



The Reconciliation of Relationality by Mitchell's Via the Lens of Trauma and PTSD with *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Saadawi

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Abstract

The study examines the concept of trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD) as a deterioration endeavor Iraqi people experienced during and aftermath War in Ahmed Saadawi's (1973-) novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad* through psychoanalytic analysis. This study illustrates that the protagonists, Elishva and Hadi, have experienced permanent repercussions from the atrocities of war, estrangement and liveness they experienced in Iraq. Furthermore, it emphasizes the capacity of a nurturing social circle to mitigate their distress. It tries to understand Saadawi's insightful treatment of trauma and (PTSD), through the innovative theory of Relationality by Stephen A. Mitchell. The lack of safe connections impedes the body's natural healing process and increases the strain on already fragile mental faculties. The new reading attempts to approve that Relationality is a psychoanalytic therapy sufficient enough to provide opportunities for recovering from emotional disturbances, enabling them to develop healthy mental frameworks to replace traumatic ones.

Keywords: *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, Mitchell, PTSD, Trauma, Relationality

التوافق بين نظرية العلاقة من خلال عدسة الصدمة واضطراب ما بعد الصدمة في رواية فرانكشتاين في بغداد لسعداوي

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ملخص

تتناول الدراسة مفهوم الصدمة واضطراب ما بعد الصدمة كمحاولة تدهور عايشها الشعب العراقي أثناء الحرب وبعده في رواية أحمد سعداوي (1973-) فرانكشتاين في بغداد من خلال نظرية التحليل النفسي. توضح هذه الدراسة أن بطلي الرواية، إيليشوا وهادي، قد عانوا من تداعيات دائمة من فظائع الحرب والغربة والوحدة التي عاشوها في العراق. علاوة على ذلك، تؤكد على قدرة الروابط الاجتماعية الداعمة في تخفيف محنتهم. تحاول فهم معالجة سعداوي الثاقبة للصدمة واضطراب ما بعد الصدمة، من خلال نظرية العلاقة المبتكرة لستيفن أ. ميتشل. إن الافتقار إلى التواصل الآمن يعيق عملية التعافي النفسي الطبيعي ويزيد من الضغط على القدرات العقلية الهشة بالفعل. تحاول القراءة الجديدة إثبات أن العلاقات هي علاج نفسي تحليلي



كاف لتوفير فرص التعافي من الاضطرابات العاطفية، وتمكينهم من تطوير أطر عقلية صحية لتحل محل الأثر المؤلمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فرانكشتاين في بغداد، ميتشل، اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة، الصدمة، العلاقة

1.1. Introduction

Iraqis have extremely undergone through a significant impact of successive trauma that causing a profound humanitarian, economic and social crises, the effects of which are still continuing to this day. Abdel-Nabi Al-Zaidi in his play *Summer Rain* argues that “The Iraqi populace has withstood the unbearable, including war, starvation, and imprisonment. It has survived a series of dictatorships and is, to this day, besieged by corrupt and manipulative forces” (51). Living in a culture where daily killings justified by a violent religious belief, killing by mistakes and bombing innocents are deeply unsettling. So war literature emphasizes on restoring cultural and national identities that have been severely damaged by a series of crises and sectarianism. The appearance of war literature, necessitated by works that focus on the trauma and post-trauma, anguish, disillusionment, and disappointment by individuals.

Like the selected work, war and dystopian fiction heavily emphasizes the preservation of history, both personal and national, through documenting in the face of approaching loss. Since, literature is a message to preserve the cultural heritage that is under jeopardy from the devastation of war.

Ahmed Saadawi, is a multi-talented Iraqi individual who excels in various creative fields such as novel writing, poetry, screenwriting, and documentary filmmaking. He frequently explores the psychological toll of trauma, acts of brutality, and the social effects of conflict in his writings. His writings, which include *Frank Memories* (2008), *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (2013), and the short tale "The Exercise" from the book *The Bare Face Inside the Dream* (2018), all address trauma and its psychological effects. He has witnessed and discussed people's pain and suffering of different kinds of traumas throughout her professional career. He portrays linear psychotic disturbance after Trauma blends with Human emotions related to conflicts, such as dread, worry, and despair.

