



Loss of Identity in Postwar Society :An Analytical Study in 'Frankenstein in Baghdad' by Ahmed Saadawi

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Abstract in English

This paper explores the losing of the human identity in the wartime , focusing on the work of Ahmed Saadawi 's Frankenstein in Baghdad , a booker prize nominated . It shows how man might escape his reality in order to create an imaginary or fictional character seeking an identity compensate the lost one . How people's identities are torn asunder by war. Fragmentary identities, uncertain , confused memories, and the ambiguity of the world result from the violence and destruction of the monstrous present. The transformation of an abandoned corpse into a monster reveals the horrors and traumatized traces of war. Meanwhile, the creation of this monster also conveys a marginalized voice against the ones who have no responsibility. The hybrid monster (Whatsitsname) was used by Sadaawi as a national symbol of Iraqi identity after 2003 . Using a postcolonial critical approach , the study argues that's Saadawi exploitation of magic realism technique not merely to present that horrible atmosphere , but to critique the breakdown of social cohesion as well as the individual disintegration . The major focus of this paper is Saadawi's ability to mirror the history of Iraq and Baghdad as a textual representations and tragic depths that greatly affect the culture and the identity .

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1.Introduction

Translating Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* from the Romantic Period to a post-war context in Iraq, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* sees Whatsitsname, a body sewn together from severed stranger body parts, come to life with a resistance against the living. Saadawi's appropriation of Shelley's myth explores the oneness of the infinite: the infinite becomes the world through innumerable parting away points, yet the points of parting remain shackled. New creations come into being with new properties, yet are also imprisoned for the old ones. Similarly, excluded from the sacred, infinite being eternally disintegrates into introverted absurdities and devaluation of values for centuries to come. Saadawi clearly voices devaluation in the fate of Whatsitsname, the presumed resend-initiating series of acts, and asks a series of provocative questions about being and destruction.

Must all beings express being meaningfully for it to be real? When transcendental values are devaluated, will this not eternally result in self-destruction? What meaning do excluded conceiving things contribute beyond themselves? And what is it that yet again destroys created others, which were rational and free, a means to secure life? Early on, we were convinced of the very independence of Saadawi's monster, yet by the end he is found abandoned in his creation and existence. Further, unlike in Shelley, will new beings not be born, even if in decay? The two novels' creators each face a complex fate: one of veneration, ingenuity approach from scattered and cautious examination, mixed with hatred leading toward destruction; the other an entry into eternal nothingness that evokes sympathy (Mahmood, 2021, pp 127-136).

Even the transcending shapes of approaching despair are reminiscent of humanity's initial quarrel with the cosmos. The answer to Baal's intervention remains a riddle. However, even in devaluation, ingratitude and wrath are acknowledged. What the myth must discuss further, then, is the meaning attributed to other beings. Humans would be self-destructive beings without meta-narrative values, yet neither these nor an aesthetic answer to regard everything as transitory and unresolved creatively seem recoverable amid the ruin. The risk of appropriation as an alternate chance of extension is also considered. Discussing the limits of listening in '*Frankenstein in Baghdad*, Saadawi clearly acknowledges devaluation and an impasse and disallows any restorative escapism based on hope.

2. Historical Context

The novel "*Frankenstein in Baghdad*" was created in a specific time and place, raised in a war-torn city filled with various scenes of destruction and dismemberment. The text reflects the writer's view of the Shia-Sunni conflict, the war, the threats, the horrifying scenes, and the sense of abandonment due to being occupied. This inhumane scene, however, generates a new person. Pictures and words resulting from loss lead to Shia payback and revenge and picture the task of the hero – the warmongering journalist. He is in search of a maid, a professional

killer. Evil is in turn against evil. Evil disguised in native clothes and articular shall emulate the same. In brief, this is the text and its view of war, including a literary ending. The late 2005 was two year after the American invasion of Iraq and the beginning of employment and war. Three files are produced – slaughtered bodies that are absorbed without action, the common fear and sadness that compel synthesis, and the profound comment of 'there must be other criteria to create a creature' (Mahmood K, 2021). Deeper than space and bone in there, fantasy is the scene of bridges connecting two banks between visualization and hearing. The wise live in the crowd, and the quicker it is disturbed, the more they are surprised. The meaning of a plate lies

in the steam of potato. Irony wins: the quicker the natives are connected into a whole by the signal, the more they are cut and broken. Children's laughter comes from children's dead bodies.

2.1. Impact of War on Society

War is a traveling cloud hung over humanity. Men killing men in contemporary society is presumably a legitimate activity, while in the sacred world of nature even snake eating the other is a shameful action. Since its invention wars have been obliterating the features of men and framing them with blind dogmas . This kind of blindness is clearly introduces in the novel ‘ ‘ he is going to enforce divine justice ‘ ‘ (Saadawi 2013\ 2018 , p174) . Moreover, this dogmatism is commonly extended to legal justification and in most cases shred into more than one thousand rational reasons. Or, war can be looked at from a different angle, war is a mean to obliterate identity. This target could be achieved by the mockery of men's dignity as the crown of creation, creation's best ally. This mockery is exhibited through looting their minds not by bareness, but by transforming dogmatic chaos into blindness and rational, medical pursuits to endless blariness. And this transformation is quite close to the concept of identity sake. Dictators transform identity chaos into bestowed blindness while crudifying the inner blindness of societies into unsophisticated outward behaviours.

Identity means a soul defined though traces, frame time and size. Four features shape what a person is, a mixture of heart, thoughts, psyche, and flesh; and shape what an animal is, a discrimination by brain's acceptance of fear and mere copying. A character displayed by thought lied in the depth of the heart and a character devoid of trace in the chaos of the psyche must be coarse savagery or grotesqueness, or dismembered vitality without any vitality: it can take the acid of drugs, blood of butchered flesh, and essences of camphor and be set heap upon heap dead dumping sigils of diseases, but still do not smell the specks of origin (Qasim Z, 2015). These behaviors mean men's abandonment of identity, decadence of soul purity, and monstrosity in both heart and looks. The grotesquery is polar purity which functions like vhaana intensively; men have been mangled into oblivion. The death shivers turn to waving laughing; yearning with nostalgia are transformed into dust of distant echo of dead songs by ridicule.

