



The Sectarianism Concept in Iraq post-war 2003 based on Selected Iraqi Novels

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Abstract

This study explores the rise of sectarianism in Iraq post-2003 war and U.S invasion, highlighting the changing political, social, cultural, and economic landscape. Novelists used themes from Frankenstein, a Mary Shelley novel, to express sectarianism as a last resort for marginalized and impoverished individuals in Baghdad's neighbourhoods. The concept is discussed in selected Iraqi novel. The researcher will discuss how sectarianism emerged in Iraq following the 2003 war and how the US invasion of the country thrived following the significant upheaval in the political, social, cultural, and economic spheres of Iraqi society. New writing trends and styles were reflected in the themes and discourses, which eventually became an accurate representation of Iraqis' lives and sorrows. Sex, religion, and politics were three formerly taboo topics that could now be discussed in novels written at the period. The novel from Iraq features a prominent theme that is derived from the universal phenomenon that is based on Mary Shelley's English classic Frankenstein. This theme is purposefully used to convey the notion that sectarianism is the last option and the hope for those people.

Keywords: sectarianism, Iraq, Frankenstein

مفهوم الطائفية في عراق ما بعد الحرب 2003 استنادا إلى روايات عراقية مختارة

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خلاصة

تستكشف هذه الدراسة صعود الطائفية في العراق بعد حرب عام 2003 والغزو الأمريكي، وتسليط الضوء على المشهد السياسي والاجتماعي والثقافي والاقتصادي المتغير. استخدم الروائيون موضوعات من رواية فرانكشتاين، وهي رواية لماري شيلي، للتعبير عن الطائفية كملاذ أخير للأفراد المهمشين والفقراء في أحياء بغداد. وقد تمت مناقشة هذا المفهوم في روايات عراقية مختارة. وسيناقش الباحث كيف ظهرت الطائفية في العراق بعد حرب 2003 وكيف ازدهر الغزو الأمريكي للبلاد في أعقاب الاضطرابات الكبيرة في المجالات السياسية والاجتماعية والثقافية والاقتصادية للمجتمع العراقي. وانعكست اتجاهات وأساليب الكتابة الجديدة في الموضوعات والخطابات، التي أصبحت في نهاية المطاف تمثيلاً دقيقاً لحياة العراقيين وأحزانهم. كان الجنس والدين والسياسة ثلاثة موضوعات محظورة سابقاً ويمكن مناقشتها الآن في الروايات المكتوبة في تلك الفترة. تتميز الرواية من العراق بموضوع بارز مستمد من الظاهرة العالمية المبنية على رواية فرانكشتاين



الإنجليزية الكلاسيكية لماري شيلي. يتم استخدام هذا الموضوع بشكل مقصود لنقل فكرة أن الطائفية هي الخيار الأخير والأمل لهؤلاء الناس.
كلمات مفتاحية : الطائفية ، العراق ، فرانكشتاين

1-Introduction

Especially during difficult times, sectarianism is nearly universal among all peoples, cultures, and civilizations. Nearly no people or nation is free of this notion, according to surveys and research from various religions and beliefs. This concept goes all the way back to the beginning of civilizations. Everyone living in suffering and oppression will wish to know how to free themselves from evil and injustice and return to a life of safety, justice, and tranquillity. The oppressed wait in vain for someone to bring laws and justice, freeing them from cruel rules imposed by cruel rulers who dominate their people, limit their freedom, and kill in order to satiate their own greed and selfishness (Fouladi, 2011, p.1). With the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's administration and the US invasion and occupation, 2003 marked the beginning of a new era for Iraqis. But the lack of a clear future vision is a problem for the Iraqis. It followed the failure of national, global, and patriotic ideologies to meet the expectations of the populace on the one hand, and the populace's incapacity to generate a charisma that would enable them to realize their dreams of peace and prosperity and halt the catastrophic destruction of the nation and its citizens brought about by both internal and external forces in the form of partisan, ethnic, and sectarian conflicts on the other. All of these factors encourage people to consider redemption, whether it comes from a legendary figure that purges corruption or from a practical, people-created salvation from metaphysically divine energies. A novel is a literary form that "looks to many people in their society," therefore the authors utilize it to express their ideas and issues. Although writers have always been curious about the world they live in, the rise of the novel genre indicates a shift in focus from a primarily religious understanding of life to one that is more concerned in the intricacies of daily existence "the majority of novels are concerned with ordinary people and their problems in the societies in which they find themselves." (Peck & Coyle, 2003, p. 114). Dobie noted "All texts are social documents and, as such, they both reflect and affect the world that produces them. (p. 185). This is in line with the views of the new historicists.

