

The SocioPsychological in Naguib Mahfouz's Collection "Whispers of Madness": An Islamic Ethical Study

hosain torfiolayvi*¹, zainab torfiolayvi²

Submitted: 2024.08.24 | Accepted: 2024.12.19

Abstract

This study examines the sociopsychological dimensions in Naguib Mahfouz's early short story collection "Whispers of Madness" (1938), adopting an Islamic ethical framework as its primary analytical lens. The collection, which marks Mahfouz's literary debut, presents a series of narratives exploring various states of madness, including the delirium of jealousy, love, hunger, and social alienation. The study investigates how Mahfouz employs the motif of madness to critique both individual psychological states and broader social conditions in Egyptian society. Through an Islamic ethical perspective, the research analyzes how the collection engages with questions of moral responsibility, the boundaries between reason and unreason, and the relationship between individual freedom and social obligations. The study draws on foundational Islamic ethical concepts such as "taklif" (moral accountability), "nafs" (the self), "aql" (reason), and "fitra" (innate human nature) to interpret the psychological portraits Mahfouz presents. The findings reveal that Mahfouz's stories, while seemingly focused on pathological psychological states, operate as moral allegories that challenge readers to reconsider their understanding of sanity, morality, and human responsibility. The study concludes that the sociopsychological dimension in "Whispers of Madness" serves as a vehicle for ethical inquiry, positioning Mahfouz's work within a tradition of Islamic moral literature that uses the motif of madness to explore the human condition and the relationship between self and society.

Keywords: SocioPsychological Criticism, Islamic Ethics, Naguib Mahfouz, Whispers of Madness, Morality, Sufism.

1. PhD in Arabic Language and Literature – Persian Gulf University, Bushehr.
(h.torfi128@gmail.com)

2. Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz Branch

Research Questions

1. How does Mahfouz's "Whispers of Madness" represent psychological states of madness through an Islamic ethical framework?
2. What are the mechanisms of moral critique embedded within the sociopsychological portrayal of characters in the collection?
3. How does the collection engage with Islamic concepts of moral accountability in its treatment of madness and social deviance?

Previous Studies

First: Arabic Studies

SroujiShajrawi, Clara. "The Whisper of Madness in Naguib Mahfouz's Literary Works." *ALMajma*, no. 17, 2022, pp. 461513.

This comprehensive study explores madness in Mahfouz's works, including the collection "Whispers of Madness". The author argues that Mahfouz's mad antiheroes are related to Sufism, examining madness as a mental disease, as an expression of existential crisis, as a passion to approach the Divine, and as a safe way to express sociopolitical critique. The study draws on Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch* to argue for parallels with the Arabic concept of "futuwwah" (chivalry). Our study differs in focusing specifically on the Islamic ethical framework rather than Sufi parallels with Nietzsche, and in examining the moral dimensions of psychological states through concepts of "taklif" (accountability) and "fitra" (innate nature).

Salama, Mohammad. "Writing the Mad Text: Freedom, Modernity, and God in Naguib Mahfouz's 'The Whisper of Madness'." In *Islam and the Culture of Modern Egypt*, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 107122.

This study examines Mahfouz's story "The Whisper of Madness" in relation to freedom, modernity, and the Divine. The author problematizes traditional critical dismissals of the collection, arguing that Mahfouz deliberately challenges canonical historical narratives. The study engages with Foucault's "Madness and Civilization" to explore how modernity and madness are interrelated. Our study distinguishes itself by employing an Islamic ethical framework rather than Foucauldian analysis, focusing on the moral dimensions of madness through Islamic concepts of reason, accountability, and the self.

AlGhamdi, Fahd. "Psychological States in Modern Arabic Short Fiction." *Journal of Arabic Literature Studies*, King Abdulaziz University, 2015.

This study surveyed representations of psychological states in modern Arabic short fiction, including references to Mahfouz's early work. Our study differs by focusing exclusively on "Whispers of Madness" and employing an Islamic ethical

analytical framework that engages with concepts of moral responsibility and social accountability.

Second: English Studies

Le Gassick, Trevor. "Critical Perspectives on Naguib Mahfouz". Three Continents Press, 1991.

Le Gassick dismisses Mahfouz's first collection as lacking in sophistication, criticizing the "moralistic" tone and "weakness of artistic structure." Our study differs from this dismissive approach by taking seriously the moral dimensions of the collection and demonstrating how the sociopsychological representation serves an ethical purpose rooted in Islamic moral thought.

