



الانتقام في رواية احمد السعداوي "فرانكشتاين في بغداد"

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الملخص:-

فرانكشتاين في بغداد واحدة من اهم الروايات للكاتب العراقي أحمد السعداوي وتعتبر رواية تراجمية. تدور أحداث الرواية حول تأثير الحرب على العراق التي بدأت في 2003 وأستمر تأثيرها لسنوات عديدة. الرواية تركز على الانتقام. كيف المخلوق اخذ الانتقام لأجزاء الضحايا الذين صنع منهم. وكيف جرائم غريبة نفذت ونسبت الى مجهول. قسم البحث الى اربع اجزاء رئيسية : الجزء الاول يتضمن ثلاث فقرات فرعية: حياة أحمد السعداوي وأعماله والمقدمة والخلفية التاريخية للقرن العشرين. والجزء الثاني كذلك يتضمن ثلاث فقرات فرعية: ملخص الرواية والموضوعات الاساسية والشخصيات. الجزء الثالث يتضمن الجانب التحليلي. والجزء الرابع يتضمن الاستنتاج. الهدف من هذه الدراسة حسب موضوع الانتقام سوف اجيب على السؤال الرئيسي هل احمد السعداوي نجح في الانتقام من خلال الشخصية هادي وفرج واليشوا والجلاد والشخصيات الستة (العراف والسفسطائي والمجنون الصغير والمجنون الكبير و المجنون الاكبر) واخسراً يتضمن الاستنتاج وقائمة المصادر.

الكلمات المفتاحية:- أحمد السعداوي ، فرانكشتاين ، الرواية ، تراجمية ، الانتقام

Revenge in Ahmed Saadawi's novel "Frankenstein in Baghdad"

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Abstract:-

Frankenstein in Baghdad is one of the most important novels of the Iraqi writer Ahmed Al-Saadawi and is considered one of the tragic novels. This novel revolves around the impact of the war in Iraq that began in 2003 and continued its influence for many years. a stranger. The novel revolves around revenge, where this creature takes revenge for the parts of the victims that make up it, and strange crimes are committed, as they are attributed to the unknown. This study is divided into four main parts: The first part includes three sub-sections, namely: Ahmed El-Saadawi's life and works, introduction and historical background to the twentieth century. The second section includes three subsections that summarize the plot of the novel, the main themes in the novel and the characters of the novel. As for the third part, it contains an analytical part. The fourth part contains the conclusion. The goal of this study is going to analyze Ahmed Al-Saadawi Frankenstein in Baghdad according the revenge theme which is through this research I am going to answer the main question of who does Ahmed Al_saadawi novel achieve the revenge through this character. Hadi, Faraj, Elishva, Abdaki, Six characters (The Magician, The Sophist, The Enemy) are used by the author (small Madman, big



Madman, and biggest Madman). Finally, the study gives the conclusions, then it ends with a list of references.

Keywords: Ahmed Al-Saadawi , Frankenstein , tragedy , novel.

Section One

1.1 Introduction

In this section, we will discuss in 1.2 a brief biography of Ahmed El- Saadawi and his most important works, while in 1.3 we will discuss the historical background of the twentieth century.

1.2 The life and work of Ahmed El Saadawi

Ahmed Saadawi's "Frankenstein in Baghdad" Ahmed Saadawi is an Iraqi writer; he was born to an average family living in Sadr City, a well-known district in Baghdad. He wrote poetry before 10 and worked at a publishing house. He is very interested in fantasy novels so that he is fan of " Frankenstein " the movie about Mary Shelley's (Daham ,1).

Ahmed Saadawi is an Iraqi novelist, poet, and screenwriter who has worked in the production of television programs and documentaries. In 2014, he received the Arab Booker Prize for his novel Frankenstein in Baghdad, and the novel was chosen from among 156 nominated novels from 18 Arab countries. (Marefa 2022/February/21) novel which was produced in 1994, starring by Robert De Nero .In 2005 he has joined the BBC, but he finds that short news of people killing and wounding in journalism could be forgotten easily, but in literary work the matter is different. In literary work, he can make these victims dream, live, participate, think, meet their families then die. The main job of good writer is how to give voice to those unknown people. (Daham ,1).

