

T.C.
İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE PROGRAMME



SOCIO-CULTURAL DISCOURSE IN PYGMALION BY
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW AND MIDAQ ALLEY BY
NAGUIB MAHFOUZ: A COMPARATIVE NEW
HISTORICIST STUDY

MA THESIS

AHMED MAAN AHMED ALFAHHAM

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İSTANBUL, JUNE 2023

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I prepared my project following the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, and I hereby declare that;

- I have obtained the data, information, and documents provided within the thesis according to academic and ethical rules,
- I have submitted all information, documents, evaluations, and results under the requirements of scientific ethics and moral rules,
- I have cited all works that I have used in the project by appropriately referring to my sources,
- I have not made any changes to the data used,
- I declare that the work I present is original, and

if found otherwise, I accept all loss of rights that may occur.

23/6/ 2023

AHMED ALFAHHAM

PREFACE

Firstly, I would like to show my deep gratitude to Allah who gave me power to carry on in this long trip.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor assoc. Prof. ZENNURE KÖSEMAN for her invaluable guidance, unwavering support, and expert knowledge throughout the entire process of this research. Her mentorship and insightful feedback have been instrumental in shaping this thesis. I am also indebted to the faculty members of the English Language and Literature at Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University for their commitment to excellence in education and their contribution to my academic development. A special gratitude is sent to Prof. Gunseli Isci who was generous by her help and support during writing process. Their passion for their respective fields and willingness to share their expertise have enriched my understanding of the subject matter.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my lovely parents and friends for their constant encouragement and belief in my abilities. Their unwavering support, both emotionally and intellectually, has been a constant source of strength and motivation. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the participants of this study, without whom this research would not have been possible. Their willingness to contribute their time and insights has been invaluable, and I am grateful for their involvement.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the support of my fellow classmates and colleagues who have been part of my academic journey. Their camaraderie and intellectual discussions have been instrumental in shaping my ideas and refining my research.

This thesis is the culmination of years of hard work, collaboration, and support from numerous individuals and institutions. I am humbled by their contributions and grateful for the opportunity to undertake this research.

ISTANBUL, 2023

AHMED ALFAHHAM

ÖZET

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'IN PYGMALION VE NAGUIB MAHFOUZ'UN MIDAQ SOKAĞI'NDAKİ SOSYO-KÜLTÜREL SÖYLEM: KARŞILAŞTIRMALI YENİ TARİHSEL BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Bu tez, George Bernard Shaw'ın *Pygmalion* ve Naguib Mahfouz'un *Midaq Sokağı*'nın yeni tarihsel bir karşılaştırmasını sunmaktadır. Araştırma soruları, yazarların sosyal sınıfın insan ilişkileri üzerindeki tasvirleri ve etkisiyle ilgili olduğu gibi, karmaşık sosyo-politik konularla ilgili çalışmalarını da kapsamaktadır. Birinci bölüm, çalışmanın arka planını ve önemini göstermektedir. Yeni Tarihsel eleştirinin edebi eserlere nasıl etki ettiği konusunda teorik bir arka plan sunmaktadır. İkinci bölüm, *Pygmalion*'ı yeni tarihsel bir perspektiften analiz etmektedir. Bu bölümde, Shaw'ın mekan ve karakterleri kullanarak toplumsal normları eleştirmesi ve mevcut durumu sorgulaması incelenmektedir. Ayrıca, oyunun kimlik, güç ve sosyal ve kültürel kısıtlamalar karşısında ajans konularıyla nasıl ilişkilendiği araştırılmaktadır. Üçüncü bölüm, Naguib Mahfouz'un *Midaq Sokağı*'nın yeni tarihsel bir analizini sunmaktadır. Bu bölümde, Mahfouz'un 20. yüzyılın başındaki Kahire'deki sosyal sınıf ve güç dinamiklerini tasvir etmesi incelenmektedir. Aynı zamanda yazarın romanı bir sosyal eleştiri aracı olarak nasıl kullandığı, cinsiyet, din ve gelenek konularıyla nasıl ilgilendiği araştırılmaktadır. Dördüncü bölüm, iki eseri yeni tarihsel bir perspektiften karşılaştırmaktadır. Bu bölümde, yazarların sosyal sınıf, güç ve ajans konularının işlenmesindeki benzerlikler ve farklılıklar tartışılmaktadır. Aynı zamanda iki eserin sömürgecilik, milliyetçilik ve modernleşme gibi daha geniş sosyo-politik konularla nasıl ilişkilendiği incelenmektedir. Genel olarak, bu tez, *Pygmalion* ve *Midaq Sokağı*'nın yeni tarihsel bir okumasını sunarak yazarların sosyal sınıfa olan ortak ilgilerini ve karmaşık sosyo-politik konularla ilgilenmelerini vurgulamaktadır..

Anahtar Kelimeler:Yeni Tarihçilik, Nahuib Mahfouz, George Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*, *Midaq Sokağı*, Arap Edebiyatı

ABSTRACT
SOCIO-CULTURAL DISCOURSE IN PYGMALION BY GEORGE
BERNARD SHAW AND MIDAQ ALLEY BY NAGUIB MAHFOUZ:
A COMPARATIVE NEW HISTORICIST STUDY

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This thesis presents a new historicist comparison of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* and Naguib Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*. The research questions concern the authors' portrayal of social class and its influence on human relationships, as well as their engagement with complex socio-political issues.

Chapter one displays the study background and the significance of the study. It provides theoretical background shedding light on New Historical criticism and how it affects literary works. Chapter two presents an analysis of *Pygmalion* from a new historicist perspective. The chapter examines Shaw's use of his setting and characters to criticize social norms and challenge the status quo. It also explores how the play engages with issues of identity, power, and agency in the face of social and cultural constraints.

Chapter three presents a new historicist analysis of Naguib Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*. The chapter examines Mahfouz's portrayal of social class and power dynamics in early 20th century Cairo. It also explores the author's use of the novel as a means of social critique, engaging with issues of gender, religion, and tradition. Chapter four compares the two works from a new historicist perspective. The chapter discusses the similarities and differences in the authors' treatment of social class, power, and agency. It also examines how the two works engage with broader socio-political issues, such as colonialism, nationalism, and modernization.

Overall, this thesis presents a new historicist reading of *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley*, highlighting the authors' shared interest in social class and their engagement with complex socio-political issues.

Keywords: New Historicism, Nahuib Mahfouz, George Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*, *Midaq Alley*, Arabic Literature

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INTRODUCTION

Literature has long served as a reflection of society, providing insights into the historical and cultural contexts in which it is produced. Through the lens of New Historicism, a critical approach that examines the interference of literature and history, this study carries out a comparative analysis of two iconic works: *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw and *Midaq Alley* by Naguib Mahfouz. By diving into these literary masterpieces, we aim to explore the ways in which they capture and comment upon the social, political, and cultural realities of their respective time periods.

Pygmalion, written by Shaw in 1912, presents a compelling portrayal of early 20th-century England, a society marked by stark class divisions and the struggles of women for independence and social mobility. The play follows the transformation of Eliza Doolittle, a working-class flower girl, into a refined lady through the efforts of Professor Henry Higgins. Shaw's work tackles issues of class, gender, and identity, shedding light on the societal hierarchies and challenges faced by individuals striving to break free from the boundaries imposed upon them. Shaw's masterpiece *Pygmalion* has taken a major and considerable attention as it refers to the importance of language in highly classified society like Victorian Era. It drags readers and critiques to the problem of classes in general and language in scope. Some consider it as a reflection of Shaw experience when he first moved to England with his Irish accent. It asserts how language was a crucial tool to identify your identity then you will be treated according to your class group. The play provokes the psychoanalytic critics that supposes Higgins as a reflection of Shaw personality as he is single and cruel speaker in his nature. However, Shaw highly struggled from stage censorship so it was unexpected to regard the play as a part of purity movements in nineteenth and twentieth century. Shaw's works was known to assert on completely different concerns. Apart from Shaw censorship issues, the choice of the cast depended on the reaction of audience from 1910s and 1920s. It was targeted to these groups of audience who might consider *Pygmalion* as a moral myth that was re-told by a contemporary author. (Bloom, 2011, 71).

This paper aims to analyze *Midaq Alley* and Shaw's *Pygmalion* in the scope of New Historicism. There are a group of terms that will be used in this paper such as. New Historicism is literary criticism which interprets target literary text according to

its sociological, political, cultural and biographical context. It assured that history and literature are emerged equally and the history is not only the background of a literary work. All forms of written text receive the same appreciation.

At the heart of *Pygmalion* is the exploration of class distinction and its impact on individual lives. Shaw exposes the stark divide between the upper class, represented by characters like Higgins and his social circle, and the working class, represented by Eliza and her fellow characters from the London slums. Through Eliza's transformation, Shaw highlights the role of education and language in bridging the class divide. Eliza's linguistic makeover becomes a vehicle for her upward social mobility, demonstrating how language and speech patterns become markers of social status and power. Shaw challenges the notion that class is determined by birthright, arguing that social mobility is possible through education and self-improvement. (Holroyd, 1997,514).

In contrast, *Midaq Alley*, published by Mahfouz in 1947, offers a glimpse into the social materialism of mid-20th-century Egypt. Set in an old Cairo neighborhood, the novel explores the lives of its diverse people, through the themes of poverty, power dynamics, gender roles, and societal restrictions. Through the struggles and aspirations of characters such as Hamida and Abbas, Mahfouz discovers the complex social hierarchy and the impact of cultural norms on individual lives, providing a nuanced depiction of Egyptian society during that period. (Mugglestone, 1993,380).

Midaq Alley serves as a reflection of Egyptian society, reflecting the multifaceted nature of class distinctions in a rapidly changing urban environment. The Alley is home to a diverse range of characters, each representing a different part of the social ladder. At the top of the hierarchy stands the wealthy and influential Hussain Kirsha, who embodies the power and privilege of the elite class. Kirsha's wealth and social standing allows him to exert control over others and manipulate the lives of those around him.

Beneath the upper class, there exists a middle class comprising small business owners and professionals. Characters like the café owner Abbas and the pharmacist Zaita represent this segment of the population. They have achieved a certain level of economic stability and social standing but often find themselves caught between the elite and the working class, navigating the complexities of the social hierarchy. Towards the bottom of the hierarchy are the working-class individuals, including laborers, street vendors, and impoverished residents. They face poverty, limited

opportunities, and a lack of upward mobility. Characters such as Hamida and Kirsha's wife highlight the struggles and aspirations of this segment of society. Hamida, a young woman yearning for a better life, uses her beauty and charm to navigate the patriarchal society and seeks upward mobility through marriage. prevalent in traditional Egyptian society. Women, such as Hamida and the widowed Mrs. Saniya Afify, are often marginalized and subject to societal restrictions. They navigate a patriarchal system that limits their choices and opportunities, reinforcing gender inequality. Mahfouz exposes the limitations placed upon women and challenges the objectification and exploitation of women for their perceived value. Both *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley* present female characters who defy societal expectations and strive for agency and independence. Eliza and Hamida embody the struggles and contradictions faced by women striving for self-determination within their respective social contexts. They are complex characters, shaped by their socio-economic backgrounds, cultural norms, and personal aspirations. Through their journeys, Shaw and Mahfouz shed light on the profound challenges and sacrifices women endure in their pursuit of a better life.

By employing a New Historicism approach, this study aims to analyze these two literary works in their historical and cultural contexts. Through a comparative examination of *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley*, we seek to uncover how Shaw and Mahfouz engage with the socio-political issues of their time and use literature as a medium to comment on and criticize the prevailing social structures, power dynamics, and gender roles. (Hamilton , 1996 , 10)

In doing so, this study hopes to shed light on the ways in which literature can serve as a valuable source for understanding historical periods and the complex interactions between literature, society, and the forces that shape them. By critically analyzing these two works through a New Historicism lens, we can gain deeper insights into the profound influence of historical and cultural factors on the creation and reception of literature as well as its ability to illuminate and challenge prevailing ideologies. (Brannigan , 1998 , 40)

Greenblatt and like-minded scholars advocate that Cultural Poetics was produced between 1960s, 70s and 80s by the institutional character of American literary criticism. During Greenblatt's graduate studies at Yale University, he mastered New Criticism concepts. At that university, many new critical scholars like T.S. Eliot, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn and others were respected and their

methods were highly used. Early in 1938, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren issued a book, which was titled as *Understanding Poetry*. This book encouraged scholars to use New Criticism in a practical and teachable way. According to New Criticism, text is independent i.e., it has no relation to its reader, writer or historical surroundings. It claims that text is the most important part to form the meaning. It reveals the meaning when a reader takes a close look to text. Any text has the ability to reveal itself after applying certain rule or methodology. New Critics believe that it enables as to discover the facts and rare knowledge within Literature. Facts are the realities that science cannot discover while New Criticism can. Moreover, knowledge is connected to humanity or science. (Bressler, 2011, 129)

New Historical criticism is an interdisciplinary approach that emerged in the late 20th century, combining elements of literary criticism, history, anthropology, and other social sciences. It focuses on the relationship between literature and its historical, cultural, and social contexts (Brannigan ,1998 , 42). When applying New Historicism in this paper, it is likely examining a literary work within its historical and cultural framework. This approach involves analyzing the text in light of the political, social, economic, and ideological factors that influenced its creation and reception. By doing so, you aim to gain a deeper understanding of the text and its significance in its specific historical context. (Hamilton, 1998, 9). The paragraph interdisciplinary nature of the paper becomes apparent when you consider the different fields of study that converge in New Historicism. Here are a few disciplines that may intersect with the analysis history. First, historical research and understanding are integral to New Historicism. I will explore primary and secondary historical sources to provide context for the literary work under scrutiny. This historical investigation helps illuminate the cultural, political, and social factors that influenced the creation and reception of the text. Second, *Anthropology New Historicism* often draws on anthropological perspectives to explore the cultural practices, beliefs, and values reflected in the text. Anthropological concepts such as cultural relativism, symbolic systems, and social rituals may be employed to analyze the literary work within its broader cultural context. (Foucault , 2000 , 261). Third, Sociology, Socioeconomic and sociopolitical factors are significant in New Historicism. Analyzing power dynamics, social structures, and class relations within the text and its historical context can provide insights into the social realities of the time and how they are represented in the literature.(Robertson, 2008, 1067). New Historicism shares

affinities with cultural studies, which explore the production, dissemination, and reception of culture. Cultural studies theories can help you examine how the literary work participates in and challenges the dominant cultural discourses and ideologies of its time. (Brannigan, 1998, 47). By incorporating these interdisciplinary approaches, this paper using New Historical criticism aims to offer a comprehensive analysis that goes beyond a purely literary examination. It seeks to understand the text as a product and reflection of its historical, cultural, and social context.

Through this comparative study of Shaw's *Pygmalion* and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*, it is aimed to contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between literature and history, and the significant role they play in shaping our perceptions and interpretations of the world around us. By examining the themes of class, gender, power, and social mobility within these two works, we aim to unravel the complexities of the societies they represent and clarify the broader socio-political landscapes in which they were written. Through this exploration, we hope to gain a more nuanced understanding of the historical and cultural contexts that influenced Shaw and Mahfouz, as well as the ways in which they challenged and subverted prevailing social norms through their literary works.

Edwardian Era: (1901-1910) the time when the oldest son of Queen Victoria Edward VII started his reign after the death of his mother in 1901. Many challenges were faced by Britain under the leadership of Edward VII. He failed to lead this sensitive era of time specially the preparation to World War 1, which took place four years after his death. Victorian Era: The second part of nineteenth century was the time when Queen Victoria reigned. Britain was the most powerful country. (Woolf & Hodgman, 2023).

When authors write their literary works, an argument is always provoked that what inspired the writer to write a certain novel. Why would an author write about a war while the other would write about love story. Several critical theories discuss this aspect of literature like reader-oriented criticism that supposes separation of literary works from its author once he or she finishes it. It claims that writers can be objective when they write about certain events in their lives. New Historicism has no exception, it analyses the literary works considering authors' lives, or political opinions. It claims that all literary works are mirrors of societies that author comes from and these readers can only really understand the text if they read about events and know the widespread attitudes of that era. An author can be influenced

politically, biographically and socially. So, a reader, must understand the time when a novel or a play was written in. This paper sheds light on the biographical, social and political context for both *Midaq Alley* and *Pygmalion*. Now we are lead to a question why would a reader read *Pygmalion* in 2023 and the question is applicable to *Midaq Alley*? Why would a researcher analyze both works? Why would he or she choose a New Historicism's scope carrying on this analysis?