2-Problem Statement

The genre of modern Iraqi novels has developed after the Saddam regime's downfall at the end of the twenty-first century, particularly when the country's people saw significant changes in their political, social, cultural, and economic lives. Numerous testimonies portraying the lives of the disenfranchised individuals who were directly impacted by the upheaval and significant social and economic transformations that followed the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 are abundant.



Actually, it was a completely unheard-of narrative revolution. The book genre has made significant strides, with numerous Iraqi novels reaching a global readership. The Iraqi book genre breaks free from its archaic forms and forges ahead with its own themes. It was noted as existing in both the Arab and global spheres. This study looks into how the U.S. invasion affected the creation of narratives in Iraq and how language discourse, style, and themes changed as a result. There aren't many studies done in the stated fiction genre. The Iraqi novel was covered in some theses and dissertations from particular perspectives or topics. Nonetheless, the research will look at why reviewers were unable to continue the prolific novelistic output after 2003. The goal of this study is to close the gap and lay the groundwork for future investigations. It provides an answer to the following query: Does the Iraqi story have its own uniqueness or is it a part of the Arabic and global discourse?

Using sectarianism concept as a subject drawn from the global phenomena in the chosen story is the primary idea employed in the new genre of Iraqi novels. This theme is purposefully used to portray the impression that sectarianism is the final chance left for those who are oppressed and marginalized in a destitute neighbourhood of Baghdad. Due to the immense strain placed on those impoverished people, they were compelled to either quit Iraq and migrate abroad, or face their oppressors and the challenges of the new life that the invasion put upon them, which drove many to turn to identity change. The period of the invasion demonstrated the range of terror and retaliation that typifies the nation's unfairness and tattered fabric of life. It was observed that there aren't many studies done in this area.

3-The sectarianism

Sectarianism is the study of political or religious sects and the divisions that typically result in hostilities and violence. The phrase refers to the sectarian conflict in Iraqi society between Sunni and Shia Arabs, Kurdish and Arabs, Christians and Muslims, and other groups. Following the 2003 war and invasion of the coalition led by the United States of America in Iraq, all of these elements defended themselves by joining organizations or parties to obtain rights and income from the authorities. Iraq's sectarian issues have grown from extremist struggles to popular movements, with a growing support base. Despite public support for national unity, violence and cleansing continue to escalate. The 2005-2008 sectarian conflict was an undeclared civil war, destroying Iraq as a nation.

4-National Identity

Ammar Izzat points that "An ideological concept represents the shared features among a group of people, such as religion, ethnicity, language, or sect," is how



identity is described. These characteristics vary according on how they are used and applied (Izzat, 2016, p. 6). It is a significant theme found in Iraqi writing. The treatment of this theme was based on regional, ethnic, or religious affinities. The fight for identity began locally and spread to states and countries. Any ethnic or religious group associated with a state or country that chooses to sponsor and aid this group in continuing to exist. The national identity is not anything tribal, eternal, metaphysical, or predestined. Because a body may be created, changed, and reconstituted, it is a dynamic reality. The topic of national identity. (p.18).

5-Literature Review

In this study I try to divide the discussion into two main subjects which are connected to each other. The first subject was the sectarianism as a concept. It has been discussed from different perspectives; linguistically and as a notion or idea. This concept is a controversial subject among different scholars and the interpretations about it are so diverse. Some religious leaders preach about the sectarianism who will appear at the end of the world and invite people to just wait.