The chosen text, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, is the most celebrated novel of Saadawi which won International Prize for Arabic Fiction, The story discusses identity trauma following a conflict. A monster called "AlShismah" or “Whatsitsname”, the former is a local Iraqi words used to point out someone not in particular who is sewn together from body parts represents the need to repair society and lives that have been shattered. Through the perspective of these weird



and anomalous creatures, magic realism combines with Saadawi's skillful creation of horrific landscapes that inspire readers to reflect on the common vulnerability, alienation, and complexity of pain faced by all living things. He explores the inner workings of the human psyche to identify the causes and consequences of trauma.

The study scrutinizes the portrayal of Trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* which have played an essential and vital role in Saadawi creative works. Exploring the complex topic of trauma through the juxtaposition between the original story of Frankenstein which is written by Mary Shelley's in 1818, emphasizing the reckless ethical responsibility of handling the scientific progress took place at that time which leads to a sort of alienation as prominence theme of the original text. On the other hands, the adopted story by Saadawi is a national tragedy of war and occupation. The protagonists face personal traumas such as torture, loss of people who loved, and loneliness. "Whatsitsname" is a monster sewn from body parts that represents the desire to reconstruct from bits of shattered lives and society. He is anti-terrorist corpse that "embarks on a "noble mission" to avenge the deaths of the victims whose body parts make up its aberrant anatomy" (Webster 2018, 441)

1.2. Analytical Framework

The study investigates the psychological, rhetorical, and cultural importance of trauma, as well as its impact on literature and society. Generally, trauma is defined as "an emotional reaction to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster. People often feel shocked and denial right after an event. Long-term effects include mood swings, flashbacks, tense relationships, and even physical signs like nausea or headaches" (Johnson et al. 2020, 191). Another definition by (Van der Kolk 2014), "Trauma happens when neither internal nor external resources are enough to handle threats from the outside. People feel useless and powerless because of this, and they have a very bad opinion of themselves and their future" (4). On the other hand, (Balaev 2008) gives a literary account that the phrase "trauma novel" in the context of "Trends in literary trauma theory" denotes a fictional work that effectively portrays deep sorrow or extreme terror experienced by individuals or groups (151).

Likewise, Another advanced and more complicated step of trauma is a "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), when a person is triggered by a terrifying event, either experiencing it or witnessing it, as well as thoughts about the event" (Aiken, Mary P., and Mike J. Berry 2015, 98) PTSD is a group of possible responses to a traumatic event. The kind of trauma experienced determines the likelihood of acquiring PTSD. (Grinage 2003) further argues that "It [PTSD] may take weeks or



months to discover the symptoms of PTSD. Other times, PTSD can develop as soon as a person arrives at a troublesome incident. It affects about one in every three people who suffer from painful experiences” (56). Sometimes, they think that severe objects occur due to something inside them, in addition to emotional dysfunction. C- PTSD individuals usually experience stress emotions. They also suffer from rage and sorrow, as if they are dreaming, and rarely feel happiness. Later, they endure a lack of others' -confidence and other problems with their community, such as unsteady or changeable relations. If their trauma is due to a particular abuse, their feelings about their abuser may be complex, or they may think seriously of revenge. The research aims to investigate the causal factors of trauma and its impact on those who have experienced it. Furthermore, it reveals the techniques it employs to promote healing via the lens of relationality theory.

Trauma triggers responses based on a person's perception of being in danger, and the interaction of internalized ideas or assumptions has a significant and disruptive impact. (Freud, Sigmund, and Joseph Breuer 1893) clearly state that Trauma involves repressed emotions returning through dreams, hallucinations, and nightmares, leading to fragmentation and fragmentation, causing future disorders and hypnotic episodes. After a traumatic experience, people face difficulties in dealing with their emotions and thoughts. They try to make sense of what happened and integrate it into their existing personal, social, and family support systems. Additionally, they must resist the strong and misleading influence of negative self-perception, blame, guilt, and confusion about their purpose and the reasons behind the event. Strangely, trauma seems to have a reverse effect, diminishing the self-capacity to see its own progress, imposing constraints on its psychological well-being, bodily well-being, and potential for growth or positive transformation. The idea of trauma is intricate and multifaceted, serving as an obstacle to the process of recovery. The social, political, and historical significance of this topic fuels its continuous discourse, making it suitable for exploration in both contemporary and enduring literature, resulting in a diverse and complex array of characters and storylines.