Let's start with *Pygmalion*. Reading Shaw's *Pygmalion* from a New Historicism perspective provides several advantages: First, insight into Edwardian Society: Shaw's play offers a window into the social, cultural, and economic conditions of the Edwardian era (1901-1910). Through the characters and their interactions, readers can gain an understanding of the prevailing social hierarchy, class divisions, and the impact of the British Empire on society. Second, Critique of the Victorian Era: *Pygmalion* reflects a transition from the Victorian era to the Edwardian era. Shaw uses the play to challenge and satirize Victorian ideals, such as rigid social class distinctions, gender roles, and the concept of genteel behavior. By reading the play, one can appreciate Shaw's subversion of Victorian norms and the shift in societal values. (Holroyd, 1997, 524). Third, Language and Linguistic evolution. The play explores the power of language and its role in social mobility. It captures the changing linguistic landscape of the early 20th century, including the rise of phonetics and the influence of dialects. Through the characters' discussions on language and accents, readers can observe the evolving attitudes towards speech and communication during that period. (Mugglestone, 1993 , 278).

Fourth, approaching through Suffrage Movement and Women's Rights: *Pygmalion* indirectly touches upon the suffrage movement and the changing status of women in society. Shaw presents Eliza Doolittle's transformation from a working-class flower girl to a refined lady, highlighting issues of gender, autonomy, and self-determination. By examining the play within its historical context, readers can explore the connections between the characters' experiences and the broader women's rights movement. Fifth is the class and Social mobility: The play explores the concept of social mobility and challenges the notion that one's social standing is fixed. Shaw criticizes the inherent unfairness of the class system and questions the value placed on birthright versus merit. By reading *Pygmalion* historically, readers can analyze the social and economic dynamics of the time, including the changing opportunities for upward mobility. (McGovern,2011,8). The sixth is the Theatrical and cultural Impact

Pygmalion had a significant impact on the theater and cultural scene of its time. It introduced innovative ideas about staging, character development, and social commentary. By studying the play historically, readers can appreciate its influence on the theater of the early 20th century and its contribution to the wider cultural discourse.

In summary, reading Shaw's *Pygmalion* from a historical perspective offers insights into Edwardian society, the critique of Victorian norms, linguistic evolution, women's rights, social mobility, and the play's theatrical and cultural impact. It allows readers to engage with the historical context in which the play was written and performed, deepening their understanding of its significance and relevance in its time.

Now let's move on to *Midaq Alley*. Studying *Midaq Alley* from New Historicism prospective can provide valuable insights into various aspects of Egyptian society during the early 20th century. *Midaq Alley* is a novel written by Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz, published in 1947, and it is set in the mid-1940s Cairo. While the novel is a work of fiction, it reflects the social, political, and cultural context of that time period. Here are some significant aspects of studying *Midaq Alley* in New historicism prospective:

First Socioeconomic Conditions: *Midaq Alley* provides a glimpse into the socioeconomic conditions prevalent in Cairo during the mid-20th century. The alley itself represents a microcosm of Egyptian society, with its diverse inhabitants ranging from the poor to the rich. The novel explores the struggles, aspirations, and dreams of different social classes, shedding light on the challenges faced by the lower classes and the disparities in wealth distribution. Second is the urbanization and Modernism. *Midaq Alley* is set against the backdrop of Cairo's urbanization and modernization during the 1940s. The alley serves as a physical and metaphorical space where traditional values clash with the influences of modernity. By studying the novel historically, one can understand the impact of urbanization, the changing urban landscape, and the social tensions that arise as a result. (Hasenfus, 2013, 99).

Third, the Political Climate Examining *Midaq Alley* historically allows an understanding of the political climate of the time. The novel was written during a period of political transition in Egypt, marked by the end of British colonial rule and the struggle for independence. By delving into the historical context, readers can explore the political undercurrents and the aspirations of Egyptians for self-

determination, which are subtly reflected in the novel's narrative. (Abdullah, 2020 , 114). Fourth is the Gender Roles and Women's Rights: *Midaq Alley* also addresses gender roles and the status of women in Egyptian society. Through the characters' experiences and interactions, the novel provides insights into the challenges faced by women and the limitations imposed on them in a patriarchal society. By studying the novel historically, one can examine the evolving roles of women, their participation in public life, and the emergence of women's rights movements during that era. (Goher, 2015 , 50). Fifth are Cultural and Religious Dynamics: The novel explores the cultural and religious dynamics of Cairo during the 1940s. It delves into the complexities of Egypt's cultural heritage, the influence of Islamic traditions, and the tensions between traditional and modern values. By studying *Midaq Alley* historically, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the cultural milieu and the societal forces shaping individual identities. (Muhammed, 2020, 1). In summary, studying *Midaq Alley* historically offers valuable insights into the socioeconomic conditions, urbanization, political climate, gender roles, and cultural dynamics of early 20th-century Egypt. By examining the novel within its historical context, readers can appreciate its significance as a reflection of the social fabric and the aspirations of the Egyptian people during that time.

This paper includes four chapter, the first sheds light on New Historicism and its historical background as well as mentioning its pioneers. Chapter two focuses on Shaw's masterpiece *Pygmalion*, An analysis will be done in a New Historicism prospective shedding light on its biographical, social and political context. Chapter three provides a New Historicism analysis to Mafouz's *Midaq Alley* concerning its biographical, social and political context. Last but not least, the comparison will be made between these significant literary works, both contemporaneously and in their time. The comparison will take place first between the authors of these works as well as a general comparison between the literary works themselves. Next, differences and similarities between Eliza and Hamida will be displayed, rather than the fact that the two works were written at different times and in different societies. Both Mahfouz and Shaw are arguably considered by feminists.

A feminism-scoped comparison is going to be carried out as the two targeted societies, through literary works, used to have that sense of women's oppression.

Religion has a special dimension in *Midaq Alley*, while it has no clear effect on Shaw's *Pygmalion*. In terms of religion, there is going to be a comparison too. One of the main themes that Mahfouz used to express in his works is colonialism, so this comparison will be carried on its light.

The spatial relation between works and their surrounding circumstances is going to be shown and compared, such as the relation between World War I and World War II and the relation with other contemporary works for both masterpieces.



1.INTRODUCTION AND REASEARCH FRAMEWORK

1.1 Background of the study.

Literary text and world relationship has formed an essential bummer in criticism and literary world. “The text and the world” phrase constructs immediately controversial distinctions; It previously supposes a distinction between a text and the world. The literary text independence from the world has formed a variety of theories that depends on realism. The assumption that literary works are a reflection of the world contributed to make up ways to interpret a text claiming separation of the text from the context. These ways encourage the notion that text is not even an important portion of the world. They represent as a monster of literary work interpretation. (Bennett & Royale, 2004, p.26). On the other hand, the killers of this monster are called “poststructuralists. Poststructuralism (including new historicism, deconstruction, certain forms of feminism, postcolonialism and queer theory)” (Bennett & Royale, 2004, p.28). New Historicism is a new literary criticism school that deals with author’s surrounding circumstances. It focuses on the context whether it is social, historical or cultural that contributed to produce the target text.

Historicism scholar believes that time when a text is written identifies meaning of terms and events that are used with in the text. It considers a text as mirror of the era when the text was produced. (Guerin, 2005, 55). Guerin (2005, 53) advocates that literary work is not only the mirror of author’s lifetime. New Historicism assures that a critic has to study the author’s history beside the analysis of the text. As the text and its historical cannot be separated. It claims that when a text is produced in a certain era of time, it’ll spontaneously hold the concepts of that society. No question, a critic must study these concepts to be able to give considered interpretation of the given text. Supporting the truth that literary works production is a human activity so it can’t be considered neutral or objective. New historicism assures history is no exception. It is subjective too and needs to be rejudged again regarding historical context to conclude the best interpretation of a certain text.

George Bernard Shaw is an Irish comic dramatist, socialist and literary critic. Shaw belonged to the Protestant Christian cult. A servant and unsuccessful grain merchant father formed an unstable figure of a father. His father’s dismal career led Shaw’s life to severe poverty. It was a humiliating life for Shaw. It was not simply poverty. The Nobel prize winner was a terrific socialist who firmly refused the

hypocrisy principles of Elizabethan society that were shown through plays of that era. This is the place his critique abilities. His most well-known works “The doctor’s Dilemma”, “Man and Superman”, “The Philanderer” and “Pygmalion”. *Pygmalion* is a romance play that was performed first in 1913 in Austria. Later on, it was performed in 1914 in England. It deals with classes of English society as well as a comedic love story. Patrick Campbell played Eliza Doolittle. (Stewart & Weintraub, 2020 , 2).

Naguib Mahfouz was born in 1911 in Cairo, dedicated his writing talent to fictional stories about ancient Egypt. After several years he decided to break the iceberg by writing his first trilogy novel called Khan Al-Khalili in 1945. The novel name was derived from a famous district in old Cairo that had a bazaar. His unique way of showing the old Cairo lifestyle and streets contributed to recognize his novel among other writers (Johnson & Davis, 2011 , 12). One of his trilogy novels series about Cairo life is Midaq Alley. It was published first in 1947. Two years after Khan Al-Khalili, which has similar events with Midaq Alley. Later, the novel published after translation in 1966. The event of the novel deals with a small alley in a low-class society district in Cairo. It is placed in The King Farouk Era, passing through English hegemony on Egypt. It has several significant characters, but the most dominant one is Hamida, who leaves the Alley later chasing money, power and fame (Mahfouz, 1947 , 34)

Pygmalion for Bernard Shaw and *Midaq Alley* for Naguib Mahfouz will be analyzed through the New Historicism criticism lenses Then a comparison will be carried out between both novels.

1.2 Objectives of the study

This study aims to fulfill the following objectives:

1. To discuss Shaw’s biography and the context of *Pygmalion* particularly the end of Victorian era and social classed changing.
2. TO discuss the context of *Midaq Alley* particularly the end of King Farouk era.
3. To analyze the cultural, social, and political circumstances in which *Pygmalion* was written and staged.
4. To analyze the cultural, social, and political circumstances in which *Midaq Alley* was written.
- 5.To discuss the main sides of *Pygmalion* from a new historicist point of view.

6.To discuss the main sides of Midaq Alley from a new historicist point of view.

1.3 Significance of the study

Pygmalion was written and published in a sensitive period. The end of Victorian era that mainly stresses on classes of the society and the beginning of Edwardian era. It's considered one of Shaw's masterpieces. On the other hand, Mahfouz who grew in Cairo streets lets us take a look to that those low-class people. It is the second novel after his fictional series. Midaq Alley shows Mahfouz's talents as a pioneer literary figure not only locally but nationally after translating it in 1966.

Both these literary works have their significance in the literary world. New Historicism is a contemporary criticism so no one has already analyzed any of them in perspective of New Historicism so, that is what makes this study significant and important.

1.4 Research Questions

This study will answer the following questions.

- 1.What are the biographical and historical background that inspired Shaw to write *Pygmalion* and Mahfouz write *Midaq Alley*.
2. What are the social, cultural and political circumstances that made Shaw write *Pygmalion* and Mahfouz write *Midaq Alley*.
- 3.What other work that might be connected to either *Midaq Alley* or *Pygmalion*.
4. To what extent these works related to each other in terms of New Historicism.
5. What principals of New Historicism can be found in these works?

1.5 Limitations of the study

The study basically focuses on one hand Shaw's life and *Pygmalion* on the other hand, then consider lives of both writers and their novels Midaq Alley. The results are not applicable or generalized on their other works.

1.6 Definition of terms.

New Historicism: Literary criticism which interprets target literary text according to its sociological, political, cultural and biographical context. It assured that history and literature are emerged equally and the history is not only the background of a literary work. All forms of written text receives the same appreciation.

Edwardian Era: (1901-1910) the time when the oldest son of Queen Victoria Edward VII started his reign after death of his mother in 1901. Many challenges were faced by Britain under leadership of Edward VII. He failed to lead this sensitive era of time

specially the preparation to World War I which took place four years after his death. (“Definition of Historicism,” n.d.)

Victorian Era: The second part of nineteenth century when Queen Victorian reigned. Britain was the most powerful country. (“Definition of Historicism,” n.d.)

1.7 Theoretical Background

1.7.1 Before New Historicism and cultural materialism

Greenblatt and like-minded scholars advocate that Cultural Poetics was produced between 1960s, 70s and 80s by the institutional character of American literary criticism. During Greenblatt’s graduate studies at Yale University, he mastered New Criticism concepts. At that university, many new critical scholars like T.S. Eliot, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn and others were respected and their methods were highly used.

Early in 1938, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren issued a book which was titled as *Understanding Poetry*. This book encouraged scholars to use New Criticism in a practical and teachable way. According to New Criticism, text is independent i.e., it has no relation to its reader, writer or historical surroundings. It claims that text is the most important part to form the meaning. It reveals the meaning when a reader takes a close look to text. Any text has the ability to reveal itself after applying certain rule or methodology. New Critics believe that it enables as to discover the facts and rare knowledge within Literature. Facts that science cannot discover while New Criticism can. (Bressler, 2011, 133).

On the other hand, What New Criticism fails to discuss is understanding literature considering history as background. Greenblatt and like-minded scholars desired to interpret Literature accompanied with History. They doubted the ability of defining Literature. They ask” is there a specific definition of Literature?”. Literature could be deeply related to History. They claim that History produced Literature as result of social, cultural and political activities. Greenblatt believes Literature could be no literature anymore as it holds facts and events of the era it was produced in. Superiority of New Criticism provoked a variety of challenging critical theories such as; feminism, Marxism and Lacanian psychoanalysis. Post structural scholars also invented new theories about the role of the reader and reading process. With these surrounded circumstances cultural poetics were produced.

A sociologist called Foucault has various questions about the nature of the following elements: Literature, history, society and culture. Foucault and other peers of post structuralists believe in the idea of life interconnectedness and combination. While they disagree to the old answers of other Marxist peers like Goerge Lukacs, William Raymond and others. Post structuralists asserts that people and what they experience in their lives form the history spontaneously. They believe that literature is formed by the connectedness of these four elements: society, culture, literature and history. Greenblatt and like-minded scholars admired the questions of Foucault and both groups contributed to redefine culture in a different way which agree with William's belief. Raymond Williams's belief that life is a mixture of human experiences that are exposed through politics and Literature. These two elements are surrounded by a two-sided relation force conflict. (Bressler, 2011, 134).

1.7.2 Historical Development

Literary text and world relation has formed an essential bumper in criticism and literary world. "The text and the world" phrase constructs immediately controversial distinctions; It previously supposes a distinction between a text and the world. (Bennett & Royale, 2009, 155). A French critic Hippolyte A. Taine has shown the principles of biographical historical analysis in the nineteenth century, though the analysis approach continued development. His famous phrase "race, milieu, moment" That was clarified in his English Literature History. The phrase indicates a genetic background determinism. Simply speaking, this method supposes that literary texts are mainly mirrors of the writer's life and his period or milieu and surroundings of characters. Some literary works that are related to historical events are called Historical novels. They are deeper understandable if the reader is aware of its historical background or authors milieu. An excellent example of that is if the reader has knowledge about the Indian French war, He/she will manage to understand better Charles Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities* and John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*. Consequently, the writers of these works are admired by the personalities within these literary works as they are logical with clear evidence related to these historical occurrences. What was already explained above is also implemented to ideologic and propagandistic novels. For instance, Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The Octopus* for Frank Norris and *The Jungle* ring truer for Upton Sinclair. (Guerin, 2005, 284)

The origin of New Historicism is 'Old Historicism'. This approach gives superiority to text on the historical background. The main part to discuss is text, while the milieu has secondary importance. The text reflects the history and serves all needed facts about the society that generated it. It refers to history as a creative object that can add secondary details to the text interpretation process. Old Historicism focuses on the text-only as it holds vital information, which is a simulative New Criticism approach. What Old Historicism highlights is that the history was written in an accurate way and indicates what truly happened. Consequently, it assumes that all historians are not affected by their subjectivity. The approach assures that historians have the ability to write objectively about a specific era, person, group of people or event. It also believes that historians are able to fully comprehend the mindset of any given group of people. (Bressler, 2011, 135)

The relation between text and history is represented by theory called New Historicism. New Historicism is a new literary criticism school that deals with the author's surrounding circumstances. It focuses on the context, whether it is social, historical or cultural. It seeks the contribution that led to produce the target text. New Historicism scholars believe that the era when a text is written identifies the meaning of terms and events used within the text. It considers a text as a mirror of the period when the text was produced. (Guerin, 2005, 283). Guerin (2005, 284) advocates that literary work is not only the mirror of an author's lifetime. New Historicism stresses that a critic has to study the author's history besides the analysis of the text. As they are both cannot be dichotomized. It claims that when a text is produced in a particular era of time, it'll spontaneously hold the concepts of that society. No doubt, a critic must study these concepts to give a considered interpretation of the given text. Supporting the truth that literary works production is a human activity, so they cannot be regarded as neutral or objective. New historicism assures history is no exception. It is subjective too and needs to be reread to conclude the best interpretation of a particular text.

