



Features of the Development of the Saudi Realistic Story in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century

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Abstract

This article examines the specific features of the formation of a realistic method of narration, as well as the beginning of the development of a realistic direction in a new type of fiction in Saudi literature. By means of the analysis, the features of the poetics of the Saudi realistic short story in the second half of the twentieth century are considered. The specific features of the formation of the realistic method of narration and the time intervals of its formation depend, in many ways, on the historical conditions in which artistic creativity develops in each society. National-historical circumstances also determine the uneven development of realism in different countries. In Egypt, near the Arabian Peninsula, the realistic method of narration began to take shape at the beginning of the first half of the twentieth century, when most of the Arabian States were not even covered by the educational movement. Already in the first collection of Muhammad Teymur - one of the founders of the short story genre in Egypt "What the eyes see" (1917-1918), the main features of realism are shown, "showing life in its contrasts". The beginning of the development of a realistic direction in the new type of fiction in Saudi literature was laid at the stage of Enlightenment. The struggle with the inherited old norms of life and consciousness for the authors of educational literature resulted in a protest against the forms of new oppression associated with the preservation and maintenance of medieval traditions and ideas in modern society, and, therefore, in many works of Saudi enlighteners, despite their inherent features of sentimentalism and romanticism, the beginnings of realistic trends can be traced.

Keywords: *Journalism; Eurocentrism; Catalyst; "Oil Boom"; Reformist Views; Literary Criticism; Novels, Realistic Direction; "Showing Life in Its Contrasts"*

Introduction

The specific features of the formation of the realistic method of narration and the time intervals of its formation depend, in many ways, on the historical conditions in which artistic creativity develops in each society. National-historical circumstances also determine the uneven development of realism in different countries. In Egypt, the nearby the Arabian Peninsula, the realistic method of narration began to take shape at the beginning of the first half of the twentieth century, when most of the Arabian States

were not even covered by the educational movement. The main features of realism are manifested as “showing life in its contrasts” [1, p.95] in the first compilation “What the eyes see” (1917-1918) of Muhammad Teymur, one of the founders of the short story genre in Egypt.

The beginning of the development of a realistic direction in the new type of fiction in Saudi literature was laid at the stage of Enlightenment. The struggle with the inherited old norms of life and consciousness for the authors of educational literature resulted in a protest against the forms of new oppression associated with the preservation and maintenance of medieval traditions and ideas in modern society, and, therefore, in many works of Saudi enlighteners, despite their inherent features of sentimentalism and romanticism, as well as the beginnings of realistic trends can be traced.

The Main Findings and Results

Most researchers associate the formation of the initial stage of realism in Saudi literature with the works of Ahmad Sibai (1901-1985), one of the leaders of the educational movement. [2, p.164] His short stories were published in the newspaper “Sawt al-Hijaz” and the magazine “al-Mankhal”, and in the following years they were collected in the compilation “خالتي سدرجانا” (“My Aunt Kadarjan and other short stories”), printed in Cairo in 1980 [3, p.78].

The short story “خالتي سدرجان” (“My aunt Kadarjan”), which gave the title to the compilation, was placed in the fourth volume of the literary encyclopedia of modern Saudi literature, as one of the samples of works of the prose genre published during the period 1905 – 1953 [4, p.87]. Therefore, the date of publication of the compilation does not reflect the true time of creation of the short stories that make up its content, which were written, most likely, in the fifties of the twentieth century.

The focus of realism is not just facts, events, and people taking part in them, but the laws that operate in this society. Truthfully depicting these patterns in their entirety, realism performs cognitive tasks, enriching the reader with knowledge of life. For a long time in history, discrimination against Muslim women has been a natural constant in Islamic society up to our time. The image of a Muslim woman in the progressive world is associated with the concept of an oppressed person experiencing double oppression – social and religious. For this reason, at the stages of formation and development of literature in each of the Arab countries, the most typical subject for writers - realists becomes a description of the dramatic situations and the plight of the women belonging to the disadvantaged sections of society, and forced to sacrifice their own dignity and honor, to feed yourself or your family, or become subject to sale under the pretext of marriage, and so on. In this regard, the realistic literature of Saudi Arabia is no exception, in which the question of the unequal status of men and women in the Islamic world has become one of the main themes of artistic creativity. The difference lies only in the approach to the problem, namely: in the works of Saudi writers, the "women's" theme is not associated with social status, but rather appeals to the issue of human rights violations. Most of the short stories of Saudi realist writers expose the Muslim order, which condemns a woman to second-rate, wordless, humiliating existence in the house of a male master, whether he is a father, brother or husband. According to the Russian researcher Suvorov M. N., "the most acute confrontation between "fathers" and "children" is expressed in relation to the incomplete position of women in society, which makes the female theme hardly central in the fiction of the Arabian countries. The depiction of typical female destinies, the inner world of suffering heroines, becomes an important factor in the formation of a realistic direction here, and at the same time a characteristic feature of the new literature of the countries of Arabia." [5,p.62-63]