In 1973, he was born in Baghdad. He was employed by and worked as a correspondent for many organizations In Baghdad, 2005-2007, I worked for the BBC on a number of newspapers, periodicals, and local publications. Currently, he is involved in the production and authoring of documentaries, television shows, and screenplays. He worked as a correspondent for the Berlin-based German news agency MICT. It's in the morning, new morning, and range of newspapers. And there's the network, Tawasul, and weekly periodicals. Baghdad is the source of all of them. (Marefa 2022/February/21)

He writes poetry, novels and documentary films. In 2013 he wrote his novel "Frankenstein in Baghdad" and he was awarded because of it several prizes like the Arabic Fiction Prize and he is the first Iraqi novelist to win this prize. This novel is nominated for the Man Booker International Prize for Arabic Fiction 2014 and won France's Grand Prize for Fantasy. It is listed in annual Locus Recommended List published in Locus Magazine, February, 2019 as a Fantasy Novel. The novel



is considered as a fantasy and black comedy after 2003 as surreal reality literary work of that specific period in Iraq (Daham ,1).

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His Works and Collections :

Invasive Fetish, Collection, Baghdad 1997. .Najat Zaida, collection, Baghdad 1999. Bad Songs Feast, Group, Madrid, Panel House, .2001 My Picture while I Dream, Collection, Baghdad .2002 the novel The Beautiful Country, Dar Al-Mada, won first . prize in the Arabic Novel Competition in Dubai 2005 It Dreams, Plays or Dies, British High Fastfall. Award 2010 Frankenstein in Baghdad Playing in the Adjacent Rooms, manuscript, most of its texts were published in Arab and .Iraqi newspapers and periodicals Shared books Wounds in the palm trees, testimonies of Iraqi .authors, Dar Al-Saqi, London 2007 The Iranian Place Texts by Iraqi Writers Institute. (Retrieved 2022/2/21)

1.3 Historical background of the twentieth century

On September 29, 2017, Miriam Cooke organized a two-part symposium on Iraqi literature produced after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. The first part took place at Duke University and the second in Iraq. The symposium was motivated by the noticeable surge in dystopian novels, short stories, memoirs, and poetry over the previous 14 years, coupled with the lack of sufficient scholarly attention to these works. This academic event sought to fill this lacuna by placing the occupation within its broader framework of American imperialism, not in order to exaggerate Iraqi suffering but to understand its role in a large geopolitical strategy meant to subjugate the region. Academic Research Institution in Iraq, 2017, October 11.



The symposium consisted of two readings and four academic presentations. Starting with the discussion of Iraqi literature under the Ba'ath regime, the speakers in order were Ahlaam, Abd al-Sattar, Louis Yako, who recited some of his poems, and Sinan Antoon, reading from *The Baghdad Eucharist*, a novel he translated recently. Both authors also gave papers on the "corpse cliché" that has recurred in Iraqi writing since 2003. The title of the symposium took its cue from Hassan Blasim's 2013 short story collection, *The Corpse Exhibition*.

In the paper "Death & Exile in Balasim's Writing," Louis Yako explored the reason behind a particular linguistic style being adopted by post-war Iraqi authors. When everything is lost, he maintained, language becomes the only remaining "home," and this "home" must reflect human experiences adequately—pleasures, sorrows, and everything in between. He said, "Demanding the right words with which to frame the event would have been equivalent to praying that every human disaster evaporated instantaneously in thin air." Sinan Antoon, while giving the speech entitled "Writing Iraq After 2003," talked about the thematic and linguistic spheres of his novel from 2010 *The Corpse Washer* The Academic Research Institution in Iraq, 2017, October 11.

The novel has become a leading genre in modern literary development, Mikhail Bakhtin affirms in his *The Dialogic Imagination*. Though Iraq has a rich history of literature, with myths, fables, biographies, and oral storytelling traditions dating five millennia, the Iraqi novel as such did not appear as a serious genre until the mid-20th century, though there is some dispute among scholars regarding the origin of the Iraqi novel. Some critics consider Mahmud Ahmad al-Sayyid (1903–1937) to be the founder of the Iraqi novel with works such as *For the Sake of Marriage* (1921), *The Fate of the Weak* (1922), *The Calamities* (1922), and Khalid Jalal (1923). Though at times Khalid Jalal's work has been considered Iraq's first true novel, it has also been labeled an ideological tract devoid of cohesion, and even as no more than a long story by critics (Hamedawi 9).