New Historicism which was appeared in the late 1970s, refuses the old historicism approach. This approach ignores the Literature and asserts that history is written objectively and has no relation to Literature. New Historicism also disbelieves the majority of literary text and its independence from time, author and reader, as New Criticism asserts. It also neither believes that a literary text represents the soul of the era that was written in nor expresses the author's attitudes.

The text is not the centre or the central part that holds the proper interpretation. New Historicism also asserts that literary text is a part of a complicated mixture of discourses. The discourses were invented by culture and society. It controls the time and place, and they can do so as they are all net of meanings that were made by the various aspects of society. The relation of text and context is firmly tied. They both have the same amount of appreciation and importance. They invent each other dynamically, like the relation of one's identity and his society. They both create each other. The literary text is formed and forms the historical context. (Tyson, 2006, 139). Louis Althusser asserts that literature is considered as an establishment. This establishment contributes making the familiarity and acceptance of the state's ideology and power reasonable to the state individuals. According to Althusser, Literature is a mirror of the most prevalent concerns within society which generated it. Literature is a reflection of morals, fashions and natures of society that produced it. All these concerns are transferred by the dominant power within the state through an "ideological weapon" and a group of tropes. The process almost happens simultaneously without any obvious enforcement makeshifts. (Brannigan, 1998, 58).

According to Parvini, Althusser brought the idea of the "mirror phase" from Jacques Lacan. An instance of this idea is when a little child notices himself for the first time on a reflective surface. Then he figures out his position within the surroundings. According to Althusser's idea of ideology, to consider a man as fully ideologized, he must comprehend his role as a part of this ideology. It does not mean that he needs to notice that he is in a specific ideology but, he must know his role in that ideology like a hairdresser or university student but not a capitalist. The former concepts assure that the theory is anti-humanist. Althusser assumes that Marx got inspired by the humanism concepts from an idealist philosopher named George W. F. Hegel, so Althusser assures that he filters Marx theory from humanism concepts. (2012, 114).

In the last thirty years, Althusser has had the most significant influence on particularly Shakespearian studies and might be studies of literature if we excluded Foucault. He confined two short letters to Andrea Daspre by his statement. He calls it a science of art which contains a famous line of him "I believe that a peculiarity of art is to "make us see", "make us perceive", "make us feel" something which alludes to reality!". The impact that he made on criticism extends the influence of new historicism and cultural materialism. Fredric Jameson's and Terry's Eagleton works

are related to the concepts of Althusser, particularly Pierre Macherey, who is Althusser's student. (Parvini, 2012, 112)

Foucault is considered the most famous new historicist, and he has the most impact on new historicism. At the same time, the old historicist soul is still evident in his works, especially the works of Nietzsche. Foucault's notifications about patterns of truth, the process of decision and information in modern Western society are the prosecution of power. All allegations of truth are actually signs of power. This is identical to Benjamin, Marx and Althusser controversy that "the truth" is what the power leaders prefer, not society's preference. This truth is forcibly implemented on social individuals. Nietzsche's controversy lies in his assertion that, despite the pursuit of power, competition, and the desire for dominance, the concept of truth itself does not exist. It is just various editions of the same events. He tested this controversy in his late work. The Genealogy of Morals tells that by searching closely about the development of principles and etymologies of the terms "good" and "bad". Nowadays' terms are functionalised to express ethical and non-ethical attitudes. (Brannigan , 1998 , 60).

Foucault starts to reidentify the principles of history in a more sophisticated and contradictory way. He assures that history has no boundaries. In other words, it has no specific start and end nor going forward for a certain goal. He believes that history is a mixture of highly connected correlations of various speeches when people express their world, such as artistic, political or social speeches. The way these speeches interact with each other is not indiscriminate. Through unified language and thought, a group of people interact similarly for a particular speech. This is called episteme by Foucault. Each duration in history produces its own lore and habits considering what is called reality in their episteme. They precept what is allowed and denied in terms of attitudes within their society. They specify a norm that is used as a tool to identify what is good or bad. Later this tool becomes their yardstick that they defend and protect. All these values and truths will be treated as acceptable in that society. (Bressler, 2011, 130)

Althusser and Foucault consider giving completely different explanations for the same theme. On the other hand, they battle in the same dilemma, which is the connection of a specific subject and the whole patterns of history. Furthermore, others like Robert Paul Resch go further to consider Foucault as Althusserian who has already got his dissidence. Both Foucault and Althusser embraced the concepts and

methodology of Saussurean structuralism, at least in their beginnings. The idea of an easily read and analysed limited structural system had attracted Foucault better than discussions about ideology and culture. 'Power and relation' is what basically attracted him. The relations that are converted along with each other by them are of digressive occurrences. Foucault believes that all kinds of discourses imply a power-relation that transfers us to endless battle with the text, not like Harold Pinter's play *Betrayal* that one group dominates the other. Moreover, this is similar to Althusser's ideology, as he mentions in his book *The order of things* 1966. It was evident that Althusser and Foucault are in some sort of debate. Foucault theory is not tightly woven, broken and exploding in conflict of sites. In contrast, Althusser's theory is firmly woven, coherent and waterproof. Althusser discriminates between two terms that he names "'ideological knowledge' and 'scientific knowledge'". According to him, the popular knowledge or the innate logic of society is purely ideological while keeping the other groups of the category of knowledge for "science".

In other words, the second part is completely objective and is purely produced with any relevance or influence to ideology. What is considered truth is objectively produced far from ideology impact. Concepts that are listed under this category are Lacan's conception of the 'mirror phase', Freud's 'discourse of the unconscious' or Marx's critique of capitalism. Foucault's claim that 'power produces knowledge' is opposed by him. He denies that category of knowledge. He assures that knowledge and power directly generate each other. There is no power relation regardless of the corresponding canon of the area of knowledge nor any model of knowledge which does not presume and form power relation at the same time. In the light of this idea, it is difficult to accept that a man wants to learn something while he has no clue about the power relation or the influence of power relation. In other words, all individuals are already held and controlled by power-knowledge. (Parvini, 2012, 126)

2.A NEW HISTORICIST ANALYSIS FOR *PYGMALION*

2.1. Historical Background of *Pygmalion*

When Shaw called his play *Pygmalion*, he already placed it in a mythological, historical framework. The first glance at the name of the play, it provokes the old story of *Pygmalion*. The story of *Pygmalion* is already a reflection of an older piece of literature called Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The reason behind relating the story of *Pygmalion* to Ovid's poem that the latter is older than the first and Ovid's works gives the story of *Pygmalion* a special impact to literature. Shaw's play has a tight connection to the story of *Pygmalion* which is about a man who loves his statue and takes a good care of it. Later that statue comes to life because of the honest feeling received by that man. Shaw's play has similar story when a phonetician picks a flower girl who lives in gutter and teaches her how to speak properly to engage with a high-class society. Later the phonetician's theory achieved its goal rightly. However, some other problems raise because of this major change in flower girl's life. The relation between the Greek story of *Pygmalion* and Ovid's version makes it difficult to discuss Shaw's play deeply. Considering Ovid's as the context of Shaw's play means to deny a long era of stories that are derived from myths. If that happened, many important stories that are major part of history must be neglected. The development of these stories through time holds specific facts and messages that are related to a specific era. It has that era's features and sometime it tells about their victories or other important parts of their culture and traditions. On the other hand, a story might have many versions some are real to each other in terms of resemblance and reality while some other far from the real story or hold a completely different message from others. Narrators had their reasons to retell the story in a certain way. Some stories cannot be grouped in one context. All these stories are related to Greece mythology which form the most part of Literary history. I echo Lévi-Strauss's noted about Oedipus myth; Not all versions of a story should be taken into consideration. Some stories have no original version and a lot nonidentical copies which provokes the fact searching deeply enough before making the context list of the literary work. It is a complicated net of texts in different times and related to different big empires through history. *Pygmalion* has no exception as It cannot be limited by one text or a period of time. All available texts, events or other forms of literature have to be taken into consideration to reach the real context of the target play, novel or other texts. It's a tight connection

with Greek myth of *Pygmalion*. Regardless to Ovid's works, some other context texts should be portrayed accurately to conclude the true context the literary work. (Joshua, 2020, 127).

Shaw's masterpiece *Pygmalion* has taken a major and considerable attention as it refers to the importance of language in highly classified society like Victorian Era. It drags readers and critiques to the problem of classes in general and language in scope. Some consider it as a reflection of Shaw experience when he first moved to England with his Irish accent. It asserts how language was a crucial tool to identify your identity then you will be treated according to your class group. The play provokes the psycho analytic critics that supposes Higgins as a reflection of Shaw personality as he is single and cruel speaker in his nature. However, Shaw highly struggled from stage censorship so it was unexpected to regard the play as a part of purity movements in nineteenth and twentieth century. Shaw's works was known to assert on completely different concerns. Apart from Shaw censorship issues, the choice of the cast depended on the reaction of audience from 1910s and 1920s. It was targeted to these groups of audience who might consider *Pygmalion* as a moral myth that was re-told by a contemporary author. (Bloom, 2011, 70). Shaw desired to explain how superficial the old Victorian society was. He refers to the ability of science to solve classes bummer within that society. Phonetics science is an example to treat the class of a man. It also shows the importance of learning in any time. It can change your class and increase your chances to succeed socially and financially. *Pygmalion* is a sincere invitation to learn regardless to your social background. It informs us about how the society was divided at Victorian Era. Shaw also provides the shortest solution to pass classes obstacle. *Pygmalion* is a message to change the direction of power of fighting a man or a group of people to teach them or use the power of word instead of power of army. World War I was about to happen so Shaw asserts to put the choice of fight to the end. (Holroyd, 1997, 514).

Shaw clarified the character of Clara as a stupid person. It is shown by the eyes of both Higgins and his mother. They display her as social failure and an unsuccessful person. Shaw asserts that Clara of H.G. Wells's novel has discovered herself and started to work at furniture shop. It's like she was born again and fixed her social situation. The relation between two novels reveals how novels from the same background are tightly related to each other even though in minor details. The relation between literary works stresses on the principle which describes literary works are

like complicated net of works that are connected to each other in somehow (Griffith, 1993 , 177). Eliza's transformation which was done by Higgins breaks the brutality of Victorian and Edwardian society in terms of changing between classes. Shaw assures that a person is a combination of social political experiences. The background of the man identifies or limits the he or she behaves. This theory was clear through Eliza and her father at the beginning of the play. Shaw explains that background can be changed if the person work hard for it like Eliza does. He supports this concept at the end of the play when Eliza succeeds to change her class through dialect tool.

The trap of class is shown clearly in *Pygmalion*. The bumper of classes in Victorian and Edwardian society is that a person is born in a specific class and that person has no ability to change his class. Shaw believes in the opposite that each one has the ability to change his class or we are always in the same class except minor details like money or place of birth. The society is divided superficially and easily can be fooled like what happened with Eliza. This was the reflection of brutal Victorian society. Shaw intelligently chose a Greek myth to refer to a person before the classes bumper begins to invite people to through classes division. *Pygmalion* is a prove about how ridiculous Victorian society was. It shows how a man can be separated from class to class easily with deep knowledge about him. Shaw exposes the illness of that society and its division. Language was the first tool to divide it or to classify people into classes. Dialect what changes the flower girl in the streets to a lady who can sell to high class people in a flower shop even though she sells the same old flower. (Suleiman, 2010, 32)

The Way We Live Now is a novel was published first 1875 in London for Anthony Trollope. When Trollope came back from 18 months trip in Australia, he was astonished by the gradience of people in British society. Every single part of life is related to money and business. He claims that it was like people taught to be dishonest to earn money. Corruption was widely spread in all parts of the society. Financial situation also used as tool of class division. Shaw wrote *Pygmalion* after *The Way We Live Now* in almost twenty-five years but it focuses on the same areas within society. (Lanchester, 2014 , 33)

The amount of the poor was increasing in Victorian society. The financial gap between classes in that society was increasing significantly so it was reflected by writers through their literary works like George Gissing and Arthur Morrison. Both writers and others portray the structure of city in Victorian society in late Nineteenth

century. They show how poor people were neglected and mostly represented in some other works in naturalistic view. They shed some light on the borders of slums of London. These works are through direct society eyes in London is divided into two classes. The labour class and people who live in London. Morrison assures how labour class was trapped by socio-economic conditions in East London. (Harputlu, 2017, 44)

Shaw's *Pygmalion* approved its special place within the literary world through the consequences of capitalist practices in the latter years. Shaw confirms that in the preface of *Heartbreak House* as he shed light on its historical background. Shaw distributed to discover the relation between the irresponsible British Government and the capitalist. He displays capitalists' greediness that caused a major problem to Britain's economy. (Zorn, 2016 , 145). *Pygmalion* is considered as a problem play which allows it to stay relevant to all times. In other words, Shaw's presentation of the problems of Victorian Society is applicable to all societies. He tickles readers' minds to make them provide their solution of these problems. A clear example is the classification of society, which can be found in almost all societies. People always fight against the idea of multi-classes society which makes *Pygmalion* relevant to all times. One of the sides that Shaw desired was to shed light on the education dilemma. Eliza Doolittle used to be a flower girl who wasn't respected by everybody. She had the ability to change her class and feel like a lady as well as dress like a lady. Dolittle is trapped in her new class. She can't have the chance to get back to her old class. In six months, Henry Higgins changed her into a person of a higher class which is considered a short period. (Sarkar, 2021, 6)

Shaw criticized the harsh speech of some English people. He faced this miserable situation when he first came to England as an Irish speaker. The accent was considered as a dilemma that identifies your origins. Later you would be placed in the social classes system. Shaw hated the aggressive speeches from English people toward any non-English thing. He dedicated most of his money to make up a new alphabet which is built on a naturally speaking way. Deleting all accents boundaries that used to divide the society, might help to unify people under one common system to stop the identification process through accents. He tried to clarify this through Eliza's transformation so she can be a lady now through learning simple phonetics symbols in six months and classes mostly are about Education. (Sarkar, 2021 , 4). Shaw met James Lecky at Vandeleur Lee. Lecky's passion about phonetics was

pretty similar to Shaw's. Lecky later introduced Shaw to Henry Sweet who was an Oxford Phonetician. Shaw used his name to be the main character in his play *Pygmalion*. Henry Higgins is the reflection of real Henry Sweet who had the same job though. At the beginning period of Shaw's life, he found it difficult to speak publicly. He felt very nervous to speak loudly in front of a bunch of people. Shaw chose his main character as phonetician. The one who teaches people how to speak fluently. He was affected by Henry Sweet Phonetics abilities and it improved his speaking abilities. Later it shifted him to become a good public speaker. This even affected his social direction. Shaw is a brilliant writer, but he adds some speaking skills in Higgins character. One day, Shaw was invited by James Lecky to a new group meeting. They called themselves Zetetical society which sought about different aspects of life like political, social and scientific issues. Shaw had a strong desire to speak loudly for the first time. He got his first speech perfectly rather than of his nervousness. After that, he became an official orator who gives speeches where he goes. He beat his fears of speaking publicly. Eliza also made it to speak with high class accent which later changes her position in that society. In the both situation speaking skills used as the tool to overcome difficulties. So, *Pygmalion* has a clear connection to Shaw's life issue. It can be relevant to each person to express himself publicly to face his fears. A man need only the right practice then he can express himself flawlessly. (Ganz, 1983 , 7).

A professor of sociology in university college London called Oakley approved some clues that Shaw was not writing his works himself only. The evidence assures that Nee Payne-Townshend read all his works and edited them. Sometimes she added major parts of the writing pieces. He took a look to every single part of his writings and edited it to suit her thoughts too. Professor Oakley stresses Shaw's wife was a good writer too. If she had not involved in Shaw's works, there wouldn't have been a well-known writer with literary world. Nee Payne-Townshend was born in Ireland. She grew up in a wealthy Anglo-Irish family. She helped Shaw in choosing topics for his new plays. She supported him financially using the money she inherited from her family. Because of her support he could work as a full-time writer at his beginning. Later he gained a reputation and became famous. They got married in 1898. Charlotte was a socialist and naturally rebellious. She was a member of Fabian society. Feminism was majorly her case. Charlotte fought against women repressing circumstances. Shaw was a feminist too as its shown in many of his works. On the

other hand, each soul of feminism in Shaw's plays was edited and supported by Charlotte. In *Pygmalion*, he shed light on women's education right in Victorian society. She refers to a point that all low-class women can be duchess and engage with first class people by receiving the suitable education. (Ferguson, 2021)

Shaw's comeback from comedy as he was adopting it in the period before writing *Pygmalion*. In this play he comes to his peak performance as a playwright. He came back to romance sense in this play. *Pygmalion* considered as a return for the previous period in his Play Pleasant. It is an extension to Cinderella fairy-tale and legend of Faust which are considered. *Pygmalion* was written a short period after the death of Shaw's mother which deeply affected Shaw's life. It even affected the nature of character in the Play. Mrs Higgins is the mother who takes care of her foul-mouthed son Henry. He is professional in his field and has enough money but still single. This situation is a reflection to Shaw's real life. He was single when he wrote this play. He brought his mother back through Mrs Higgins who disagrees with him about his way of talking to other people. Another phase of reflection of *Pygmalion* of Shaw's real life is his mothers relationships with her music teacher Vandeleur Lee. She fell in love with him after a group of music lessons. Eliza almost falls in love with Higgins at the end of phonetics classes. Henry teaches Eliza how to speak in a good way and have the confidence to express her feelings and attitude regardless to the class. Lee taught Mrs Shaw how to play music and express her emotions. After the death of Mrs Shaw, Bernard started to touch loneliness nearer than before. He started to think about marriage which we can see in his play. Mrs Pat who played Eliza in the first audition on the stage was close to Shaw. Holroyd claims that Shaw made the role specially for Stella as they were in love with each other. He enables her to be famous and change her life. This looks identical to Eliza's case. The difference was at the time of performing the play, Shaw was already married. They were not emotionally tied to each other so he started the half love story with Stella.