While a few individuals can alleviate these symptoms with the assistance of their families and community members, many are left incapacitated and experience a situational crisis and develop symptoms of Acute Stress Disorder, which can subsequently lead to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Mitchell considers the therapy interaction to be the primary catalyst for transformation. Gaining insight into the unconscious processes within the patient-therapist connection has significant importance. The concept of interconnectedness refers to the mutual impact that both the patient and therapist have on each other, often occurring at an unconscious level. (Ornstein, Eric D. and Carol Ganzer 1997) the interaction



creates a "relational matrix" in which transference and countertransference interact in both directions.

The Rationality is innovative interpretation of a psychoanalytic theory that places particular emphasis on the dynamics of relationships and conflict. Stephen A. Mitchell is the owner of the original form of Freud's notion of 'the concepts of love and hate'. He is a clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst who lived from 1946 to 2000, made noteworthy advancements in the field of psychoanalysis. His theory of Relationality is widely regarded as a pioneering breakthrough in the world of psychology. Mitchell has made significant efforts to trace this version and further develop it. Pioneering psychotherapist (Bion 1967) skillfully integrates the understanding and profound need to comprehend the underlying emotions of love and hatred. According to him, trauma highlights the absence of communication and relationships with oneself and others. Additionally, the concept of conflict/drive in maturity focuses on the conflict/relationship. In other words, it highlights the absence of communication and ties with both oneself and others. Mitchell, in his theory Relationality (S. A. Mitchell, Relationality: From attachment to intersubjectivity 2022), brings an ample justification about the trauma /PTSD and the process of healing it:

This primary dedifferentiation between self and world is not an illusion, nor is it less real that the differentiated process of primary process thinking. There is no text provided. Psychoanalytically oriented treatment does not aim to reconnect the traumatized individual with reality. Instead, it involves replacing logic with meaning, objectivity with imagination, and control with vitalization. The main beneficial effect is seen in the process of reconnecting. (25)

Mitchell employs the term "relinking" to denote the reconnection between the primary and secondary processes. Consequently, the primary objective of the majority of trauma treatments is to reintegrate the distressed individual into their current environment. (S. A. Mitchell, Relationality: From attachment to intersubjectivity 2022) prefers the term "relationality therapy," which emphasizes:

Once the traumatised individual is reconnected to their primary processes, where the meaning of life is found in our most intimate identifications with people and experiences, these concerns will resolve themselves. Primary process is where the enthusiasm for life resides, the sheer pleasure in being alive. It is the place where our most intense living and feeling is done. (23)

Additionally, the study explores the ways in which the devastated character isolates themselves from others, seeks alone, and harbours a deep disdain for all the



aesthetically pleasing elements that provide happiness to life. According to the idea, the treatment for a traumatized personality involves removing it from isolation and facilitating its integration, in a conducive and nurturing environment, with others in order to rebuild self-confidence and self-reliance in others.

1.3. Literature review

Throughout centuries of literature, characters frequently exhibit the full range of symptoms associated with trauma and PTSD, thus Iraqi has ample share of traumatic story inspired by post-war incidents. “*Traumatic Experiences: A study in Selected Plays of Iraqi Contemporary Protest Theatre*” by (Ubeid 2019), Analyze the effects of traumatic events, namely those related to war and violence, on modern Iraqi theater. Iraqi theater, as the author shows, mirrors the communal trauma of war and the hardships endured by everyday people in the wake of it. Another literary text (Al-Azraki, et al. 2017) comments traumatized identities of Iraqis During or subsequent of war that they have gone through. The narrative centers on two plays: "A Cradle" authored by Abdul-Kareem Al-Ameri and "Summer Rain" written by Abdel-Nabi Al-Zaidi. By doing a thorough analysis of these plays (522).

(Webster 2018) wrote a paper entitles “Ahmed Saadawi’s *Frankenstein In Baghdad : A Tale Of Biomedical*” as a critique of biomedical narratives linked to the Iraq War. The creature, made from war victim remains, challenges the idea of warfare as a catalyst for biomedical innovation and highlights the devastation of Iraq's medical infrastructure. The text uses dark humor and meta-fictional elements to blur the lines between reality and fiction. Hadi, a refuse dealer, represents the desperate efforts to restore humanity to the dismembered. The Whatsitsname, a reanimated creature, represents a miraculous resurrection, providing hope in a world where advanced medical care is scarce. He discusses the loss of identity. The creature represents the loss of identity and the ongoing cycle of violence, raising moral concerns about justice and survival.