3. Thematic Analysis

In ‘Frankenstein in Baghdad’ the post-2003 war situation is dealt with artistically by making the chaos of the current historical moment incarnate through fragments of bodies that are unified and transformed. Frankenstein's monster ‘ whatsitsname ‘ comes back to Baghdad to destroy the lives of its creators in a way. Saadawi portrayed the outcomes of the war, chaos, and terrorism in an ironic way while reflecting on human duties toward themselves and their neighbors, the negation of which is a crime against humanity .

In the beginning, the character embodies the lost identity of a human who lived a simple life removing garbage in a city but found himself in a complicated situation, and it passed to him the feeling of killing. It transfers to a part of the monster life stories of the destroyed and the lost members of the Iraqi community. The monster fitted into a character called ‘the human’ or ‘the identity of human.’ By collecting the needed parts of the monster, Saadawi narrated the prior life of pre-war Baghdad which represents a cultured intellectual city, and the fragmented parts of a legitimate identity have been gathered (Mahmood K , 2021).

Once the monster was completed, it began the sequence of killings in its own way. This assassination of the creators and guarding of the law has been ironically visualized in its irony by Saadi in the last chapters. The monster with a long coat looked like a

monster from the outside but in the creation act, he was innocent but made to be a monstrous killing figure by humans. He legislated a law, which is paradoxically the negation of the last hope of the citizens for peace.

3.1. Identity in Crisis

Throughout Ahmed Saadawi's novel, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, the absence of a national identity among the people forced to share the territory, the consequences of an identity crisis along the lines of faith and religion; the pursuit of a personal identity along intimate lines; and the consequent emergence of a public consciousness, embraced by the burgeoning mass media, have been pointed out through the positions taken by the characters presented in the novel. The characters' thoughts on national identity and the experience of the war should be the starting point for the discussion of their existential anguish after the loss of their national identity. Ahmed Saadawi has presented together identities constructed on the basis of blood and ideology, which do not open horizons, similar to the impenetrable sun of the desert (Mahmood K, 2021).

"Solace" and "bigger misery" are the bitter consequences of this mania. The eternal enslavement of the people is the end result. Therefore, religion, like national identity, is revealed to be the birthmark of illusions embossed on hard flesh. The accused, erstwhile patron of the world's tormentors, acquires a significant stature that eventually engulfs them (M.S. Abu Baker, 2010). This plays a significant role in the process of collecting the fragmented selves, which initially became scattered with the state's collapse. Following the loss of the additional forms upheld for the sake of social review, the public consciousness with its informational arms becomes dominant: the film, the Islamic State, the media; and in parallel with this, the emergence of consciousness of self-safety, which is brought about by the latter's control over the latest methods of war development, keeping pace in imperial power ticking.

3.1. Fragmentation of Self

The notion of self is the basic theme of identity theory in post-war. Identity is the essence of humanity; hence, every human loves identity and struggles for its integrity. The opposite side of identity is fragmentation and conversion. In other words, the breaking up of identity leads to anguish. When the self is distorted or fragmented by some bomb or force, its main constituents of it, such as memory, place, and language, will have a fear of loss and will rebel against losing identity. Hadi al-Attaghi is the junk dealer whose job is to collect and recycle the wrecks of the war. After he visits the explosion site of the truck bomb on al-Mutanabi street, he discovers some separated body parts. He thinks that they belong to one person, and when one of them shows signs of life, he decides to collect some parts from other corpses in order to make the body whole again. "I made it complete so it wouldn't be treated as rubbish, so it would be respected like other dead people and given a proper burial." (Ahmed Saadawi 2013\2018 p 27 chap 2) Thus, he connects the parts with respect to one of the Qur'anic verses about the resurrection of human beings on the Day of Judgment, which says that God will gather each one of them with what they were created from. This means that Hadi will resurrect the dead with dead body parts. Almost all the corpses' places, religions, and nationalities are heterogeneous and, hence, constitute a grotesque and apply lots of fears against loss of identity in itself (henceforth, it will be called monster). The fear operates as the limit of monstrosity and develops excessive assaults on the other as a distorted form whose assault is beyond redrawing boundaries, that is, fledging from the monster in what form(s) and how much violence. As a fragment, it is fearful and against being forgotten.

After six hours from connecting dead body parts together, the corpse is animated. However, as expected, instead of thanking and rising God for the second chance of life, the monster is horrified and repulsive for others and for itself because of the hideousness of the body formation formed from different parts from dead bodies. This grotesque body is monstrous and does nothing except enjoying thinking about the monstrous creatures in the past who played a horrible role in the history memory scattered all over the places. This means that an attempt to retrieve a unified identity triggers fears in which the past splinters again in the form of monstrosity. There is excessive violence in which a re-read history is excavated and enacted again in the present time against the others. The standpoints toward identity shift from a fear against loss of identity to a fear against reception into the past identity itself.

3.2. Collective Memory and Trauma

The sheer number of individuals displaced by the United States' 2003 invasion of Iraq, due to death, destruction, and the onset of sectarian violence, is overwhelming. In its aftermath, Iraq and the images associated with it have become a global zone of trauma and horror. Location, wound, calamity, and trauma are irreversibly preserved through images projected on television screens that permeate both the private and public domains of life in the wake of the media coverage of the invasion and the ensuing violence. Exile or geographical separation in postwar society entails a reconstruction of identity. Unmoored from their places, Iraqis become a symbol or sign, reconstructing place as a phantom through memories that do not belong to them. The loss of the sense of place leads to the loss of the collective. Each individual's loss is refracted endlessly. Location, displacement, disaster, and terror perpetually reopen wounds, composing a narrative of trauma whose chaotic nature cannot be redeemed by archival memory.