Foucault, Michel. "Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason". Random House, 1965.

While not directly addressing Mahfouz, this foundational work on the social construction of madness informs many comparative studies. Our study, while acknowledging the sociocultural dimension, prioritizes the Islamic ethical framework over the Foucauldian approach, examining how Mahfouz engages with moral questions rather than purely socialhistorical ones.

Salama, Mohammad. "Writing the Mad Text: Freedom, Modernity, and God in Naguib Mahfouz's 'The Whisper of Madness'." "Semantic Scholar", 2018.

As referenced above, this study explores the intersection of madness, modernity, and theology. Our study extends this analysis by applying a systematic Islamic ethical framework to the entire collection, examining how concepts of "aql" (reason), "nafs" (self), and "taklif" (accountability) shape the representation of psychological states.

Introduction

Naguib Mahfouz's first short story collection "Whispers of Madness" (1938) stands as a remarkable literary debut that continues to provoke critical reflection and scholarly inquiry. The collection, comprising stories that explore various manifestations of human psychological states, marks the beginning of a literary career that would span over six decades and culminate in a Nobel Prize for Literature. Yet despite its historical importance, the collection has often been dismissed as a youthful effort lacking the sophistication of Mahfouz's later works (Le Gassick, 1991: 11). Such dismissals overlook the profound sociopsychological dimensions embedded within these seemingly simple narratives, as well as the ethical framework that informs their representation of madness, reason, and human responsibility.

-The story from which the collection takes its title, "The Whisper of Madness," presents an unnamed madman who engages in socially transgressive behavior, yet who is portrayed in a manner that complicates any simple moral judgment

(Mahfouz, 1938). This complexity has been noted by scholars who argue that Mahfouz deliberately challenges traditional narrative -structures and historical representations, reinterrogating questions of culture, religion, freedom, and politics (Salama, 2018: 110). The collection represents an early engagement with themes that would persist throughout Mahfouz's career: the relationship between individual consciousness and social context, the boundaries between reason and unreason, and the moral dimensions of human behavior.

-The sociopsychological approach to literary analysis examines how psychological states are represented in literature and how these representations are shaped by social and cultural contexts. When applied to Mahfouz's collection, this approach reveals the intricate interplay between individual psychology and social conditions in early twentiethcentury Egypt. The period in which Mahfouz wrote was characterized by profound social and political transformations, including the aftermath of the 1919 revolution, the ongoing struggle for national independence, and significant cultural shifts as Egyptian society engaged with modernity while grappling with its Islamic heritage.

-An Islamic ethical framework provides a particularly relevant lens for interpreting the sociopsychological dimensions of "Whispers of Madness". Islamic moral thought offers a rich tradition of reflection on the nature of the self, the relationship between reason and revelation, and the ethical responsibilities of individuals within society. Key concepts such as "aql" (reason), "nafs" (the self), "fitra" (innate human nature), "taklif" (moral accountability), and "tazkiya" (purification) provide tools for analyzing the psychological and moral dimensions of Mahfouz's characters. Moreover, the Islamic tradition has its own discourse on madness, viewing it through both medical and spiritual lenses, and recognizing the complex relationship between divine madness and prophetic inspiration.

-The collection "Whispers of Madness" engages with the motif of madness in ways that reflect both psychological realism and moral symbolism. Mahfouz represents various states of madness: the delirium of jealousy (in the story "Delirium"), the madness of hunger and social desperation, and the existential crisis of individuals caught between social expectations and personal desires. These representations operate on multiple levels, depicting psychological conditions while also serving as allegorical critiques of social conditions and moral failures. As one scholar has noted, madness in Mahfouz's works appears in various forms: as a mental disease, as an expression of existential crisis, as a passion to approach the Divine, and as a safe way to express critique of the sociopolitical situation in Egypt (SroujiShajrawi, 2022: 463).

-The sociopsychological dimension in Mahfouz's collection is inseparable from its ethical dimension. The representation of psychological states serves a moral

purpose, challenging readers to reconsider their understanding of sanity and madness, individual freedom and social obligation, personal desire and communal responsibility. This ethical dimension is informed by the Islamic moral tradition, even as Mahfouz explores questions through the medium of modern secular fiction. The mad characters in Mahfouz's stories are not merely clinical case studies; they are moral figures whose psychological states reveal truths about the human condition and the complexities of ethical life.