In the context of *Pygmalion* characters, Henry Higgins is the reflection of Henry Sweet who taught Shaw how to speak properly with an understood accent and lovely to hear by all British classes. Sweet is a major factor that helped Shaw to speak publicly with no fears or stammer. The way Shaw used to speak to the audience with sense of humour that he was famous for, made him famous among pioneers of that time. Sweet was planning to open a phonetic institution to train people speak a common accent. He sent a letter to Robert Bridges telling about his plans. The

phonetician died while the play was being performed. The following year Bridges contacted Shaw to be the spokes man of the Phonetic Conference in at University College, London. After Sweet's training to Shaw, he made it easy for Bridges to find a speaker with accent that is accepted to almost every English speaker.

“Robert Bridges wrote to Sweet afterwards, ‘NOT that the pronunciation represented is the standard pronunciation or ideal pronunciation, or correct pronunciation, or in any way binding on any human being or morally superior to Hackney cockney or Idaho American, but solely that if a man pronounces in that way he will be eligible as far as speech is concerned for the post of Lord Chief Justice, Chancellor at Oxford, Archbishop of Canterbury, Emperor, President, or Toast Master at the Mansion House.’” (Holroyd, 1997 , 501)

Sweet changed Shaw's life by teaching him how to speak properly in such a complicated era like Victorian with its classes system. It is almost identical to Eliza's situation. Henry Higgins helped her to speak a different accent far from her native accent. This accent enables her to change her class while it was impossible at that time. (Holroyd, 1997 , 501).

Fabian and other pioneer of that era was famous to their defending efforts to woman and her right in Victorian society. Shaw was included in this group and always referred to women struggle in Victorian society. On the other hand, Avelings and Babel was not concerned about women's case. They both thought that dominance dilemma between sexes at that time wasn't worth to be discussed. They claim that its not worth to even refer to the situation of women in their literary works. It's thought that they were not feminist at all that's why they didn't have the motivation to write about it. Shaw is considered as a serious feminist as its shown in many of his works like *Pygmalion*. He portrays how people of low class was treated in Victorian era on one hand. On the other hand, he showed how women like Eliza was treated . They were not allowed to take education as the man was superior to woman. The clearest example of respect between man and woman is Henry and Eliza's relation. Griffith assured that Shaw exaggerated in terms of mentor student relation. Shaw is considered a strong feminist and socialist and he is renowned through his works how equality is important between sexes. He assured that with little help or education woman can make a clear effect with society like Eliza does. At that time Feminism concepts were about to be widespread. So he was affected by the waves of it. His wife contribution in his works added extra voice of feminism in Shaw literary works.

(Griffith,1993,178). The main theme of Shaw's *Pygmalion* is the independence of woman when he referred the miserable situation of that era. He embodies the relation between Henry and Eliza as slave and master Colonized and colonizer then later Eliza freed herself by learning simple pronunciation rules. Shaw referred that people of that society only concerned about how to speak without focusing on what to speak. (Innes, 1998, 22)

Eliza criticized Henry for changing her. She refers to her old life by portraying a picture of poverty as a space of freedom which is vice versa to high class life. She cannot accept her change at the end. She could sell flowers to cover her daily expenses. As a flower girl he controls her freedom by wearing what she wishes or acting in the way she loves with taking extra consideration to surrounding people. She tells Henry that in the past she used to sell flowers while now she sells herself for money. Shaw refuses the materialistic principles that was widespread in Victorian Society so he reflected this through Eliza speech about the real poverty of morality that Victorian society suffered from. He refers that working as flower girl in low class theme is a fake poverty as it can be solved by a bunch of money. In comparison with Vivie in *Mrs. Warren's Profession* which was first performed in 1902. At the beginning, Vivie has no idea about Mrs. Warren's profession but she hates the way her mother takes attention to materialistic matters. The mother focuses on things that are related to appearance not about how are in deep. Vivie thinks about people in deep regardless to their attention so after she discovers her mother's profession that assures her situation toward Mrs Warren. Shaw portrayed morals of Victorian Society through Mrs. Warren profession. He referred to the level of whoring the society . How the people think among themselves in the same class and the way they look to lower class people was empty and superficial that a man can be judged by his appearance or accent. Both *Pygmalion* and *Mrs. Warren's profession* shared the reflected features of Victorian society as they were written in almost the same period of time by the same writer which clarifies his attitudes. (Suleiman, 2010, 34)

2.2. Last breaths of Romanticism

The late nineteenth century witnessed the end of an emotional era that was called Romanticism. It started first at 1700 then reached it top in nineteenth century between 1800 –1890. It became after several events that contributed to produce it. The industrial revelation, the french revelation reaching to the Enlightenment age.

Aesthetics which was about philosophy of beauty and taste contributed to make it more common. It is originated in Germany when rationalism and enlightenment was spread. They were originally influenced by French revolution. That era witnessed a variety of actions that led writer to show Romanticism in their literary works and visual arts. Many writers were deeply influenced by it like William Wordsworth and William Blake that's to name a few. *Pygmalion* was written at the end of Nineteenth century by a writer who witnessed the end of Romantic Era so he showed this in his works by portraying his love story with Eliza in unromantic way. Eliza was a reflection of Mrs Campbell but he reflected the love story specially its ending in a way that cannot be described as romanticism. It is a reference to the end of emotional era. (Scott, 2021 , 3)

In the title of *Pygmalion*, Shaw used the word Romantic while he was known as anti- romantic writer. He assured this concept in *Arms and the Man* about love and war. He broke the concepts of Romanticism. In *Man and Superman*, Shaw killed the myth of Romanticism by showing that woman always chases the man. She has a tempting tools like beauty and sex to seduce him to her trap while he is only willing to be a father and husband. It has nothing to do with Romanticism. The transformation of Eliza from a poor cockney speaker accent to a lady with fair accent who can talk with high class people seems romantic at the first glance. The ending implies another impression. The hero and his protagonist do not marry. She throws the slippers on his face and goes out from home in anger. Higgins feelings toward Eliza is not love. He sees her as a scientific experiment that is done by him. Event though he asks her to stay with him at the end of novel but when she refuses he seems cold and careless as he considers her as his success not love. He performs as mentor or teacher not a lover at all so it is not considered as romantic. The conclusion that it is not a love story as the hero and heroine do not fall in love and marry in the last act of the play. (Sarkar, 2021,3)

"Pygmalion" is not a romance, as it could rightly have been called if Higgins and Eliza had fallen in love and married. It is a problem play, and it goes much deeper than the bare story told in *Pygmalion*. Every sets out to fight ignorance is in a similar position with regard to his pupils as Higgins was with regard to Eliza. He leads them towards a new way of life and is compelled to leave them at its threshold to go on by themselves." (Sreenivasulur, 2010 , 6)

2.3. Shaw and Wilde bond

It could be argued that a 120-year-old rivalry is being played out between our two main theaters, the Gate and the Abbey, with the staging of "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "You Never Can Tell". Alternatively, it could be seen as evidence of a somewhat strained friendship between the two theaters. From 1895 to 1897, two renowned Irish writers produced remarkably similar plays that revolve around love, society, changing identities, and absent parents. These comedies were intricately laced with political references and nods to contemporary times. Despite the striking similarities between the works, the writers were not known to share a strong connection, and opinions about them. (Crawley, 2015 , 6)

When I'm Wilde about Shaw

I'm not Shaw about Wilde."

Weintraub noticed similarities between the works of Wilde and Shaw. Specifically, in Shaw's play "*You Never Can Tell*," Weintraub believed that the use of wordplay on "earnestness" was too frequent to be coincidental and that it contained elements of Wilde's style. Shaw also wrote in "*Man and Superman*" that there are two tragic events in life: not getting what one desires and actually achieving it. Similarly, Wilde had written in "*Lady Windermere's Fan*" that the two tragedies in life are not getting what one wants and getting it. Additionally, in Shaw's play "*Major Barbara*," the character Lady Britomart bears a striking resemblance to Wilde's Lady Bracknell(2021, 25). Wilde and Shaw had a connection in their lives as they were both from the same country, and Shaw even lived with Wilde's family in England for a period of time. When Wilde had his palm read and learned of Shaw's fortune-telling, it inspired him to write "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime," which was later published in 1887. (Crawley, 2015 , 2)

George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde were both prominent writers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and were known for their wit and satire. While they were contemporaries and shared some similarities in their writing styles, they also had their own unique perspectives and approaches to their work. Shaw and Wilde were both Irish, and Shaw even spent some time living with Wilde's family in England.

There are several instances where Shaw's work shows signs of Wilde's influence. For example, in Shaw's play "You Never Can Tell," there are similarities in the use of wordplay and wit that are reminiscent of Wilde's writing style. Additionally, in Shaw's play "Major Barbara," the character of Lady Britomart has been said to bear a resemblance to Wilde's Lady Bracknell from "The Importance of Being Earnest." Despite these similarities, Shaw and Wilde had some notable differences in their writing. While both writers used satire to critique society, Shaw tended to take a more political approach to his work, often using his plays to advocate for socialist ideals. In contrast, Wilde's work was more focused on social critique and the satirization of the upper classes. Overall, while Shaw and Wilde had some similarities in their writing, they also had their own unique perspectives and approaches to their work that set them apart from each other.(Encyclopædia Britannica, 2019).

During the Romantic and Victorian periods in Britain, poverty was a widespread issue that affected a significant portion of the population. For many, the Industrial Revolution brought about new economic opportunities, but it also led to a growing divide between the wealthy and the working classes. Authors and artists of the time often sought to highlight the struggles faced by those living in poverty. For example, Charles Dickens' novels, such as *Oliver Twist* depicted the harsh realities of poverty and its effects on society. Similarly, the paintings of William Hogarth, such as "Gin Lane," depicted the dangers of alcoholism and its links to poverty. Some writers and artists sought to draw attention to the issue of poverty in order to bring about social change. For example, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote a pamphlet called "The Necessity of Atheism," in which he argued that the existing social order was responsible for perpetuating poverty and inequality. As the 19th century progressed, social reform movements began to emerge, and writers and artists played a key role in bringing about change. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, for example, sought to promote a return to traditional values and to challenge the prevailing social and artistic conventions of the time. Today, poverty remains a significant issue in many parts of the world, and the works of Romantic and Victorian writers and artists continue to inspire new generations to take action and work towards a more just and equitable society.(The British Library).

Shaw is truly affected by pioneers before his time like Charles Dickens and during his time like Wilde. *Oliver Twist* was the first by the author to present a realistic depiction of London's impoverished underworld and to communicate his

belief that poverty is a major factor in causing crime. It became a way for the author to directly criticize the issue of poverty in 19th-century London. The novel was frank in its portrayal of crime and murder, which led it to be categorized as a "Newgate novel" in Victorian London - a term referring to novels that depicted the criminal underworld associated with Newgate Prison in London.(Lohnes, 2020). In the original manuscript of *Oliver Twist*, where Oliver is unexpectedly pulled into a life of crime. When Sir Peter Laurie criticizes the novel's portrayal of criminal life as unrealistic, Oliver becomes furious. Later, in the preface of the cheaper edition of the book, the author confronts his critics directly and defends his work.)In page 267 of the current version of *Oliver Twist*, he describes a place called Jacob's Island as the filthiest and most unusual location hidden in London. It is similar to *Pygmalion* when Shaw described slums and low class people in old London. This description was published about 11 or 12 years ago. The author believed then, and still believes now, that improving the living conditions of the poor in England is necessary for their betterment, and that this cannot be accomplished without providing them with clean and healthy living spaces. This relates to Shaw's message about treating poor people in a better way and delete all boundaries within Victorian society.(Chesterton, 1906 , 16).

On April 24, 1916, a group of Irish nationalists proclaimed the establishment of the Irish Republic and initiated a rebellion against the British government in Ireland. About 1,600 individuals supported the rebellion and seized important buildings in Dublin, leading to violent clashes with British troops. Despite the rebels' efforts, the uprising was suppressed within a week, and over 2,000 people were killed or injured in the process. The leaders of the rebellion were executed, and initially, the Irish population did not support the Easter Rising. However, over time, public opinion shifted, and the executed leaders were seen as martyrs. In 1921, a treaty was signed that established the Irish Free State, which eventually became the Republic of Ireland that we know today.(Carpenter , 1995 , 25). There is a connection between the Easter Rising and George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion*. Shaw was a supporter of Irish independence, and the events of the Easter Rising deeply affected him. In fact, the opening night of *Pygmalion* at His Majesty's Theatre in London on April 11, 1914, was just a few weeks before the outbreak of World War I and a couple of years before the Easter Rising. Shaw was a friend of several of the leaders of the rebellion, including James Connolly and Patrick Pearse. He was deeply affected by their

executions following the rebellion, and he wrote several essays and articles condemning the British government's response to the uprising. Some scholars have also suggested that the character of Eliza Doolittle in *Pygmalion* may have been influenced by Shaw's experiences in Ireland. Eliza is a working-class girl who is transformed into a lady through the efforts of Professor Henry Higgins. In a similar way, Shaw may have seen the Irish people as needing transformation and education in order to achieve their goals of independence and self-governance.(Kitamura , 2014 , 8)

Shaw's relation among his literary works is shown clearly in several cases, nevertheless a connection can be made between *Pygmalion* and his essay *Freedom*. There is a clear relation between the ending of George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* and his essay *Freedom*. In the play, the main character, Eliza Doolittle, has been transformed from a poor, uneducated flower girl into a refined lady through the efforts of Professor Henry Higgins. However, at the end of the play, Eliza rejects Higgins' offer to continue teaching her and instead asserts her independence by leaving him and starting a new life on her own terms. Shaw's essay *Freedom* deals with the importance of individual liberty and the need for people to break free from social constraints in order to achieve personal growth and fulfillment. In the essay, Shaw argues that true freedom is the ability to pursue one's own goals and desires without being limited by the expectations or demands of society. The ending of *Pygmalion* can be seen as a manifestation of Shaw's ideas about freedom.

By rejecting Higgins' offer to continue teaching her, Eliza is asserting her right to make her own choices and to pursue her own goals, rather than being confined by the expectations and limitations of the class system in which she was born. In this way, the play can be seen as a critique of the rigid social hierarchy of Victorian England and a celebration of individual freedom and autonomy.(Guha, 2017, 10). Another literary work that reflects the reality of life in Old London's society is *The Nether World*. George Gissing's novel *The Nether World* can be seen as a work of social realism, which means that it attempts to depict the reality of life for people living in a specific time and place. The novel portrays the lives of working-class people living in the slums of London in the late 19th century, and it addresses issues such as poverty, social inequality, and the struggle for living. While the novel is a work of fiction, it is based on the author's own experiences living in poverty and his observations of the working-class communities in London. Gissing conducted extensive research and interviews with people living in the slums, and he drew on his own experiences to

create a vivid and realistic portrayal of life in the nether world. Overall, while "The Nether World" is a work of fiction, it can be seen as containing elements of reality, as it seeks to depict the lives of real people living in a specific time and place.(Hock, 2014 , 22).