Ahmad Sibai's short story "My aunt Kadarjan" focuses on a woman's life broken by Sharia law which does not allow women to control their own destiny.

Kadarjan was the only child of a very wealthy elderly man. The young beauty, like any girl of her age, dreamed of love and a happy life. But the father, citing his old age and fear of loneliness, rejected all applicants for her hand, although the main reason for refusal was his commercialism: he believed that the marriage of his daughter could damage his capital. The death of her father has not brought changes in the life of Kadarjan, his place was taken by the guardian. Regarding the legal issue of guardianship of adult women in Muslim society, Human Rights Watch described the situation of Saudi women as no different from that of minors with little power over their own lives. [6, p.89]

An aged cousin became the guardian of Kadarjan after her father's death. Flattered by the girl's inheritance, the guardian decided to marry her himself, but:

ولكنها أنت قبول يده فهو والد لأتراب في مثل سنها ولما أصر ثبتت عند رخصها في عناد.
و جازاها بعناد مثله إذ رفض باعتباره وصياً عليها كل يد تتقدم خاطبتها ... كان يخترع لكل خطيب عيباً يستند عليه في
الرفض حتى استطع أن يحكم عليها لتعيش عانساً في بيتها.

" Kadarjan indignantly rejected his offer, because he was the father of children the same age as her! The guardian continued to insist, but Kadarjan was adamant. And, then, the guardian decided to punish her for disobedience, always refusing anyone who came to him to propose to Kadarjan. To justify his refusal, he found in each applicant some far-fetched flaw. But, in fact, his only and self-serving goal was to maintain power over Kadarjan and her capital, and for this she had to remain a single unmarried woman. " [7,p.15]

This state of affairs persists for a long time, until Kadarjan receives an offer of marriage from a pilgrim from Indonesia who unexpectedly arrives at her house accompanied by her mother and sister with a letter from distant relatives of her father. Kadarjan is extremely happy, but she has to inform the Sheikha, who acts as a mediator, about the obstacles caused by her guardian to enter her into a legal marriage. An old woman who expects to receive a reward if she successfully completes her mediation role, taking into account the age of Kadarjan, who has long passed the age of majority, offers to marry in the presence of witnesses, without informing the guardian about it. But, neither pilgrim nor acted as mediator Sheikh, will never appear in the house of Kadarjan. The young man must not have received approval for the marriage from his father, who considered it a misalliance to compete with a foreigner in a foreign country with the official guardian of a single woman. Ignorant of the complexities of Sharia law, naive Kadarjan waited for her fiancé, who, according to her ideas, could send for her at any time of the day, kept her house perfectly clean, and she was always festively dressed, for which she received from her neighbors the mocking nickname "Kadarjan", which means "like a pheasant" in the national dialect.

The content of the short story is dominated by a vivid image of the narrator, whom Ahmad Sibai entrusts with the narration as a witness to the events. Through the image of the narrator, the writer presents and illuminates reality in a certain way, comprehends and evaluates the events depicted, which are important to him in their self-worth: he builds his narrative based on the objectivity of specific events that actually take place in Saudi society. Everyday authenticity is subject to changes, refracted through the aesthetic and social views of the writer, the individual characteristics of his thinking.

