positive and heroic portrayal of women. For instance, Amal Zayn ad-Din praises Kanafani for his positive stand towards Layla in “Shay’ la Yadhhhab” where an Arab lady gives up her honor for the sake of her homeland.50 Moreover, Yaghi goes even further by stating “[i]ndeed he [Kanafani] is liberal, and courageous, he exalts women and in some cases gives them precedence over men”.51 No one can dispute the fact that Kanafani did indeed portray some of his female characters as heroines and in some cases made them

50 Amal Zayn ad-Din and Joseph Basil, Tatawwur al-Wa’i fi Namadhij Qisasiyya Filastiniyya. (Beirut: Dar al-Hadatha, 1980) 143
51 Yaghi 60.
revolutionary heroines; nonetheless, when evaluating his literary works, it is
evident that Kanafani’s short stories are biased towards male.

Of all the 240 characters in his short stories, only 47 (or 20%) are female
characters. Also, only 9 female characters (or 20% of all female characters)
play instrumental role in the short stories compared to over 90% of male
characters. The one area where Kanafani treats male and female characters
equally is in naming them. About 36% and 39% of female and male
characters, respectively, have proper names. But these ratios are not
consistent for all types of characters. For example, characters that are depicted
as fighters (whether male or female), are more likely than others to have
proper names. Of the 31 fighter characters (male and female), 19 (over 60%)
are given proper names. Perhaps, this is an indication that Kanafani regarded
his fighter characters more highly than other characters.

*Productive vs. Negative Characters:*

When it comes to productive characters\(^{52}\), male characters are more
likely to be productive than female ones in Kanafani’s stories. Thirty one
percent of all male characters are considered productive compared to only
14% of their female counterparts. Even in a story such as “Kana Yawmadhaka
Tiflan” where none of the Palestinian characters assume any particular role
except for being passengers on a bus and victims of a massacre, Kanafani still
differentiate between males and females. The workers, lawyer, driver, and
clergy man are all described as being males. On the other hand, all of the
female passengers are presented solely as women.

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\(^{52}\) Productive character is a character who contributes positively to the society, such as a
farmer, teacher, engineer, nurse, student, physician, etc...
Moreover, the productive roles of males in Kanafani’s stories were perceived completely differently from those of females. The productive male characters assume the role of a priest, student, policeman, engineer, teacher, physician, lawyer, and many other occupations (a total of 26 different occupations). On the other hand, the productive female characters assume only a handful of occupations which traditionally were reserved for females. Kanafani’s productive female characters are either students, peasants, maids, nurses, housewives, or saleswomen.

Another striking contrast between the male and female roles in Kanafani’s stories is in the ratio of negative characters. With regard to male characters, a mere 4% are presented as negative characters (i.e. traitor, murderer, thief, and pimp). By contrast, 13% of the female characters (more than three times the male ratio) assume a negative role (i.e. prostitute, and traitor). Again, this shows that Kanafani was willing to consider women more as negative characters rather than positive and productive ones. Viewed in a different way, while 13% of females are portrayed as prostitutes and traitors, a very close percentage (about 15%) of male characters are presented as fighters.

The above leaves no doubt that Kanafani had perceived women characters as more negative than the men ones. This fact is further accentuated by comparing the ratio of negative characters to that of patriotic characters. For the female characters, the negative characters are double the patriotic ones (13% of negative characters compared to 6% patriotic). On the other hand, the ratio of male patriotic characters is fives times that of
negative ones. This is an absolute distinction between the two genders in Kanafani’s stories.

In Kanafani’s stories, once a character is presented as either productive or negative, then he or she will assume that role for the entire length of the story. It is extremely rare that any character changes roles within the story as is the case in “al-Batal fi az-Zinzana”, and “al-Qamis al-Masruq”. In the first of these stories, the lady—at whose place the protagonist was staying—is presented in the early part of the story as a nice and hospitable lady, who used to prepare him dinner once in a while, and who, along with her husband, used to visit him in his room almost every night. But behind this pleasant facade was a wicked woman, for the reader discovers at the end of the story that she was an informer for the government and that she was behind the imprisonment of the protagonist for his political activities. In “al-Qamis al-Masruq”, on the other hand, Abu al-‘Abd considers at one point stealing flour from the UNRWA warehouse and thus may be perceived as a negative character at that moment. However, at the end of the story, when Abu al-‘Abd is put to the test, he refuses to join Abu Samir in stealing from the warehouse and instead kills him.

Another change in the role of certain characters appears not in the same story, but across a number of stories. The role of prostitutes undergoes some change between “‘Asharat Amtar Faqat”, “‘Ulbat Zujaj Wahida”, and “al-Qitt”. In the first two stories, and although no sexual act takes place, the prostitutes’ roles (including the maid) are simply to provide sexual pleasure for men. In “al-Qitt”, however, the protagonist goes to his usual prostitute, Samira, to satisfy his desires, but on his way to her he passes a cat whose legs
were smashed and was desperately trying to reach her destination by crawling. That scene horrifies the protagonist and he feels that he could not engage with Samira sexually. Instead, he spends the time talking with her. One can realize that unlike the prostitutes in the other stories, in this story, the prostitute is depicted more like a friend, a companion, and perhaps a confidant.

Role of Women:

The following table shows the complete list of categories aggregated into broader ones:

Table 1: Aggregate of character categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aggregate Category</th>
<th>As in...</th>
<th>Male %</th>
<th>Female %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinship</td>
<td>father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, wife, husband, grandfather, daughter, son</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive Char.</td>
<td>student, maid, teacher, peasant, nurse, carpenter, merchant, writer, driver, engineer, physician, etc.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriotic Char.</td>
<td>fighter, patriotic, general</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Char.</td>
<td>traitor, murderer, thief, pimp, prostitute</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>child, person, young man/woman, old man, girl, man, patient, woman, crazy, traveler, defendant</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To Kanafani, a woman assumes the role of a relative more than anything else. Forty five percent of all women characters in Kanafani's short
stories are either mothers, wives, sisters, aunts, or daughters. On the other hand, only 11% of male characters are labeled as father, son, brother, uncle, grandfather, or husband. This clearly shows that Kanafani considered women in their traditional roles; a role which, according to Ghazi al-Khalili, most Palestinian women assumed before 1948. Al-Khalili mentions that the Arab society regarded women in the traditional way considering them seconds to men, weak and helpless creatures, and that their main purpose is to care for the husband and to bear children.\(^{53}\)

Furthermore, Kanafani mentioned the role of a wife five times in his short stories (once in each of the following years 1956, 1958, and 1961, and twice in 1962). Except for the wife in “Risala min Mas'ud”, wives in Kanafani’s short stories are traditional wives. Umm 'Uthman in “Waraqa min ar-Ramla”, Umm al-'Abd in “al-Qamis al-Masruq”, Umm 'Ali in “as-Silah al-Muharram”, and the wife in “Ab'ad min al-Hudud” are all exemplified as simple wives with no particular role in the story. All of these wives appear to be subordinate to and over shadowed by their husbands. For example, in “Waraqa min ar-Ramla”, Abu 'Uthman (Umm 'Uthman’s husband) is described as being a gentle and humble barber and physician of the town, loved by the young children. Moreover, he is described as the person who gave up all his fortune to buy weapons for the fighters, and finally carried out a suicide attack in the Jewish command center. On the other hand, his wife is mentioned twice, once when she is shot dead, and the other time she is remembered by the narrator having often seen her sitting in front of the her husband’s shop waiting to collect the empty dishes once her

husband is done eating. The contrast between the two characters is obvious and there is no doubt that Umm 'Uthman’s role is marginal compared to her husband’s. One can notice the same contrast in “as-Silah al-Muharram” where Abu ‘Ali is shown as the one who performs a heroic act of seizing a rifle from a foreign soldier. His wife, however, is presented in two situations, as the one who prepared and packed his lunch, and as mourning her husband.