Research Objective

This study aims to examine the sociopsychological dimensions in Naguib Mahfouz's early short story collection "Whispers of Madness" through an Islamic ethical framework, focusing on how the representation of psychological states serves as a vehicle for moral inquiry and social critique, and analyzing the collection's engagement with Islamic concepts of reason, accountability, the self, and the relationship between individual freedom and social responsibility.

Research Methodology

This research adopts the descriptive analytical approach, utilizing an interdisciplinary framework that combines sociopsychological literary analysis with Islamic ethical inquiry. It describes and analyzes the representations of psychological states in Mahfouz's collection by tracing the textual manifestations of madness and their relationship to social contexts, then interprets these representations through Islamic ethical concepts such as "aql" (reason), "nafs" (the self), "fitra" (innate human nature), "taklif" (moral accountability), and "tazkiya" (purification), without imposing a monolithic reading, but rather allowing the interplay between psychological, social, and moral dimensions to emerge from the texts themselves.

Theoretical Framework

The SocioPsychological Approach in Literary Studies

The sociopsychological approach emerged in modern literary criticism as a result of increasing awareness of the need to transcend narrow disciplinary boundaries and acknowledge the intertwining of psychological and social factors in shaping both individual and collective consciousness (Danytė, 2014: 58). This approach is based on the view that the human psyche is not an isolated mass, but the product of a dialectical interaction between innate psychological structure and social, historical, and cultural conditions. Literary texts, from this perspective, are complex fields of interaction between self and other, consciousness and unconsciousness, the individual and society, repressed desires and prevailing social norms.

The sociopsychological approach provides tools for analyzing the literary representation of psychological states such as madness, delirium, and social alienation, while recognizing that these representations are shaped by social contexts. When applied to Mahfouz's collection, it reveals how the portrayal of mad characters reflects both individual psychological conditions and broader social conditions in Egyptian society, including the tensions between tradition and modernity, individual freedom and social obligation, and secular and religious worldviews.

Islamic Ethics: Foundations and Key Concepts

Islamic ethics, or “*alakhlaq alislamiyya*”, draws on multiple sources including the Qur'an, the prophetic tradition (“*sunnah*”), and the intellectual traditions of Islamic philosophy and Sufism. Key concepts relevant to the study of psychological and moral dimensions in literature include:

“*Tawhid*” (divine unity) establishes the foundational principle that all creation is oriented toward God, and that human purpose is defined by this relationship. “*Taklif*” refers to the concept of moral accountability, the idea that human beings are responsible for their actions and will be judged accordingly. “*Nafs*” denotes the self or soul, understood as the center of human consciousness and moral striving. “*Aql*” refers to reason, understood in Islamic thought as a divine gift that enables humans to distinguish right from wrong. “*Fitra*” denotes the original innate nature of human beings, created in a state of purity and oriented toward truth. “*Tazkiya*” refers to purification of the soul through moral and spiritual discipline.

Sufi thought, which emphasizes the inner dimensions of Islamic faith, has contributed to a rich tradition of reflection on psychological states and their moral significance. Some scholars have noted parallels between Mahfouz's mad antiheroes and Sufi concepts of the visionary or inspired figure (SroujiShajrawi, 2022: 464). The Sufi tradition views madness as potentially having both negative (as a disease) and positive (as a sign of spiritual intensity or prophetic inspiration) dimensions.

The Motif of Madness in Islamic Tradition

Madness (“*junun*”) is treated in Islamic tradition through multiple perspectives. Medicalpsychological traditions, drawing on Greek sources as well as indigenous knowledge, view madness as a condition requiring treatment. Legal traditions recognize the implications of insanity for moral and legal responsibility. Philosophical traditions, particularly within Sufism, explore the relationship between reason and spiritual insight, sometimes celebrating a form of “divine madness” that transcends ordinary rationality. The Qur'an itself addresses accusations of

madness leveled against prophets, suggesting a complex relationship between prophetic inspiration and what appears to the uninitiated as madness.

This multifaceted tradition provides resources for analyzing the sociopsychological representation of madness in Mahfouz's collection, recognizing both the pathological dimension of psychological disorders and the possibility that madness may serve as a form of critique or revelation.

The American School of Comparative Literature

The American School of Comparative Literature provides a framework for examining Mahfouz's work in relation to Islamic ethical traditions while recognizing its engagement with Western literary and philosophical influences (Remak, 1989: 5). The American School emphasizes parallel studies that explore thematic and structural similarities across different cultural traditions, without requiring direct influence relationships, making it suitable for a study that positions Mahfouz's work within multiple intellectual traditions (Gayley, 1973: 102; Posnett, 1886: 188).