The development of the plot is guided by an internal logical system built by Ahmad Sibai, although its external components can create the impression of incoherence. The writer tries to avoid his interference, but reserves the right to select, rearrange or directly evaluate certain facts from the life of Kadarjan, which allows him to find the right solution to the cardinal problem of realism-the ratio of verisimilitude and artistic truth. The narrator introduces Kadarjan to the reader, and casually points out the singularity of her name, then he warns that it is not real, and tells about the characteristics of his heroine, smoothly proceeds to memories of friendship with her in childhood. The neighbors' regrets about the unfortunate fate of Kadarjan seem, at first glance, inappropriate against the background of her

well-provided life, described by the narrator, and it leads to an increase in the curiosity of readers. This is followed by a message about the death of Kadarjan, and only after that, the author reveals her sad story, clarifies the strangeness of the behavior of the heroine of the short story and explains the reason for acquiring such an unusual nickname. Sibai is interested in external action and the behavior of Kadarjan only because, since they are manifestations of internal processes occurring in her mind. The author draws in detail the monotonous life of a single woman who tries to distract herself from the tense expectation of chores around the house, or worries about own appearance.

كنت ألاحظ أن خالتي كدرجان تعني كثيراً بمكحلتها، و هي تحتفظ بجانب المكحلة بعلبة صغيرة أراها كسيراً ما تمد يدها إليها لتتناول منها بأصبعها شيئاً تدعكه بين يديها ثم تغشي به وجهها فكانت لا أعلق شيئاً على ما تفعل. تأخذ بيدها مقصاً تمر به على شعر رأسها فتلتقط به شعرة من هنا و أخرى من هناك بيضاء ناصعة و كان الفرط استخفافهن بي كطفل ترجوني أن أساعدها بالنظر في شعرها، فإذا لمحت شعرة بيضاء دفعت المقص لالتقاطها.

"I have noticed that aunt Kadarjan attaches great importance to her antimony bottle, near which she kept a small box. I have often seen her reach out to take something from the box with her fingers, then rub it between her hands and smear it on her face. But I didn't pay attention to what she was doing. Kadarjan picked up a pair of scissors and ran them through her hair, looking for a white hair on one side of her head or the other, and because of her extremely dismissive attitude towards me as a child, she asked me to help her look at her hair. If I notice white hair, Kadarjan pushed me the scissors so I cut it." [8,p.14]

Emphasizing the importance of Ahmad Sibai's works in establishing a realistic direction in Saudi literature, Dr. Mansour al-Hazimi points out that "Ahmad Sibai had a rare dramatic gift that allowed him to see life in exciting live scenes, rather than in silent frozen pictures." [9, p.85]

Revealing the influence of the environment on the formation of the character and behavior of characters, describing the indelible stamp of historical time that the characters bear, the realistic method of storytelling seeks to depict reality in development, recognizing the freedom of the human will, the ability of the individual to rise above circumstances, to resist and fight them. Such is Kadarjan, the character of Ahmad Sibal. She is not a typical Muslim woman meekly obeying the orders of men – the master of the situation. In her own way, she protests against the strictest restrictions of Muslim society, as well as she rejects the claims of the guardian, and decides to marry without his prior consent.

إنها فرصة العمر.... سوف لا أتركها تضيق من يدي ... لا قيمة للصداق عندي قل أو أكثر... ما أعظم "ستي الشيخة" ما أعظم أفكارها.... سوف أحسبه إلى بيت القاضي و أقرر موافقتي أول يوم يطرق فيه بابي ما أحلى أن أجد إنساناً يملأ فراغ بيتي بعد طول هذه السنين.... لك الرحمة يا أبي غقد قيدتني في حياتك لأفكارك الخاصة و أسلمتني بعدك لهذه الوحدة المرير و أبحت للنذل ابن أخيك أن يقيدني لمنفعته الشخصية و يضيف إلى السلسلة أقالماً جديدة... سأحطم هذه السلسلة مهما كانت متانتها...

"This is my last chance.... I will not let it out of my hands... it does not matter to me whether the bride price is large or small... how great this "lady of the Sheikh" is, what great ideas she has... I will go with him to the house of the Qadi, and confirm my consent the very day he knocks at my door...how wonderful it is that I will find a man who will fill the emptiness of my house after these long years...agonizing loneliness, mercy to you, o my father, you have chained me to your life because of your thoughts, and condemned me to this painful solitude. Your brother's dastardly son has tied me even more tightly because of his personal interests, adding new locks to my chain. But I will break this chain, no matter how strong it is..." [10,p.16]

The ending of the short story is sad: after spending her entire life in agonizing expectation, Kadarjan will not be stable in her old age, and she will be forced to move to her relatives, where her lonely years of life will end.