In his comparative analysis, Ghanbari (2008) contends that "religious groups all ask others to wait, which is thought to cause people's hearts to hope," despite disparities regarding sectarianism and the circumstances surrounding his coming (p. 736). We must continue to look to God for help, expect Al-Qaim to return at any time, and firmly believe that he is the only one who can end the horrors we face in this world. This is the believers' most noble effort, so the story goes (Majd, 2003). Based on their interpretation of Qur'anic texts, Shiites hold to the waiting theory. Media and the Promised Hope (2012), Sabah Mohsin Kadim states: "The anticipated Imam is the dream of humanity of equity, pleasure, liberty, and peace. A ray of hope and light are here to guide humanity toward righteousness, goodness, and peace." (p. 37) Therefore, it is evident from the Qur'an that " They ask: "Why hasn't his Lord sent him a sign"? Declare: " Only Allah (may) know what is unseen, so wait; I will wait with you. " (Mahdi, in 1981). "Normally, under normal situations, one didn't crave for him but when faced with hardships, problems, or truly catastrophic circumstances, he submits, whether he wants to or not." (Ghanbari, 2008: 736). Due of the extreme suffering that people experience from war, poverty, deprivation, and unfaithfulness, the idea of sectarianism or great reformers quickly spreads and is especially prevalent in developing countries (Lafta, 2013: p.107). Additionally, some individuals begin to question God's existence because of his seeming indifference to all of the misery brought on by the protracted wait without anything tangible. However, the theological perspective on waiting for the Savior does not advocate for doing nothing but waiting aimlessly. They advise carrying on with the good deeds while looking for a job to support yourself. In difficult



circumstances, man is supposed to remain patient and optimistic, persuading himself that better days are yet ahead, just as he was promised.

Falih Mahdi examines the idea of the Savior in his different religions: especially in his book *The Search for a Savior: A Contrastive Study among Eight Religions*. The author provided a thorough explanation of how various religions have changed and developed over time. This book is an express to investigate a particular aspect of religious philosophy, which is symbolized the world ends and the Savior's descent from heavenly power to rescue the righteous. He focuses on the prophecy breach of the hero's or Savior's place and time of appearance, as well as the circumstances surrounding the hero's or Savior's birth. The author also discusses the indications that precede the great appearance of this Savior (Mahdi, 1981, p. 135).

An additional piece released by the Islamic Studies examines the phenomenon of the Savior and how it appears in nearly every known religion and mythology. They talk about various well-known Western philosophers' and intellectuals' perspectives on the idea of the Savior. The world is waiting for the Great Reformer, according to a number of western philosophers, academics, and authors, who will seize global leadership and bring all peoples together under one roof. The globe is waiting for a reformer to bring the world together under a single flag and emblem, according to English philosopher Bertrand Russell. According to Einstein, the time is not far off when there will be calm, harmony, and brotherly love among people.

The second topic covered in this research is the intentional (knowing) usage of the idea of sectarianism in Iraqi novel writing, and how authors use this idea to express the worries and hopes of their readers. The time frame selected is the post-2003 war, which saw US invasion of Iraq. Following the war, the situation in Iraq has drastically changed in all facets of society. The significant shift is covered in this paper from historical, social, political, and cultural angles. Focus is placed on the sectarian strife that ravaged the nation between 2005 and 2008 when an unofficial civil war was being waged.

The information and statistics on this topic were gathered from modern Iraqi novels written in literature. The emphasis is on the war novels published after 2003, which portray people's hopes, pains, and battles to survive in the midst of chaos brought on by the significant shift. A deeper comprehension, perspective, analysis, and interpretation of the texts are made possible by reading narratives of the Iraqi which included in this study against the backdrop of the selected theories. They offer a specific approach along with supporting data to help analyze the stories produced during this time period. We have chosen three Iraqi books and will analyze them using new historical and postcolonial perspectives.

The works are examined using postcolonial theory to show the true state of affairs in the nation following the transition. " The premise of a postcolonial analysis is