(Botting 2019) in " Justice, Terror and Trauma in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* ", explores the concept of monstrosity in the context of contemporary warfare and tragedy, particularly in Iraq. The creature symbolizes collective mourning and trauma, symbolizing the fragmented identities and lives lost due to recent conflicts. The novel critiques media-political responses to terror and the cycles of retribution and violence. The novel highlights the complex societal and individual suffering created by global forces and local realities in Baghdad, illustrating how trauma transcends borders. The narrative structure employs multiple voices and perspectives, highlighting the moral ambiguity individuals face when seeking



reparation in the face of overwhelming loss and violence. The complexities of empathy, mourning, and perception of life and death are revealed through the investigation of spectatorship obscured by media representation.

Feline Trauma in Ahmed Saadawi by (Jani 2023) explore trauma, violence, and conflict's impact on society through the lens of feline (a cat) characters. His narratives highlight the shared vulnerability experienced by humans and animals amid disorder, as represented by characters like Nabu in "Frankenstein in Baghdad" and Hannoush in "The Exercise." These depictions broaden trauma theory and enrich discussions on emotional responses to violence, emphasizing the interconnectedness of suffering and the pain caused by conflict affecting all living beings, regardless of species. The narratives highlight the interconnectedness of suffering, affecting all living beings, regardless of species. Nabu's complex relationship with monstrosity in "Frankenstein in Baghdad" reflects individual and societal challenges.

The Corpse Washer, a novel by (Antoon 2013), The protagonist, Ra'ad, is a morgue worker in Baghdad who washes corpses. Tragedy, loss, and the ever-present danger of violence are the threads that bind Ra'ad's life together. As he washes the bodies of the victims of the continuing conflict, he sees directly the horrors inflicted upon his nation. We witness the harsh truths of life in Iraq after the war through Ra'ad's eyes. The narrative depicts the pervasive brutality, the disintegration of social systems, and the perpetual terror that accompanies daily life.

By examining the chosen novel, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* and how the author introduces the concepts, the study seeks to follow the two ideas of trauma and PTSD disorder, which enlightens the disrupted psyche after trauma. The study will clarify some issues, like Saadawi approach to figure out a reanimation related to the hero's desire to resurrect what was destroyed by trauma and return to normality. What solutions are available for these traumatized characters? And why does the author leave some problems unresolved?

1.4. Thesis Statements

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1.5. The Traumatic Motif as Pivotal Theme in the *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

Frankenstein in Baghdad is a portrayal of the psychological deformity and ludicrousness that result from uncontrolled aggression. The backdrop of prevalent pain is created by the location of Baghdad in 2005, amidst the American occupation and constant sectarian conflict. The backdrop, together with the characters' individual backgrounds and experiences, is likely to form their emotional states and impact their actions throughout the narrative. (Kristeva 1982) further hints that the book creates a link between Shelley's previous English work, *Frankenstein*, and the present one by its use of horrific brutality, illogic, and the hideous metamorphosis of the human flesh to inspire terror. The emergence of hideous creatures is at the heart of these stories, which also feature the grotesque and the abject. Living in a violent civilization and an increasingly violent globe, where the universe looks brutal, drives the author's motivation, which is reflected in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* through the representation of the grotesque and terrifying abject. (Webster 2018) "The text uses dark humor to make the iconic Frankenstein



story absurd, providing an accessible and entertaining perspective on the complex implications of the Iraq War” (440). The goal of Saadawi's dystopian future is to show a society where horrible things happen all the time and people have no control over their own destinies.