In realistic literature, the inner world and behavior of the characters bear an indelible mark of the social development of society, the daily background where they live. Ahmad Sibai was deeply convinced of the paramount importance of the environment for the development of human personality. In his works, he seeks to depict a person in various connections with the surrounding world in its social and psychological specificity. The temper of his characters is revealed in an organic connection with social circumstances. The writer shows the direct dependence of a person's moral ideas on the environment and conditions in which his life takes place. In the short story "الحيفة السوابق" («Chronicle of relapses»), Sibai expresses his point of view with all frankness:

إن بيئة الشخص و عادات محيطة مسؤولة في المقام الاول عن جميع تصرفاته في الحياة

"The human environment and its surrounding conditions are responsible, first of all, for all his further actions in life." [11,p.53]

In his opinion,

الجريمة مجرد مرض يمكن البحث في أسبابه الاجتماعية و النفسية و تتبع أعراضه التي تتنوع بتنوع جراثيمه الخاصة

"Crime is simply a disease, the social and psychological causes of which can be investigated, and its symptoms can be traced, which are modified by changes in special microbes." [12,p.54]

Eliva, the main character of the short story "Chronicle of relapses", a naive and trusting orphan, grows into a dangerous and violent criminal. The writer intentionally gives his character the name "Eliva", derived from the Quranic word *اليوة* which means "the book of the righteous" [13,p.83,19].

One good name given at birth, good intentions and wishes are not enough for a person to grow up a worthy member of society in the future, and not to cross its laws. According to the writer, society is responsible and must create conditions that promote the spiritual growth of each person, and form their consciousness aimed at creation.

لم يولد عليوة منحرف الاخلاق او مستقيما و إنما كما تولد العجائن اللدنة قابلا للتكيف و الصيانة

"Eliva was not born with bad inclinations or an honest man, he was like an elastic test, taking any shape or form." [14,p.52]

The selection of life phenomena, their evaluation, the ability to present their significance, and the desire for objectivity in the works of Ahmad Sibai, point to the leading role of the realistic method of narration in his work.

In the early 50s, a large group of young writers returned to Saudi Arabia after studying under government grants abroad, mainly in Egypt, under the impression of numerous publications by Egyptian and other Arab writers who were seized with a thirst for creativity in the new genre of verbal art for Saudi literature.

These years were the heyday of realism in Arab literature: in 1944, a compilation of short stories by Fuad al-Shaib (1911 – 1970) was published in Beirut, which is rightly considered "one of the bright initiators of the Syrian short story" [15, p.161]. This historical period also includes the works of Sayed Hauraniyya (1929-1994), one of the most prominent representatives of the realistic method of narration in Syrian literature. By this time, short stories by Yusuf Idris (1927-1992), who brought the form of the short story to a high level of artistic perfection, had already been published in Egypt. [16,p.18]

The development of pan- Arabic literature contributed to the significant evolution of new forms of fiction in the States of the Arabian Peninsula. A new generation of Saudi writers began to form who

realized that a short story was an independent kind of artistic literature with its inherent features that can most adequately reflect the rapidly changing reality around it. The readership has significantly expanded, fiction has moved out of the scope of publicistic publications, and writers have begun to place their works in separately published compilations. The young writers created their short stories in a realistic way inspired by the works of famous realist writers of the pan-Arab scale. The publication of compilations of short stories gave them confidence in their abilities, contributed to the accumulation of creative experience and the manifestation of individual identity. Social contrasts between the poor and rich layers of society, the clash of children's consciousness with the harsh reality, education issues, the problem of confrontation between "fathers and children" in modern reality, changing under the influence of huge oil revenues, as well as the tragedy of unequal marriages, the crisis of moral values were the main themes of their works. [18,p.166]

Famous realist writers of this period include Ibrahim al-Nasser, Abd al-Rahman al-Shair, Saad al-Bawarudi, Khalid Khalifa, as well as Hasan Abdallah al-Kurshi, the preface to his compilation of short stories "أنات الساقية" ("Moans of the irrigation wheel", 1956), was written by Mahmoud Teymur [18, p.166]. Ibrahim al-Nasser (1930-2013) stands out from among them in terms of writer's productivity and artistic skill.