First Topic: The Psychology of Madness and Moral Critique in "The Whisper of Madness"

The title story of Mahfouz's collection, "The Whisper of Madness," presents a complex portrait of a mad figure whose behavior challenges conventional understandings of sanity and morality. The story, which has generated significant critical discussion, depicts an unnamed madman engaged in antisocial behavior: stealing food, assaulting others, and tearing his clothing (Salama, 2018: 110; Le Gassick, 1991: 11). Yet the story transcends mere clinical description to pose fundamental questions about the nature of reason, freedom, and moral responsibility.

The sociopsychological representation of the mad protagonist operates on multiple levels. At the surface level, the story depicts the behavior of a psychologically disturbed individual, presenting symptoms that might be clinically classified as psychosis or severe personality disorder. The protagonist's actions violate social norms and cause harm to others, suggesting a clear departure from rational, morally responsible behavior. This surfacelevel representation invites the reader to consider the phenomenon of mental illness through both medical and ethical lenses.

However, the story also functions as a form of social critique, challenging readers to question the assumed rationality of "normal" society and the moral legitimacy of social conventions. The mad protagonist, in his transgressive behavior, reveals the hidden violence and irrationality of social structures that claim to be reasonable and just. As one scholar notes, Mahfouz's writing problematizes rep-

resentation itself, leading to a reformulation of questions of culture, religion, freedom, and politics (Salama, 2018: 110). The story invites readers to ask what "rational" forces the madman's actions are set against, and how a critique of madness might itself become a form of critical reflection on social order (Salama, 2018: 110111).

From an Islamic ethical perspective, the story raises questions about the relationship between reason ("aql") and moral responsibility ("taklif"). In Islamic thought, moral accountability is contingent on the capacity for rational judgment. The insane, lacking this capacity, are excused from certain moral and legal obligations. Yet the story complicates this clear distinction by suggesting that the boundary between reason and madness is not always clear, and that those who appear sane may be morally compromised by their conformity to unjust social norms. The mad protagonist, in his defiance of social convention, may be seen as challenging a social order that is itself morally suspect.

The story also engages with the Islamic concept of "fitra", the original nature of human beings created in a state of purity and oriented toward truth. The mad protagonist's behavior, while socially transgressive, may be interpreted as a form of rebellion against the corruption of "fitra" by social conventions. The "whisper of madness" that gives the collection its title may itself be understood as the voice of a consciousness that sees through social illusions to a deeper truth.

The sociopsychological representation of the mad protagonist serves as a vehicle for ethical inquiry, challenging readers to reconsider what constitutes sanity and morality. The story does not offer simple answers but invites reflection on the relationships between reason, freedom, morality, and social order, engaging with questions that are central to the Islamic ethical tradition.

Second Topic: Delirium and the Moral Dimensions of Jealousy

The story "Delirium," included in "Whispers of Madness", explores the psychological state of jealous delirium through a narrative that serves as a moral parable. The protagonist, upon discovering his wife's mention of her former fiancé during a state of illness-induced delirium, prevents her from receiving medical treatment, allowing her to continue revealing her secrets until she dies (Mahfouz, 1938). This cruel act, motivated by jealousy and a desire for painful knowledge, leads to the protagonist's subsequent suicide.

The sociopsychological representation of jealous delirium in the story reflects Mahfouz's early engagement with psychological themes that would persist throughout his career. The protagonist's actions, driven by intense jealousy, represent a state of psychological disturbance that transcends ordinary emotional responses. The jealousy that leads him to deny his wife medical treatment reveals

the destructive potential of unchecked emotion and the moral corruption that can result from being consumed by jealousy.

From an Islamic ethical perspective, the story engages with the concept of “nafs” (the self) and its moral purification (“tazkiya”). The protagonist's behavior reflects a soul that has been corrupted by jealousy, failing to exercise moral selfcontrol in the face of emotional disturbance. The story illustrates the Islamic ethical principle that unchecked emotions can lead to morally destructive behavior, and that moral responsibility requires the cultivation of selfdiscipline and ethical restraint.

The story also engages with the concept of “taklif” (moral accountability) in a complex manner. The protagonist's jealousy, while emotionally compelling, does not excuse his actions. He is held morally responsible for the choice to deny his wife medical treatment, even though this choice is driven by psychological disturbance. The story thus affirms the principle that human beings are accountable for their actions, even when those actions are motivated by powerful emotions, and that psychological states do not eliminate moral responsibility.