Only in “Risala min Mas’ud” do we see the wife as a modern and urban lady who is equal to the husband and perhaps superior to him. The actions of that wife could be expected from some urban ladies as they had more freedom than their rural counterparts. Al-Khalili states that the few gains in freedom and liberty which women achieved early this century did not penetrate the rural areas--where most of the population lived--but were mainly confined to the cities and their dwellers. In this story, not only is the wife presented as of the bossy type who is ordering around the maid and her own husband, but she is also portrayed as the one who decides when to have sex with her husband. The husband is presented as the obedient type, one who is directed by his wife.

The dramatic change in the wife’s role in “Risala min Mas’ud” should not come as a surprise. Not only was “Risala min Mas‘ud” written last among the other stories that include the role of wives, but more importantly it was written within a year of Kanafani’s marriage. It would be reasonable to conclude that marriage life had its impact on Kanafani’s perspective of the wives’ role, especially inasmuch as his wife was a European lady.

54 al-Khalili 52.
**Patriotic Characters:**

Only 6% of all female characters are depicted as patriotic, while three times that figure (19%) among male characters are depicted as such. This should be expected, since all of Kanafani’s stories that include patriotic women (as in “Ila an-Na‘ud”, and “Shay’ la Yadhhab”, and “Waraqa min Ghazza”) were written a long time before the start of the Palestinian armed struggle in 1965. Until late 1960’s armed struggle was left for men with very little participation by women⁶⁵. It was not until late 1960’s and early 1970’s, that Palestinian women joined the Palestinian resistance movement at a large scale. It was after 1969 that we heard of Layla Khalid, and Dalal al-Mughrabi.

Not only is the ratio of females who participated in fighting much lower than that of males, there is also a clear distinction between the roles of the two genders in combat. Of the three stories mentioned above, two end in the death of the heroine and the third ends in the amputation of Nadiya leg.

Despite the fact that Kanafani tries to give women some equality, by depicting them as patriotic, he still sees them as weak and helpless and considers that they can not carry out significant combat missions. It is apparently his subconscious mentality—the mentality of his environment—that causes his heroines to be killed or maimed. In all three stories, despite their heroic acts, the heroines were always attacked and destroyed by their enemy. In “Ila an Na‘ud”, the wife of the protagonist who fought along side

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⁶⁵ al-Khalili explains that the Palestinian rural women helped the Palestinian fighters by transporting weapons and food; their aid, however, was spontaneous and unorganized and without any supervision by any of the women organizations [in the urban areas]. And as for women’s participation in combat, it was extremely rare except for few cases. (al-Khalili 78)
her husband was killed by the enemy. The interesting point in this story is the fact that both the husband and the wife were taken captives by the Jews, but it is only the wife who was killed while the husband was not. In the second story “Shay’ la Yadhhhab”, Layla, the women that the narrator once loved, was involved in the resistance movement in Palestine and carried out numerous attacks. However, she was eventually caught and imprisoned for nine days during which she was repeatedly raped by her jailers. Not wanting to spend the rest of her life in disgrace, she refused to leave her town and apparently fought to the end. Although in the third story “Waraqa min Ghazza”, the heroine does not die, she is maimed.

On the other hand, not only do we see that many of the male fighters engage in combat and military operations, but Kanafani describes some of their heroic acts in great detail. Twenty-two out of twenty-nine male fighters (about 75%) do not die at the end of the stories. One such example is Mansur in “ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva...” who destroys an enemy heavy machine-gun. Not only is his act described in great and heroic detail, but he survives that mission and participates in other missions in later stories as well.\(^5\)

The very same position is taken in his novels. ‘Ashur points out that “[d]espite the patriotism of Umm Sa’d, she is still a depiction of the motherly woman... and she is a patriotic mother rather than a revolutionary woman per se... and she herself [Umm Sa’d] says that she would have joined the

\(^5\) Some critics, such as Radwa ‘Ashur, consider the short stories of ‘An ar-Rijal wa al-Banadiq collection as a novel (see ‘Ashur 103-104). Even if we do not consider that collection as one novel, the strong resemblance between characters and themes among its stories leaves no doubt that some characters are the same ones in these stories. Hence, Mansur in “ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva...” is the same Mansur in “Abu al-Hasan Yuqawwis ‘ala Sayyara Ikniziyya” and in other stories of that collection.
*fedā'iyyin* had she not had to care and cook for her young children. Thus, even in the revolution, her role continues to be the role of the assistant and not that of the main and active one." In "Rijal fi as-Shams", all reference to fighting is always associated with men, and in "Ma Tabaqqa Lakum" it is the Hamid who engages in a confrontation with an Israeli enemy. And "‘A‘id ila Hayfa" is no exception as all those who were engaged or will engage in fighting are male characters.

**Characters and Appearance**

It seems that Kanafani did not place much emphasis on the way his characters are dressed since he very rarely includes descriptive information about their clothing. Kanafani gives some information of the way 37 characters are dressed out of a total of 240 characters (about 15% of the total). However, in these rare occasions, he tries to be either consistent or realistic.

When Kanafani tries to describe how an educated person or a man in a high governmental office is dressed (i.e. in "Darb ila Kha‘in" written in 1957, and "Ab‘ad min al-Hudud" written in 1962), he describes each as wearing jackets and neck ties. On the other hand, it seems that he, for one reason or another, had associated a blue dirty shirt with certain jobs. For example, Kanafani uses a blue dirty shirt phrase to describe four characters in four stories: "Darb ila Kha‘in" in 1957, "Ka‘k ‘ala ar-Rasif" in 1959, "as-Saqr" in 1961, and "Ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva..." in 1965. The four characters are a truck driver, a shoe shiner, a guard (though his uniform is not dirty), or a car driver in the first, second, third, and fourth story respectively.

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57 'Ashur 130.
In the two stories that he describes the way Jewish women or female soldiers are dressed ("Abu al-Hasan Yuqawwis ‘ala Sayyara Inkliziyya" and "Kana Yawmadhaka Tiflan"), he portrays them as wearing short trousers. For the Jewish women in "Abu al-Hasan Yuqawwis ‘ala Sayyara Inkliziyya", Kanafani goes further to degrade them by presenting them not only as wearing short trousers, but also as showing their shoulders and walking around with a dress as tiny as a handkerchief. In contrast, all of his non-Jewish women for whom he provided dress information (except for the prostitutes) are described as wearing dresses.