Ibrahim al-Nasser showed himself as a follower of the realistic method of narration already in his first short story "الهدية" ("Gift"), published in 1960 in the magazine "Quraysh", founded by Ahmad Sibai. The content of the story is devoted to the problems of marriage and family, and it is directed against the rigid customs and traditions that bind the traditional Muslim society. The father of two adult daughters finds himself in a difficult situation, he can not give consent to the marriage of the younger of them, because there is no applicant for the hand of the eldest one. He is tormented by doubts and despair, because in the end this state can lead to the loss of the groom of the youngest daughter. Fortunately, the girls' brother finds a husband for the eldest sister - an old rich man looking for a new wife, and the father perceives him as a gift of fate.

In the same 1960, Ibrahim al-Nasser published his first compilation of short stories "أمهاتنا" the "النضال" ("Our mothers and the struggle"). In 1967, he published a second compilation of short stories "أرض بلا مطر" ("Land without rain"; in 1976, he released his third book "غدير البنات" ("Maiden treachery"); in 1984, the writer published his fourth compilation of short stories "عيون القطط" ("Cat eyes"). The writer's last compilation of short stories, "سجمتان المساء" ("Two evening stars"), was dated 1998.

The second half of the twentieth century was a period of evolution of the socio-economic structure and intensive construction of a new state system in the history of Saudi Arabia. Huge funds were allocated from the state budget for the development of health care, education, irrigation, road construction, expansion and modernization of cities.

One of the main problems faced by the Saudi state at the beginning of its formation was the organization of the transition of the traditional nomadic economy of Bedouin tribes to settled agriculture, the rejection of the nomadic way of life and the settlement of new buildings being built everywhere. The young Bedouin, a main character of Ibrahim al-Nasser's short story "شبه المدينة" ("Shadow cities") who brings cattle for sale to the city walls, faces the agonizing choice between the bleak, filled with the daily struggle for survival, but the usual life in the desert, and moving to the city, which attracts its lure quiet comfortable existence. One night, stretched out on the sand, from a distance, like a warrior assessing his enemy before a battle begins, he gazes intently towards the city to examine his strengths and weaknesses before entering into battle. The Bedouin, accustomed to the silent darkness of the desert, sees a colorful panorama, sparkling in a myriad of bright lights. But, in fact, this spectacle leaves him indifferent, shining from afar lights he scornfully likens to

«كالقلادة الماسية و هي تطوق جيد امرأة ثرية فحسب»

"a diamond necklace encircling the neck of a rich woman, and only" [19,p.26].

Ibrahim al-Nasser masterfully describes the agonizing struggle that takes place in the naive soul of a young Bedouin. Accustomed to the open spaces of the desert, the proud Bedouin is surprised and annoyed with himself: he does not understand why thoughts about the city and its inhabitants have not left him since the day he first entered its territory and walked through its streets. The psychological impact of the encounter with the new order of life has to some extent undermined the foundations of his traditional consciousness, and he is painfully pondering, trying to sort out his conflicting feelings. In his opinion, the magnificent buildings of the city are nothing more than the personification of "الجبن و الخوف" "cowardice and fear". City residents have surrounded themselves with stone walls, and hide behind them in a tight space under overhanging ceilings. They do not see the enchanting beauty of nature that the Creator of the Universe created for them, and they are deprived of simple, but such beautiful moments of life as:

لساعات الشمس عند البكور و وهجها في الأصائل بالإضافة الى مرأى القمر الذى يضىء ببإتسامته المشرقه التى يحتضن بها
الكون من اعاليه

"the tingling of the sun's rays at dawn, and its scorching heat by evening, not to mention the appearance of the moon, which from its heights illuminates and embraces being with a radiant smile" [20,p.27].

On the other hand, he realizes that city life means an abundance of food, clothing, and many other things that he saw during his brief stay in the city, the names of which are not in his vocabulary, and the purpose of which he can only guess. In addition, it will be more profitable for him to do business directly with buyers in urban markets than with intermediaries who ungodly lower the price for driven cattle.