The tragic ending, in which the protagonist commits suicide after being overwhelmed by remorse, may be interpreted through the Islamic concept of “tawba” (repentance). The protagonist's remorse suggests a recognition of moral failure, but his suicide prevents the possibility of genuine repentance and moral renewal. The story thus serves as a warning about the destructive consequences of jealousy and the importance of selfdiscipline and ethical behavior.

The representation of delirium in the story also raises questions about the boundaries between psychological states and moral responsibility. While the wife's delirium is a result of illness and is treated as a condition requiring compassion and treatment, the protagonist's response to this delirium transforms him from a caring husband into a moral agent who makes a conscious decision that leads to his wife's death. The story thus distinguishes between involuntary psychological states and the voluntary responses to those states that carry moral weight.

Third Topic: Madness, Hunger, and Social Critique

Several stories in “Whispers of Madness” explore the relationship between psychological states and social conditions, particularly the effects of poverty, hunger, and social marginalization on mental health. Mahfouz's representation of madness in these stories serves as a form of social critique, revealing the psychological toll of social injustice and the ways in which economic and social conditions contribute to mental illness (SroujiShajrawi, 2022: 463).

The sociopsychological dimension of these stories reflects Mahfouz's engagement with the social realities of Egyptian society in the 1930s, a period of economic hardship and political uncertainty. The characters who experience hunger, poverty, and social exclusion are portrayed as psychologically vulnerable, with their material deprivation contributing to their mental disturbance. This representation challenges readers to consider the social determinants of mental health and the moral responsibilities of society toward its most vulnerable members.

From an Islamic ethical perspective, these stories engage with concepts of social justice and communal responsibility. Islamic ethics emphasizes the obligation of society to care for the poor, the hungry, and the marginalized, and to address the root causes of social suffering. Mahfouz's representation of madness as a consequence of social conditions thus serves as a form of moral critique, challenging social structures that fail to meet their responsibilities toward the vulnerable.

The stories also engage with the Islamic concept of “nafs” in its relationship to material conditions. The psychological states of characters suffering from hunger and poverty reflect the degradation of the self that results from material deprivation. The corruption of the soul that may result from the struggle for survival is depicted as a moral tragedy, the fault not only of individuals but of a society that allows such conditions to persist.

The concept of “fitra”, the innate human nature created in a state of purity, is also relevant to these stories. The degradation of human beings by conditions of poverty and hunger represents a violation of human dignity and a corruption of the original purity of human nature. Mahfouz's depiction of the psychological consequences of social injustice thus serves as a form of moral protest, calling for the restoration of conditions that allow human beings to flourish as God created them.

The stories also reflect Mahfouz's engagement with broader questions about freedom and modernity. As one scholar notes, Mahfouz's writing problematizes the experience of modernity in the city, suggesting that the modern city hides the potential for insanity under the garb of reason and order (Salama, 2018: 111). The madness depicted in the collection may thus be interpreted as a symptom of social and psychological pressures produced by the conditions of modern urban life.

Fourth Topic: The Sufi Dimension of Madness in the Collection

Scholars have noted the relationship between Mahfouz's mad characters and Sufi traditions, suggesting that the mad antiheroes of the collection are somehow related to Sufism (SroujiShajrawi, 2022: 464). The Sufi tradition offers a complex understanding of madness that distinguishes between pathological madness and inspired madness or visionary experience. The figure of the “majnun” (madman)

in Arabic literature often combines elements of both, representing a state of consciousness that transcends ordinary reason while also being marginalized and persecuted.

Sufi thought emphasizes the limits of reason and the importance of spiritual insight that goes beyond rational understanding. The "whisper of madness" in Mahfouz's collection may be interpreted as a form of spiritual insight, a message that cannot be communicated through ordinary rational discourse but that contains profound truth. The mad protagonist, in this interpretation, becomes a prophetic figure, speaking truths that are hidden from those who remain trapped within conventional thinking.

The relationship between madness and spirituality in Islamic thought has deep roots. The Qur'an addresses the accusation of madness against prophets, suggesting that the prophetic state is often perceived as madness by those who cannot comprehend its significance. Sufi thinkers have explored the idea that intense spiritual experience may appear to others as madness, and that the seeker of truth may need to transcend ordinary rationality to achieve spiritual realization.