Saadawi's dystopian future portrays a society characterized by incessant occurrences of dreadful events, where individuals are devoid of agency over their own fates. Elishva or Umm Daniel, an old lady, visits the church regularly searching for solace and sense in a chaotic environment. The first and obvious traumatized character in the story is “**Elishva:** an elderly Assyrian Christian widow living alone in Bataween” (Saadawi 2013, 9). The text consistently highlights Elishva's multiple traumatic incidents that she has undergone through. In the opening scene, the readers come across an aging female, Elishva, boarding a bus when a decisive explosion took place in “Tayaran Square” left “her frail body was curled up by the window, and she looked out without seeing anything, thinking about the bitter taste in her mouth and the sense of gloom that she had been unable to shake off for the past few days” (Saadawi 2013, 13). Living in Baghdad during a period of terrific bloodshed illustrates an ongoing threat and trauma. The author describes her as:

Elishva, in solitude, her mind incessantly fixated on deeply rooted in her son Daniel's tragic loss in the Iraq-Iran conflict, lived in solitude, constantly battling between optimism and hopelessness. The absence of her son and a fragment of her essence left her feeling emptied and unassuaged by supplications. (Saadawi 2013, 31)

Another traumatic matter, when we learn her son Daniel is taken away to join war to meet his fate. Elishva was convinced that her son, Daniel, is alive, despite the assumption of his demise in the Iran-Iraq war, “he was just one of many who'd died over the years.” (Saadawi 2013, 15). Another hardship is that it is no longer safe for Iraqi Christians to live in the country, especially since the sectarian strife in 2005. Despite this, she does not think leaving her traditional home in the hopes that one day her son Daniel will return and find her waiting for him “and she wanted a sign from the Lord about Daniel whether he was alive and would return or where his real grave” (Saadawi 2013, 22). Because of this, she is forced to live alone and put up with those who want to take her house because it is very ancient and contains many invaluable antiques, leaving her facing a lot of aggressive and exploited attitudes from some of her neighbors. Among the most powerful scene which makes the skin shuddered, the encounter between Umm Daniel (Elishva) with the creature,



GET UP, DANIEL, Elishva shouted. ‘Get up, Danny. Come along, my boy.’ ‘He stood up immediately... With her words the old woman had animated this extraordinary composite—made up of disparate body parts and the soul of the hotel guard who had lost his life. (Saadawi 2013, 55)

A Frankenstein-like entity generated from the remains of deceased Iraqis, is a profoundly disquieting experience. The violence and trauma that have devastated Baghdad are reflected in the creature's appearance and actions, which have left Elishva feeling even more vulnerable and apprehensive.

These traumatic incidents shape Elishva's personality. She becomes withdrawn, isolated, and fearful of the world outside her home. While she is a strong and resilient woman, the trauma of her past continues to haunt her, leaving a lasting impact on her life and her outlook on the world. Consequently, the woman is incapable of experiencing recovery, (Dewachi 2015) further states the novel highlights the repulsiveness of violence in Baghdad, revealing numerous crimes that have deprived Iraqis of their sense of self and introducing a new notion of violence. It also highlights the erosion of moral authority and the rise of a new authority fueled by disorder and anonymous criminality. The text highlights Elishva's identity as a crucial location for comprehending trauma which is intricately connected to the collective trauma experienced by the city of Baghdad. Elishva's physical well-being is consistently endangered in Baghdad. Her experiences with the violent, exploitation, loneliness result in both bodily and emotional wounds. The creature used as remainder of giving up hope, the ugliness of Baghdad's situation and her mental vulnerability.

1.6. Elishva moderating her trauma through Socialization Process

The socialization immersion of Elishva softens her rigid trauma. (S. A. Mitchell 1988) emphasizes the significance of interpersonal connections in the process of recovering from traumatic experiences. Understanding Elishva's journey requires recognising the significance of her connections with her daughters and grand-daughters, her neighbour, and the presumable lost son represented by the creature ‘Whatsitsname’, despite being lost. Her house serves an existence dimension, self-esteem reservoir and optimism. Her religious practice, in “pray in the Church of Saint Odisho, near the University of Technology” (Saadawi 2013, 13), works as another healing and solace factor. Among the things that bring Tranquility and comfort to the Elishva is her house and every elements are filled with reminders of her family, particularly her son Daniel. The antiques, the empty rooms, and the silence all contribute to a sense of hope and authenticity.