لم يكن هو جشعا و لا ممن يكتنزون المال بدون غاية. فالواقع أنه لم يكن ينشد فى يوم من أيام سوى الكفاف له و لأهله، و لدرئهم من العوز و الفاقة و لكن إمتصاص أولائك السماسرة لجزء كبير من أثمان ماشيته التى يرعاها كما يرمى أ بناءة أغضبه.

"He was neither avaricious, nor one of those who seek to accumulate wealth aimlessly. In fact, he never wanted more than was enough for him and for his family, and that saved him from want and privation. But the appropriation by these intermediaries of the lion's share of the price for his flock, which he and his sons grazed, aroused his wrath." [21,p.28]

The socio-political and economic changes taking place in the Saudi state in the second half of the twentieth century were significantly ahead of the changes that had to occur in the minds of people in order to adequately perceive progressive ideas that correspond to the stages of forced development of society. They created confusion, and fear of the future, which ultimately led to rejection and hatred of the new order. Ibrahim al-Nasser forces the reader to delve into the psychology of the young Bedouin's thinking, to understand the deep causes of his experiences, which is a characteristic phenomenon of realistic art. The young Bedouin is not yet ready to accept the new trends of the modern era, and although he feels a vague admiration for what he sees in the city, the medieval traditions and habits of free life ingrained in his mind do not allow him to get into new ideas, and they may cause future conflicts. Ibrahim al-Nasser sincerely sympathizes with his hero, pities him, and chooses freedom for him.

سمعه عواء ذئب جائع فارتعش قلبه لدى سماع ذلك العواء. وكنأما أفاق من سنة نوم، و قد تذكر إبنه الذى إلتهمه أحد الذئاب المتوحشة فى غفلة من أمه. وإذا بالذكريات تنتال عليه كالشعاع الذى يكشف الطريق، الطريق حياته. فكان أن أحس للتو بما يشده إلى خيمته المتسخة تلك، من وشائج و هم زوجته و ولديه و كل دنياه. فإستدار على الفور و انقلل مسرعا ليطمئن على صغاره.

"He heard the howl of a hungry wolf, and his heart shuddered at the sound of it. He seemed to wake up from a short sleep, and remembered his son, who was torn apart by a hungry wolf because of his

mother's mistake. Memories came flooding back to him, like a light illuminating the road, the road of his life. In an instant, he felt all that he was inextricably connected with the tent set up (in the desert): it was his wife, parents, and his whole world. He turned, taking quick steps away from the city in excitement for his young children "[21,p.30].

The contradiction between the city, which represents the progressive movement of society towards progress, and the nomadic life, which means the preservation of age-old traditions and foundations that hinder this movement, is still strong enough, and the Bedouin returns to his native element, but the coming changes are inevitable, and therefore the memories of the city are not erased from his memory:

أشبه المدينة تتراجع بالتدريج لتستقر هناك في أعماق نفسه و لكنها لا تذوب... أو تتلاشى تماما.

"The shadows of the city gradually receded, and settled in the depths of his soul, but they did not dissipate...and did not disappear forever." [22,p.30]

Ibrahim al-Nasser in his compilation "أرض بلا مرر" ("Land without rain") continues to develop a topical theme for the period of conformity of public consciousness to the historical pattern of society development. In the short story "ليبية أمل" ("Disillusionment"), the confrontation between the remnants of the past and the growing modernization is noticeably weakened in favor of the latter. A young peasant, the main character of the short story, is a representative of the settled agricultural population, who has to leave his native places, and work in the city to collect a ransom for his beloved girl, who is waiting in the village for his return. Unlike the Bedouin hero of the short story "Shadow of the city", who looks at the city from afar and with fear, he studies the city life from the inside, and, like the discoverer, with delight and surprise explores previously unknown sides of it, even if he is not always accompanied by luck.