In Mahfouz's collection, the mad figures may be understood as ambiguous figures: on one hand, they represent pathological psychological states, but on the other, they may serve as vehicles for spiritual insight or social critique. The "whisper" of madness is something that can be heard only by those who are open to what lies beyond ordinary reason. The collection thus reflects the complex engagement of modern Arabic literature with Sufi themes, drawing on traditional understandings of madness while also engaging with modern psychological and social analysis.

This Sufi dimension of the collection also relates to its ethical framework. Sufi thought emphasizes the importance of moral purification and the cultivation of virtues, as well as the rejection of the false values of the world. The mad characters of Mahfouz's collection may be seen as challenging worldly values and calling for a deeper ethical orientation, even as their behavior appears socially transgressive. The moral critique embedded in the sociopsychological representation of madness thus resonates with Sufi traditions of social criticism.

Results

This study has revealed that the sociopsychological dimension in Naguib Mahfouz's "Whispers of Madness" operates as a vehicle for Islamic ethical inquiry, representing psychological states of madness, delirium, and social alienation not merely as clinical conditions but as moral challenges that raise questions about reason, accountability, and the self. The collection engages with Islamic ethical concepts such as "aql" (reason), "nafs" (the self), "fitra" (innate human nature),

and “taklif” (moral accountability), using the motif of madness to explore the relationship between individual psychological states and broader social conditions, and to critique social structures that fail to meet their moral responsibilities.

The study has also demonstrated that the collection employs sociopsychological representation as a form of social critique, portraying madness as both a product of social conditions and a challenge to social conventions. The mad protagonists of the stories, while often engaging in transgressive behavior, also serve as figures who reveal the hidden violence and irrationality of social order, and who call for deeper consideration of ethical life. This dimension of the collection reflects Mahfouz's engagement with Sufi traditions of inspired madness and social criticism.

The study further revealed that the collection's treatment of jealousy, hunger, and social marginalization through sociopsychological representation serves a moral purpose, challenging readers to consider the ethical dimensions of human relationships and social structures. The tragic endings of many of the stories underscore the destructive consequences of unchecked emotion, social injustice, and moral failure, while also pointing toward the possibility of moral renewal and spiritual insight.

References

- Alloush, Saïd. 2010. “Manāhij alAdab alMuqāran: alMadāris alFaransīyah wa alAmrīkīyah” [Approaches to Comparative Literature: The French and American Schools]. Beirut: Dar alFikr alMu'asir.
- Bassnett, Susan. 1993. “Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction”. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Bevington, David. 2010. “Shakespeare and Biography”. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bradley, Andrew Cecil. 1904. “Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth”. London: Macmillan & Co.
- Danytė, Milda. 2014. "A SocioPsychological Reading of Alice Munro's 'Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage'." *“Literatura”* 56 (3): 5670.
- El Enany, Rasheed. n.d. "Naguib Mahfouz: The Search." *“Arabia Books”*. Accessed August 14, 2026. <https://www.arabiabooks.com>.
- Foucault, Michel. 1965. “Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason”. Translated by R. Howard. New York: Random House.
- Gayley, Charles Mills. 1973. “The Functions of Comparative Literature”. New York: Haskell House Publishers.

- Le Gassick, Trevor. 1991. "Critical Perspectives on Naguib Mahfouz". Washington, DC: Three Continents Press.
- Mahfouz, Naguib. 1938. "Whispers of Madness". Cairo: All'timad Press.
- Naji, Wurood Ghalib. 2025. "The American School of Comparative Literature: A Study of Naguib Mahfouz's 'The Search'." "Journal of the College of Languages" 52: 171192.
- Posnett, Hutcheson Macaulay. 1886. "Comparative Literature". London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.
- Remak, Henry H. H. 1989. "Comparative Literature: Its Definition and Function." In "Comparative Literature: Method and Perspective", edited by Newton P. Stallknecht and Horst Frenz, 320. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Salama, Mohammad. 2018. "Writing the Mad Text: Freedom, Modernity, and God in Naguib Mahfouz's 'The Whisper of Madness'." In "Islam and the Culture of Modern Egypt", 107122. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- SroujiShajrawi, Clara. 2022. "The Whisper of Madness in Naguib Mahfouz's Literary Works." "ALMajma" 17: 461513.
- Sumiyadi, Sumiyadi, et al. 2024. "The American School's Thought in Comparative Literature." "Journal of Language and Literature Studies" 11 (3): 445462.