Trauma prevents the articulation of its occurrence. It incapacitates victims and functions as the cause for unutterability. Deserted by morals and faith after the civil war, survivors become the haunted, dream-free souls of horror, agony, and anxiety. Memory becomes a dangerous disease. Memory, because of fear, is ghostly. Because of hiding, it is a void.

Loss of identity signifies loss of memory. Memory then situates Iraqis in ambiguous hauntingness. In this sense, trauma systematizes society as invisible by-products of international politics. Displaced individuals re-experience and revisit irrational fears, submerged whereabouts that succumb to oblivion. Stray in place and empty in space, their identities disappear into ambiguity. Shared grievances unify them and transform their shared provenances into a monstrous absent other. Fragmented memories evade congruency. Through the ghostly hauntings of their traumas, they become a mass unable to constitute cohesive imaginations or enact corporeal functions other than an eternal spiraling and stagnation in their phantoms, as suggested in the narrative form that wails "Where then shall we go?" (Qasim Habeeb, 2015).

4. Character Studies

Like a stone thrown into a placid lake, the war in Iraq sends ripples through the fabric of society, distorting and affecting every aspect of life in the land. Everything seems to drift in the air, people, morals, identity, the past, and everything that was thought to be solid becomes like the hazy smoke of a bomb, flickering to vanish. Ahmed Saadawi creates an image of Iraq on the brink of dissolution in this state of affairs, where people become either monsters or machines. The biggest question is the question of identity. Where is Iraq in this war? How do people perceive themselves while being smashed by the war machine? In the postwar society of Iraq, it would be a foolish thing to ask "What is Iraq?", and a risk-laden act to ask "Who am I?" Frankenstein in

Baghdad tells a unique monster story. It takes the form of a mystery thriller and can be read as a detective fantasy novel, but this novel is fundamentally different. In a classical monster story, normal people's understanding of the world is distorted due to the presence of monsters, but in this novel, it is the world that is already sick and monstrous. Monsters bring into the light a fundamentally abnormal society plagued by fragmentation and loss of identity. This novel is like an iceberg in which the surface is the monster's vicious murder wrought by the cynical doctor, and the deep layer is the gradual disintegration and loss of everything in the monster's eyes. Twist-and-turn plots push the horror part, and the suspense behind the murder is just a cherry on the top; the main body of this monster tale is the monster-depicting world that captures the silence of the invisible identity crisis.

This novel seems to be categorical in its demonization of the United States under Bush, and the analysis of its mythological purposes is insightful. However, to highlight the emotional element in this politicized text is also an undeniable point. There is long-lasting hatred of the U.S. military in Iraq that is never effectively voiced; similar to the monsters stalking Iraqis, the demons' personal tragedies echo with many people's pain that can only be understood but not told, making it even more horror-inducing. Comparatively, this critique of war is more universal after the sharp focus on Iraq and the convergence of its mythological critiques, since the demons made inevitable equivalence, the ancestral resources and contemporary textual attendances become intertwined.

4.1. The Monster as a Reflection of Society

Saadawi's monster serves as a partner in crime to the monstrous society of post-Saddam Iraq. Just as Victor Frankenstein believes the grand scheme of acquiring immortality could justify the monstrous creature, society at large convinces itself that war and violence, no matter how horrific, could guarantee safety and peace. The novel explores a world where loss presses down on the living through the eerily lifelike creature stitched from both the deceased and the living, a narrative able to question the meaning of life and humanity without further eliciting trauma (Aziz Mahmood, 2021). The monster, born of misery and rage, kills not by choice, but just as Victor, initially unaware, thoughtlessly let the creature loose. As with the horrific deaths in Taliban-ridden Afghanistan, the most insignificant victim in monstrous Iraq barely prompts an uproar. Trapped in the epidemic of violence, cynicism creeps in, ironically repeated in further bloodshed one detonation later, resembling the failure of progenital bolts and heartbeats. The novel alternates between two narratives, the poetic death of the deceased told through expert monologues and the rapidly shifting first-person perception of the living, all intersecting with

haunting mediocrity and occasioning bursts of lyric. Truthful accounts are turned into groanings, too atrocious to tell, and horror into grotesque reading. Though much of humanity may laugh at the attempt of monster-making, it becomes heartbreaking when survival is only too frail in an unthinkable monstrous world. On the one hand, Saadawi's monster scorns the disinterestedness of those immune to trauma, mocking the unconscious inability to escape the sufferer's gaze and voice, the token enjoyment in tales of monstrous cruelty. On the other, he embodies the very creature's traits reminiscent of Sadran monsters in Arabic tradition, as a result of which Saadawi's moral lesson also amounts to unveiling evil and the illusion of justice looking for truth in error.

4.2. Supporting Characters and Their Identities

In the context of the ensuing story, in addition to the Robert Jones group and the sculpture as an artistic and intellectual project, other characters with potentials of identity loss will be examined. In his role as a robbing fiend right after the emergence of the “what’s it called” assemblage and then a father who lost a son’s fate, the newsvendor is the first supporting character to be explored. Then the human loiterer, the utterly indifferent character toward the originally residence-seeking and then his own son-killing metal beast, is the next character. Finally, the character who cannot grasp the inconceivable answerability is treated. The exclusion of these supporting characters from the possibilities of socio-political identities is conducted in the same way as the above exploration of Robert Jones.

Aside from showing little concern for the sculptural “what’s it called” project and the bloody killings of the assemblage, the newsvendor and his wife’s attitude toward the assemblage is also somewhat ambiguous. His scarce grasp of the reality of its nature is noted during his oral diary recollection. However, from the perspective of identity loss, the newsvendor is primarily concerned with a killed newsboy’s identity on the sociopolitical level, who was very similar to his son in that he was very hardworking, dutiful, and good-hearted. After the discovery of the brain-having assemblage by the newsvendor, his attention to it is much less than to the newsboy. Thereby the newsvendor gradually loses any interest in seeking for a new identity.