[She] wanted to remember it as it had always been, tidy and clean and smelling of the people who had lived in it and passed through it... The night before her departure, the old lady stayed up late in the parlor. She sat on the sofa facing the picture of Saint George and spoke to him at length, the light from the decorative glass sconces in the corners of the room creating a sacramental ambiance. (Saadawi 2013, 205)

The idea of home stands as a hope and reminder of how it provides a sense of spiritual refuge. Although Elishva is in the constant threat of violence and defending her existence among her neighboring, her home arouses the sense of belonging and her home is one aspect of this feeling. Similarly, (Shane 2018) agrees with Mitchell theory of Relationality that receiving validation from those who observe their experiences in a helpful manner assists individuals who have experienced trauma in rebuilding a fundamental feeling of trust, safety, and positive self-esteem. In other words, supportive relationships, based on mutual recognition and respect, help traumatized people build resilience to live with reason and orientation. “Umm Salim, or Elishva’s old friend and neighbour, adepts a high respect to the Elishva, “and she thinks that she had special powers and that God’s hand was on her shoulder wherever she was. Although sometimes she might criticize or think ill of the old woman, she quickly went back to respecting and honoring her” (Saadawi 2013, 16)

The appearance of the grotesque creature ‘Whatsitsname’ in Elishva’s life reveals a faint image of her, since she thinks the creature is her son Daniel who has long been deceased, they develop a mutual mature relationship Enabling her to act as a mother figure to him offers her solace and partially mitigates her suffering. It enables her to satisfy her maternal instincts by resuming the responsibility of caring for her son.

He felt closer to her than others and felt he helped keep her son's memory alive. Now, she's gone, he lost one of his reasons for existence. She left him without realizing she was leaving one of the last threads linking her with her late son. (Saadawi 2013, 207)

Whatsitsname provides her with a revitalized sense of direction and aids her ability to manage her sorrow as well as the resolution and tranquilly she has been searching for extensively. Particularly, "Whatsitsname indicates a lack of identity", “he who has no identity, and then who has no body” (Saadawi 2013, 99) Thus, he could represent anybody that gives meaning and solace to loneliness and traumatized people. Whatsitsname can live in relative safety by adopting Daniel's identity and letting Elishva mother him. He distracts her from dwelling constantly



on her loss and pain. Whatsitsname's presence is therapeutic for an old and lonely soul of Elishva. And for the same reason, Hadi may create him out of the parts of his roommate Abdaki and his friend Hasib Mohamed to be reunited again that may relieve and mitigate his shock.

By the same token, the creature/ Elishva's relationship is fruitful back to the creature too. During the process of taking revenge, Elishva defends and gives a safe haven. It satisfies Elishva's most profound yearning to be reunited with her son, on the other hand, Whatsitsname may also satisfy their own psychological need to be needed or desired. It provides him with a sense of purpose and significance.

Elishva goes through a profound trauma, it may exceed to PTSD as she comes close leaving her homeland in Iraq. As she starts selling her furniture one by one, she uproots from the place she is custom with. The scene of leaving her home heading toward the airport is displayed with a big despair and sorrow. Especially, when we know that it represents the resident of her husband, son. All of her social connections and sources of support are located in Iraq. She is anxious about sacrificing her sense of self and autonomy by relocating to live with her daughters. It represents the cessation of her capacity to live autonomously. The significant disruption caused by this relocation has the potential to develop PTSD.

1.7. Hadi between Despair and Deterioration

Hadi, another prominent character in the novel, serves as a means for the author to convey several traumatic themes. He is portrayed as an average person who fabricates stories. The reader gains insight into the story's pivotal moments through his lenses, besides, he is the creator of the creature, Whatsitsname, from the torn pieces of Iraqi bombing corps. He can be considered the primary target of violence of the novel. Since, he experiences numerous instances of physical and psychological pain throughout the narrative. He is a middle age junk dealer who resides by himself in a shatter house in Bataween, sustaining himself by the purchase and sale of second hand staff.

He suffers from mental health issues as a consequence of his addiction, multiple significant traumas, and his propensity to engage in inventing stories. The first accident when he came across the location where "Hadi was watching the scene of the vehicle exploded in a ball of fire... the people who weren't injured" (Saadawi 2013, 25)

The second horrible trauma that Hadi experienced is the death of his friend and roommate Nahem Abdaki in " car bomb that had exploded in front of the office of



a religious party in Karrada”, ... It had been hard to separate Nahem’s flesh from that of the horse” (Saadawi 2013, 36)

After Nahem's death, Hadi got into a deep trauma. He starts chasing American automobile with stones, cursing and swearing. Whenever someone brings up Nahem or what has done to him, he quarrels with them. He alienates himself from other, and lives in deep grief and despair. “He also started drinking during the day and always had quarters of arak or whisky in his pocket and the smell of alcohol on his breath” (Saadawi 2013, 37). His attitude marks with erupted hostility, he isolated himself for a time before returning to his usual self, full of life and laughter and fabricated tales. He begins to hide something, a newfound sadness and despair the moment he was alone.