that by analyzing a text's relationship to its context, one can learn more about the culture that produced and consumed the work as well as the text itself. " (Dobie, 2015, page 212). The paper reviews numerous postcolonial studies conducted in various nations. Among these is a research that Kashou (2013) filed, in which she provided an important critical examination of the role that females played in Iraq both during the war and in exile. She provides insight into how women participated with men throughout the incredibly damaging international sanctions. Additionally, the author mentioned "[a] major rationale for the study the goal of Iraqi women writers on their country, the experiences of war, and exile is to offer an alternative account of events from the perspective of Iraqi Arab-Middle Eastern women." (p. 125) This study also attempts to locate the contemporary Iraqi novels in the mainstream world literature and in particular as part of the genre of postcolonial literature. It "contends that authors from these regions have tackled topics including the search for one's identity, nationalism, modernization, hybridization, mimicry, resistance, the conflict between modernity and tradition, and the interaction between colonizers and colonized". (Al Wadhaf1 year and page?). Kashou (2013) in her study *War and Exile in Contemporary Iraqi Women* discussed about the struggle of women during the war and in exile from a feminist point of view. She analysed some novels written by Iraqi women during the contemporary time, especially during the recent wars in Iraq with Iran, Kuwait and the Coalition Forces which led to the invasion of Iraq. She focuses on the fictional narrative discourse and themes on the Iraqi war(s) and the political situation the nation faced over the past thirty years. Also, from a feminist point of view, she sees the men as victims of the war in their being soldiers, prisoners, deserters, exiles, or martyrs of wars. She describes the plights of the women in the absence of men and how they and their children struggle to survive. Kashou (2013) gives more attention to the identity subject as one of the most problematic issues the Iraqis, especially for women. She argues the complexities which the Iraqi emigrants have to overcome represented by the binary system of identities between the East and West. These complexities go beyond politics and war but also through culture and traditions and the superiority/inferiority relationship between the two worlds. Westerners fear competition from the immigrants as they are seen as stealing employment away from locals. An obvious instance of this case was discussed in Ali Bader's novel *The Infidel women* in which he narrated the daily life of young Iraqi women who migrated to Brussels and engaged in the daily life as a seller in the market describing the paradoxes that happened to her (Bader, 2016).

6-Theoretical Framework

This study covers the ideas that were used to develop the research design and methodology, as well as certain publications and critical remarks. The present investigation employed a range of concepts, methodologies, and theoretical



frameworks to analyse and interpret data in accordance with pertinent theoretical frameworks. The study's approach incorporates multiple sources. First, religious and philosophical studies and resources were reviewed to contextualise the sectarianism concept through history and the role and status of such concept in the life of the Iraqi people. The researcher used the Holy books such as the Koran, Gospel, Torah, Testaments, and other texts in my review. Second, a thorough examination of the political landscape of Iraq prior to and following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein was conducted through the use of official data, news articles, archival materials, and personal accounts from both the occupiers and the occupied. Also, the researcher reviewed selected Iraqi contemporary novels written before, during and after the fall of Saddam's regime. The novels chosen represent a sample of the massive narrative production post-2003 war. Third, the new historicist perspective is used regarding the discourse of the marginalized. This is because New Historicists are aware that "Since no single discourse can fully capture the complexity of any given event or artifact, they look for sources that critics who were looking for a comprehensive account of the customs and output of a certain era in the past neglected" (Dobie, 2015, pp. 182-183). The historical literary critics, then, the literary text, through its representation of human experience at a given time and place is viewed as an interpretation of history" (Tyson, 2006, p. 295). So, the chosen novels in this study are related to the Iraq history in a form or another. In the novels, the novelists described in detail the history of Iraq during the past hundred years. In addition, they criticized the malfunctioning of the country from one ruler to another. The worst was the Ba'ath party which ruled with an iron fist and committed a lot of atrocities.

The critics during the period of the Ba'ath party were constantly under government control. We cannot consider the output of literature of this period as neutral or realistic since the novelists were under the constant supervision of the government. With regard to literature Tyson (2006) states "Literary interpretation is taking into account all of the social issues surrounding a text, including those that are relevant to the author's life as well as the traditions, organizations, and social behaviors it portrays." (p. 185). But this orientation was absent. Only government-sanctioned critics and scholars that represented the regime's point of view were accepted. In contrast, critics of the government who represented the masses could not express their opinions freely or they would be prosecuted with imprisonment or execution. Tyson (2006), in his book *Critical Theory Today*, defined discourse as "a social language created by particular cultural conditions at a particular time and place, and it expresses a particular way of understanding human experience" (p. 285). It means that the discourse during the Ba'ath party era was a reflection of the conditions under which the writers could not express any opinion without being in danger from the authority. This caused the narrowness of the writer's horizon and



creativity and their themes only focused on what served the best interest of the regime.

In the same book Tyson (2006) used the word *discourse* and considered it as having roughly the same meaning with the word *ideology*. The two terms are often used interchangeably, but the word *discourse* draws attention to the role of language as the vehicle of ideology. In this perspective the literature during Saddam regime was ideological literature. It bore the ideas, orientations, and policies of the regime and the writers were simply tools to carry out the regime's policies. This generated poor quality of literature and could not compete with the international or even the Arab literature in the freedom of ideas and styles. The literature of this stage represented a major setback in the development of Iraqi literature.