As previously mentioned, the human loiterer brutally cannot feel for a long while that all of his primary things have been ruined, which gradually makes him apathetic to all. The first encounter with the assemblage evokes a brief but grand passion to him, i.e. the search for the anthropomorphized identity for a while. Nonetheless, when he realized that the assemblage is utterly indifferent to him, his identity as an initially passionate man vanishes too. When the loiterer is unintentionally exposed to the last killing of the assemblage, he can only laugh sarcastically at the whole situation he has lived.

5. Symbolism and Metaphor

Ahmed Saadawi’s original adaptation of Shelly’s “Frankenstein” offers the reader an interesting narrative borne of creativity, filled with complex characters. On that note, the novel’s metaphoric level is undoubtedly rich, spanning a multitude of concepts. The garbage monster, its material origin notwithstanding, can be seen as a critique of the state of Baghdad, constituting a reclamation of an already lost identity in postwar society. The monster’s construction is borne of “garbage,” which is not merely the former materials of loved bodies and souls, but also the national memories of the inhabitants alongside their cultural, historical, and cosmological dignity. The breaker of national pride, represented by a foreign junk dealer engaged in national looting, Kadhimi’s attempts to hoodwink the hapless truck driver and sell the Baghdad Tigris, the frequent recounting of the looting of the National Museum, and Bu Nassif’s attempt to breach the sanctum of the tarab shrine are macroscopic references to the fragmentation of an already lost identity, forced upon the birthday city of the Garbage Man (Aziz Mahmood, 2021). Saadawi recognizes that there is no longer a singular consciousness of identity, but rather a diversity of interpretations within the ambiguous conditions of present-day Iraq.

Within the monster’s many layers, the grotesque was the most dominant worldwide and throughout the fragmented city of Baghdad. Its existence clothed in the thrown-away garb of many noble bodies turns trash into treasure and, in a single stroke, reveals the intertwined fate of many. Plastic bones juxtaposed with human and sheep parts obscure the distinctions among different elevations of existence. The sounds

reverberating merely through rubbish are artfully penetrative, insisting anonymity in the many expressions of hatred toward the shared monsters. Overall, Ahmed Saadawi's adaptation of Shelly's *Frankenstein* is relatively faithful, with Suha and the doctor intrinsically connected to *Frankenstein* and Waltham. Saadawi does add a few original minutes, conferring brio and distant horror to the original narration. The frivolity, the monster's attempts to persuade the city to adopt the garb of exile, the cacophony of user-games ridiculing the grotesque, and the absurd weapons of total destruction contrast with the solemnity and despondence of the imagined urban scene near the end.

5.1. Death as a pivotal theme in *Frankenstein* in Baghdad

Death has an essential role as a horrific idea for the gothic novelist along the time, and Ahmed Saadawi is not an exception for his ancestors; death is employed as a dynamic factor and a magic cane in the hand of the writers to escape the traumatic reality in order achieve some supernatural deeds in a realistic frame.

Furthermore, death is not the end of evil but a starting point to instigate the individual's imaginative sense. According to Jane Gilbert (2011) death has a psychological indication and she differentiates two types of death "the corporeal death" which starts with the formal declaration of the community that person is dead, whereas "the symbolic or subjective death" which might precede or follow. The first one refers to the man's experiences individually or collectively (p.6).

Ahmed sadawi 's *Frankenstein* in Baghdad intricately employed the notions of dead through Whatsitsname – the main character – in the novel; he passed through the bodily death of many victims of the violence and war to be unified in a hybrid body .the challenge of the reason and rationality is reinforced by the gothic mode to proceed forth. The character of Daniel's mother – the old disillusioned woman – represents the symbolic death for the community for two reasons: her odd act and behavior waiting for her war missing son that pushes her neighbors to address her as a madwoman, she is subjectively dead. The second one is her loneliness in an old house that turned out to be like a grave for her lovely past.

The Whatsitsname experiences a kind of death that is well described by Paul Fairfield (2001) as the "anthropological death" by which a person loses his identity and separated from his community(p.64), the character of the security guard is transferred into metamorphosis isolated from his family, seeking supernaturally revenge and justice. There is definitely an ambivalence concerns the rational meaning of death that Fred Botting(2005) puts in " death denies any possibility of imaginative transcendence into an awesome and definite space ."Botting also adds that " it is the moment of the negative sublime, a moment of freezing There is no complete alienation from the finite world " (p.p 49-52). However, Saadawi eschews the reality to create a gothic world for his character which acts as a connection between the real world and the deads " There in the valley of peace in Najaf, he examined all the graves. He didn't find anything that offered him any certainty, but in the end, he saw a teenager in a red t-shirt, with silver bangles on his wrists and a necklace of black fabric he was sitting cross-legged on a raised grave. " (Saadawi, 2018, p.38).

Death is one of the terrifying ideas in addition to the pain and danger, that can be regarded as a sublime which according to Donna Heiland (2004) " sublime experience is at the heart of the gothic " because it transcends the experience of reality to escape the spatial and temporal limits of the ordinary physical world. (p.33). For this reason, sadawi asserts in *FIB* the superiority of the spirit over the physical mortal bodies and

this well indicated by the spectrum with two silver bracelet in the cemetery: “this is my grave. My body’s lying beneath. In a few days, I won’t be able to get out like this. My body’s decomposing and I’ll be imprisoned in the grave till the end of the time .” (Saadawi, 1918, p.33).

The meaning of death has a lured role in the gothic novel permits the transgression to give a new impressive dimension for the novelist to capture the reader’s mind. As a result, an imaginative world is created definitely in the readers ‘mind to accept new ideas.