Children Characters

Children occupy an important place in Kanafani’s short stories. One fourth of Kanafani’s stories include a child, with many of these children assuming either a leading or a protagonist role. When it comes to the presence of children in Kanafani’s stories, the critics seem to have conflicting opinions. ‘Abd al-Hadi, for example, believes that Kanafani concentrates on children as heroes in his stories because he has futuristic hope and that these children are the hope of the revolution58. Khalida Khalil, on the other hand, claims that children (along with the poor and refugee camp residents) are the preferred characters for Kanafani59. Sami Swaydan seems to have a more comprehensive view regarding the role of children in Kanafani’s short stories, albeit not a complete one. Swaydan describes four roles for Kanafani’s children: the child is either a witness as in "Waraqa min ar-Ramla", a role

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58 'Abd al-Hadi 164
model for the grown-ups as in “Waraqa min Ghazza”, someone superior to grown-ups as in “Sittat Nusur wa Tifl”, or someone able to convince grown-ups with his point of view as in “al-Munzalaq”.

In addition to Swaydan’s four roles, Kanafani’s children assume a wider range of roles. In “Ka’k ‘ala ar-Rasif”, Hamid is the victim of an-nakba while in “as-Saghir Yadhbhab ila al-Mukhayyam” the children are participants in the war of survival. And if a child is presented as the victim of a morally deteriorating society in “Asharat Amtar Faqat”, in “as-Saghir Yaktashif arna al-Miftah Yashbah al-Fa’s” the child represents the connection between the past and future.

It seems that Kanafani’s bias towards male characters is not confined to age. Even when it comes to children, a clear preference of boys over girls is evident. Of all the children in Kanafani’s stories, only four are young girls: there is Fatima in “Waraqa min ar-Ramla”, Nadiya in “Waraqa min Ghazza”, Dalal in “al-Ufuq Wara’ al-Bawwaba”, and the sister of the crazed boy (the narrator) in “al-Majnun”. Two characteristics are common for all four of these girls. First, none of these little girls were introduced in the story as little girls per se, but rather are either a daughter (as in the first story), a niece (as in the second story), or a sister (as in the two other stories). Second, and perhaps more significant, all four young girls are destroyed at the end of the story. Fatima, Dalal, and the sister of the crazed boy are all killed while Nadiya is maimed. Earlier, we observed the same trend for the adult heroines who also die at the end of the story.

In contrast, little boys in some of Kanafani’s stories not only play a leading role, but are also protagonists who never die in the stories. The worst

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60 Swaydan, “Fi Dalaliyat al-Qisas” 121.
physical harm that befalls any of the 14 boys are minor injuries suffered as a result of car accident in "as-Saghir Yadhib ila al-Mukhayyam".

Little girls never assume the role of a narrator in Kanafani's stories while little boys are in some cases narrators. Not only are they able to observe and record with keen sensitivities and sharpness the complex events that are surrounding them, but the little boys are also playing active roles in these events. In "al-Majnun", the entire story reflects the inner thoughts of the narrator who is a little boy describing his miserable life, believing that he is a little dog who spends his day sitting at a street corner. Similarly, in "as-Saghir Yadhib ila al-Mukhayyam", the entire plot evolves around the little boy—who is also the narrator.

Moreover, Kanafani's girls do not participate in any dialogue. Of the four girls, only Nadiya utters two sentences: "Uncle, have you returned from Kuwait?" and "My uncle..."61. The little boys, on the other hand, take part in very long, complex, and in sometimes unbelievably imaginative and mature dialogues. Kanafani’s little boys are able to tell stories, and even make up stories. In "Ka'k 'ala ar-Rasif", for instance, the little boy—Hamid—is the protagonist who is able to manipulate those who are much older than him, such as his teacher. Hamid, in contrast to his age, understands the weaknesses of adults and tries to prey on them through their emotions. Just to survive, Hamid is able to come up with excuses in an instant and without much effort. Moreover, Kanafani’s little boys are able to talk to adults and even convince them of their point of views, as in "Sittat Nusur wa Tifl" where the young boy is able to persuade the narrator, and the reader for that matter, to adopt his point of view regarding the myth of the eagle. The little

61 Kanafani 348.
boy gives what seems to be the most accurate account in contrast to six other accounts regarding the eagle. Kanafani’s boys are no doubt more mature and more developed than his girls—even more mature and developed than little boys ought to be.

**Jewish Characters**

As for the Jewish soldiers, we can clearly see a development in Kanafani’s treatment. In the early years of his writing (between 1956 and 1960) there are two male and one female Jewish soldiers. In 1968 and 1969 there are three male (two soldiers and one officer) and one female Jewish soldiers. The Jewish soldiers in the early years were not described physically. The only descriptive information given by Kanafani is when he described a Jewish female soldier as dark skinned (in “Waraqa min ar-Ramla”). In the early years, we do not know how these Jewish soldiers look like, what they wear, how tall they are, etc...

In the later years, however, Kanafani describes his Jewish soldiers in relatively greater detail. In “Sadiq Salman Yata’allam Ashya’ Kathira fi Layla Wahida”, the reader learns more about the male Jewish soldier, such as: he carries a gun, wears an outfit that does not belong to him, he has his sleeves rolled up, his arms are covered with blondish hair, and wears a helmet on his head while its strap is unfastened. In “Kana Yawmadhaka Tiflan”, one soldier is described as wearing a dark green outfit and carrying a gun, the second soldier is presented as being short, fat, with a pistol on his side, and carrying a black stick. While in “Waraqa min ar-Ramla” (written in 1956) the female Jewish soldiers are described as dark skinned, in 1969 Kanafani describes the
female soldier as being young, wearing a short trouser, and carrying a gun on her shoulder.

In the early years, the enemy seems to be viewed by Kanafani as an unknown creature with no definite or known characteristics; hence, Kanafani’s omitting any description of the enemy. With time, Kanafani learns more about the enemy and learns to be more realistic in presenting his Jewish characters as well as to accept the enemy as human beings. This trend is also exhibited in his novels. It is in his very last complete novella “‘A'id ila Hayfa”, published in 1969, that he presents a Jew (namely, Miryam) not as an aggressor, a terrorist, or a murderer, but rather as a victim of Nazi racism and genocide\textsuperscript{62} and gives her a proper name. In this novel, Kanafani tries to give a more humane depiction of the other side of the Jews. And although he still portrays his Jewish characters as soldiers in the short stories written in 1968 and 1969, the fact that he gives them a physical description, as we have seen, makes them appear more like humans rather than the unknown creatures.

Conclusion

Two characteristics are evident about Kanafani’s characters; first, is the economy in their presentation; and second, is that his stories are dominated by male characters. It is true there is economy in the presentation of the characters, but Kanafani does not leave out necessary details. On the contrary,

\textsuperscript{62} Radwa 'Ashur claims that Kanafani was a pioneer in presenting a Jewish character in a humane way in his novel "'A'id ila Hayfa". Although 'Ashur's view is shared by many, Ahmad Abu Matar claims otherwise. Abu Matar states that Nasir an-Nashashibi preceded Kanafani in presenting a Jewish character in a humane way. In his novel "Habbat al-burtuqal", an-Nashashibi depicts a Jewish lady being a pro-Palestinian even dies fighting for the Palestinian cause. (Ahmad Abu Matar; ar-Riwaya fl al-Adab al-Filastini (1950-1975), [Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-'Arabiyya lid-Dirasat wan-Nashr, 1980] 218).
the reader gets all the required information to form a clear picture about the main characters and to understand their actions in the course of the stories. The second, characteristic, however, could be considered a fault since Kanafani did not represent the female population in a balanced way with the males. It is true that Kanafani was living in an environment where the men are dominant, and hence one could argue that he was simply reflecting the reality in his stories. And that is something that Kanafani himself had admitted "the greatest impact on my writings is what I see [around me], the experiences of my friends, family, brothers and sisters, and students; and my experiences with poverty and misery in the [refugee] camps."\(^{63}\) On the other hand, that does not mean that this could give him the incentive to deny them to take leading roles, or to destroy the few women who did assume leading roles.