Shaw is influenced by Dickens and the wave of reality that era witnessed, poverty and slums in Victorian London were the main themes of that time such as *Oliver Twist* and *Mary Barton*. Regarding to ten year release date difference between these two works but they pour in the same bowl, *Pygmalion* has not exception. There is a clear connection between Elizabeth Gaskell's novel "Mary Barton" and Charles Dickens' novel "Oliver Twist," as both works deal with issues of poverty, class struggle, and social injustice in Victorian England. Like "Mary Barton," "Oliver Twist" depicts the lives of the poor and working-class people in the urban slums of Victorian England. Both novels explore the harsh realities of poverty and the impact of industrialization on working-class communities. They also share a concern for the welfare of children and depict the exploitation and abuse of vulnerable members of society. In terms of their literary styles, both works are examples of social realism, which means that they aim to depict the reality of life for people living in specific times and places. They both use vivid and detailed descriptions of the urban environment and the characters' lives, and they both make powerful social critiques of the injustices and inequalities of Victorian society.(Cassidy, 2005 , 17).

2.4. Shaw as a feminist

George Bernard Shaw was known for his progressive views on many social issues, including women's rights. He was a strong advocate for women's suffrage and believed that women should have the same opportunities as men in education and in the workplace. He wrote several plays that featured strong, independent female characters who challenged traditional gender roles, such as *Mrs. Warren's Profession* and *Saint Joan*. However, it is important to note that Shaw's views on women's rights were complex and not always consistent. He sometimes made controversial statements that some consider sexist or patronizing, such as his comment that "women are all a little bit crazy, my dear fellow." Some feminist scholars have also criticized his portrayal of female characters in his plays as being overly idealized or simplistic. Overall, while Shaw was certainly an advocate for women's rights, it is difficult to say definitively whether he was a feminist by today's standards. His views on gender were

nuanced and influenced by the social and cultural context of his time.(Kaufman, 1996 , 4).

George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* is a play that deals with themes of class, gender, and identity. The play can be seen as a commentary on the feminist movement of the time, as it portrays the struggle of women to assert their rights and gain equality in a society that is dominated by men. One of the central characters in the play is Eliza Doolittle, a poor flower girl who is transformed into a refined and educated lady by the phonetics expert Henry Higgins. Eliza can be seen as a symbol of the feminist movement, as she refuses to accept her place in society and seeks to improve herself through education and hard work. Throughout the play, Eliza challenges the traditional gender roles of the time by refusing to be defined by her class and by rejecting the traditional expectations placed on women. She is a strong and independent character who is determined to make her own way in the world, and she refuses to be defined by the men around her. At the same time, the play also raises questions about the limits of feminism, as Eliza's transformation is ultimately achieved through the efforts of a man. Higgins, while he is portrayed as a brilliant linguist, is also shown to be insensitive and domineering, and his treatment of Eliza can be seen as a form of patriarchal control. Overall, while *Pygmalion* can be seen as a commentary on the feminist movement of the time, it also raises complex questions about the relationship between men and women, and the limits of individual agency in a society that is dominated by gender and class hierarchies. (Bhatia, 2017, 14).

3.A NEW HISTORICIST ANALYSIS FOR *MIDAQ ALLEY*

3.1. Spatial Establishment of *Midaq Alley*

The events of *Midaq Alley* take place in an alley of branching alleys in one of the Egyptian popular lanes. Through this Alley, the Egyptian society with its various sects and classes was expressed, and Naguib Mahfouz symbolized it to Egypt during the Second World War. Another translation to this novel that Mahfouz through this alley expressed the Egyptian society of various sects and classes and a symbol of Naguib Mahfouz to Egypt during World War II. The places in this novel are divided into open places (e.g. streets, neighborhoods, squares) and closed ones (e.g. house, chamber, school) (Siddir, 2021, 3). The novel begins with a description of the alley of Midaq, a place where Naguib Mahfouz actually begins his novel, as well as a picture describing the alley with its homes and the nature of the people living in it, all its shops, boredom and dirtiness of life there as a habit of Egyptian life in similar areas. The narrative here goes back in time to the ageing covenants, and then we find it through events happened during that time launch to remind Cairo in three successive periods of three states that governed Egypt. This retrieval gave us a picture of the reality of this alley in the past (Fatimia, Mamluk, Sultans) and how it shined in the history of Cairo during the reign of these States and emirates, and this retrieval gave us information that give us an opportunity to understand, and shed light on the vague aspects of the history of this alley so the most important place the novelist focused on is the alley.

The Alley is an example for Egyptian social life in these eras. This old popular neighbourhood, which reflects Egypt, is an alley that is confirmed by Abdelmalek Murtayyadh: "The alley choice was not an intentional place of its own, but was chosen from the door of the tree behind which the forest is hidden. So this alley reflects what constitutes the whole city of Cairo, and from where Egypt reflects; in terms of historical, civilized, geographical and human value in that unambiguous covenant. So the novel begins with the presentation of a photograph of Makka. Many proves that the alley was a masterpiece for long time. We begin by talking about this open place, which reflects the social reality of what Najib Mahfouz himself said about and besides the alley of the road, we find many streets and neighborhoods, such as Al-Azhar Street, where the narrator did not draw its geographical dimensions, It merely mentions the events associated with it and the function it performs; We find

Abbas Al-Hilu asking Hamida to go to Al-Azhar Street so that they are not recognized by surrounding people, by telling her: "We should go to Al-Azhar Street is safe and dark is imminent.

Like Al-Azhar Street, the lovers were elegant, the lesson was safer, and it was the natural complement to the first place where the two characters met: If the most beautiful and freshest attitudes were said only on Al-Azhar Street. " Cafe: "The cafe plays a significant role in Mahfouz's novels, and before that, in all our lives, there were no clubs. The cafe is the centrepiece of friendship. Houses do not allow noisiness at the beginning. We headed to the alley then we could dare to Cafes. The most famous cafes that we used to sit in were Alfishawi, Urabi and Midaq Alley. (Yahyawii, 2015 , 7). *Midaq Alley* acquired its fame in the middle of the twentieth century in the Middle East. (Legassick, 1966, 69). *Midaq Alley* refers to the old Cairo. It was built by the Khalifa of Muslims in the era called the Fatimi State. Almoz Le Deen Allah Alfatimi who created it to consider it as the capital of the State.

On the other side, Mahfouz refers to a small street in that old Cairo which named Midaq. It is located near to Khan Al-Khalili, which is one of the old Cairo regions. Mahfouz used to spend time in a Café called Midaq later on he wrote this masterpiece. The novel deals with the lowest class of Egyptian society who lived in old Cairo. It describes the poor and simple people that isolated Alley from other modern regions. Mahfouz reflects the real life of slums people. On the other hand, he asserts to connect them to the real-world events like World War II. (Altamimi,2016, 5)

3.2 *Midaq Alley* and Egyptian Society

Mahfouz finished his Philosophy studies Degree at Cairo University in 1934. He later held many official governmental positions that enabled him to engage in many contemporary social problems. This helped him to gain enough social experience, which provided a special point of view about various characters. Mahfouz used this cumulative experience to create the characters in his novels. Most of his characters are a reflection of real people that he met and heard about their stories. Reality and connection to real life are shown in his first works, like the trilogy of Cairo and *Midaq Alley*. Our great novelist, Naguib Mahfouz, was born in Cairo on December 11 (December 1911). This means that it is the most important stage of development in Egypt's political and social history. It coincided with the 1919 revolution led by Saad Zaghloul, the delegation movement, the 1923 Treaty (Al Wafd,

the 1936 Treaty and the Egyptian Endowment during the Second World War, the 1942-1944 events and the January Cairo fire. (January 1952) Furthermore, the July Revolution in the same year was led by Abdunnasser. This era was followed by victories and defeats. Mahfouz was deeply influenced by these events and reflected them on his characters, such as the role of the English Army in the small Alley in old Cairo. Hussian Kersha works in Tel Alkaber with the English army. Later, he succeeds to convince Abbas to follow his steps to get more money faster so he can marry his dream girl Hamida. Hamida's new life is tightly related to English Army, and later her old fiancé is killed by English soldiers. Naguib Mahfouz's political attitudes are clearly shown in his novels. He shows the dominance of English colonization through the death of Abbas at the end of the novel. The good Egyptian guy is killed easily by English soldiers. While the same good guy works with the English army with no issues. This was the situation of many young boys who headed to work with the English Army, which was supposed to be considered a colonizer, It was a sign of the economic problems the country was facing.(Deep, 1983 , 122).

Karsha, the father, is indeed a confusing character. He is a model of nationalism who has misled his way. As he participated in the Revolution of 1919, he becomes a critic of his abnormal desires. Mahfouz draws our attention to those who believed in the revolution and then the revolution ends with nothing worthy. Mahfouz refers to those groups of people who participated in 1919 against the English invasion while that revolution ended to no avail. The novel was written in the forties of nineteenth century when English forces greatly impacted Egypt. He assures the country's situation at that time of miserable people who used to be heroes in the 1919 revolution. He conforms to their big loss against the English occupation. (Reality, 2017, 3). According to his reviews and readings of real life at a specific age, Mahfouz's works had witnessed several stages. Starting with the reality trilogy (Khufu's *Wisdom*; *Rhadopis of Nubia*; and *Thebes at War*). Passing through 1945 when he uniquely created the contemporary reality trilogy (The New Cairo, Khan Alkhalili and Midaq Alley). Later he embodied symbolism and wrote masterfully (The Beggar and The Children or the Alley). Then he moved to fantasy when he wrote *Alf Leila We Leila* and *the epic of Harafish*.

At the end of his career, spiritualism controlled him; then, he wrote The Dreams and Echoes of an Autobiography. As we can recognize from the previous paragraph, Mahfouz was deeply affected by his age, his time of living, and the events

he witnessed. The reflections on his age and events are obviously shown in his works. For instance, he mentions World War II in *Midaq Alley*, which played a major role in the novel. If there were a writer who sometimes can be affected by his background, Mahfouz would not be that one. Mahfouz is highly considered as a realist and strongly influenced by daily live events politically and socially (Sarhan, 2016 , 3). In an interview with Mahfouz with Qatar Television, the interviewer asked Mahfouz that the history of Egypt was written through his literary works, from early to late ones; what is the difference between a historian and a novelist? He did not deny that she talked about the relation between his literary works and Egypt's political and cultural history. He deliberately wrote his novel about events that were happening at that time.

Mahfouz used his novels to fix the main events witnessed by Egypt or the Arab world. *Midaq Alley* contains various artifacts about Egyptian society at that time. How people lived in the Alley is identical to how people lived in old Cairo slums. He spent his childhood in similar surroundings. Essential events such as World War II and the English invasion of Egypt are mainly mentioned in the Novel. Mahfouz predicted the loss of the Arab War against Israel in *Chitchat on the Nile* and *The Beggar*. This reveals to readers of all ages how Mahfouz is tightly bound to real-life circumstances. (Al Atrash, 2020, 9).

The writer Naguib Mahfouz left us with his body from our world. However, he still lives among us with hundreds of characters enriched by his novels, which represented the memory of an entire nation after he succeeded in making his novel a book of Egypt's memory for decades and recorded the most significant political events that passed through Egypt both in the era of the monarchy and after the 23 July Revolution. Mahfouz documented eras of the Egyptian Presidents like Jamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat and even Hosni Mubarak. (Mahfouz, 2011). He mentioned that in his interview with Qatar Television. *Midaq Alley* and Cairo's trilogy documents the history of Egypt through his way as he mentions the English invasion. (Al Atrash, 2020, 8). This is what made Egypt's Supreme Council for Culture to hold a special seminar on (Politics in Najib Mahfouz Literature), a seminar led by Ahmed Zakaria Al-Shalaq, a historical scholar, speaking on politics in the work of the world's Adib Najib Mahfouz, said that there was hardly missed a political event that he provides through his unique literary ways or directly through his characters tongues.

Al-Shalaq added that Mahfouz presented a vision and attitude to life on the issues of freedom, parties, democracy and political conflict. In *Midaq Alley*, Mahfouz

discusses the freedom problem of Hamida, who hopes from the novel's very beginning to fly Away from the big prison (The Alley) and what she does at the end of the novel. Mahfouz asserts that freedom cannot be given to all people as they fail to use it correctly, as Hamida does. As for the July Revolution, when a group of officers overthrew King Farouk's reign, Shalab said: "Najib was sympathetic to it at first and then strongly opposed it when it turned into a suppression of freedoms. On Mahfouz's behalf, novelist Khairi Shalabi said, "If he had not been a literary historian, he would have been a historian. He explained that the historical sense was obvious in the early literary works. He revealed his left-wing political direction by talking about the revolution of 19 in the novels (Beginning and End), (Midaq Alley) and (Between the Two Palaces). If we think about his work, we will find that we have an accurate history of the movement of Egyptian society, and Midaq Alley is no exception (Mahfouz, 2011 , 13).

Mahfouz spent his childhood in Al Gamiilya and its neighbourhood; he was ten when he left it. Mahfouz is still tied to that region. He used to spend a long time with his friends in a cafe called Zoqaq Al Midaq. The time he spent with friends in this area represented the motivation to write the novel and to give it the name. Combined with his reality sense of old Cairo and his writing talent. All these factors contributed to produce such a masterpiece, *Midaq Alley*. When Mahfouz describes the old Cairo, he compares the story of Dickens with London. Dickens provides details of old London in his works and uses the theme of slums and old city as well as poverty in many of his works. Both of them provide real details when they describe the city, which makes the novel closely tied to the reality of that places and to people who live there. (Aladwan, 2011, 21).

Mahfouz was loyal to display old Cairo in its real shape. He reflects almost every single social detail in his works. Most of his characters are real people he has met before. The proof of that is in each period. His works are distinguished in the same category, such as the trilogy Khan al-Khalili, 1945 (*Zuqaq al-Midaq*, 1947). The group of novels we are referring to can be classified under the same class, which allows us to connect them together as a series episode.

(*Najib Mahfouz... A Politician Hiding behind His Business Personalities*, 2011 ,3)

Top of Form Conditions during the reign of the King of Farouk (1936-1952), King Farouk was the son of King Fouad I; he used to be stingy and dealt with the Egyptian people disparagingly. World War II prolonged, despair seized souls, people

were sick of everything, and darkness, poverty, and hunger seized people and citizens at that time. Then workers went to work in the British Army to increase their wages. This is what Mahfouz mentioned in *Midaq Alley*. Both Abbas and the son of the café owner go to work in Tel Alkabiir to increase their lifetime earnings. Mahfouz criticized the era of King Farouk and how bad the situation in Egypt became. Moreover, a connection between the *Midaq Alley* Novel and the accidents in the struggle of the Alley community who had a better life than those who had rented homes, all because of the Second World War. As well as the second world, many of whom have low economics, their trading money sources brought them the minimum earnings. He denies that people loved King Farouk, and he used to collect overpriced masterpieces while people suffered like the people in the Alley. This factor pushed many Young Egyptians to work for the English army, like Abbas Alhillo (Diiyanti, 2015 , 37).

The radio broadcast started at the end of the twenties in Egypt. Mahfouz's reference to that era through the idea when the first time the radio was brought to the Café of the Alley. (Qauud, 2022). In the context of the narratives of the social phase: (New Cairo), (Khan al-Khalili), (Alley al-Madqq), and even in (trilogy), social realism issues were intended to be raised and addressed, but the issue of freedom remained a prominent presence particularly linked to independence. The reader of those novels can notify that the crisis of freedom at the time was one of the root causes that prompted the emergence of social issues. This is perhaps the understanding of the previous Mahfouz's reference to what he went to in his novel (New Cairo); The deterioration of social conditions is linked to the corruption of the ruling political class, which together are strong indicators of the absence of social justice, first and foremost linked to the country's subordination to the occupation that has confiscated all their freedoms. Although the Delegation Party (Alwafid) succeeded in concluding a treaty with the English in 1936, by which Britain began the end of its occupation of Egypt. However, this has not prevented the continued confiscation of freedoms or the deterioration of the standard of living. The King's continued interference in political life had failed any step toward genuine freedom and prevented the creation of any form of social justice at that time. (Al-Salim, 2006 , 17).

According to the events in the Novel that *Midaq Alley* was written during 1941-42 is not true. He probably started writing in 1941, but still unfinished. Then he later finished it in 1945. At the beginning, the event is in winter for various reasons.

Mahfouz mentions, "The two houses at the end of the street have closed their shutters against the cold..." ' While Darwish asked Abbas not to go out in such weather with no cover on his head. Mahfouz tells us that when Abbas goes out to work for the English Army, the air is cold and humid, while he expresses that the alley's evening was slightly warm. It attributes to another season of the year while this is not mentioned by the writer. Salim Alwan recovers from his heart attack after getting it in the middle of winter. The election parliamentary has its campaign in the novel, which provides another sign of the connection between the novel's time and the real-life events. Mahfouz talks about an independent election candidate who is called Ibrahim Ferhat. Ferhat adopts Sa'ad Zaghlul thoughts. He was the first prime minister after the defeat of the Wafdist Party, which controlled the government between 1942- 44.