6. Iraqi Identity in the Global Context

In the age of globalism and postmodernity in the 21st century, the world has become a small village that has narrowed down into an extended modern metropolis, in which pollution and an irritating environment and the capital became so rife that they have expunged the identity and characteristics of the cities. “I possess nothing but this community and I have nothing but these essential chords, instrumental tones, gold, colors and stains ... They are my people, their remnants my family, their death is where I live” . Because of these dizzying changes, green areas and public parks and gardens have become so rare and limited that they represent the maximal aspiration of human beings and so on the enormous and great and historic Iraqi identity which has so far possessed their own treasures, remembrance, bas-reliefs and stones and pictures and imprints in the universal history, but they have become the most despised in the current black era.

While those cities become battered and drenched with bloodshed, disasters and an adversity piled upon another, bullying and war zones with no support or mediating echoes. The fightings and bomb-explosions are the dominant index of the nativity and identity and custom. As the novel illustrates “Bodies are blown to pieces if they are persons or are butchered hundreds and the killing is justified as long as it justifies free democracy and the ethnicities are no getting along”. This alluded to 21st century colonialism issues and postwar states and image the identity inside it. Hence, the co-spawned and produced monster from straits is more just than human beings in such countries beset.

6.1. The Influence of Western Literature

The postcolonial tradition has had a dramatic impact all over the world, but particularly in Greece, the countries of Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The fateful intervention of the imperialist West has had repercussions that will echo for a long time and is visible in the literature of these areas. Ahmed Saadawi is a monster maker rather than a myth maker. He is concerned with the events that transpired in his country following the American invasion and the escalation of violence. His monsters are not supernatural creatures of the night, and he makes no attempt to personify the marionette master with an overwhelming devilish power, but instead depicts horror in its human and all too mundane forms. The resulting monsters are torture victims, civil war and sectarian militias, and local rulers and dogs inducted into the imperialist family tree of destruction (Abu Shehab, 2022).

The Western concern for “innocence” is inappropriate for Ahmed Saadawi. In terms of experience both personal and collective, virtually no such state exists, and Saadawi’s Iraq is a far cry from Shelly’s natural rosiness. The imperialist army’s heavy bombardments and targeted killings, the American system that proliferates mayhem, the focus on confessionalism by the political elite, the might of death squads and the ferocity of the “provincial” culture of the idle and the impoverished join forces to not

leave room for innocence, not even in the Lacanian sense of pursuing the lost object (for Translation & Literary Studies and Aziz Mahmood, 2021). “Frankenstein in Baghdad” is a literary monster born from the body of its wretched actuality. It mimics and assents to the nature of its real-world counterpart and blatantly imitates its frenzy of violence and insanity.

However, being the progeny of imperfect creatures, “Frankenstein’s Monster” frequently fails to heed folly and often makes the pain of others its own. The agency of Ahmed Saadawi’s monster is intricately bound with its fate. It transforms, mutates and drastically invents its own world of automatons. The monster does not devour its creator but witnesses the throwback to the primordial condition of indeterminate character where no monstrosity reigns. The monster operates independently amid shock and delusion even when the limits of its world are rewired in fragmentation and paranoia. Hadi accepts an openness to the world and as such returns to the innocent phase of inclusion and belonging where identity is neither stable nor absolute.

7. Multiple Perspectives

Frankenstein in Baghdad is full of diverse perspectives that revolve around the perspective of the monster, which is represented by the dismembered parts of the owner. This was done to achieve the goal of employing the new colonialism positioned within the invasion of Iraq. All of these dismembered perspectives converge towards the unveiling of the identity of the monster, which returns us in terms of the narrative to the original dismembered country and society, as well as in terms of the representation of the fictional text. The second banishment becomes a scene of the replacement of the identity of the society, as it is tortured to become a stranger by obsession, leaving behind the first image of incompleteness that did not achieve its overarching process and the associated layers of the death of society and culture.

Through a fictionalization of history, the post-colonial novel approaches the representation of this traumatic history just as the traumatic novel does. However, history is inscribed as a meta-text in the text’s body, with all fiction written over it being constantly obliterated by this traumatic history. Consequently, the narratives of the trauma are exclusively relegated to the oral level of discourse uninscribed in the text’s structure. In addition, the fragmentation of the fictionalized versions of history closely resembles the representational symptom of trauma. The post-colonial representation oscillates between the present and the past, between the visible and the invisible collective death, and between the existent trauma and the retrospective narrative of this trauma of societal death. What emerges, however, are textual representations that have the possibility of coherence commensurate to the contraction of other narrative subtexts.

The eye represents the new ambiguity in the process of the storming of tanks, the absence of a key figure, and the smuggled news broadcasts in the Security Council. To highlight this ambiguity, this perspective is attached to the recitation of a historical figure. It is worth noting that this oral narration can be linked to the textual narration of the oral tale of a heroine, which transgresses time. Direct allusions and textual perspective links to folkloric writing are also incorporated. This period was described as the images of trees of pure gold spread along a river. In the final scene, neatness is dissolved in imperfection, and the absence of the image of the countenance dying or recovery loses its final cinematic scene, which appears in the light of disbelief and dismay. No presentation or vision is offered for what happens afterwards from an aerial perspective.

8. Societal Reflections

In *Frankenstein in Baghdad* the process of losing identity extends to society. Trapped in situations they cannot control, one finds a variety of answers to the question of how they built which parts of the pre-existing identity or fabricated new ones in face of the objects of destruction. This division of consideration is meant to explore one reflection point throughout the stories. It has been said that the killer, the thief, the bomb-seller each stands for a fracture of identity, which is usually narrated in the language of despair. In *Frankenstein in Baghdad* Ahmed Saadawi sets up a conversation voiced by several narrators that does not lose hope or help make sense out of the absurd. Together with the mutilated body parts, with the bombings and bomb-selling, voices of love rise, anchored in the passages of time, to draw the outlines of identity lost but not abandoned. Notably, the novel unfolds against the backdrop of a real event, where fictive and real identities struggled for supremacy. Iraq marking a geographical territory is referred to as a nation; but a nation also referred to in terms of people, experience, culture and many others, has experienced insatiable loss and fragmentation. Anything failed to be defined proactively is induced, annulled, or atomized by the massive machine of destruction:

terrorism, sectarian strife, prostitution, labor trafficking, self-exile, and even the encroachment of the previously self-appointed “superpower”. As the founding narrative of a nation, what was written in terms of major historical events or accidents, was for the purpose of an authoritative control, a formal definition over experience so as to place it inside a circle of borders and perimeters. In post-war Iraq the borders are further expanded, a multitude of voices are incorporated, and a new puddle of history is drawn to capture the brusque contrast with now as the reference point of interpretation over which, however, control remains disallowed. That is, it has been an endless struggle over identity drawn into forms, and in servitude to forms, both prior and responsive. The difference between the examples cited here oblivious to the setting as explained above is a divine one. A multitude of voices is at stake, but are closely echoed: there is some shared hope for a restoration of the foundation or condition of a past, linguistically a shared longing for love. Behind the collective long-standing experience of love, this history persists tacitly within the complain of time; though feeling heavily drawn into the anecdote of loss, it simultaneously accuses and laughs at its encroachment .

8.1. Displacement and Belonging

Frankenstein in Baghdad is a story of a strange corpse cobbled together from parts of dead bodies, which in turn engages in strange and disturbing acts: walking, running and, most horrifyingly, killing. It explores the emotional consequences of the American occupation and the loss of family members and loved ones through the eyes of urban Iraqis. With the daily horrendous deaths of people in Iraq—be it several hundred in a day—in a country where feelings and emotions are operating under peculiar conditions, the readers are taken through various emotional states of the characters, from absurd to ridiculous, tragic to comical, terror to horror, and, specifically, through creepy sensations and feelings. Samarra, is one of the expressive “characters”, in fact, the stark reminder of a city that harbors an abundance of historical riches and attractions, as well as an inquisitive lifetime of ancient discovery, burgeoning art and literature, all of which is now reduced to abominable ruins and shattered remains. Not-a-finger, the creature fashioned out of the parts of those sent to the eternal rest prematurely—and in a grotesque and more confounding scenery, unintentionally made by the junk dealer—now harbors a distorted spirit possessed of sickness, craving to gain a true body, and

capable of viciously slaughtering, clinging to romance and dreams, somehow long and presumed unattainable; like what Frankenstein's creature is driven to. The story begins uncharacteristically: an old black blind man reminiscing about friends and feeding ferocious wild cats in dome-like cages. Here, Iraq is compared to a country "abandoned by despair" and "inhabited, without life, by the only cemetery on earth, capable of engulfing the dead—alone, a living country of corpses". Then follows a frightful tale of rush hours turned into a hell where everything goes wrong. The gradual unraveling of a monstrous threat engulfs Iraqis across the land. Parts of bodies—swollen and decomposing heads, arms, legs, and ribs—disfigured in the most grotesque and abominable ways, subsumed in grotesque smell, horrible conditions and

weird noises are all trademarks of a work of aesthetic horror. And voila! The parts, the forgotten rejected remaining of the battle between good and evil, are resurrected, and the already impossible becomes inconceivable, a very possible truth.

8.2. The Role of Community in Identity Formation

In 'Frankenstein in Baghdad,' Ahmed Saadawi attempts to examine the fragmented social fabric and the lost identity in life. Saadawi holds a whole vision about the loss of the angel world of truth, beauty, justice and honesty in Iraq that has been ruled by a slew of self-seeking and bloodthirsty creatures. Saadawi portrays the hysterical sufferings of people in Baghdad because of the horrible bombings and troubling violent actions. Besides, he is keen on providing all insights into the city and its surroundings. The pain of the loss of home is revealed in Saadawi's faithful descriptions. Each piled-up rubble damaged house reminds the leading character, Hadi, of the lovely time he spent with his friends before the war. When Saadawi talks about home, a place for shelter, he is aware that it iteratively connects the lost identity. In his strong belief, one's identity exists in one's home and the healthy society built up by the community. He examines the community, which is construed as the fabric of life, from the very beginning of the novel till its very end.

Home is the first mention of life's beautiful world, which is formed into a community and where innocent dreams and truths dwell. Through incidental chit-chat, Saadawi describes the angel world made up of lovely street corners, comic shops and other childish symbols. The community dwelling with people's miserable lives and joyful souls can be sequenced into the religious community, social community and economic community. Thus constructed, the ideal community shares the same view on society and retains the purity of the soul in an innocent and naïve way. Community relates not only to the sameness of social identity, but also to a mingled safety of citizens from different backgrounds, races and faiths. Each citizen, standing at different places seeing things from different sides, approaches the same belief and holds identities as either Hungers or Shiites. No matter how diversely people are divided, they face and fight against the same enemy and pursue the same belief, no matter how naïve this belief may seem to them.

However, the social community collapses and is unceremoniously broken down with the disappearance of preventing measures. The angel childhood world in the neighborhood turns into an ill-fated place full of savage sounds. Crime occurs everywhere, and tragedy follows tragedy. Pieces of dismembered bodies and severed heads lay fatally down the ground after the car bomb explosion. The blasted building is hardly recognized with only an amazing mushroom cloud flickering shyly far away. Respect for the dead is no longer observed, and delighted dreams are never thought of.

Whatever background, belief, or identity one holds, one is ignobly butchered in the blood-red killer's world.

9. Philosophical Implications

Frankenstein in Baghdad is set in the aftermath of the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, at a time when Baghdad is marked by security breakdown, sectarian struggles, and widespread violence. The heart of the narrative is the conflict between the titular creature and its creator; Hadi, requested by a former colleague, collects body parts and assembles them into a creature who roams the streets to avenge its creator's death. This monster, however, wreaks havoc in Baghdad, brutally killing civilians. In attempting to destroy it, the neglected and desperate security forces in a fragmented state apparatus accuse each other of duplicity while inflaming the sectarian conflict in society. Saadawi adopts a number of literary techniques to address existential issues regarding place, identity, distance, and surveillance that arise from the war in modernity. Then, words are no longer a necessary condition for meaning or impact, and the scenes are not located in real places as anthropological photographs, and Satanic monsters do not wear human skins. Only mad, vicious crusaders can cease the bloodbath, even in the absence of justification, audience, or sight. Nothing can be numeric, continuous, or whole. The decapitated introduction put the book's title in fright, throwing it into generations of profane prodigies. The labor of word weaving is regarded as cruelty, and description and prediction have proved useless. In this novel, the monster turns people to be destroyed before they are created in the face of missing absence, nodding towards Picasso and structure.