One point of extreme importance regarding Kanafani’s treatment of characters, is his treatment of Jews. Kanafani was certainly one of the pioneers in presenting Jews in a humane way as he did in “Rijal fi ash-Shams”. And Kanafani’s perception about “Jewish enemy” was developing throughout his writing career as was demonstrated. His early Jewish characters were presented with no physical description at all, perhaps reflecting his perception of the Jews as being the unknown enemy. In his later stories, it is clear that his perception has changed as the Jewish characters are depicted with more physical descriptions.

Finally, it is apparent that Kanafani did not differentiate between his characters in terms of his utilization of the language in dialogue. All his characters use the standard Arabic in dialogue regardless of the educational

\(^{63}\) ’Abbas 145.
and social background of the characters. His peasant, maid, prostitute, and illiterate characters, for example, use the same level of language as the physician, teacher, priest, and fighters. Even in terms of age, the level of language the children use in their dialogue is the same as the adults.
CHAPTER V

POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Asked by a Swiss writer whether his literary development accompanied his political development, Kanafani answered: “Yes, actually I do not know which one preceded the other.”\(^1\) Even without Kanafani’s personal admission, the reader of his works could easily sense such development and parallelism; it is more of a political ideas and beliefs molded into literary works. Kanafani’s short stories and novels were more like a forum adopted to express his political ideas and beliefs. This may be contrary to the rest of his answer as he said: “I could say that my personality as a writer was more developed than my personality as a politician”.\(^2\) Even though Kanafani himself is making such an evaluation, I believe that his political development preceded his literary because it is clear that his writings are nothing but an expression of his political views.

Kanafani, like the majority of the Palestinians, felt that the Palestinian people had to act and depend on themselves if they ever dream of returning to their homeland. Many Palestinians chose various means to express their bitterness and rejection of the status quo; there were some who did it through

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\(^1\) ‘Abbas 138.
\(^2\) ‘Abbas 138.
painting, some through poetry, and some through armed struggle. Kanafani chose to apply his writing skills to the cause. It is important to keep in mind, however, that all of these individuals, including Kanafani, did not have a preset plan as to how to deal with the Palestinian issue; instead, their efforts were very much ad hoc. Therefore, it is very reasonable to see that the starting point was to recreate either some heroic acts that took place in Palestine or the agony and hardship of the exodus and diaspora. And Kanafani did, indeed depict such realities in his early short stories. As time went by, and with the ever changing political and military realities in the region, Kanafani’s political consciousness was growing and was reflected in his stories as we shall see. In the later years, Kanafani’s stories not only portrayed the present realities, but also illustrated what actions must be taken by the Palestinians.

At the beginning of his writing career, Ghassan tries to wake his people up by putting in front of them dramatic and emotional scenes of an-nakba. In “Waraqa min ar-Ramla”, “Waraqa min Ghazza”, “Waraqa min at-Tira”, “Al-Madfa’”, and “Shay’ la Yadhhhab”, he tries to remind his fellow Palestinians that they had martyrs in Palestine who died for the sake of their homeland. He tries to wake up his audience who have been dormant ever since their homeland was occupied eight years ago. This early period of Kanafani’s writings is perhaps best termed, as coined by Khuri the period of screaming. Khuri goes on saying that this period is the period of shock and screaming. Shock at what had happened: the horrendous surprise, the hasty exodus.66 And indeed, Kanafani does just that by presenting the various pictures of heroism and martyrs. At this stage, he does not know what exactly must be

66 ‘Abbas. 92-93.
done; nor does he know along what path to guide his people. All he could do is to bombard them with such figures in order to wake them from their deep sleep. He tries to accomplish that by presenting a variety of pictures of Palestinian suffering and tragedy. In “Waraqa min at-Tira”, Kanafani injects a number of accounts about heroic acts in Palestine in an effort to make certain that his readers will not forget these martyrs, but will always remember their sacrifices.

In “al-Ufuq Wara‘ al-Bawwaba” on the other hand, Kanafani skillfully illustrates the agony the Palestinians suffer as a result of occupation. He demonstrates how occupation separated families leaving them with no means of communicating to the extent that those members on one side of the armistice line do not know who is dead and who is alive of those on the other side. This reflects the double tragedy of those Palestinians who can not go to their homes nor visit their dead.

The only advice Kanafani was able to offer the Palestinian refugees at that time was not to abandon their cause by dispersing to other countries for the sake of a quick fortune. Instead, he urges them to be steadfast and endure their miserable conditions in an effort to direct their energies against the occupier. For this purpose, he wrote three stories between 1956 and 1959: “Waraqa min Ghazza” (1956), “Lu’lu’ fi at-Tariq” (1958), and “al-Buma fi Ghurfa Ba‘ida” (1959). In “Waraqa min Ghazza”, Kanafani bluntly tells the readers not to abandon their strongholds but stay there and make sacrifices just as did Nadiya. At the end of the story, the narrator who works in Kuwait and had come to visit his relatives in Gaza, decides not to go back to Kuwait and instead to remain in Gaza. Although in his letter to his friend he urges
him to do the same, he is actually addressing all of the Palestinians to do just that. In the second story, Kanafani gives an example about what might happen to those who decide to abandon their cause. That is, they will die just as did Sa’d ad-Din. And finally, in the third story, the protagonist’s big, beautiful house and its large and fertile garden in Palestine are replaced by a tiny, dark, and miserable room in the diaspora. Here, Kanafani is simply implying that if the Palestinians do not fight for their cause they will end up living a miserable life.

At early 1958 Kanafani starts to realize that some action must be taken against the occupiers. However, just as he becomes aware of that, he realizes that it is equally important to get rid of those who would restrict such action. Traitors, whether individuals or regimes, become a great concern for Kanafani. Thus, he devotes “Darb ila Kha’in” (1957), “Al-Batal fi az-Zinzana” (1958), and “Qatil fi al-Mawsil” (1959) to this subject. The first story of these three focuses attention on the problem of individual traitors, as well as on reactionary regimes. When Mahmud, in “Darb ila Kha’in”, tries to reach Palestine through Jordan to kill his own brother who was a traitor, he finds out that he could not enter Jordan because of his past political activities. Thus, Jordan becomes a hurdle in his way preventing him from accomplishing his task. Kanafani, thus, in addition to hinting to the need to get rid of traitors, he is also implying that before reaching their final targets, the Palestinians must first deal with the reactionary regimes.

In “al-Batal fi az-Zinzana” we see a glimpse of some action. Riyad, the protagonist, is imprisoned by an Arab regime because of his political activities. This story reveals to the Palestinians the political option they could
pursue. But it also warns them about the danger of such regimes. And despite the hardship and torture one may go through, Kanafani stresses the need for such action. "Al-Batal fi az-Zinzana" seems to start from where the previous story, "Darb ila Kha'in", ends. In the previous story, Mahmud realizes the negative role of the Arab regimes but does not take any action against them. In "al-Batal fi az-Zinzana", however, Riyadh takes some action even though his action is only through political means.