The study bases its assumption on a number of studies and resources related to the field of literature, especially the novel genre. Many books were reviewed to be as a base for this research. Many of these books and resources discussed thoroughly subjects such as identity which was one of the problematic subjects under the shadow of killings and exiles. The pretexts of such atrocities were sectarian, religious, or territorial differences and the struggle for power. There are many writers who write on this subject to characterize the invasion period as the period of identity crisis. Cain (2006) discussed some types of identity in different societies and named them as "melting pot", "multiculturalism" and "identity politics". Ahmed Saadawi, the author of the novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, said in an interview that his novel's main character was the best representative of the *melting pot identity*, a unique illustration of the melting pot of identities is the *what-its-name*. Iraq has historically struggled with this ongoing issue since its founding in the early 1900s. The competing question of Iraqi national identity burst into violent eruption following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's administration. (Najjar, 2015).

7-Overview of Theories

The study based mainly on postcolonial theory, also, new historical and cultural theories are applied to describe the reality of Iraqi society. The historical theory is used to review the concept historically and how it was part of the history of the civilizations and religious instructions and practices. Also, an attention was given to the use of the Iraqi novels to explore Iraqi history through those novels. Peck & Coyle (2003) explain how literature shows the history of a place saying "[e]very work of literature has a generic context. In addition, every work has a historical context: that is, it belongs to a particular historical period"(pp.1-2).



Dobie (2015) argues that the stories, events and narrations received throughout history were recordings of those in power and that ensures writers wrote whatever serve their interests regardless of the reliability. "Every history is recorded subjectively and is influenced by the cultural background of the recorder, who is typically a powerful individual. As a result, stories of the helpless are often left out. History has typically been written by the victors." (p. 181). From a new historicist point of view *Frankenstein in Baghdad* explores the lives of the inhabitants of impoverished areas in Baghdad represented by the Bataween Quarter (a religiously and ethnically mixed working-class neighbourhood in eastern Baghdad). They are the real representatives of the downtrodden as pointed out in Dobie's argument: "There are also tales to be told by the losers, or those without social or political influence. They may not have included those tales in official records or textbooks, but they have nonetheless disseminated them as distinct discourses—that is, as perspectives on and conversations about the world. The next generation of historicists would want to hear every tale and identify every voice. (Dobie, 2015, p. 181).

When the literature of a certain period of time is studied, the historical events of this period should be taken into considerations. Thus, according to new historicist view "we cannot understand a historical event, object, or person in isolation from the web of discourses in which it was represented because we can't understand it in isolation from the meaning it carried at that time. (Tyson, 2006, p. 286). Mostly, the points of views in this case are biased and subjective. New historicist "views historical accounts as narratives, as stories, that are inevitably biased according to the point of view, conscious or unconscious, of those who write it" (Tyson, 2006, p. 286).

The researcher uses the theory of new historicism because it reflects the orientation of the Iraqi novelists to reveal the cultural changes that happened to the Iraqi society before and after the U.S-led invasion in 2003. To sum that up " The new historicists contend that as all texts are social records, they both reflect and have an impact on the society in which they are produced. " (Tyson, 2006, p.185). There was a drastic change in the post-war culture which was exploited by the authors and reflected the kind of literary achievements of the authors in how they managed to exploit the changes. This change motivated the writers to publish well-plotted novels that enabled them to compete with other Arabic novels in the international events. Contemporary Iraqi novelists were able to explain through their texts the period's concerns in which their texts were written. According to Ryan (2012), "[h]istorical information can explain a cultural text by providing meaning for events and characters that is not locatable within the text itself". (p.66). Therefore, the Iraqi novelists narrate the history of the Iraqi people using symbols such as texts, paintings, tools, and other signs that documented a certain period of time in



the history of the Iraqi people and/or places. This is exactly what Ahmed Saadawi used in *Frankenstein in Baghdad* when documenting the history of the Bataween quarter (one of the oldest Baghdad quarters which witnessed all the changes during a hundred of years). He portraits some Jewish findings in the house of Elishwa, the Jewish old lady, through his narrations.