Saadawi takes the words as a phantom hammer stimulating the fickle imagination of distorted puppets in the dust of gods. Saadawi inventively articulates the theory of a palimpsest of monsters and senselessness and questions the place for humanity and the use of language in presenting 'humanity' to a premature non-existent monster. This does not mean that things, places, and words have lost entirely their meanings or could find none at all. Rather, with the fixity and solidity of the modernist systems of abstract movements either in spatiotemporal distance to dehumanize atrocity or in the higher places to recline the fray in search of a reasonable explanation, everything continues but in a destabilized consciousness of absence and nonsense (Aziz Mahmood, 2021).

9.1. Existentialism in Postwar Context

Existentialism presents a broad philosophical thought regarding existence, man, and the universe. It is characterized by the belief that existence precedes essence and that one needs to create one's essence through actions in a world that is indifferent and absurd in relation to the individual's goals, which implies the freedom and responsibility to make choices for oneself. Existentialists believe in the primacy of individual experience, which means that one knows the world through first-person account, rather than through history books or scientific theories, to such an extent that the human being is a conscious being, alone in a body, thrown in an alien universe and in perpetual angst. The content of a literary work is not categorized as belonging to a specific genre of art. In contrast in the structure of a text any

literary form can hold a specific content, it subjects itself to a specific genre. Ahmed Saadawi's 'Frankenstein in Baghdad' might be categorized as postcolonial text in terms

of its content. However, in its form, it disregards being a postcolonial text and rather shifts toward embracing an existentialist thought.

‘Frankenstein in Baghdad’ corresponds to the political and historical aftermath of the US invasion of Baghdad in 2003 and highlights issues related to the destruction of individual identity in war-posed societal situations. Individuals are classified based on trivial communal standards. The consciousness of the individual becomes a foreign substance and subjected to the anonymity of the collective. As a result of the loss of individual identity and consciousness in postwar society, bitter nihilism arises.

Nihilism manifests itself in the acceptance of whatever fallacy, attitude, or thought; as in the belief in the truth of whatever conspiracy declared on TV. ‘Nothing matters’ (absolutely no act matters) becomes the operative false belief. Based on that nihilism, an alienation vision is cultivated, as if the body undergoes cerebral anesthesia; one sees but does not believe and does not feel. An interpretation of time and actuality is construed, whereby recurring moment misunderstands time, as all moments coincide in the same moment of destruction. Then, daydreams regarding stability or autonomy operate as a more urgent death, if possible.

9.2. Identity and the Human Condition

In ‘Frankenstein in Baghdad,’ Ahmed Saadawi foregrounds the relationship between the individual and the state. Hadi al-Attar is created from a potpourri of human scrap. Frantically seeking to escape chaos, Hadi’s peace is rooted in darkness. At their inception, all beings are innocents. The denial of understanding creates fear in spirits. Interactions among creatures lead to perceptions of the self and the other. Innovation creates life. The deaths of objects render them inoperative, and parcellated only to consume the soul in a fluent eternity (for Translation & Literary Studies and Aziz Mahmood, 2021).

Hadi is not the monster or the creator but a new life; aghast, he puddles on. “The creation is complete,” Hadi says, recalling the peddler. Amidst the fiery explosions of identities, each one shatters itself, deeming diverse discourses things. No prophet, no president proclaimed their name. They had called them in impersonal detachment. Yet creation murmurs identical pain in tongues ruled by slippage.

10. Comparative Literature

Ahmed Saadawi’s *Frankenstein in Baghdad* defines the loss of identity due to the historical and cultural representation and exploitation of the historical tragedy of Baghdadi people after the war through a hybridity vision. The text is based on postmodernism, brilliant prose, and unique and creative fictional events. Saadawi builds a meaning tangent on three levels critically and aesthetically: historicity, cultural, and textual. However, the major focus of this paper is Saadawi’s ability to mirror the history of Iraq and Baghdad as textual representations and tragic depths that greatly affect the culture and identity. This critical study approaches post-colonialism and postmodernism. The Baghdadi city represents a Cosmo polis city that embraces every ethnicity, sect, and religion and has mostly raised an unjust tragedy exploited by historical and cultural colonialism. The innocent city was built by poetic metaphors and ontological language that support the spirit of creation. After 2003, the Holly city turned into a text about the culture of death adopted by a decadent nightmare. The text of Baghdad has become a judgement culture prison of darkness. The writers’ fear is considerably captured to mirror their home deepness by culture, prosaic language, and brilliant metaphors. However, the metropolis experiences and horror explodes multitude as a deep essence in Iraq. The scale of destruction and moral vacuity is

beyond the writers' imagination, pushed them into absurdity, and finally, they were annihilated in a letter (Aziz Mahmood, 2021).

Saadawi with glowing prose reflects on the oddity of Baghdadis and their auto-reflections: simulation and exaggerated images about ghosts, which drive the alert in parallel interior spaces and deeper awareness contexts on the depths of identity loss. Accordingly, Warp fair and Butch hilarious imaginations are examined based on Saadawi's prism. On textual representation and aesthetic view, a mix of assimilatory and chemical terms described as an agony style of Hallal/Haraman are how the text engulfed and marks on the depths. The text is whose and what? Text is an artifice of this culture. Identity inescapably 1097ecalitrant/it's eradicated.