The Wafdist minister was Mustafa Nahas and was altered by Ahmed Maher Pasha. The elections happened in December of 1944, which supports the truth that Mahfouz finished writing the novel in 1944. The visit of Ibrahim Ferhat, Mahfouz expresses the corruption of the government at that time. He criticizes the situation of Egypt under the leadership of Wafdist Party, which was indeed happening. Mahfouz assures the tight relation between the Alley and the real-world circumstances. (Deep, 1983 , 126).

3.3. Modernity and Religion in *Midaq Alley*

Naguib secularism was shown in many of his novels. He used to express his religious characters as crazy or unstable mentally. The era of Mahfouz witnessed more than one twist politically. The direction of Egypt was twisted in various occupations. Abdul Nasser called all Arabs to be under one flag to be united together and Arabic nationalism was the dominant concept. In other words, the invitation was to combine all Arabic countries under one name. This move motivates the reason to not support Islamic wings. Mahfouz adopts that religion is not a suitable tool to take control over Egypt in such a sensitive period. A reader can never find a major for Islamic character in Mahfouz's literary works. Islamic characters always have minor roles with negative attitudes like Darwish in *Midaq Alley*.

Darwish complains all the time when walks in the Alley because He was pretty sad to lose half of his salary as his ministry was combined with education ministry which is a sign of modernity in Egypt at that time. Mahfouz disclaims any

sort of sacredness. He seems as a secularist in most of his works. It is not obvious if he was reflecting his own religious thoughts or He was reflecting the real society religion attributes. Mahfouz had read for Greek philosophers like worthy of a concise encyclopedia: Socrates, Plato. The affection was clearly shown in his novels like Midaq Alley's character Darwish when Mahfouz simulates the European attitudes about religion. He aims to publish himself in all part of the world. The clearest prove of that is his novel " *The Alley of Children*". Some Islamic groups tried to assassinate him as they claim that Mahfouz refusal to Islamic religion and he must die. It is a controversial social conflict. Mahfouz was social two when he raises his social sense in his early novels like *Khan Alkhalili*, *The New Cairo* and *Midaq Alley*. *Midaq Alley* is clearly social novel that has no sacredness in it but society. (El-Enany, 2016 ,152). The presenter asked Mahfouz about the reason of making all his religious characters as crazy or unstable characters. He answered that during his living time at Alhussien regions and near shrines of sacred people, you have to find a people who follow and love these dead people blindly. So he assures that he has already seen many of those in real life so he reflected this on his novels. The decision of him about picking this kind of people and making them a society representation of religion makes the reader feel his sense of secularism.(Al- Atrash, 2020 , 6).

Mahfouz asserts the clash between two worlds (Modern and old worlds) through the character of Darwish. Darwish works first in Ministry of Education as an English teacher, later he was suspended from his old job then moved to work as a clerk in Awqaf ministry. This was a sign for modernity that the government changes its direction toward modernity. Darwish can be seen as a sign of a new world without influence of English language which plays a reference to English social hegemony on Egypt. Mahfouz refers to the English invasion through Darwish. On the other side, Darwish is a name used for religious people who are deeply intimate in religion. He seems as a maniac person while he is religious man however, he keeps complaining and completely unstable person which asserts the principle of Mahfouz on sacredness. He expresses religious people like crazy and unstable which clarifies his attitudes toward religion in one side and religious people on another.

Mahfouz is already a holder of philosophy degree and a good reader of many famous philosophers like Aristotle and others. He is influenced by those pioneers of philosophy. Another clue is Mahfouz criticizes the Islamic wings at that time. The Egyptian Cinema has this soul of critics which is shown until now by some famous

actors like Adil Imam. Imam starts acting at sixties of previous century. He refers to Islamic wings represented by (Alikhwan party), as ignorant and radical people who misunderstand religion in its real way. (Deep, 1983). Mahfouz justifies his religious characters showed in this way, that we can always find like these personalities near to Alhussien region which in old Cairo where Mahouz spent his childhood. (Al- Atrash, 2020 , 8).

Mahfouz uses Holy Quran verses many times in the novel. The usage of these verses is not convenient in any means. He wrongly refers to Quran meanings that implies a clue about his thoughts. Mahfouz has no sacredness such as other eastern writers. He is influenced by philosophy and western writers who tend to not have sacred sense in their writings. Mahfouz quotes from Surat Disbelievers(Al-Kafiroon) "You have your religion and I have mine!"verse 6. It means, for you be your religion which you are insisting to follow and for me be mine, which is the only one that I desire. The reference in the novel is completely different from its real meaning. He uses it as a response said by Mr. Krisha when people advises him to stop his homosexuality activities. Another wrong usage in the novel when he describes Mr. Kersha and his friend as they sit in the café drinking wine and smoking local drugs. He quotes "until the white streak becomes manifest to you from the dark streak at the crack of dawn ."verse 187 Surat Cow (Albaqara). This verse is used a reference to end the night and to stop eating or drinking to start fasting during Ramadan. The real activity at that month is to spend the whole night worshipping Allah through night pray and ask Allah for forgiveness or ask him to give us the best, in other words the late night is considered as the most sacred period of the night while Mahfouz uses it mockingly to refer to such a devilish activities done by Kersha.

Darwish claims that he receives revelation in two languages Arabic and English. While the revelation in Islam has a holy position as the Prophet(peace and prays be upon him) received his message from Allah that includes Islam instructions through the revelation. However, Mahfouz uses it mockingly which reflects Mahfouz's unclear ideas about religion. On the other hand his plan is to make his novels readable in both eastern and western worlds and he had to satisfy both group of readers. Mahfouz is affected by religion usage in this way by William Blake and Renaissance. (Muhammad, 2020 , 12). When a woman needs to join any form of modernity, she has to overcome a boundaries that is clearly shown in Midaq Alley. What makes it clear is easiness of locating it in any part of old Cairo in 1940s. So the

novel is considered as the real reflection of the trip to modernity that could happen by woman.

Mahfouz uses women as a major character in many of his literary works like Hamida, Nafisa and Zahra. He refers to the difficulties the western woman faced at the time in the Cairo old allies and all parts of the city as well. The place that represents a boundary between two worlds is Queen Farida Square which a real place in old Cairo. Hamida's world disappears here and she has no clue about the world behind it that's why she is impressed when Faraj takes her out of her boundaries. Faraj means relief in Arabic which refers the door for Hamida to modern world through seducing her by modernity. This is the story of many girls who were tempted by modernity till they found themselves in soldiers laps doing prostitution. Queen Farida Square represented the mixing point between two worlds. The chronicle context speed is different in these two worlds however a person has the ability of moving between these two worlds changing his behaviour or principles like Hamide does when she starts doing things that she never has thought about it before. In real life too, that square used to be a sign of beginning of the modern world and the end of old classic world. (Scott ,2014 , 257).

3.4.The Reflection of Feminism in *Midaq Alley*

In the novels of Naguib Mahfouz, women have played a prominent role and a strong presence as an important component of the text movement, often the Centre (Nafisa and Zahra) and around it is the dramatic struggle of the novel. In general, the majority of women depicted by Naguib Mahfouz are middle-class or poor, and women have a persuasive negative woman, a crumbling, oppressed woman subject to a stereotype that does not exceed male dominance and is merely a subordinate suppressed by customs and traditions. Social conditions, such as Ahmed Abdul-Jawad's wife in the trilogy, are poor, frightened, culturally limited, unconditionally surrendered to the tyranny of the husband as well as her two daughters and with little difference, described by a compressed, oppressed and obstructed Naguib who has no human rights before the husband's authority. The second is the image of a perverse woman (a bitch, a prostitute) who usually highlights her perversion and tries to make the reader sympathize with her and understand the conditions to sin such as extreme circumstances (poverty, ignorance and the situation that led these girls to deviate and with the many names and differences in his novels, the model is no different. Ayah

and Karima in *The Search* Hamida in *Midaq Alley* , Nafisa in *The Beginning the End* , Camila in *The Beggar* , Noor in *The Thief and the Dogs* and Riri in *Autumn Quail*. That what connects Mahfouz's works together as a big novel that are connected in somehow. Naguib Mahfouz has always found justifications that, from his point of view, seem reasonable in his novels, and he has never portrayed the prostitute as an absolute bad person. He always polishes them with goodness. His portrayal of women also corresponds to the stereotypical example that the West likes to see and portray. From the perspective of the Western European woman, the Arab woman always suffers from oppression, and there are no rights of her. He provides a justifications to woman attitudes to show sympathy with bad woman unlike Eastern society that does not show sympathy with woman with a similar situations. She is an ordinary human being with his rights and is free to choose to act in herself as she wishes. They consider this to be one of personal freedoms and freedom of choice and see that the Arab is a bigot towards women. This, in their view, is a lack of understanding that they refer to the wrong configuration of our traditions and religion. If they find an Arab writer who agrees with their visions and encourages the same thinking, they will no doubt be interested in him and his narratives.(Takieddine-Amyuni, 1985, 29)

So we find Dennis Johnson Davis saying in one of his articles about Naguib Mahfouz. I was critical of his novels, stressing, for example, that a novel like *The Thief and the Dogs* lacked that degree of sex and violence, which English readers would expect from a novel with such a plot. As we notice here Dennis encourages Mahfouz to include much sex and violence in his novels. Increasing these two elements within a novel makes it readable and more acceptable for Western readers. It makes it convenient for readers outside Mahfouz's local boundaries. The major themes of that era for Westerns readers were sex and violence. On the other hand, Westerns were eager to read this kind of unique reflection of Arabic Muslims society. It is habitual that religious text is the origins of literature, as what happened in Arab culture where The Qur'an forms an important form of affluence on Arabic Literature. It seems that many writers use this technique, among them Naguib Mahfouz, employs religious symbols in their novelistic frame. William Blake assures that this religious employment occurred in the Old Testament and the Covenant European Literature First with the Renaissance. Some others see this picture of a religious man about

practices of some of them and Mahfouz does not mean to refer to the religion itself but to wrong appliers of religion.

Deep Hassan says that Mahfouz brought incorrect performs of doctrine in trilogy and *Midaq Alley*. This brings us to a question that says why all religious characters in Mahfouz's works are similar and shares many features. The similarity leads us to secular thinking of that time and its influence on literature pioneers and cultured class in the Arabic Nation. Abdalnasser is a clear extension of that phenomena. He calls for unity under Arabic flag not Islamic flag. Doctrinaire was his message to all Arabic countries. Mahouz show this sense in terms of religion negative usage in his novels. On the other hand, we can explain it from political point of view. Parties from that time until nowadays fought to control the country. Religious wing and secular wing who believes that Egypt has to be led by secular party and religion has nothing to do in daily life of the Egyptians. All decisions that must be made, have to be freed from religion. This argument has formed a major part of Egypt and other Arabic countries history so Mahfouz reflects this in his novels like Darwish in *Midaq Alley*. Both wings have its writers who adopt their thoughts and reflect it on their works either deliberately or unintentionally. Mahouz was one of those who discussed the principal of God which show his philosophical influence clearly as a perfume is smelled. Most of his characters adopts directions that are pretty identical to his political directions in some periods of his thinking and philosophical life. It is not fully identical with his real thoughts but we can feel it through his literary portrayal that there is a tight connection between a writer and characters he created. Sometimes you even can undoubtedly switch between them. The struggle between religion and science which Mahouz adopts as he influenced by his master Slama Mousa. Mousa believes in science and socialism. Researchers about Mahfouz claim that since he got the idea of science and socialism from his master he could never bring it out of his head and reflected it on his literary works. On the other hand, a group of critiques refuse the idea the Mahfouz's characters are part of him or a partial reflection of him specially the topics about doctrine. Muhammed Hassan Abdullah asserts on the unique religious thoughts in Mahfouz's novel are not a reflection of his own real thought. They are a representation of the rest of the society that Mahouz describes. (1983, 127)

Abdullah claims that the writer uses these references to give a complete picture about the society of the novel. He justifies that Mahfouz describes almost every detail of the society of the novel he is writing that's why he mentions those thoughts such as the homosexuality in *Midaq Alley* which is unacceptable and forbidden in both Arabic society traditions and Islam. Literature is clearly affected by the political circumstances of that time and it represents as its mirror. Mahfouz is a perfect example for that idea. Critiques and researchers searched excessively in his works to understand the reflection of his political opinions. (Bakakreh, 2016 , 58)

Tayeb Salih wrote an article in 1990. He criticized the Sudanese government. He claims that this government forces Islam to the country that what he considered as a disrespectful attitude toward the Sudanese people. He accused the governors to alter Sudanese cultures and values by traditions that are classified as Islam traditions. This article assures his thoughts about religion that was shown in his novel *Season of Migration to the North* that contains an open sexuality drinking alcohol which is a clear sign of Orientalism in his works. It reflects his thoughts about religion and as he considers religion as tradition and should not be applied to the whole country. Mahfouz wrote *Midaq alley* in 1946 and it contains a similar thought about religion. He had no sacredness as he showed his religious character in an inconvenient way.

The novel of Tayeb was written a few years later than *Midaq Alley* which shares a similar aspects. In both novels woman is the most dominant figure and both depends on sexuality and prostitution as a tool that the protagonist uses to free herself from traditions of her society. Both Mahfouz and Tayeb justify the decisions of their characters. On the other hand, they are both refer to an eastern woman who frees herself from society values like getting the money through an illegal way that can include a various options like stealing, but they both change their characters into whores and consider it as a tool of freedom and eastern woman is oppressed in many circumstances and the best solution to that is prostitution. This agrees with the image of eastern woman in western point of view. They sent this image to European readers who they love to read specially if the character is eastern. (Takieddine-Amyuni, 1985, 26).

Hamida's desire of not having a child seems abnormal comparing to an ordinary woman. There are two phases to explain that. The first is she is not a sensible person so she refuses the motherhood needs while the second is that she becomes like that because of the oppression of the society. It can also be the childhood she faces in

the Alley changes her nature like other girls who lived in old Cairo at that time. Mahouz refers to this ambiguous area of feminism in the old eastern society. He criticizes the society through Hamida's abnormal desires. The cruelty of the society changes her to a savage who is greedy for money and power. The way Mahfouz portrays the Egyptian woman is almost the same image that was drawn by Westerns about Arabic women. The attitudes other women in the Alley supports the idea of women's life in Old Egyptian society. Hamida is not alone who faces such situations but also Nafisa and others in his novels that are considered as a mirror of Egyptian history. Mahfouz established his characters on people he met in his various positions in the government. He is also influenced by other Arabic writers even in a subconscious way. He tries to analyze the political situations and reflected that reality on his novels. That's why most of his novel are addressed to a political cases like the campaign of election. Mahouz was against patriarchal system as in *Cairo Trilogy* and *Midaq Alley*. He criticized the patriarchal system in many situations and its influence on the Egyptian society at that time. At the first glance he seems to repeat the same attitudes about women's situation in the Egyptian society but in each case he expresses a different problem that Arabic woman in general and Egyptian woman in specific suffered from. In different era of Egypt history, woman was oppressed by society so he referred to almost all these periods in his novel. Woman had to right to educate herself. Woman education was not accepted by most of the society specially the place he spent his life in. He shed light on the bumner through his literary works. (Oersen, 2005 , 52)

In conclusion, Mahfouz uses the old Cairo as a representation to his thoughts and ideas. Reality of old Cairo alley where he used to live in when he was a child is shown clearly in *Midaq Alley* and other works. He reflected the attributes of the Egyptian society at that time through displaying real events like English Army colonization to Egypt. Mahfouz has no religious sacredness as he portrays religious characters as a fool or crazy man. Mahfouz is considered as a deep feminist. He combines the oppression that the Egyptian woman suffered at that time and still suffer and absence of social value of Egyptian woman. Mahfouz assures the image of eastern woman to the westerns point of view. Mahfouz has never stopped expressing his political tendency through his novels such as in *Midaq Alley* when he addressed to the elections. (Deep , 1983 , 128)

4.A NEW HISTORICIST COMPARISON BETWEEN SHAW'S *PYGMALION* AND MAHFOUZ'S *MIDQ ALLEY*

A comparison will be made in this chapter between these significant literary works, both nowadays and in their time. The comparison will take place first between the authors of these works as well as a general comparison between the literary works themselves. Next, differences and similarities between Eliza and Hamida will be displayed, rather than the fact that the two works were written at different times and in different societies. Both Mahfouz and Shaw are arguably considered feminists. A feminism-scoped comparison is going to be carried out as the two targeted societies, through literary works, used to have that sense of women's oppression. Religion has a special dimension in *Midaq Alley*, while it has no clear effect on Shaw's *Pygmalion*. In terms of religion, there is going to be a comparison too. One of the main themes that Mahfouz used to express in his works is colonialism, so this comparison will be carried on its light. The spatial relation between works and their surrounding circumstances is going to be shown and compared, such as the relation between World War I and World War II and the relation with other contemporary works for both masterpieces.