In "Qatil fi al-Mawsil", Kanafani sends out the same message as in the previous two stories, that it is vital to rid ourselves of any Arab reactionary regime in order to liberate Palestine. This story completes the picture of the first two. If in the first story Mahmud does not act and in the second Riyadh acts politically, in this story, Ma'ruf supports the armed revolution against an Arab regime. And if at the end of the first story Mahmud is still a free man and Riyadh in the second story is imprisoned, in the third story Ma'ruf sacrifices his life for the cause of the revolution.

Although in the early sixties Kanafani continued his mission to expose the treacherous roles of some Arab reactionary regimes by producing "Ab'ad min al-Hudud" and "La Shay"", there seems to be a new direction in his consciousness. This new direction is depicted in "al-Akhdar wa al-Ahmar" (1962). Although there are different interpretations of this story, Khalil seems to put her finger on the right one. She believes that the story talks about the birth of a new generation of the Palestinian people. One might also add that

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67 Kanafani admits that the Arab Nationalists Movement (which he joined in the early 1950's) was fighting colonialism, imperialism, and Arab reactionism. ('Abbas 140).
68 Khalida Khalil 165-187.
the colors used in this story clearly refer to Palestine and the Palestinians\textsuperscript{69}. In
this story, Kanafani is actually hinting at the dawn of the Palestinian armed struggle. Kanafani recognizes that fourteen years (which is the period between an-nakba and the time the story was written) are not enough for a
generation to be ready to carry out armed struggle. Thus, he rightfully
describes the little boy (who symbolizes the new generation) as being too young to fight his enemies and urges him to grow\textsuperscript{70}.

The next stage in this scenario is the year 1965 which is a landmark in
the history of Palestinian resistance. In the very same year of the beginning of
the Palestinian armed struggle, Kanafani writes five stories all of which deal
with armed struggle. In the first of these, "al-'Arus", Kanafani clearly and
ecstatically announces the beginning of the revolution. The rest of the stories
written in 1965 take the reader back to the pre-an-nakba resistance.

As already discussed, Kanafani had already made use of pre-1948
resistance in his earlier stories. But if he used such tactic in the 1950's to wake
up his people, why then, would he refer to such stories in the first year of the
armed struggle? Although other critics view the collection merely as a
reflection on the heroic actions of the Palestinians against occupation and the
continuation of struggle\textsuperscript{71}, I believe that Kanafani was using these stories--
mainly the first part of the collection--to provide valuable lessons to the
newly born revolution. Because these stories are full of little details, they are

\textsuperscript{69} Not only the title of the story is \textit{Green} and \textit{Red}, but Kanafani describes the little boy as
being black with a white heart. These four colors which are the only ones used in this story
unmistakably refer to the Palestinian flag.

\textsuperscript{70} Kanafani 360.

\textsuperscript{71} Ahmad Baydi states "the collection of \textit{an ar-Rijal wa al-Banadiq} is, for example, a great
equation of the struggle of the Palestinian person, his struggle against hunger, subjection, and
occupation, for the sake of freedom..." (see Baydi 54).

Zayn ad-Din and Basil state that in this collection, Kanafani "emphasizes the continuity of
struggle..." (see Zayn ad-Din 164).
more lively, realistic, and deep. These stories attempt to shed some light on the reasons that led to the defeat in 1948. They make it clear that the absence of organization, leadership, arms, and educated people have all contributed to the loss of Palestine. Thereby, Kanafani simply wants the nascent Palestinian revolution to avoid such mistakes. He does not offer any suggestions as to how to fight, simply because he did not know how. He does not know the roles of combat or of resistance. In each of the stories in the first set of "an ar-Rijāl wa al-Banadiq" collection, there is a clear message and lesson from the past. In the first story "as-Saghir Yasta'ir Martinat Khalihi wa Yusharriq ila Safad," Kanafani sends two messages: the need for arms and leadership. In response to his uncle's sarcastic comment about invading Safad's fortress with only twenty bullets, as-Saghir says to himself that "if every man in Galilee brought twenty bullets and headed towards the fortress in Safad we would tear it apart in a second." This is a clear indication of the need for arms and ammunitions which is also demonstrated in the trouble through which as-Saghir had to go to secure a rifle. The absence of leadership is hinted at in this story as as-Saghir fails to comprehend the meaning of leadership, "and for a little while he tried to picture the meaning of this word, leadership, but he could not. At first he he thought that the leader's duty is to go to each fighter and direct them to what they should do, but he dismissed that thought saying that this is nonsense, this matter is not as that simple." 

In the second story of the collection, "ad-Duktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva...", Kanafani hints that all Palestinians should be concerned about their

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72 Both Muhammad Siddiq and 'Abdal Hadi point out that Kanafani in this collection reveals the lack of leadership in pre-1948 fighting in Palestine. (see Siddiq 40, and 'Abd al Hadi 158.)

73 Kanafani 637.

74 Kanafani 638.
cause and they all should bear arms regardless if they were peasants or city dwellers. In this story, Mansur who went through great deal of trouble and hardship to obtain a rifle and to get to Safad to help recapture its fortress, is appalled that the residents of that town do not seem to care much about what is going on. After arriving at the city market and seeing the residents walking around without paying much attention to the sound of bullets, Mansur says to himself that the city dwellers are strange, it is as if the situation does not concern them.”75

In the third story of this collection, Kanafani directs attention to the need of engaging the young generations in the revolution. As the group of men, who are past their middle age, head to ambush a British military vehicle, Abu al-Hasan recognizes that there is a need for younger people to fight and defend their land. In response to Abu al-‘Abd, Abu al-Hasan says “Oh poor Abu al-‘Abd, do you think you can engage in a fight as in the old days? Do you think that those who will fight you are the same British [soldiers] whom you fought twelve years ago? Do you think they are as old as you are? Oh poor Abu al-‘Abd, you are not even aware that they are constantly preparing a new generation and sending the old ones back to their homes, we are the ones who have grown old”76.

In the last story in the first part of this collection, Kanafani hints at the need for organization, planning, and training. After the men who tried to recapture the fortress of Jiddin are defeated, and in the midst of their retreat, Shakib tells Mansur “it is all over, let us go, it was [like] a tribal raid that does not know its head from its tail.”77

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75 Kanafani 649.
76 Kanafani 682.
77 Kanafani 704.
Finally, and as the Palestinian revolution grows, Kanafani writes two more stories about the revolution in 1968. The first story “Sadiq Salman Yata'allam Ashya' Kathira fi Layla Wahida”, and in the second one Kanafani takes the reader into the world of *fedā'iyyin* and makes the reader experience a military operation. Kanafani demonstrates not only his political development here, but also his military. From the minute details that are given about the execution of the operation and how the fighters act, one can’t but wonder if Kanafani himself had had some military training.