The third occasion of trauma, once Hadi undergoes the explosion at the hotel himself, hurling high in the sky, “Hadi, together with his sack and his dinner, was lifted off the ground. With the dust and dirt and blast of the explosion, he sailed through the air, turned a somersault, and landed hard on the asphalt Maybe a minute passed before he realized what had happened” (Saadawi 2013, 37). The successive traumas impacts Hadi which erodes his capacity to operate in a typical manner or sustain an optimistic perspective. He increasingly collapses to drinking, indulges in fantasy, and prioritizes self-preservation. (S. A. Mitchell 2014) accordingly states:

Affectively intense experiences trigger endorphin release in the brain, causing deep trauma and a physiology of attachment to early objects. These experiences are addictive due to their psychological salience and neurochemical concomitants. (115).

The shocks introduce an element of fatalism and disregard for his own safety. Hadi's character is transformed into a more desperate and unstable state as a result of the cumulative toll of successive traumas, which renders him unable to control himself or the world around him. His financial difficulties and lack of direction intensify his uneasiness and instability. Hadi's mental degradation is prompted by the aforementioned heinous factors to challenge the natural, common, and religious law in order to transform the remains of innocent individuals who perished in suicide bombings into a human-like entity. Saadawi perfectly describes that:

A wild animal chewed off a deformed nose, leaving a new, congealed, dark crimson nose. Hadi removed the nose from a canvas bag, placing it in the dead's face, restoring it to fit like a glove. The nose was covered in dark crimson blood. (Saadawi 2013, 39)



Constructing a humanoid creature from body parts from deceased individuals, inspired by Mary Shelley's book, *Frankenstein*, renowned for its frightening and gothic nature is obviously a technique, used by the author, to emphasize the horrific circumstances that Iraqi citizens go through. Hadi will be compelled to conceal a hazardous secret that, if revealed, might lead to severe legal complications which makes him anxious and worried about it. His life grows more precarious with scary beast wandering about his resident. After knowing that the grotesque monster, that he created, is hanging around the neighbourhood, particularly when he is informed that he is one of the targets marked for elimination by Whatsitsname. So that he lives in perpetual fear of the Whatsitsname's return to execute him as promised. "The first sentence the Whatsitsname spoke confirmed Hadi's fears: he really was visiting him that night in order to kill him ...Hadi argued with him, plucking up all his courage to defend himself. In a sense Hadi was his father; he had brought him into the world, hadn't he?" (Saadawi 2013, 111-112).

Hadi situation gets even worst, not only having horrifying visions related with encountering with the Whatsitsname and the latter promises of killing him, but also he is subjected to increased suspicion and accusations from authorities in relation to the crimes which Whatsitsname had committed:

The angry officer kicked Hadi in the stomach, winding him completely. The angry officer took out a small sharp knife the length of a finger and cut into Hadi's arms, then his hips and thighs. Hadi cried out. The officer stopped and waited to see the blood. Hadi writhed on the ground as his blood spilled, black and sticky, onto the courtyard floor. (Saadawi 2013, 146)

The torture, humiliation and interrogation leave deep psychological and physical scars in Hadi's life. It is also developed into PTSD mental distress. Accordingly, (Reyes et al. 2008) note that "the stressor of the depression of a person whose prolonged trauma combines with PTSD manifests itself in various fields, including occupation, connections to others, and bodily health" (197). The police exposed him to mistreatment and deprived him of his dignity and self-esteem, causing profound humiliation. It is probable that he had heightened anxiety, paranoia, and fear as a result of the traumatic experience he went through. Naturally, he had anger and resentment against his attackers and the institution that authorized their actions. He probably had a sense of powerlessness, anxiety, and concern at the possibility of more mistreatment due to his diminished faith in persons of authority. The series of traumas never stop attacking Hadi turning him into vulnerable and confused person.



Likewise, Mitchell's theory of Relationality that Object relations theory added enormously to the understanding and treatment of patients with severe regression in the transference. Pathological character traits are always dynamically structured. That is, the development of chronic PTSD from the various traumatic experiences over time and the absence of relational healing opportunities are substantially influenced by the impaired relational capacities and lack of social connections (Greenberg 1983, 156). The event severely disrupted his internal perceptions of himself and others, hindering his capacity to establish connections or contemplate mental states. In the absence of supportive relationships, his complex trauma was further exacerbated by his subsequent experiences of abuse, violence, and loss.