عالم جديد لم يكن يحلم بتصوره، بل من ذا يصدق لو قص عليهم نقفا من الأعاجيب التي فتح عينيه فجأة على مداهمتها له... من ذا يصدق أن الأبنية تساق هناك في تطاولها و شموخها ذوائب النجوم... و تكاد قممها تتطاح أكباد الغيوم. و هل ثمة من مأفون سيستمع له إن حدثه عن اللحوم المعلبة و الخضار المجففة؟

"It was a new world that he could not imagine even in his dreams. But who will believe him (in the village), if he tells them a little about the wonders that suddenly opened up to his eyes...who will believe that here the buildings in their length and height compete with the tops of the stars... their tops almost rest on the edges of the clouds. Will there be a fool who will listen to him if he starts talking about canned meat and pickled vegetables?" [23,p.40]

Just like the proud Bedouin, the young peasant is in a state of "cultural shock", and not less he is full of fears and secret dreads, but open to new ideas, he wants to change his life for the better. He overcomes his fears and turns to a new reality to get to know the outside world too foreign to him. He cherishes in his soul the dear memories associated with his native side, but when, after a long absence, he returns home, the entire unsightly appearance of the village gives birth, both to him and the reader, to a firm conviction of the legality of the grandiose reforms being carried out in the state.

بدا الطريق أمامه طويلا مملا و متعرجا تملأه منات الأخاديد. و تنداح في وسطه أفواه الكهوف المتصدعة بفعل الأمطار التي طالما إكتسحت في سيرها الهادر جدران المنازل الطينية و قد بلاها القدم و جردتها تقلبات الاجواء من روائها ومظهرها الذي بدا كالحا مغبرا تنفر من مرآه النفس.

"The road before him seemed long, boring, winding, and covered with hundreds of potholes. In the center of the road was a row of shacks, collapsing under the influence of the rains, which erupted in a raging torrent on their mud walls, which were decayed from old age. Under the influence of atmospheric fluctuations, they lost their original beauty of form and appearance, and looked dusty and faded, inspiring disgust with their entire occurrence. " [24,p.43]

The second half of the twentieth century for Saudi society was an era of difficult times, which constantly made new adjustments to the daily way of life, developed over the centuries. The growth of oil production made it necessary to build oil refineries, pipelines, and various small and medium-sized enterprises for servicing the oil industry. The vast Arabian Desert has become a huge construction site. The workers lived in settlements hastily built for them by oil companies. Their work was hard, and their working and living conditions required improvement. For indigenous workers, the situation was compounded by the difficulties of transitioning to modern production activities based on new and unfamiliar principles. In addition, physical labor, in addition to cattle breeding, has not been considered prestigious in Saudi Arabia for centuries. Traditional ties that remained strong often returned workers from the manufacturing industry back to their homes as soon as the acute material need receded.

Ibrahim al-Nasser's short story "أرض بلا مطر" ("Land without rain") depicts the life of workers in one of the settlements built in the desert by a pipe-laying company. The content of the short story is colored in pessimistic tones, abounds in rhetorical turns of artistic language, and tends to romantic conventions, although the theme of wage labor and social contrasts traditionally belongs to the theme of works of the realistic method of narration.

كانت تلك القرية مزرعاً خصباً للأعاصير والزوابع الرملية التي تحيل أصيلها إلى عتمة غيراء فتندفع سيول الرمال صوب البحر، و كأنها شلالات تنحدر من جبل عال في حين اننا عند هبوب العواصف نتجمع داخل خيامنا، التي تحاول الرياح اقتلاعها بعناد وقسوة و هي تعج بأنفاس الرياح يملأ الفدى عيوننا المعصوبة، ونوبات السعال تختنق في صدورنا....

"This village was a fertile field for sand hurricanes and whirlwinds, which turned everything into gray darkness, sending streams of sand towards the sea. It seemed as if waterfalls of sand were falling from a high mountain. When sandstorms raged, we gathered in tents, which the violent wind tried to tear off the ground with persistence and cruelty. The tents were battered by gusts of wind, dust clogged our blindfolded eyes, and coughing fits shook our chests" [25,p.6].

لم تكن الحياة في تلك القرية الخشبية امراً طبيعياً معتاداً انما كانت بالعكس مريرة شاقّة للغاية بل و محفوفة بالمخاطر... فهي قبل كل شيء معزولة في أقصى الصحراء، عن معالم الحضارة، تحاصرها الرمال من جميع جوانبها، كما لم تكن آبار المياه منها قريبة أبداً. إذ كانت تجلب إليها من مسافة لا تقل عن ثلاثمائة كيلومتر....