The very last short story Kanafani wrote “Kana Yawmadhaka Tiflan” in 1969, tries to persuade all Palestinians, regardless of their backgrounds, to unite against their Israeli enemy. This story shows how Israeli soldiers massacre all the passengers of a bus. Only a little child is spared and is forced to witness the massacre. Only in this story does Kanafani present so many characters and different occupations. On the bus, there are workers, peasants, a lawyer, a driver, a clergy man, a child, and few women. All of these passengers, except for the child, are indiscriminately murdered. The message Kanafani is trying to convey is that the enemy is one who does not discriminate among the Palestinians. The enemy will, and is willing, to kill all of the Palestinians; it is thus, vital that Palestinians of all social classes and backgrounds unite in the face of their enemy.

**Religion vs. Arms**

Religion, and praying in particular, are used very often in Kanafani’s works. He utilizes them in both his novels and short stories and throughout his writing career. Though Kanafani was living in a very conservative and
religious environment—whether in Syria, Kuwait, or Lebanon, his Marxist beliefs were at odds with that environment. Kanafani was influenced by Marxist ideology at a very early age. In his interview with a Swiss writer, he states that "one of my relatives was a well known Marxist. This relative influenced my life at that early stage. And also, when I went to Kuwait I stayed with six roommates...after a few weeks I discovered that all six of them formed a communist cell."  

Kanafani first joined Harakat al-Qawmiyyin al-‘Arab (Arab Nationalists’ Movement) in the early fifties after he had met in Damascus George Habash  who was an influential figure in that movement. Not only was this movement confronting colonialism, imperialism, and Arab reactionism, but it had adopted Socialism at an early stage. Moreover, Kanafani admitted that at an early age he was fully and intensively exposed to Marxism and Leninism. His exposure started with his reading Russian literature, through his Marxist relative, and finally through his six roommates in Kuwait who were all communists.

This ideology, no doubt, had its effect on the way Kanafani perceived religion. To Kanafani, religion was nothing but a scam and does not do the people any good. Evidently, Kanafani preferred, and encouraged people to prefer, guns over religion. However, because of the environment in which he was living, he could not attack religion outright, but had to do it in subtle ways in his stories and novels.

In “Rijal fi ash-Shams”, when the teacher amazes his companions because he does not know how to pray, they ask him what does he know. To

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78 ‘Abbas 144.

79 Ahmad Baydi claims that Kanafani met Habash for the first time in 1952 (Baydi 32). Muhammad Siddiq, on the other hand states that it is in 1953 (Siddiq 94).
that, he responds that he knows how to use a gun. In “Umm Sa’d” we see a substitution of guns for religion as Umm Sa’d throws away the hijab\textsuperscript{80} and instead wears a bullet stating that the hijab did not do her any good throughout her life. And in his novel “‘A’d ila Hayfa”, Dov who was born as either a Muslim or a Christian, is adopted by a Jewish couple and raised as a Jew and an Israeli. This clearly indicates that it is not important to what religion one is born to, but it is the ideology that matters. After all, man is a cause.

Even in the short stories, we see such trends. In one of his early stories, “Waraqa min at-Tira”, Ibrahim the fighter requests from his three companions to sing for him some patriotic songs as he lies dying. This is in contrast to the fact that people usually request for others to pray for them or recite verses from the Qur’an. In “al-‘Arus”, Kanafani exalts the man searching for his “rifle” to the level of a prophet or angel as he describes him being surrounded with light. In “as-Saghir Yasta‘ir Martinat Khalihil wa Yusharriq ila Safad”, we see a contrast between those who perform religious duties and those who perform patriotic ones. In this story, as-Saghir who goes to borrow a gun in order to assist in fighting is contrasted with his uncle, who had just finished praying but does not go to fight even though he owns a gun.

Conclusion

It is clear that Kanafani’s stories do present a political and military procession through which he tries to show the Palestinians the path to pursue for their freedom. The stories proceed from the ability to offer not solutions, but rather encouragement to steadfastness, to dealing with traitors,

\textsuperscript{80} Hijab means amulet.
and finally leading to armed revolution. This development is not only reflected in Kanafani’s short stories, but it is also clearly visible in his novels. In his first novel “Rijal fi ash-Shams” (1963) Kanafani is unable to offer any solution. Through this novel, he encourages his people to be steadfast and not abandon their cause for the sake of a quick fortune, otherwise they will face death. In the following novel, “Ma Tabaqqa Lakum” (1966), two points prevail. The first is the imperative to get rid of the traitors (i.e. the killing of Zakariyya) and the second is the fact that the revolution is still young and unable to effectively deal with the enemy (i.e. Hamid’s confrontation with the Israeli soldier). In 1969 Kanafani publishes two novels: “Umm Sa’d”, and “A’id ila Hayfa”. The first of these two, is a joyous celebration of the Palestinian armed struggle. Kanafani describes how the feda’iyyin carry out military operations against the occupiers and how the revolution is growing. In his last complete novel, “A’id ila Hayfa”, Kanafani goes beyond what he intended in his short stories. His short stories, as we have seen, end with the presentation of limited military action, in the form of small operations against the enemy. In “A’id ila Hayfa”, however, Kanafani takes the armed struggle a step further. The words of Sa'id, in the novel, reflect Kanañi’s big idea. Sa’id tells Dov that there should be a comprehensive war to settle the whole issue. After the devastating 1967 war, Kanafani realizes that the limited effect of military operations is no match for Israel’s war machine and thus calls for a change of tactic and method of fighting. Basically, Kanafani calls on the Palestinians, and Arabs in general, to prepare for a full scale war.¹¹

¹¹ Here we are reminded by Ihsan Abdul-Quddus’s novel “Fi Baytina Rajul” (1958) where the antagonist decides to kick out the British occupiers from Egypt. At the beginning, he carries out attacks all by himself, then he joins a revolutionary group, and finally a full scale revolution erupts.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, Kanafani’s stories generally demonstrate high quality of technique and style. They are simple, yet leave quite an impact on the reader. For example, “as-Saghir Yadhhab ila al-Mukhayyam” very closely resembles the Palestinian conflict. In this story, a young child and his family live with his uncle’s family and his grandfather in the same unit. The little child used to go to the market each day with his cousin to collect any vegetables or fruits they may find. And when he once found some money (five Pounds), it created a dispute between his family and his uncle’s as his cousin was claiming to have found the money first. The grandfather does not interfere nor does he care who gets the five pounds as long as he gets something out of it. Any person with the minimum knowledge about the Israeli-Arab conflict, could easily draw a connection between the story and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Palestinians and the Israelis are cousins and each claim that Palestine is theirs. The grandfather, I believe, represents the leaders of the Arab countries who did not care who claims Palestine as long as they get a reward such to be kept in power.
It is this simplicity in presenting complex issues that made him a powerful writer as well as an excellent spokesman. However, that is not to say that his stories are simple in the sense as being unsophisticated; on the contrary, many of his stories exhibit the qualities of an established writer who was willing to experiment with new styles and techniques. Kanafani was mainly a Palestinian writer who was committed to his cause. In addition, he tackled issues other than the Palestinian one such as social and traditional ones.

The development of Kanafani’s writings, whether short stories or novels, is parallel to the developments on the political arena of the Arab World. His works that are Palestinian in theme, gradually transform from the grim atmosphere he depicts in his early stories to the more hopeful and optimistic in his later stories. One should also note that during the first two periods of his writing career, Kanafani was simply reflecting or reacting to the events. In the last period, however, Kanafani starts taking charge in determining the destiny for his fellow Palestinians. He starts encouraging his people to train and arm themselves and to prepare for a wide scale war. And no less significant, is his relentless fight against traitors and reactionary regimes.