As Dobie (2015) says "But in the case of a modern piece, the critic might not stop at comprehending the power dynamics. Alternatively, she can view a text as an ideological declaration and a tool for political awareness." (p.184). In the same context Ali Bader in his novel *The Tobacco Keeper* narrated the history of Iraq during the period from 1926 to 2006, the period in which the protagonist of the novel with his three different personalities lived and acted. Every one of these three characters has a distinct name, age, features, convictions and different religion. Fawzi Al Hindawi, the author of the third selected novel *A Hope to Live* wasn't different from his predecessors in recording and documenting tragedies of war and hopes of the history of Iraq during the sectarian war in the period of 2006 to 2008 under the American Occupation. (2015). Under the dictatorship of the Ba'ath party history was changed according to the regime's interest. They covered their injustices by providing the population with different images from what actually happened. They employed the media as a tool of dissemination of the falsehood. In the past century, Saddam Hussein for the first time talked about rewriting the Arab and Iraqi history. He calls for interpreting the events according to the philosophy and viewpoint of Arab Ba'ath Social party. He invited, for this purpose, many writers, university professors, researchers and scientific research centres to start rewriting Iraq and Arab history role in the region and the world.

The result of this invitation was a group of studies and publications that were based on chauvinistic, rightist intellectual and political point of view that sought to inflate the Ba'ath party's role and its thoughts. Also, it sought to highlight the role of 'the founder leader' Michael Aflaq and the 'the necessary historical commander' Saddam Hussein. The result was a distortion of historical events and writings in favour of the Arabs, Ba'ath party and Saddam Hussein instead of a thorough investigation of the facts of the relative events or those which are closer to reality without deliberate prejudice to the Arabs and other peoples (Habeeb, 2018). In this regard, Christina Asquith in her article in *The Guardian* wrote Children have been taught since 1973, when Saddam Hussein ordered that all school histories be rewritten from the perspective of the Ba'ath party, that the US was the bad invader, that Iraq won every war, and that Saddam Hussein alone saved the Arab world from avaricious Zionism. (Asquith, 2003). Eric Davis, in his article Historical Memory and the Building of Democracy in Iraq, a Middle East expert and consultant on peace-building initiatives in Iraq states:



Davis intends to promote a rethinking of contemporary Iraqi history by resurrecting an understanding of these pre-Ba'athist events and trends that the Ba'athists attempted to remove from public consciousness by researching how the Ba'athists attempted to rewrite history through their major writings. Examining the Project for the Rewriting of History during the Ba'athist era also exposes attempts by intelligent and resourceful intellectuals to undermine the Ba'athist message, which is another beneficial legacy that ought to be discussed in Iraqi public conversation today. When Davis visited Iraq for the first time in 1980, he discovered not only that the country was actively producing a lot of history, but also that the people were eager to read it, even in the face of the government's suppression of historical discourse. The endeavor of the Ba'athists to reconstruct historical understandings. (Davis, 2004).

On the Writing of History, an effort to rewrite history, was ostensibly written by Saddam but was actually composed of twenty-four essays by leading Iraqi historians and cultural theorists and four speeches by the president of Iraq. (See also: Iraq in History, a text without an editor evident; Poetry and History by Nuri Hammudi al-Qaysi The Literary Vanguard, a monthly newspaper that described itself as focused on "the literature of our youth," The Civilization of Iraq by Abd al-Hamid al-'Alwaji, and The newspaper of Popular Culture). Examining these and other works sponsored by the state shows how the Ba'ath party tried to obliterate from Iraqi history the accomplishments of any group that it believed threatened its political agenda. Some historical events were neglected and labeled as having little influence on modernity through the marketing of specific books, articles, visual images, films, and television shows. Examples of this include having them put as museum exhibits or even completely erased from the historical record. (Davis, 2004). The Ba'athist authority used some paid pens of critics to do this distortion. "Critics who work from this perspective often want to change the culture, and the stories they bring to light are deemed to be a tool for modifying it. Like the Marxists who preceded them, these critics assume that literature addresses cultural concerns and can affect society's attitudes and values." (Dobie, 2015, p. 184). Politicians control the historical narration and employ it for their interest because they control the economy and culture in their time. "For political historians, a society is defined and determined by who runs it. The distribution of power is as important as the distribution of food. Political parties are the expression of both economic and social lives, and the major changes that occur in the world are the result of political action" (Ryan, 2012, p. 33). Edward Said (2001) argues that Postcolonial theory investigates, and develops propositions about, the cultural and political impact of European conquest upon colonised societies, and the nature of those societies' responses. The 'post' in the term refers to 'after colonialism began'