The modern Iraqi novel gained prominence in 1966 with the publication of Ghaib Tu'ma Farman's *The Palm Tree and the Neighbors*. Between 1927 and 1966, notable works were few and included Abdul Haq Fadhil's *Two Mad Men* (1939), Thinoon Ayoob's *Doctor Ibrahim* (1939), and *The Hand, the Earth, and the Water* (1948). Other notable contributions included Ja'far al-Khalili's *The Jinn's Villages* (1948) and Abdullalla Niyazi's *The End of a Love Story* (1949). The short story flourished in the 1950s, led by writers like Abdulmalik Noori and Fouad al-Tikerly, but the novel lagged behind.

Female writers of the mid-20th century faced significant challenges in a male-dominated literary landscape. Authors such as Harbeya Mohammed (Who's the



Culprit?, 1954) and Layla Abdul Kadir (Nadia, 1957) contributed extended tales, but their works were not considered full-fledged novels. Other female writers, including Amna Hayder al-Sadr, Maeda al-Rubayee, and Sameera al-Daraji, also produced noteworthy works, though they were similarly categorized as extended narratives rather than novels.

From 1980 to 2003, the Iraqi novel became closely associated with war, reflecting the devastating effects of the Iraq-Iran War (1980–1988) and the Gulf War (1990–1991). These conflicts, followed by the crippling international sanctions from 1991 to 2003, had a profound impact on all aspects of Iraqi life, including literature. The regime's motto, "Everything for the Battle," shaped a generation of writers whose works reflected the struggles of a war-torn society (Marefa, 2022, February 21).

The Iraqi postcolonial novel establishes its own norms, going well beyond the limits given by the classic novel. When readers look at the history of the Iraqi novel, they will notice that it was not accorded the same prominence as poetry in the country's literature. Iraqi culture was recognized for its conservatism and commitment to tribal customs and traditions. In this predominantly patriarchal

culture, the book was a Western and female phenomena. Women had more important things to do than tell stories, and men had more essential things to do than tell stories. Individuals were also engaged with internal strife and the government of emerging states, not to mention a plethora of intrigues. Sulaymn Fayd's *Al-Riwyah Al-Iqaziyyah*, recognized as the first Iraqi narrative with novel-like features, focused on social awakening and moral reform rather than entertainment or romance (Kashou 52). Following the conflict, intellectuals such as Ahmed Mahmoud Alsaed continued the battle by addressing social, political, moral, and educational challenges. In his novel *Khaled Jalal* (1928), commonly recognized as the first Iraqi novel in terms of narrative substance and design, Alsaed argues that the only way to oppose British colonization is via education, knowledge dissemination, and the rejection of needless customs. He also supported political and women's rights changes (Hamedawi 4- 5)

It was not until April 9th, 2003, that Iraqi authors who had not yet departed the country were emancipated from their mental exile and began to compose the rich texts that would characterize the Iraqi postcolonial novel's main features. The hope that erupted when the Al-Ba'ath Party's regime collapsed revitalized authors. The proliferation of publishing firms provided significantly more room for writers to produce and publish than they had previously had or even required. Millions of books were released onto the market in the country, as well as internet platforms that allowed writers to publish their works.



Ward Bader is a character in the film *Ward Bader Salam*, which skillfully conveys the changes that happened in the city as a result of the social and economic crises, as well as the civil strife (**Eajayib Baghdad, 2012**). This book examines the disturbing circumstances surrounding the civil war that devastated Iraq in 2006, as well as the internal conspiracies and exterior foreign agendas that conspired to destroy Iraq as a nation and state. It also addresses the challenges that have exhausted the country's resources and led to sectarianism among its population. The major theme of the work, the search for identity, is explored in great depth, portraying Iraqis' grief and victimhood throughout the tragic events of 2006. (**Hamedawi 9-24**)