At the same time that Kanafani deals with the Palestinian cause, he also mounts an offensive against outdated traditions which have become obsolete in our time. However, his attack against such principles is not necessarily an attack at traditions, but it seems that he tries to eliminate those

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62 Kanafani’s wife, Anni states that "Ghassan possessed a great ability to convince others [regarding the Palestinian cause]." *al-Adab* 7/8 (July-August 1992): 20.
archaic traditions which stand in the way of progress and advancement. Progress and advancement which are necessary for the liberation of Palestine.

Kanafani, as mentioned earlier, was not averse to employ different techniques such as complication-resolved and situational-revealed. Complication-resolved is used mainly in stories of Palestinian themes while situational-revealed is used in other themes. And still, sometimes he keeps the ending to the very end of the story, and sometimes he gives the denouement at the very beginning of the story. This variety in technique and style surely keeps the reader excited and motivated to keep on reading.

Nevertheless, Kanafani failed to present the women in his short stories at an equal status as men. One can detect a number of faults that leave no doubt that this was a systematic failure throughout his short stories—albeit not necessarily intentionally done. Not only is the number of women in his stories far less than that of men, but even the heroines are destroyed unlike their male counterparts. Moreover, Kanafani’s women are presented as traditional women more often than not. On the other hand, male characters are more likely to be physicians, workers, teachers, etc...

Nonetheless, Kanafani has left his mark on a very important issue in modern Arabic literature. He is considered as a pioneer in presenting the Jews in a humane way as he did in “‘A’id ila Hayfa”. His perception of the Jews in his short stories did go through development. In his early stories, the Jewish characters were presented as the unknown creatures with no physical description; in his later stories, they are given very distinct descriptions. Also, in the early stories, such as in “Waraqa min at-Tira”, he refers to the enemy as
Jews. Only in his later stories, such as “Sadiq Salman Yata’allam Ashya’ Kathira fi Layla Wahida”, he refers to them as Israelis.

Finally, critical literary material about Ghassan Kanafani as a short story writer is still scarce. There is a serious need for further research and investigation of Kanafani’s short stories as they form the foundation of his novels as well as they demonstrate his writing development throughout his writing career. Thus, I hope that this paper will provide some ground for further studies and investigation.
APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF GHASSAN KANAFANI'S LIFE AND WRITINGS, AND OF EVENTS IN THE ARAB WORLD
# CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF GHASSAN KANAFANI'S LIFE, WRITINGS, AND OF EVENTS IN THE ARAB WORLD *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PERSONAL LIFE</th>
<th>LITERARY OUTPUT</th>
<th>EVENTS IN THE ARAB WORLD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1936:</td>
<td>• April 9th, Born in Acre [2,9]</td>
<td></td>
<td>• April 19th, The start of The 1936 Revolution in Palestine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Moved to Yafa (before 1st grade) [2,9]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Resided in Almanshiyya district in Yafa [2,9]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attended Frreire school [2,9]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>• Moves back to Acre (because of fighting) [2,9]</td>
<td></td>
<td>• U.N. Partition Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948:</td>
<td>• April 27th, Moved to Al-Ghaziyya (Lebanon) [2,9]</td>
<td></td>
<td>• April 9th, Dayr Yasin massacre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• May 15th, Israel is founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Moved to Al-Shabakliyyah district in Damascus [2,10]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952:</td>
<td>• His sister got married, and her husband (a marxist) influenced Ghassan [3,17]</td>
<td></td>
<td>• July 23rd, Military coup in Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Met George Habash while working in a print shop [1,32]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Source: [1,2,3,9,10]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Received Brevet certificate [4,12]</td>
<td>Shams Jadida, published in ar-Ra’i (est. by Habash) [1,34], [4,12]</td>
<td>Oct. 14th, Qibya Massacre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taught at UNRWA school in Damascus (with Wadi’ Haddad’s future wife)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Translated a French story [1,34]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Broke his leg and started reading Arabic literature [2,11]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nasir becomes president of Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Started studying art [2,11]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Harakat al-Qawmiyyin al-’Arab was founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Graduated from High School [1,34]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joined Harakat al-Qawmiyyin al-’Arab [4,13]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Left to Kuwait to teach art at al-Ghazali school [4,15], [3,12]</td>
<td>Waraqa min ar-Ramleh, Waraqa min Ghazza</td>
<td>July, Nasir nationalized Suez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lived with six other roommates who were marxists [3,17]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct. 28th, Israel, France and Britain attacked Egypt</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct. 29th, Kafar Qasim Massacre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Diagnosed with diabetes [6, 26]</td>
<td>Waraqa min at-Tira, July, Ila an Na’ud, Aug., al-Madfa’, Sep., Darb ila Kha’in</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>July 14th, Revolution in Iraq; and it became a republic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>High point of Pan-Arabism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nov., Coup in Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Wrote daily journals [2,15]</td>
<td>al-Buma fi Ghurma Ba’ida, Ka’k ‘ala</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Wrote daily journals (while in Kuwait)</td>
<td>2,15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Settled in Beirut</td>
<td>2,13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Editor of al-Huriyya (till 1963)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muntasaf Ayyar, Mawt Sarir Raqam 12</td>
<td>Qal’at al-‘Abid, Sitat Nusur, al-Qitt,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>al-Khiraf al-Masluba, ‘Atash al-Af’a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>September, Met Anni in Beitut</td>
<td>6,5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 9th, married Anni</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote few daily journals</td>
<td>2,15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>al-Urjuha, al-‘Atash, al-Majnun, Thamani</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Daqa’iq, Aktaf al-Akharin, as-Silah</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>al-Muharram, as-Saqiq, al-Munzalaq</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Law Kunta Hisanan, Nisf al-‘Alam, Ra’s</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>al-Asad al-Hajari,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Al-Lutus al-Ahmar al-Mayyit</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jul, Nasir nationalized businesses in Egypt and Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sep. 30, End of UAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Aug. 24th, His first child Fayiz is born</td>
<td>2,15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrote few daily journals</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Ab’ad min al-Hudud, al-Akhdar wa</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>al-Ahmar, La Shay’, Dhira’u hu wa Kaffu hu</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wa Asabi’u hu, ash-Shati’, Risala min</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mas’ud, Jahsh, Aug., Yād fi al-Qabr</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jul, Independence of Algeria</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sep., Revolution in Yemen; and it became a republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Editor in chief of al-Muharrir and edited Filastin</td>
<td>4,18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Granted Lebanese passport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Judran min al-Hadid, Kafr al-Manjim,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Rijal fi ‘ash-Shams</em> (published)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March, Ba’th took power in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Syria and Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More closeness among Egypt,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Syria, and Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>April, Enthusiasm for Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>unity reached its peak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jan., <em>Al-Bab</em> (published)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Translates <em>Sayf wa Dukkkhan</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan., Arabs agreed to form PLO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1963:
- **Autumn**, Visited China {4,18}
- **Autumn**, Visited India {6,8}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 Jun.-20 Aug.</td>
<td>writes <em>ash-Shay' al-Akhar</em> as a serie in al-Hawadith magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep.,</td>
<td><em>Ma Tabaqqta Lakan</em> (published), <em>al-Qubba'a wa an-Nabi</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Starts writing <em>Al-'Ashiq</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>[Adab al-Muqawama fi Filastin al-Muhhtala 1948-1966]</em> (published)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Jan 1st, Fata'h's first military operation against Israel