4.1. The authors

An Irish-English playwright who was born in Dublin in 1856 in a poor family, George Bernard Shaw is the third child after two sisters. His mother was a music teacher, which affected him deeply and motivated his art sense. Another side of his life is that his mother fell in love with her colleague and left his father. Shaw used to live in the family house while his father had no role. Shaw reflected that in his novels and focused on social issues and love between husband and wife. In *Pygmalion*, he tended to express Eliza as a girl who falls in love with her teacher after he teaches her how to speak the duchess accent. He used to visit the National Museum's Gallery of England in 1872, so these circumstances resulted in a very talented and unique playwright. Shaw's family moved to London without his father in 1872. In 1879, he became a writer and published his first novel, *Immaturity*, which was not a successful novel. Shaw suffered from poverty in his twenties, and he depended on his mother's earnings from music. Shaw spent the evenings in the reading room of the British Museum. He read novels and wrote them, as well as self-educated himself about what he missed in

school. Shaw was a historical writer, as he referred to historical events in his works, such as classes in the Victorian era. (Griffith. 2002 , 178).

On the other hand, Naguib Mahfouz was an influential Egyptian writer and the first Arab author to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1988. Born on December 11, 1911, in Cairo, Egypt, Mahfouz's literary works predominantly captured the essence of Egyptian society and explored its complex social, political, and cultural dynamics. He is renowned for his richly textured narratives and vivid character portrayals, often delving into themes of human nature, existential dilemmas, and the clash between tradition and modernity. Mahfouz's most acclaimed work is the Cairo Trilogy, comprised of *Palace Walk*, *"Palace of Desire,"* and *"Sugar Street,"* which vividly depicts the life of an Egyptian family during the early 20th century. Throughout his prolific career, Mahfouz penned over 50 novels and numerous short stories, leaving an indelible mark on Arabic literature. His writings continue to be celebrated for their profound insight, masterful storytelling, and profound reflection of Egyptian society. Mahfouz's literary legacy remains an enduring testament to his contribution to the world of literature and his profound impact on Egyptian and Arab literary traditions. Both Shaw and Mahfouz were influential writers who used their work to explore and comment on important social and political issues of their time. However, they worked in different literary genres and in different cultural contexts, and their approaches to literature and their writing styles are quite distinct. (Altamimi,2016 , 6)

4.2. *Midaq Alley* and *Pygmalion*

Let's shed light on *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley*. *Pygmalion* is a five-act romance that was first produced in Germany in 1913, while the next year it was performed in England. It refers to the English class system at that time and a poor Cockney girl who used to sell roses in the street. Henry Higgins, a phonetician, taught her to speak with a new accent so she could change her class by changing her accent. At the end of the play, Eliza is stuck between classes, as neither she can come back to her class nor does she naturally live with the high-class people. The story was derived from the old Greek mythology, which talks about a man who loves his statue more the later it comes to life, so Shaw was inspired by it. In a thought-provoking way, Shaw reveals the significant themes of the Victorian Era, such as class, identity, and the power of language. We are taken with Eliza's development journey, from a simple

flower girl to a high-class accent speaker, accompanied by her phonetics-experienced instructor, Henry Higgins. In *Pygmalion*, Shaw's aim is to challenge the idea that when a person is born into a certain class, he has no chance to change it. Shaw asserts that this change is possible through changing tools like language and education. At the beginning, Eliza is described as a marginalized, impoverished cockney girl, and then she finds herself part of an experiment done by Henry Higgins. Surprisingly, the experiment resulted in a significant change in Eliza, not only in terms of language or appearance but also in terms of self-confidence and the way she looks at herself in the mirror. Moreover, Shaw shows a clear condemnation of the Edwardian Era in terms of its cruel structure. He portrays its shallowness and double-standard attitudes against low-class people through the character of Higgins, who deals with Eliza as a figure that has no right or will to decide what to do. On the other hand, Eliza manages to be independent and free herself from Henry's hands after fighting for her freedom by leaving him at the end of the play.

The equality between sexes is also introduced in this play through Eliza's success in achieving more than expected from her. She also manages to choose which man she wishes to marry, even though Henry is the reason for the situation she is in today. The play was being performed to high-class people, so he carried a message to them not to judge people by their language or education, as they can be changed through time. This attitude makes it timeless, and its themes are applicable to all times. It stresses the importance of language and the significance of education. (Mugglestone, 1993 , 375).

Midaq Alley is a novel written in 1947 by a well-known Egyptian author, Naguib Mahfouz. It depicts old Cairo streets where Mahfouz used to live; it shows the nature of ordinary people in old Egypt at King Farouk's time and in the shadow of the English occupation before World War II. It represents the whole Egyptian society of that era by showing the deep relationships among street neighbors. It displays the interwoven net of relations in ancient Egypt. The Ally turns into a character itself by deciding the boundaries of its people. It portrays desires. Dreams of its residents and limits them within the alley itself. Mahfouz smartly shows the mixing dreams of alley people who come from various social backgrounds, starting with ambitious Hamida, passing to humble, ordinary Abbas, moving to godliness Darwish, and ending with Faraj the pimp. They are all looking for a new life in their own way. Individuals in the

alley are seeking economic and social development through connections, like Abbas, who goes to work with the English Army because of his friendship with Kersha's son. They also use materialism to free themselves from the alley, like Hamida does first to marry the old man, as he is rich, and then she falls into the first temptation from outside the alley, represented by Faraj. This is a real reflection of Egyptian society at that time. (Abdullah, 2020 , 57). *Midaq Alley* is a clear picture of what Egypt's society was facing, it tells about the conflict between modernism and traditionalism, secularism and religious wings. It shows the outer influences of a specific transformative period that Egypt was witnessing. *Midaq Alley* remains a lasting work of literature that transports and engages its readers, providing deep orientation on the intricacies of human existence and the communities we live in, making it a timeless literary masterpiece. (Hasenfus, 2013 ,97).

Both *Midaq Alley* and *Pygmalion* share some themes and differ in others. They both represent a social reflection of their time. On the one hand, *Pygmalion* tells about the class system in Victorian and Edwardian societies. It talks about a low-class, impoverished flower girl who is observed by a high-class phonetics professor, Henry Higgins. Henry considers her an object and has full control over her until she truly frees herself. Similarly, Mahfouz refers to the low-class people by portraying the way they live in the alley. They are all impoverished and have dreams and plans to get to a higher class in Old Cairo.

Differently, Hamida has a full materialist vision of life as she struggles with severe poverty, so she seeks the chance that frees her out of the alley. Poverty is shared between both works, but it plays a different role in each. Hamida uses poverty to justify to herself the reason behind her tending to rich suitors and following the steps of Faraj. (Gohar, 2015 ,577). On the other side, Eliza has no materialist vision, as she doesn't run for money or suitors but for freedom through education and language. Like *Pygmalion*, *Midaq Alley* reveals the truth that a man can change his social class if he or she runs for it. Eliza agrees to train with Higgins to improve her speaking abilities, so she uses it to go up to the first class, but she is stuck there and has no chance to go back to her old identity. Both works share the same themes, like identity and gender roles, from a feminist perspective, but they differ in this term. Hamida fights to free herself from the Alley traditional world to get to the modern life

she dreams of, but she doesn't fight for her independence, as she already has it. More than three suitors ask her hand for marriage, and she has the power to decide whether she wants them or not. Hamida gets the appreciation because of her beauty, which means she was visible and not weak at all. On the other side, Eliza used to be invisible and has no chance to make decisions. Even when her father sells her to Henry Higgins, expecting that he wants her for prostitution purposes, she has no choice. Eliza finds herself learning new words and practicing them to improve her chances of getting a better job with a higher salary. While she fights for her new birth to a new life against the norms of Edwardian society, trying to prove herself as an independent woman. (Handayani, 2009,27).

Midaq Alley provides a multi-dimensional vision for the alley, in other words, it tells the story of all individuals in the alley at the same time rather it focuses on Hamida's story. They are all important to the plot of the novel as they represent the whole of Egyptian society (Istanbulli ,2010, 12). On the other side, *Pygmalion* focuses on Eliza's journey to the upper class in Edwardian England and Higgins as a high class professor who objectifies Eliza and considers her to have no will, which shows the class gap in Edwardian society. Both literary works are timeless and have themes that can be applied contemporaneously, while *Midaq Alley* is more relevant to our lives. The class gap almost is not exist nowadays in England and all countries while women fight for freedom and independence like Hamida is more relevant to our world now. (Putzell , 1979,31).

4.3.Hamida and Eliza Doolittle

Now let's compare the protagonists of both works. Hamida is a key figure who embodies the complicated challenges faced by women in Egyptian and Middle Eastern society during the mid-20th century. She symbolizes both ambition and dedication through a journey that has many obstacles and impediments faced by women in a male-dominated society. Hamida's story begins within the narrow boundaries of *Midaq Alley*, a lively district in Cairo. At first, she was described as an impressive and driven young lady who symbolizes breaking free from the boundaries of her humble surroundings and the restricted options they present. Marriage to a richer man represents the only way for Hamida to change her class and develop her

life status. She thinks marriage to a socially important man is a relief from her miserable life in the alley, and he is the chance to free herself from society's districts. On more than one occasion, Hamida tempts different men: Abbas, the poor, humble Barber who believes in pure love, and Darwish, the old, wise man, using her beauty. This shows Hamida's greediness in a self-decision situation, as she intentionally attracts men at the same time. She is engaged to Abbas after giving her a word to leave the alley and go to work with the English Army to make her happy and live a rich life with her, but unfortunately, to no avail. Hamida leaves him on her first loyalty test when she meets Faraj at the election campaign. Hamida's attitude shown by Mahfouz probably shows the weakness of women in Egyptian society in terms of choosing a man for marriage. Although it seems that Hamida manages to achieve her goal of freeing herself from that alley, sadly, she falls into the hands of Ibrahim Faraj, who promises her true love and a fancy life outside the alley. Hamida falls into the hands of a pimp, who gradually changes her into a prostitute who works in night clubs (Oersen, 2005, 11).

The other dimension of the story is that she was a prostitute for English Army soldiers, which is a clear proof of what happened to Egypt at that time while it was occupied by the English Army. She is the prey of her desires and dedication for freedom. Abbas, a low-class Egyptian, comes back from his new job and starts looking for his love, Hamida, until he finds her on an English soldier's lap. While he tries to save her, the English soldiers kill him by coldly pressing on him with their military shoes. Mahfouz portrays the situation in Egypt and the English occupation allowed by King Farouk. He refers to all kinds of external interference that leads to nothing but destroying the country (Gohar, 2015 , 256).

Mahfouz employs Hamida as a tool to prompt readers to deal with the influence of social and cultural factors on women's experiences, the complicated nature of their wants and goals, and how these external conditions influence the decisions and behaviors they take. In *Midaq Alley*, Hamida's journey becomes a powerful test of gender roles, societal boundaries, and the outcomes of pursuing freedom in a district context. Her experience reveals the hardships and conflicts faced by women who desire independence and the ability to shape their own destinies.

Through her story, the novel confirms the immense obstacles and sacrifices these women face as they strive for a brighter future (Oersen, 2005 ,12).

The alley's isolation from the outside world fosters a culture of pernicious and misogynistic traditions, ideas, and oppressive gender roles from which its ostensible protagonist, Hamida, fights to escape."(Hasenfus, 2013 ,98). Eliza in *Pygmalion* and Hamida in *Midaq Alley* are two complex female characters from different literary works that share similarities in their journeys towards self-empowerment and freedom. Although they come from completely different social and cultural backgrounds, they both challenge traditional gender roles and societal expectations, highlighting the struggles and sacrifices women make in their pursuit of independence and a better life. Eliza Doolittle, the protagonist of *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw, is a Cockney flower girl who undergoes a transformation under the tutelage of Professor Henry Higgins. Through her efforts to improve her speech and manners, Eliza seeks to achieve higher social mobility and independence. She challenges the norms of her class and meets expectations by fighting to become a lady. Eliza's journey reveals the inequalities and unfair norms of upper-class society, as well as the transformative power of education and self-improvement (Bouchard, 2008,27).

Similarly, Hamida in *Midaq Alley* by Naguib Mahfouz is a young woman living in a poor neighborhood in Cairo. Hamida dreams of escaping her district life by marrying a wealthy man. She uses her beauty and charm to strive against patriarchal society and rise above her circumstances. However, her pursuit of freedom comes at a great cost. Hamida faces moral issues, compromises her values, and becomes prey in exploitative relationships. Her story serves as a pathetic journey that shows the limitations placed upon women in traditional societies and the sacrifices they make in their quest for independence. Both Eliza and Hamida challenge societal expectations and gender roles, defying the circumstances they were born into. They embody the struggles and contradictions faced by women striving for independence and free will. Their journeys expose the double standards and unfairness present in their societies. While Eliza's transformation is facilitated by the intervention of a male figure, Hamida relies on her own cunning and resourcefulness. Despite their different approaches, both women ultimately highlight the profound challenges and sacrifices women make in their pursuit of a better life (Goher, 2015, 255).

In conclusion, Eliza and Hamida share a common theme of female independence and freedom. Through their respective narratives, they challenge traditional gender norms, expose societal inequalities, and emphasize the struggles faced by women in their quest for independence. Their stories serve as powerful reminders of the serious obstacles and sacrifices women face in their pursuit of independence and self-rule, leaving a lasting impact on readers.

4.4. Feminism

A comparison will be carried out in terms of feminism in *Midaq Alley* and *Pygmalion*. Let's begin with *Pygmalion*. One of the central characters in the play is Eliza Doolittle, a poor flower girl who is transformed into a refined and educated lady by the phonetics expert Henry Higgins. Eliza can be seen as a symbol of the feminist movement, as she refuses to accept her place in society and seeks to improve herself through education and hard work. Throughout the play, Eliza challenges the traditional gender roles of the time by refusing to be defined by her class and by rejecting the traditional expectations placed on women. She is a powerful and self-reliant character who is dedicated to making her own way in the world, and she disagrees with being limited by the men surrounding her. At the same time, the play also raises questions about the limits of feminism, as Eliza's transformation is ultimately achieved through the efforts of a man. Higgins, while he is portrayed as a brilliant linguist, is also shown to be insensitive and dominant, and his treatment of Eliza can be seen as a kind of patriarchal control. Overall, while *Pygmalion* can be seen as a commentary on the feminist movement of the time, it also raises complex questions about the relationship between men and women and the limits of individual freedom in a society that is dominated by gender and class hierarchies. (Chen, 2009,42).

Both *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw and *Midaq Alley* by Naguib Mahfouz explore feminist themes and offer social commentary on the status of women within their respective societies. While they were written in different time periods and cultural contexts, both works shed light on the challenges and inequalities faced by women and present strong female characters who strive for empowerment and independence. *Pygmalion* portrays Eliza Doolittle, a working-class flower girl

who seeks to break free from her societal constraints. Shaw's play challenges traditional notions of class and gender, highlighting the ways in which women are marginalized and oppressed. Eliza's transformation from a cockney dialect-speaking ordinary person into an articulate and refined lady raises questions about social mobility and the impact of education on women's empowerment. Through Eliza, Shaw criticizes the built-in sexism and class discrimination in Edwardian England. In *Midaq Alley*, Mahfouz presents Hamida, a young woman trapped in the confines of a conservative society in Cairo. Hamida's journey stresses her desire for economic and social improvement, using her beauty and charm to manipulate men. However, her pursuit of liberation leads to disappointment and moral commitment. Mahfouz exposes the limitations placed upon women in traditional Egyptian society and challenges the objectification and exploitation of women for their perceived value. Both works use feminist themes by exploring the societal expectations, restrictions, and inequalities faced by women. They criticize the objectification of women and advocate for their independence and self-reliance. Shaw and Mahfouz use their female protagonists as vehicles to challenge and demolish patriarchal norms (Takieddine-Amyuni, 1985, 27).

While *Pygmalion* focuses on the interruption of class and gender, *Midaq Alley* digs into the complexities of gender within a cultural and societal context. The works differ in terms of their cultural specificity and the means by which the female characters strive for empowerment. Eliza's journey is assisted by a male mentor, while Hamida relies on her own wit and manipulation. However, both characters undergo transformative experiences that reveal the injustices and constraints imposed on women. (Mishra, 2016,130). In conclusion, *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley* approach feminism from different cultural perspectives and time periods. Shaw's play examines the intersection of class and gender in early 20th-century England, while Mahfouz's novel delves into the struggles of women in traditional Egyptian society. Both works challenge patriarchal norms and shed light on the oppression and limitations faced by women, emphasizing the importance of independence and empowerment. (Pařeta , 2017,195)

4.5. Social classes Difference

Class distinction refers to the social division based on economic class in a capitalist society. In this system, the dominant class, represented by capital owners, exploits the subordinate class, which consists of the working class, to generate significant economic profits through mass production. The existence of extreme class distinction leads to various negative consequences, including unfair treatment such as low wages, excessively long working hours (ranging from 12 to 19 hours per day), and the imposition of harsh disciplinary measures and fines. The purpose of this research was to expose and explore instances of class distinction, as a representation of a real socioeconomic situation in capitalist society in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. In reality, this state has certain social implications for society, including discrimination, human exploitation, and poverty, which have an impact on British people's social lives throughout the country and social condition in capitalist society in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. In fact, this condition has some social implications for society, including destruction, human exploitation, and poverty, which have an impact on British people's social lives across the country. (Tuaderu, 2015,57).