Iraqi literature, on the other hand, has long been associated with the country's tumultuous political situation. Anyone aiming to subjugate Iraq, beginning with Hulagu Khan in **1258**, went for its intellectual heart. When the Mongols took the city, they set their sights on the famous Bayt al-Hikma, flinging its volumes into the Tigris River, which, according to witnesses, became black with ink. In recent history, Saddam Hussein sought to use literature to bolster his dictatorship, suffocating the culture in the process. Even as it caused havoc on the country's infrastructure and social fabric, Operation Iraqi Freedom released authors and ushered in a new era of freedom of speech in **2003**. When **ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria)** took control of the nation a decade later, its fanatics intended to restore the country to its previous grandeur. When Saddam Hussein was toppled in **2003**, his regime's censorship and repression, as well as the nation's social foundation and infrastructure, were broken. Iraq was flooded with technology and resources that it had been denied earlier. The Internet was made available to the country, allowing information to freely flow in and out, the press to be unmasked, and newspapers, radio stations, and television channels to be aired. Free speech and expression were strongly supported by US authorities and the interim administration as part of their campaign for democracy. The stability and security that had prevailed under Saddam Hussein had vanished. IEDs and militias terrorized the streets; in **2007**, a suicide bomber killed 26 people in Baghdad's literary district, al-Mutanabbi street. Water and electricity were not assured. The only goal was to stay alive (**Gunderson, 2019**)

Iraqi Literature's Representation of Tyranny and War in Iraq despite Iraq's recent political and social developments, which continue to have an influence on daily life, literary portrayals of Iraqi conflicts, tyranny, and violence are woefully insufficient. Roger Luckhurst contrasts the literary coverage of the **2003** Iraq War to that of prior conflicts in a form of survey. Both the Vietnam War and the September 11, 2001 terrorist strikes He claims that no significant literary work comparable to those written on **9/11** or the Vietnam War paints a clear image of the



invasion, the post-operation period, or the civil war that followed (**Luckhurst 713**). Other aesthetic media, including as photography and documentary cinema, have shown a significant response to the conflict (**Habeeb 7**)

We can no longer approach Iraqi literature without first comprehending the different transformations and varieties in its expression a decade after the US-led coalition invaded the country. To mention a few major events during the post-Ba'thist era, there was the sudden fall of a long-running dictatorship, a confrontation with Western occupation, and an unprecedented surge in sectarian discourses. A variety of cultural upheavals that spanned the bulk of the twentieth century impacted the development of contemporary Iraqi writing in addition to these sources of inspiration. The abrupt shifts from the Hashemite monarchy (1932–58) to the reign of 'Abd al-Karim Qasim (1958–63), the Ba'th Party dictatorship (1968–2003), the embargo years (1991–2003), and finally the post-2003 period highlight the ideological schisms and differences (Habeeb 8)

A significant shift in Iraqi literature has occurred in Basra's cultural landscape, which, in addition to producing well-known diaspora authors like Najem Wali, looks to be undergoing its own literary renaissance via a new generation of fiction writers. Local advancements in magical realism and magical history, whose forefathers, most notably Muhammad Khdhayir, but also Mahdi Jabr, Mahmud Abd alWahhab, and Hussayn 'Abd al-Latif, mainly chose quiet throughout the Ba'thist era, are represented in the literary work of Luay Hamzah Abbas, among others. Multiple waves of intellectuals have been forced to leave Iraq for political or other reasons over the period of more than half a century. (Hanoosh,2013)

Section Two

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we will discuss in 2.2 a brief summary about the novel, in 2.3 we will discuss the main themes in the novel, and in 2.4 we will discuss the characters of the novel. And in 2.4 we will discuss the topic of revenge in the novel.

2.2 Summary of Frankenstein in Baghdad

"Frankenstein in Baghdad" is based on Mary Shelley's novel "Frankenstein," however it is not required to be a copy of that book due to cultural differences. The topic of Saadawi's story is violence, while Shelley's story is about a strange monster made by a scientist in his laboratory. The horrific mood of Frankenstein is esquire during the novel's Iraqi setting. Another distinction between Hadi Al-Attag and Victor Frankenstein is that Hadi is a naive trash salesman, whereas Victor Frankenstein is a brilliant scientist with his own scientific laboratory experiments. The story depicts how Hadi, a trash trader who is known for narrating stories from



his mind, gathers human remains and sews them together to form a single corpse. After that, the gathered corpse transforms into a monster. The work bears some resemblance to Mary Shelley's novel from two centuries ago, but Shelley's monster does not have the same political overtones as Saadawi's monster, which is more terrifying than the previous one. This work portrays violence as a heinous crime. The narrative of this novel centers on a basic junk merchant who collects the bones of victims killed in explosions and sews them together into one corpse.