### 1966:
- **Visited China** {4,18}
- Received an award from the Friends of Writers in Lebanon{1,57}
- **Nov.12th**, His daughter Laila is born {2,15}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 Jun.-20 Aug.</td>
<td>writes <em>ash-Shay' al-Akhar</em> as a serie in al-Hawadith magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep.,</td>
<td><em>Ma Tabaqqta Lakan</em> (published), <em>al-Qubba'a wa an-Nabi</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Starts writing <em>Al-'Ashiq</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>[Adab al-Muqawama fi Filastin al-Muhhtala 1948-1966]</em> (published)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Israel attacked *feda'iyyin* bases in al-Samu' in Jordan

### 1967:
- **Worked for al-Anwar** (until 1969) {2,13}
- A week before 1967 war, his mother died{6,9}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar.,</td>
<td><em>as-Saghir Yadhhab ila...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May,</td>
<td><em>as-Saghir Yaktashif anna al-Miftah...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Fi al-Adab as-Suhuyuni</em> (published)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- June 5th, 1967 War
- July, PFLP is established and it adopted Marxism

### 1968:
- **Feb.**, Participated in the Annual Journalists Conference in Cairo {5,56}
- **April**, Went to Cairo to participate in the Annual Arab Writers Conference{5,90}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb.,</td>
<td><em>Sadiq Salman Yata'allam...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb.,</td>
<td><em>Hamid Yakuff 'an Sama' Qisas...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>[al-Adab al-Filastini al-Muqawim Taht al-Ihtilal 1948-1968]</em> (pub.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- March, Al-Karameh Battle

### 1969:
- **July 26th**, Editor in chief of al-Hadaf (until his death){4,21}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May,</td>
<td><em>Kana Yawma Dhalika Tiflan, Umm Sa'd</em> (published), 'Aid ila Hayfa* (published)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Jan., PFLP broke up and PDFLP and another group were formed
- Dec., Roger's Plan

### 1970:
- **May**, Visited Kuwait and delivered a lecture: *al-Muqawama al-Filastiniyya,Tajarub wa Durus*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug.,</td>
<td><em>[Al-Muqawama wa Mu'dalatuha Kama Taraha al-Jabha ash-Sha'biyya...]</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Sep., Black September
- Nasir's death
1971:
- Imprisoned in Lebanon because of an article in which he criticized an Arab regime [6, 10]
  Starts writing Barquq Nissan

1972:
- July 8th, Assassinated. [Thawrat 1936-1939 fi Filastin]

1974:
- Received the International Organization of Journalists Award

1975:
- Received the Union of Africa and Asia Writers Award

* Works in italic are novels and plays, between brackets are studies and researches, the rest are short stories. The first number between parenthesis refers to the reference; the second number refers to the page number.

References:

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGICAL CATEGORIZATION

First Period:

1956:
• Waraqa min ar-Ramla
• Waraqa min Ghazza

1957:
• Waraqa min at-Tira
• Ila an Na‘ud
• Al-Madfa‘
• Darb ila Kha‘in

1958:
• Shay‘ la Yadhhab
• Lu‘lu‘ fi at-Tariq
• Ar-Rajul alladhi lam Yamut
• Al-Ufuq Wara‘ al-Bawwaba
• Ard al-Burtuqal al-Hazin
• Al-Qamis al-Masruq
• Al-Batal fi az-Zinzana
• Qarar Muwjaz

Second Period:

1959 \(^83\):
• Al-Buma fi Ghurfa Ba‘ida
• Ka‘k ‘ala ar-Rasif
• Fj Janazati
• Qatil fi al-Mawsil
• ‘Asharat Amtar Faqat
• ‘Ulbat Zujaj Wahida

\(^83\) Some of these stories may be considered as part of the first period.
1960:
- Muntasaf Ayyar
- Mawt Sarir Raqam 12
- Qal'at al-'Abid
- Sittat Nusur wa Tifl
- Al-Qitt
- Al-Khiraf al-Masluba
- 'Atash al-Af'a

1961:
- Al-Urjuha
- Al-'Atash
- Al-Majnun
- Thamani Daqa'iq
- Aktaf al-Akkharin
- As-Silah al-Muharram
- As-Saqr
- Al-Munzalaq
- Law Kunta Hisanan
- Nisf al-'Alam
- Ra's al-Asad al-Hajari

1962:
- Ab'ad min al-Hudud
- Al-Akhdar wa al-Ahmar
- La Shay'
- Dhira'uahu wa Kaffu'hu wa Asabi'uhu
- Ash-Shati'
- Risala min Mas'ud
- Jahsh
- Yad fi al-Qabr

1963:
- Judran min Hadid
- Kafr al-Manjam

Third Period:

1965:
- Al-'Arous
- As-Saghir Yasta'ir Martinat Khalihi
- Ad-Daktur Qasim Yatahaddath li Iva...
- Abul-Hasan Yuqawwus 'ala Sayyara...
- As-Saghir wa Abuh wa al-Martina...
1967:
• As-Saghir Yadhab ila al-Mukhayyam
• As-Saghir Yaktashif anna al-Miftah...

1968:
• Sadiq Salman Yata'allam Ashya' Kathira fi Layla Wahida
• Hamid Yakuff 'an Sama' Qisas al-'Amam

1969:
• Kana Yawmadhaka Tiflan
## APPENDIX C

### THEMATIC CATEGORIZATION

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Palestinian suffering

- Al-Ufuq Wara' al-Bawwaba 1958
- Ard al-Burtuqal al-Hazin 1958
- Al-Qamis al-Masruq 1958
- Ka'k 'ala ar-Rasif 1959
- As-Saghir Yadhhab ila al-Mukhayyam 1967
- Kana Yawmadhaka Tiflan 1969

Moral decay

- 'Asharat Amtar Faqat 1959
- 'Ulbat Zujaj Wahida 1959
- Al-Qitt 1959
- Thamani Daqa'iq 1961
- Aktaf al-Akharin 1961
- Dhira'uhu wa Kaffuhu wa Asabi'uhu 1962
- Jahsh 1962
- Yad fi al-Qabr 1962

Renouncing old traditions

- Al-Khiraf al-Masluba 1960
- 'Atash al-Af'a 1960
- Ra's al-Asad al-Hajari 1961
- Law Kunta Hisanan 1961

Psychoanalytical

- Mawt Sarir Raqam 12 1960
- Qal'at al-'Abid 1960
- Sittat Nusur wa Tifl 1960
- Al-Urjuha 1961
- Al-Munzalaq 1961
- Nisf al-'Alam 1961
- Al-'Atash 1961
- Al-Majnun 1961
- Risala min Mas'ud 1962
- Kafr al-Manjam 1962

Other

- Fi Janazati 1959
- As-Saqr 1961
- Ash-Shati' 1962
- Judran min Hadid 1963
APPENDIX D

MALE ROLES IN SHORT STORIES
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Works in Arabic:


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**Works in English:**