"Life in this wooden village was not an ordinary and natural living, on the contrary, it was sad, extremely difficult and dangerous....first of all, this was the most remote corner of the desert from all signs of civilization, which was surrounded by sand on all sides, and also, there was never a single well with water in the vicinity. Water was brought here from a distance of at least three hundred kilometers. " [26,p.7]

The main character of the short story is a worker who was brought to the village by a dream to get rich and return home. His companions, like him, were impoverished former farmers or shepherds who had joined the company in the hope of improving their lives. They are Rafea, who sees life as a "series of failures and misfortunes"[27,p.8], or Zafer, who has worked for the company for a long time and has nothing but "certificates of achievement, a certificate of disability, a severed leg, and burn marks that painted the body like a chameleon. " [28,p.9]

The logical conclusion of the dominant motive of hopelessness in the content is a fatal accident that prejudices the sad fate of the main character. All his efforts are in vain, and dreams crumble to dust-the accumulated money is burned to the ground during an accidental fire.

وعدت إلى أهلي مثقل القلب، كسير خاطر لضياح نقودي التي ادخرتها عاماً كاملاً في التشرّد و الجوع و المتاعب.

و تلقاني الجميع فرحيب بعودتي...وقصصت عليهم مشكلتي والعبرات تخنق صوتي.
لم تعقب أمي بشيء، و لكن لحظت دمعة كبيرة تندرج بالرغم منها. أما أبي فقد تظر إلي شزرا و بصق على الأرض بتأفف و
هو يقول : " كنت أعلم أنك ولد غير نافع...."

"With a heavy heart, I returned to my family, saddened by the loss of money that I had saved for a year, wandering, starving, and experiencing difficulties.

Everyone met me, rejoicing at my return....I told them about my problem, my voice was breaking with tears.

My mother did not reproach me for anything, but I noticed a large tear that rolled out of her eyes against her will. As for my father, he looked at me sideways and spat on the ground in frustration, saying, " I knew you were a useless guy." [29,p.11]

In the subsequent short stories of Ibrahim al-Nasser, the clash of traditional concepts and new economic and social ideas takes on a different hue, and it is reduced to isolated protests of an individual nature. These are most of the characters from the compilation "غدير البنات" ("Maiden treachery") [29,p.75]. This is an elderly clerk of the short story "سدان الليس" ("The Devil's Horse") who refuses to use a bicycle, which hinders his promotion and becomes the subject of ridicule by young colleagues; or an ordinary resident of the short story "المسافر" ("Traveler"), who considers the introduction of technical innovations to be a bad omen which, in his opinion, disturb the peace of man, and promise of premature death; or the undertaker of the short story "حال الدنيا" ("the world Situation"), the resident of one of the oldest districts of Riyadh, the Shalakat block, who complains about happening in the country changes which bring to the unpopularity of his professional occupation.

Ibrahim al-Nasser is known not only as a short story writer whose work is committed to a realistic method of narration, but also as one of the founders of the novel genre in modern Saudi literature.

Conclusions

The tremendous, in chronological terms, backlog in the formation of the realistic method of narration in Saudi literature from the other Arab countries was occurred due to the late development of new type fiction in the Arabian states. As an independent literary genre, the Saudi realistic short story began to take its shape only in the 50's of the twentieth century. The experience of previous years in the field of composition and literary translations from other languages played a positive role in its formation, but the most important in this process was the experience of writers of culturally developed Arab countries, in particular, Egypt, where the short story genre had already reached the peak of its development in the works of Yusuf Idris, whose highly artistic and mature works in many ways surpassed the short stories of representatives of the previous generation of both Egyptian and pan-Arab literature;

- Ahmad Sibai, the famous educator was considered to be the initiator of realistic literature in Saudi Arabia. The scenes of life depicted in his short stories, the characters, the conditions of their existence, and all the real validity that Ahmad Sibai described in his works had been of great importance for the further development of the realistic method of narration in the Saudi story;

- The works of young writers who replaced the enlighteners had been imbued with a realistic spirit. The range of topics and problems of their prose was determined by the topical issues of the time. Ibrahim al-Nasser was considered to be the most significant of the realist writers of this period. His works are characterized by recognition of the value of objective reality and a great interest in it. As a realist writer, Ibrahim al-Nasser managed to capture the most important conflicts and antagonisms of the radically changing historical reality of Saudi society in his short stories.

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