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Frankenstein in Baghdad, Jonathan Wright's English-language translation, arrives at a time when "dystopia" as a notion, worry, and topic of discourse has infiltrated American awareness. "It would be too improbable to please readers if Donald Trump's election were fiction," Margaret Atwood told The New Yorker last year. The popularity of Frankenstein in Baghdad is due to the fact that, in the midst of its amazing scenery, the appearance of a sewn-together undead appears barely impossible. Dystopian literature blends parts of realism particular to the historical period in which it is written with science or fantasy elements to illustrate the terrifying direction in which we are heading. The dystopian components of Frankenstein in Baghdad are not anchored in the novel's speculative, supernatural themes, but rather in the novel's dystopian features (Metz, 2018, June, 5)

Frankenstein In Baghdad is an engrossing book that not only captures a period in history that I don't recall much about... these people are all the same as our own, painted against the backdrop of this eerie modern horror story (Owlcation, 2018, Feb. 12)

" Frankenstein in Baghdad " is named after another one which is Mary Shelley's novel "Frankenstein", but it is not necessary to be a copy of that novel because of different cultures orientations. Saadawi's theme is about violence whereas Shelley's theme is about a new creature that is created by a scientist inside his scientific lab. Frankenstein is esquire the horror atmosphere during the period of the novel in Iraq. Another different point is between Hadi Al-Attag and Victor Frankenstein, because Hadi is a naïve junk dealer while Victor Frankenstein is a genius scientist



who possesses scientific lab for his experiments. The novel describes how Hadi – the junk dealer – who is used to narrate stories out of his imagination collects remains of human bodies and sews them to make one body. After that the collected corpse becomes a monster. The novel has some similarity to Mary Shelley's novel which was written two centuries ago, but Shelley's monster does not have political points as the monster of Saadawi which is more frightening than the previous one. This novel exposes how violence is like an abject thing. The plot of this novel concentrates on the simple junk dealer, when he collects remains parts of those people who are killed in explosions and sews them in one body. This body is inhabited by Hseeb's soul – the young guard – who begins to revenge against criminals who killed parts composing its body. There is another character that needs creation of What'sitsname the old mother Elishva, she is waiting her absent son Daniel for two decades. She is not convinced that he had died in war (Daham, 1). The extent to which Hadi would go all out to express an effigy made of the terror victim's body parts conveys, as he boasts to his friends when drunk on a session over coffee. Having a victim's nose as part of the torso, a section of the finger of the officers, and having bits and parts stitched across gives him great satisfaction, whereby he falls into a swoon on the floor (Owlcation, 2018, February 12).

Jonathan Wright's English translation of *Frankenstein in Baghdad* arrived at a time when the notion of "dystopia" had become a pervasive fear and a dominant topic of discourse in American culture. As Margaret Atwood remarked in 2017, "If the election of Donald Trump were fiction, it would be too implausible to satisfy readers" (The New Yorker). Where the book finds its strength is in the placing of an impossible premise—a stitched-together zombie roaming the streets of Baghdad—within the horrifyingly plausible reality of 2005 Iraq. The book does in reverse what the great majority of dystopian fiction does, combining contemporary concerns with speculative or fantastic elements. Its dystopian aspects are rooted not in supernatural elements but in the unrelenting violence and disintegration of Baghdad's social and political fabric (Metz, 2018, June 5).

Frankenstein in Baghdad is a haunting yet captivating novel that epitomizes a moment in tumultuous history. It is an Arabic perspective on daily life during war, rarely captured by the Western world. Grotesque horror intertwined with shared human experiences forms a thread throughout the story, poignantly emphasizing that no matter the destruction, its characters' hopes and values are universal. It is this duality—grotesque yet poignant—that defines the power of the novel (Owlcation, 2018, February 12).