10.1. Comparison with Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein'

This section will attempt to demonstrate the similarities between Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" and Ahmed Saadawi's "Frankenstein in Baghdad" without looking for an in-depth understanding of the texts. Saadawi's novel narrates the life of a junk dealer named Hadi in Baghdad after the United States' fierce attack on it in 2003. Hadi collects the components of dead bodies from the streets and shapes them into a complete corpse resembling a human body, wishing to bring peace to the streets of Baghdad. The body is created and named Abd al-Aziz by Hadi, and it murders many citizens of Baghdad to achieve its aim. After some association, Hadi loses control over his new creature. There are major similarities in circumstances and storytelling devices between the two novels.

Firstly, the creatures in both novels are pieced together from dead bodies. In Shelley's version, Victor Frankenstein gives life to a creature mixed of re-assembled body parts of others. The creature states, "*I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body.*" In translation, this image resembles the one in Saadawi's Hadi scuttles across streets looking for body parts overlooked by American forces and pieced together the bodily components to form a complete whole resembling a human being. After declaring the name, Abd al-Aziz, Hadi recalls, "I ordered you to create me from my own kind. What is the point in reviving with these limbs and body parts that do not resemble me? ... You are a naked corpse with blue skin and rotten parts. You are made of stolen parts and doomed to my damned fate. You will be stared at in shock and disgust. 'Secondly, the creatures in both novels, after being brought to a new existence by their creator, kill other people. In Shelley's narrative, there is a short lapse after its creation, when victor holds both joy and disbelief over his creature. The creature, meanwhile, escapes his creator's place and roams around the empty streets of Geneva, France. However, still ugly and terrifying, it repulses every person it encounters and instills terror in the hearts of villagers, who thought of mounting a revolt against it. After spending some time hidden in a barn, the creature finds a way to infiltrate the apartment of De Lacey, a blind old man. This fruitful connection does not last long either, as the creature accidentally encounters the other family members and is again banished to the where it belongs, the sidewalk .

12. Conclusion

The discussion of identity loss and retrieval in postwar Iraqi society culminates with the conclusion that Iraqi society is in dire need of a narrative that reveals its various identities. The various factions and groups with the same identity have different goals and dreams, but they still suffer because of a distorted identity of a creature within society's shell. To reflect this identity loss in society, various narrative methods are used, including the fragmented story that lacks resolution at the level of the

macrostructure or background. The scene remains fractured, and there appears to be extensive diversity in ethnicities, languages, and narratives. Each faction narrates its recollections of what is taking place in Baghdad, and the language succeeds in differentiating between the narrators' accents. Syllables, pronunciations, and vocabularies differ, and there are even changes in the English text. Additionally, there are various ideologies, depending on who is dictating the story and which narrative is being told. The monster works simultaneously in the various places that the narrative circles around. The narrative space remains fluid, delicate, and ambiguous.

As the narrative proceeds, the diversities become so wide that emptiness and a sense of a broken horizon come to contain Baghdad. There are also concerns regarding how to retrieve the identity once it has been lost, which has always been in decline. This was the case with the Iraqi identity, and it is possible for the society that reached that point to dissolve. Despite the long, elaborate, and painful wait, the reparation of the identity did arrive, embodied in the creature produced by the junk dealer. At a macro-level approach, the society bore a monster whose characteristics depend on the fabrications of others. It came from a gathering of parts from diverse different bodies, revealing that diverse characteristics were formed, which joined together for the identity. It is through the intersection of the various social identities that comprise the Iraqi identity that the reparation and collective recognition of the lost identity are revealed and formed. Arabic identity, Western identity, and Turk identity join together to retrieve an identity that cannot be fixed anymore, but it embraces all of them, inclusive and unpacked. Each identity brings its part and determines the way it fabricates the creature and gives it life. The monster comes to reveal fragmentation and rupture. The monster's speech reveals illuminated sanity, bringing to the surface the hidden horrors that laid beneath the surface. The creature's actions are not sufficient in order to bridge that ugly gap. With the various forms of breaches and losses exceeding the ability to repair, the narrative reaches the end, reflecting Baghdad's identity in cumulative wounds that never heal, impossible to fix. The failure of reparation is a death blow, which a monster could never cure. Un-identity comes to reveal an infinite emptiness that is signified by a creature whose actions are futile.

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Abstract in Arabic

تناول هذه الدراسة مسألة فقدان الهوية الإنسانية في زمن الحرب، مع تركيز خاص على رواية أحمد سعداوي فرانكشتاين في بغداد، المرشحة لجائزة البوكر العالمية. وتُبرز الكيفية التي قد يلجأ فيها الإنسان إلى الهروب من واقعه عبر ابتكار شخصية خيالية أو متخيلة، بحثاً عن هوية بديلة تعوّض الهوية المفقودة. كما تكشف عن تمزق هويات الأفراد تحت وطأة الحرب، وما ينشأ عنها من هويات متشظية، وذاكرات مرتبكة وملتبسة، وغموض يلفت العالم نتيجة العنف والدمار اللذين يميزان الحاضر الكارثي. إنّ تحوّل جثة مهملة إلى كائن وحشي يعبر عن فظائع الحرب وآثارها الصادمة. وفي الوقت ذاته، فإن خلق هذا الكائن يُجسّد صوتاً مهماً يقف في مواجهة قوى لا تتحمل أي مسؤولية مباشرة عما يحدث.

وقد وظّف سعداوي شخصية الوحش الهجين (ما اسمه) بوصفها رمزاً وطنياً للهوية العراقية بعد عام 2003. ومن خلال تبني مقارنة نقدية ما بعد استعمارية، تجادل الدراسة بأن استثمار سعداوي لتقنية الواقعية السحرية لا يقتصر على تجسيد ذلك المناخ المروع، بل يتجاوز ذلك إلى نقد تفكك النسيج الاجتماعي وانهيار البنية الفردية.

وينصبّ التركيز الرئيس لهذا البحث على قدرة سعداوي في عكس تاريخ العراق وبغداد، بوصفهما تمثيلات نصية تتسم بعمق مأساوي شديد التأثير في الثقافة والهوية.