rather than 'after colonialism ended', because the cultural struggles between imperial and dominated societies continue into the present." (Said, 2015, p. 15) The U.S. occupation has caused great divisions in the social, political and sectarian fields using some of the profiteers and opportunists to fulfil its goals to dominate the wealth of Iraq. Those opportunists were mostly living in exile and built strong connections with the invaders. They participated effectively in paving the way for the occupiers to control their homeland and benefited from the authority of the invaders. The study will also shed lights on the new trends, issues and ways of behavior which developed in the Iraqi scene after the war. Therefore, the themes of the novels were centered on war components as stated by Kashou (2013). There are fundamental components to war that are unavoidable, such as death, destruction, soldiers, and casualties, and therefore these components are naturally considered to be a part of war literature. The soldier, one of the main figures in writing about war, also acquires certain attributes in the literature. The tenancy was directed to explain the situation the Iraqis encountered after the war transferred to their homeland and affect every person in the country not only the soldiers in the war fronts. There were no fronts, all the directions were fronts. Killing mechanisms are working all over the days and nights. This situation was neatly described by Kashou (2013) when describing the Iraq situation after the war of 2003 states:

The Persian Gulf War was fought in Kuwait but was followed by debilitating sanctions, and during the last war of 2003, there was no such thing as a home front and battlefield for Iraq and the Iraqi people. The war was fought on their land and on their turf; therefore, there is no distinction. The casualties were not merely soldiers on the front line, but civilians, civilians that died of rockets, of bombs dropped from the air, from explosions, from snipers and from any use of a deadly weapon that was available during the war. That particular experience can be narrated by those who lived through the war in Iraq whether male or female. (p.134) The postcolonial novel can also be read as an anthropological work. It provides glimpses into the culture and mostly operates as a native informant. Comorau (2009) argues that "The novel, due to its connection to modernity, the nation, and the formation of the subject, holds different possibilities for postcolonial writers than forms" (p. 2).

9-Discussion and analysis

Despite differences in scope, specifics, and diagnoses, the study is a common denominator in human culture across the majority of civilizations. Sectarianism has philosophical, political, and religious roots. It is impossible to dispute the story of sectarianism's pervasiveness in human cultures. Every religion or human society has a legend concerning the idea of sectarianism that has been passed down through the decades. These tales frequently include extra information and are depicted in



different ways. But even so, it never loses the initial framework that defines it as a dream or a fiction about sectarianism. Sectarianism is a religious symbol that represents people's aspirations for happiness and liberation.

According to historians and sociologists, despite the stark contrasts in culture, ethnicity, and religion, sectarianism is a universal concept that manifests itself in human civilizations in one form or another. Through the evangelizing of Jesus Christ, Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon him), and the Muslims with the promised Mahdi, supported by Christ (peace be upon him), sectarianism first occurs in Judaism. Among these are Francis Bacon's The New Atlantis, Johan the Christian, Tomas Kampala's The City of the Sun, Confucius Island in China, and others. The names they gave these cities are not all fictitious; rather, they are based on ideas that are backed by evidence from archaeology, science, and religion.

The people, who had been tormented by injustice and corruption, hoped that a holy figure would appear and bring peace and justice back to the land. There was Osiris, whose mythology was influenced by natural occurrences like the Nile's floods and droughts. additionally, the political circumstances that the Persian rule represented. They saw Alexander as a liberator, which made him an idol and a holy person. There are various forms of sectarianism, as Ahmed Saadawi outlines in his book *Frankenstein in Baghdad*. The elderly woman who "Some of the villagers thought that Eishva used her supernatural abilities to keep evil things from happening while she was among them." is one example of a possible human being. (Saadawi, 2018: p.5), and "Unlike many others, Umm Salim, Eishva's neighbor, firmly felt that God was always watching over her shoulder and that Eishva possessed unique abilities." (Saadawi, 2018: p.9).

The author assigned a chapter in the title *The Whatsitsname*, and states:

There's not much time left. One night, when I'm strolling down the street, I might come to an end and my body might dissolve to liquid, even before I complete the mission I've been given. I resemble the recorder that my father, the unfortunate junk trader, received from a journalist. Furthermore, time is, in my opinion, like the charge in this battery—it's neither too much nor too little. Is my father truly that rubbish dealer? As my poor mother Elishva puts it, surely he's just a conduit for the will of our Father in heaven. She is an elderly, destitute woman. I am the one who answers the poor's call, and they are all impoverished.