(S. A. Mitchell 1988) relational model posits that the trauma will exacerbate into more severe PTSD over time as a result of impeded recovery if social support is not available to process it. "A man sat on the sidewalk smoking, fearing a car bomb might go off at any moment. Every day, he saw people dying on the news, but he remained alive. He knew that he had to get on the news one day, as he knew this was his destiny (Saadawi 2013, 93). The event detailed at the Hadi's contemplation would compound and intensify Hadi's previous trauma in a variety of ways. He has a deep sense of powerlessness and insecurity as a result of the continual presence of violence, Whatsitsname's threat, security abuse and bomb threats. This feeling of powerlessness is causing significant psychological distress.

Consequently, the last explosion, took place, in Bataween district close to the Hadi's house, turned out to be the bullet of mercy diminishing his tenuous hold of sensibility and would have worsened his mental stability. His mental and physical health is worsened by the event and its aftermath. The occurrence of another very distressing incident in such close succession to the past traumas intensifies his post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and anxiety. The explosion left severe physical scars and mental ones to the level he begins to mix up his identity with Whatsitsname:

He had hoped his face would be in better shape when he emerged from his sleep and saw the pattern on the skin after the removal of the bandages. It wouldn't matter if he recovered completely; he was an abominable monster. Incredulous, he leaned in to assess his deformity after rubbing his palm over the mirror's surface to confirm its authenticity. All he could do was look, even though he wanted to weep. Up close, he could see something more substantial: this wasn't Hadi the trash dealer's face, but rather the face of someone he had persuaded himself was nothing more than a creation of his vivid mind. The Whatsitsname was represented by its visage. (Saadawi 2013, 227)



Hadi after had been deformed by the bombing incident, he is no longer able to grasp the new image of himself. The accident reinforces his sense of helplessness in the face of imminent peril. His mental and physical health are worsened by the event and its aftermath. Hadi is neither able to accept the new image of himself nor can mingle among the people he knows. Thus, His resilience and capacity to cope are diminished by the chronic stress and insecurity he experiences. His state is shattered the subsequent disorientation of explosion and it develops into PTSD. Hadi's mental degeneration is significantly influenced by the absence of a link between himself and others. Specifically, we acknowledge that he was a self-indulgent person who made significant attempts to be the centre of attention, even going so far as to create fictitious stories to fascinate his social circle. His state agrees with Winnicott's model "the individual is left with deficits in functioning and arrested development, resulting in low self-esteem, vulnerability to narcissistic injuries, and unsatisfactory relationships" (Ornstein, Eric D. and Carol Ganzer 1997, 394). Mitchell considers broken or degraded connections to be crucial in comprehending traumatic reactions. Trauma undermines an individual's perception of safety, trust, and stability in interpersonal connections.

1.8. Conclusion

Although, the theory of the relationality emphasizes more on the professional (client /therapist) treatment, it also beneficially counts on the ordinary cooperative fusion of the traumatic people in their social circle. The study states that traumatized people are better coped with their plights if they are in positive relation esteemed by others. Consequently, their circumstances are a component of the broader context that contributes to the bleak outcome of the Iraqi conflict. As a result of this focus, the emphasis was on the client's participation in understanding the nature of her difficulties, experiencing past and present conflicts in the context of this new therapeutic relationship, and developing new patterns of action. If trauma occurs before the establishment of one's relational frameworks, it may significantly disrupt a person's sense of identity and hinder their ability to absorb information effectively. Mitchell's relational theory basically indicates that individuals who are experiencing trauma can be saved by facilitating the reconstruction of relationships and the healing of relational wounds. However, individuals who are devoid of supportive relationships will experience an intensification of their psychological distress as trauma progresses unabated into severe and chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). According to Mitchell, supportive connections are crucial factors that may serve as major motivators to avoid, alleviate, and assist in resolving trauma reactions, such as the ones experienced by heroes due to the lack of genuine relational support systems after a significant disturbance. They were initially able to manage the plights, though they



are less devastated and awkward than the last ones, owing to social bond, esteem and support.

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