Egyptian society is divided into two powers: the marginal, represented by poor people who live in old Cairo slums, and the central, represented by rich people who live in the center of Cairo. Like Hamida, Midaq Alley residents have to pass a group of boundaries to reach modern society, and while this process can cost precious things, Hamida loses her dignity and virginity through this complicated journey. (Istanbulli, 2010,16).

Shaw's main theme in the play is class distinction; in other words, he refers to this bumper that Victorian and Edwardian England were suffering from through the main character Eliza Doolittle. She strives to find her way up to the upper-class bourgeoisie. The message told by Shaw is explained by Marxist scholars as a war that the working class used to have against capitalist England. Eliza is only an example for the proletariat class, which fights for its economic and social freedom. They are fighting for their rights, which are ignored by high-class people. The condition of low-class people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was miserable,

according to the numbers of impoverished people of that class. Their condition raises many questions about class discrimination in Victorian society, where workers dedicate their lives to freeing themselves from capitalist England's slavery and strive to be accepted by a high-class society. Eliza embodies this plight as a low-class member in addition to the gender distinction bummer.(Tuaderu, 2015,56)

Both *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw and *Midaq Alley* by Naguib Mahfouz explore feminist themes and offer social commentary on the status of women within their respective societies. While they were written in different time periods and cultural contexts, both works shed light on the challenges and inequalities faced by women and present strong female characters who strive for empowerment and independence. *Pygmalion* portrays Eliza Doolittle, a working-class flower girl who seeks to break free from her societal constraints.

Shaw's play challenges traditional notions of class and gender, highlighting the ways in which women are marginalized and oppressed. Eliza's transformation from a cockney dialect-speaking ordinary person into an articulate and refined lady raises questions about social mobility and the impact of education on women's empowerment. Through Eliza, Shaw criticizes the built-in sexism and class discrimination in Edwardian era. In *Midaq Alley*, Mahfouz presents Hamida, a young woman trapped in the confines of a conservative society in Cairo. Hamida's journey stresses her desire for economic and social improvement, using her beauty and charm to manipulate men. However, her pursuit of liberation leads to disappointment and moral commitment. Mahfouz exposes the limitations placed upon women in traditional Egyptian society and challenges the objectification and exploitation of women for their perceived value. Both works use feminist themes by exploring the societal expectations, restrictions, and inequalities faced by women. They critique the objectification of women and advocate for their independence and self-reliance. Shaw and Mahfouz use their female protagonists as vehicles to challenge and demolish patriarchal norms. (Takieddine-Amyuni, 1985 , 27).

While *Pygmalion* focuses on the interruption of class and gender, *Midaq Alley* digs into the complexities of gender within a cultural and societal context. Eliza, while Hamida relies on her own wit and manipulation. However, both characters undergo transformative experiences that reveal the injustices and constraints imposed

on women. (Mishra, 2016,132). In conclusion, *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley* approach feminism from different cultural perspectives and time periods. Shaw's play examines the intersection of class and gender in early 20th-century England, while Mahfouz's novel delves into the struggles of women in traditional Egyptian society. Both works challenge patriarchal norms and shed light on the oppression and limitations faced by women, emphasizing the importance of independence and empowerment. (Pašeta , 2017,193)

4.6. Colonialism

Pygmalion has a complex relationship between Eliza and Higgins; it is considered a colonizer-colonized relationship. The play shows a different aspect of colonization, where the roles are changed at the end of the play. In other words, the play begins with Higgins as the colonizer with an identified identity, whereas Eliza, a poor cockney girl, is the colonized. At the end, the play enters a third-dimensional space where roles are changed, and Higgins asks Eliza's hand for marriage. She would have had no choice if she were still in her old identity while she managed to refuse him and go to another man. Eliza is not colonized anymore. (Sasani. 2015,241). In contrast, *Midaq Alley*'s colonization is different; it was meant for Mahfouz to shed light on women's colonization by social radicalism. Poverty caused by circumstances in mid-twentieth-century Egypt is a colonization of poor people. The societal oppression of women is a cultural colonization led by old traditions. Mahfouz stresses English colonization under the reign of King Farouk. (Mansour, 2016,7)

A New Historical examination of *Midaq Alley* by Naguib Mahfouz and *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw shows the deep ways in which these works talk about the social, political, and cultural contexts of their certain eras. In *Midaq Alley*, Mahfouz transports readers to Cairo in the middle of the 20th century, depicting the society's swift transformation. The novel becomes an exploration into the difficulties of modernism, political transitions, and the struggle between tradition and modernity when viewed through a New Historical scope. The depiction of social class, power dynamics, and gender roles in Mahfouz's works reflects the conflicts and transformations occurring in Egyptian society at the time. By analyzing the characters' struggles, aspirations, and interactions, New Historical analysis reveals Mahfouz's

powerful social commentary and his examination of the larger sociopolitical issues of the time.

Similarly, *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw offers a New Historical perspective on early 20th-century London, a period characterized by social hierarchies, gender norms, and altering class dynamics. The play by Shaw examines the rigidity of class distinctions and the influence of language and education on social mobility. Through the character of Eliza Doolittle, Shaw reveals the constraints imposed by societal expectations and investigates the prospect of self-transformation. The New Historical analysis of *Pygmalion* reveals Shaw's criticism of the class system, his commentary on the agency of women, and his investigation of the changing social and cultural landscape of Edwardian England. Both Mahfouz and Shaw use their works to investigate the complex interaction between individuals and their sociopolitical environments. By examining the historical context, cultural distinction. New Historical analysis reveals how these authors captured the mood of their eras and contributed to deeper conversations regarding social class, power dynamics, and societal transformations.

In conclusion, a New Historical analysis of *Midaq Alley* by Mahfouz and *Pygmalion* by Shaw demonstrates how literature can serve as a potent prism through which to examine the complexities of history, culture, and the human experience. It focuses on the significance of understanding these works within their historical contexts, thereby enhancing our understanding of the social and political forces that influenced their creation and stay in contact with readers today.

CONCLUSION

For a long time, literature has acted as a mirror of society, offering valuable understandings of the historical and cultural circumstances in which it originates. Employing the perspective of New Historicism, a critical method that investigated the interplay between literature and history, this research conducted a comparative examination of two renowned works: *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw and *Midaq Alley* by Naguib Mahfouz. Through an in-depth analysis of these literary works, the objective was to investigate how they effectively depicted and criticized the societal, political, and cultural aspects of their respective eras.

Micheal Foucault and Stephen Greenblatt influenced the reevaluations of literary criticism in the 1980s, which led to the emergence of New Historicism. This approach to criticism moved away from previous methodologies, such as Formalism and New Criticism that concentrated primarily on the analysis of the text itself. Instead, New Historicism adopted the political and social ramifications of a text, transferring the focus from investigating the text's basic features to analyzing its broader social and political messages. (Bressler, 2011, 128). The researcher expected to find several proofs and facts that tie *Midaq Alley* and *Pygmalion* to their political, social, and economic contexts. This study aims to shed light on the circumstances that led Mahfouz and Shaw to produce these works. According to Greenblatt, each society has an artifact that must be used to understand a piece of writing that was written in that certain area (Brannigan , 1998, 42). The researcher aim was to find the real reflections of *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley* in their contexts. In other words, there is the belief that Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* is closely related to Mahfouz's life. On the other hand, Shaw has a clear connection between his play *Pygmalion* and his real-life circumstances, as he suffered from accent differences when he first came to England from Ireland. After carrying out a New Historical analysis on both works, it was clear that the findings were truly connected to research intended question and aims.

The origin of New Historicism is Old Historicism. This approach gives superiority to text on the historical background. The main part to discuss is the text, while the milieu has secondary importance. In contrast, New Historicism takes into account both the historical background and the milieu with the same importance.

Historical criticism method is an effective way to interpret literary works like *Midaq Alley* and *Pygmalion*. In other words, each one of these works depicts a reflection of that historical period. *Pygmalion*'s main theme is class distinction, which is related to the class system in Victorian England. The play talks about a cockney flower girl who comes from the slums of London and sells flowers to high class rich people. Shaw reflects the lives of the poor in Victorian society, but he added another option for low-class people. He proposed that class system bumper are shallow and can be solved through simple steps like education. Shaw also reflects gender roles, as women neither have the right to decide what to do nor the freedom to live the life they wish. Shaw gave Eliza the main character to decide not to marry her instructor, Henry Higgins, regardless of his positive influence in her life, as he helps her speak like high-class people and gives her a chance to change her class. In Victorian society, women had no rights to vote or the will to choose a man for marriage, so using the New Historical Method enabled me to connect these events together and afford a better understanding of the text. In *Midaq Alley*, Mahouz shed light on the nature of life in old Cairo; he portrayed it from different corners. In other words, he mainly focused on Hamida's character life, but he also portrays other characters too like Kirsha, the cafe owner, and Abbas, the barber.

Reality was one of Mahfouz's tools in writing, especially in his trilogy (Palace Walk, Palace of Desire, and Sugar Street), and *Midaq Alley* is an extension of them. This research clarifies the connection between *Pygmalion* and Shaw's lives and social and political circumstances. It also raises another important question: What is the relationship between Shaw's different works? Each work of his might reflect such a period of time in his life, so this could be another field of research. In Mahfouz's case, I believe that after analyzing the effect of his life on the novel as well as the effect of social and political affection on the novel, the religion in his novels is shown in a bad way, so it raises the question of why Mahfouz would portray religion in this way through his characters.

Set in early 20th-century England, *Pygmalion* explores the complexities of class distinctions and the struggles of women for independence and progression in society. Characters such as Professor Henry Higgins and Eliza Doolittle exemplify the peering contrast between the upper class and the working class in Shaw's work.

Through Eliza's transformation, Shaw challenges the notion that class is determined by birthright, emphasizing the significance of education and self-improvement as avenues for social mobility. *Midaq Alley*, on the other hand, provides a vivid depiction of Egypt in the middle of the 20th century, particularly the diverse inhabitants of a vibrant Cairo neighborhood.

With characters such as Hussain Kirsha representing the privileged class and Abbas navigating the challenges of the middle class, Naguib Mahfouz depicts the complexities of the social hierarchy. The novel also explores the struggles of the working class, especially through the character of Hamida, who yearns for a better life and tries to transcend her circumstances through marriage. Mahfouz offers a nuanced depiction of Egyptian society during the time period by highlighting the impact of cultural norms, gender inequality, and limited opportunities on individual lives.

In the context of *Pygmalion* characters, this paper managed to find that Henry Higgins is the reflection of Henry Sweet, who taught Shaw how to speak properly with an understood accent that is lovely to hear in all British classes. Sweet is a major factor that helped Shaw spoke publicly with no fears or stammers. The way Shaw used to speak to the audience with the sense of humor that he was famous for made him famous among pioneers of that time. Sweet was planning to open a phonetic institution to train people to speak with a common accent. He sent a letter to Robert Bridges, telling him about his plans. The phonetician died while the play was being performed. The following year, Bridges contacted Shaw to be the spokeswoman for the Phonetic Conference at University College, London. After Sweet's training with Shaw, he made it easy for Bridges to find a speaker with an accent that is accepted by almost every English speaker.

Another finding of this paper is that the situation of Eliza and Higgins is a reflection of Shaw's real life. He was single when he wrote this play, so he brought his mother back through Mrs. Higgins, who disagrees with him about his way of talking to other people. Another phase of reflection in *Pygmalion* of Shaw's real life is his mother's relationship with her music teacher, Vandeleur Lee. She fell in love with him after a group of music lessons. Eliza almost falls in love with Higgins at the end of phonetics class. Henry teaches Eliza how to speak in a good way and have the confidence to express her feelings and attitude regardless of the class. Lee taught Mrs.

Shaw how to play music and express her emotions. Under the claim Holroyd makes that Eliza is a reflection of an actress called Stella, after the death of Mrs. Shaw, Bernard started to feel loneliness more than before. He started to think about marriage, which we can see in his play. Mrs. Pat, who played Eliza in the first audition on stage, was close to Shaw. Holroyd claims that Shaw made the role especially for Stella because they were in love with each other. He enables her to be famous and change her life. This looks identical to Eliza's case. The difference was that, at the time of performing the play, Shaw was already married. They were not emotionally tied to each other, so he started the half-love story with Stella (Holroyd, 1997, 501).

This thesis offers a comparative analysis from a New Historical perspective, examining George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* and Naguib Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*. The primary focus is on how these authors depict social class and its impact on interpersonal connections, along with their exploration of intricate socio-political themes. In the first chapter, the study presents the background and importance of the research. It offers an overview of the theoretical foundation, specifically focusing on New Historical criticism and its impact on literary works. Chapter two of the thesis offers a New Historical analysis of *Pygmalion*. The chapter explores how Shaw utilizes the play's setting and characters to criticize societal norms and question established conventions. It delves into the ways in which the play tackles themes of identity, power dynamics, and individual agency within the confines of social and cultural restrictions. In chapter three, a New Historical analysis of Naguib Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* is presented. The chapter investigates Mahfouz's depiction of social class and power dynamics within the context of early 20th century Cairo. It further explores how the author employs the novel as a medium for social criticism, delving into the themes of gender, religion, and tradition. Chapter four undertakes a comparative analysis of the two works using a New Historical approach. The chapter examines the similarities and differences in how the authors address social class, power dynamics, and individual agency. Furthermore, it investigates how both works navigate and contribute to larger socio-political themes, including colonialism and modernization.

Overall, this thesis provides a comprehensive exploration through a New Historical lens, analyzing both *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley*. By employing this approach, the study emphasizes the authors' mutual focus on social class dynamics

and their deep involvement with intricate socio-political concerns. Through a meticulous examination of the texts, this research uncovers the authors' nuanced perspectives, revealing their profound observations on the complexities of social structures and the broader societal context in which their works were created. By presenting this new historical criticism reading, the thesis shows the significant thematic interference and thematic contributions of Shaw's *Pygmalion* and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* to the ongoing discourse on literature, social class, and socio-political issues.

To wrap up my thesis, Through our comparative analysis of *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley*, we have identified several key themes and ideas that connect these works. Both Shaw and Mahfouz explore the complexities of class divisions and social hierarchies, highlighting the challenges faced by individuals striving for social mobility. They also provide a critique of societal expectations and norms, particularly in relation to gender roles and women's agency. In *Pygmalion*, Eliza's transformation from a working-class flower girl to a refined lady challenges traditional gender roles and demonstrates the potential for self-determination. Similarly, Hamida in *Midaq Alley* defies societal expectations and strives for agency and independence, albeit within the limitations imposed by patriarchal norms. Both characters embody the struggles and contradictions faced by women striving for self-determination, ultimately highlighting the profound challenges and sacrifices they endure in their pursuit of a better life.

Furthermore, both Shaw and Mahfouz utilize language and communication as powerful tools for social change. In *Pygmalion*, Eliza's transformation is facilitated by her acquisition of proper speech and manners, illustrating the influence of language on social mobility. Similarly, language plays a significant role in *Midaq Alley*, reflecting the power dynamics and social hierarchies within the community. Both works underscore the ways in which language functions as a marker of social status and power and how it can be employed to challenge existing structures of authority and control. Moreover, these works engage with broader historical and cultural contexts.

Pygmalion offers a critique of the Victorian era's rigid class structure, exposing the double-dealing and injustices that emerged in the social system. While

Midaq Alley, set against the background of mid-20th-century Egypt, provides a detailed portrayal of the socio-economic challenges and cultural norms of the time. It captures the changing face of Cairo and the complexities of a society struggling with modernity, Western influence, and traditional values. Their works serve as mirrors that reflect the enduring struggles faced by individuals striving for social mobility and self-determination in the face of oppressive social systems. This comparative study has shed light on the profound interplay between literature and history, revealing how these two disciplines inform and enrich one another. Through the New Historicism approach, we have uncovered the ways in which *Pygmalion* and *Midaq Alley* capture and criticize the socio-political realities of their time.

As we conclude this study, we are reminded of the enduring relevance of these literary masterpieces. Shaw's *Pygmalion* and Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley* serve as timeless reminders that social hierarchies, gender inequality, and struggles for self-determination are not isolated to specific time periods or geographic locations.

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