But, it is unfortunate that the sectarianism turned to be the destructor because his existence depends on the replacement of its damaged parts, which required continuous killing. He told the astrologer; "My face changes all the time, nothing in me lasts long, other than my desire to keep going. I kill in order to keep going"



(Saadawi, 2018: p. 267). This was his only justification. He thinks that the only battle that is deserving is the battle to defend lives

He may have clung to life out of terror more than others did, even more so than those who gave him their lives and body parts. He deserves life more than they did because they hadn't battled for it. They ought to have at least retaliated, even if they knew they couldn't win against him. Giving up in battle—and what a battle!—was not respectable. The only struggle worth fighting in this life was to defend their lives." (p. 268).

He blames those victims for not fighting back and surrender directly for death. He gives a lesson for others not to be controlled by fear which he considers the main cause for death. "Honestly, I think everyone was responsible in one way or another. I'd go further and say that all the security incidents and the tragedies we're seeing stem from one thing—fear. The people on the bridge died because they were frightened of dying. Every day we're dying from the same fear of dying" (p. 123)

In another justification, the *Alshisma* thinks that he is helping people to get rid of their miserable lives and gives them courage to commit suicide and die. "They were intent on suicide but hadn't found a good way to commit it until the *Whatsitsname* appeared, strolling down the dark lane in Daniel's old clothes...They had died because they wanted to die, and that explained the posture they were in when the locals found them the next morning, in a square, with each one strangling one of the others" (Saadawi, 2018: p.131). The monster considers himself as a gift from God to verify the dreams and hopes of people even if it was death. "Daniel, or the *Whatsitsname*, was just a means by which they went to their deaths, which was a fate that appealed to them at every serious drinking session they had, including the one they had had that night.

But even those assistants were not enough to satisfy the *Whatsitsname*'s desire to continue living. That is why he cured himself by his own hands using body parts from completely innocent man. "I raised my revolver and aimed at the innocent old man. He was definitely innocent, not one of those people that the three madmen had brought to replace my body parts and keep me going" (p. 161). By killing the innocent and taking his body part, there should be a justification. The monster invented an idea to convince himself and his followers that

the old man was a sacrificial lamb that Lord had placed in my path. He was the Innocent Man Who Will Die Tonight. So that was that. He had been going to die in a few minutes, or within half an hour at the most. So, all I had done was hasten his death. All the other innocent people who came down this desolate street would die too (p. 162).



This is what all the criminals need, that is to justify their deeds. He couldn't find a better idea of the death to satisfy himself; "Although my mind was filled with contradicting ideas, I firmly believed that I had simply accelerated the elderly man's demise. I didn't commit murder. I had only taken a bite out of death before it hit the ground." (p. 162). It proves the fertile imagination of the author and amazing creativity to employ a net of symbolically connected events in a fine narrative style. The author used some colloquial Iraqi words and sentences that add beauty to the narrative. One of these words is *Alshisma* naming the creature *Frankenstein* which is a word extracted from the phrase: *Who is with no name*, the Iraqis used colloquially in their daily life. *Frankenstein* is originally a legend created by the British writer Mary Shelly. This character was employed by the Iraqi author Ahmed Saadawi to be the fantastic hero of his novel. This novel addressed a difficult stage of Iraqi history, where the destruction includes the land and human as never experienced before. It is the second face of democracy which was supposed to be brought to Iraq by the American. This course might symbolize the corrupted politicians for their hold on power. Another possibility of the symbolism is that the mechanism of creating a tyrant who mostly started as the oppressed, then a revolt and then they turn to be a tyrant after he gains power. *Frankenstein* in the end of the novel is not captured or arrested because he is a creature produced by the society from its dark self and will continue destroying everything beautiful unless the society controls him. So, the creature is both victim and villain, and the novel itself is very relevant in for the contemporary world today.

Conclusion

This research will be a valuable contribution to the further studies as a reference. It is one of the few attempts to study the Iraqi literature after the 2003 war and invasion. The resources collected are rare and almost covered part of the literary view and shed light on the changes that happened before and after the 2003 invasion. The study looks into why, after 2003, reviewers were unable to continue with the prolific output of novelistic writing. This study aims to close the gap and lay the groundwork for future investigations. Also, it will help the researchers of the Arab modern novel to find out the level of the Iraqi novel among its Arab counterparts. They will discover the big and drastic qualitative change of the Iraqi literature which qualified the Iraqi novel to be at the forefront of the Arab and international novels.

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