Ahmed Saadawi does not engage in speculative fiction on bombing atrocities; his work typically deals with daily trauma in post-invasion Iraq, symbolized by



Shesma, or al-Shismma, a mysterious figure whose dismembered body reflects Iraq's fragmented identity. Thus, Shesma is a symbolic construction: each part of his body was representing a social group in the Iraqi society, and each was eager for justice or revenge. The novel portrays Iraq's traumatized identity as one shaped by greed for power, sectarianism, and foreign intervention. Saadawi's narrative highlights the disintegration of Iraqi society and its fragility in the aftermath of war, presenting Shesma as the personification of a collective longing for justice and retribution (Ghazi, 4039).

Shesma through him, Sa'adawi has given voice to one revolutionary spirit considering the avenger of all violence victimized. "Shesma sets out in the service of assurance for the soul of those that are lost by explosions and wars." His act expresses a deeper ache of justice and humanity within his psyche marred and blemished society of oppression and annihilation. Lastly, he used Shesma's ugly brutality as a looking glass into truth distasteful to him about Iraqi societal and political circumstances. Through this aberrant character, Saadawi shows the aftereffects of trauma and points toward the continuing struggle for justice in a country torn apart by war and instability. This is a deep metaphor that underlines the fragility of Iraq's social and political landscape and the resilience of its people.

2.3 main themes in the novel

As the novel progresses, we find that as the corpse regains consciousness, it embarks on a grand mission of vengeance, killing every guilty criminal responsible for the murder of the body's constituent pieces. The Whatsitsname, possessed by the guard's spirit, begins killing for justice and vengeance because "justice had to be done here on earth, with witnesses present". Surprisingly, as it begins to kill bad people, portions of its body begin to fall off and rot. And, in order to perform its "honorable mission" it must replace the bits that have fallen out. (Reda 17)

Hadi discovered a nose in the rubble after another vehicle bombing, the final component he needed for Abdaki's body. Hadi afterwards witnessed yet another car bombing when a garbage truck crashed into a hotel gate, killing Hasib Mohamed Jaafar, the guard inside. Hasib's soul wandered the city after the bombing, looking for his body, but instead discovered it in Hadi's courtyard. The body became sentient when he entered it. (Owlcation,2018,Feb.12)

Hadi alerted a group of individuals about the body at a coffee shop, including journalist Mahmoud. Mahmoud worked as an editor at a magazine under Ali Baher al-Saidi, whom he regarded as a father figure. Mahmoud aspired to be like his mentor, and he even had a thing for his mentor's girlfriend. Meanwhile, Elishva was visited by the now reanimated body, whom she mistook for her son Daniel, who had finally returned to her (Owlcation,2018,Feb.12)



The novel concludes on a bleak note for Iraq's future, as there is no way to cease the constant terror and violence. "It was anarchy out there; there was no rationale behind what was occurring," Mahmoud (the journalist) says when he returns to his village (273). According to Saadawi, his monster is "a fictional portrayal of everyone killing everyone." Rather than being the solution, this character is a visual depiction of the bigger dilemma (Reda 18)

In 2006, he was a correspondent for the BBC Arabic channel, chronicling the violence and war in occupied Iraq, which was destroying his nation terribly. "I witnessed a lot of dead people," Saadawi says, "not just dead bodies, but body parts as well." "A large number of body parts" (Hankir, 2018). After seeing awful incidents while working as a reporter, Saadawi chose to express himself through beautiful ink, portraying the many subtleties of tragedy (Alhashmi 92)

When Hadi conceives the idea of creating an effigy assembled from the body parts of victims of terror attacks, he initially presents it as a bold statement aimed at challenging the government. This intention, however, is expressed during a drunken conversation with his friends at a café, casting doubt on its sincerity. While his claims suggest political motives, his underlying interest seems to stem more from personal curiosity than a genuine ideological stance. As he works on his creation, Hadi gathers disparate body parts—such as a nose taken from one victim, fingers removed from an officer who killed an innocent person, and other fragments of flesh hurriedly stitched together. The grotesque assemblage becomes a source of peculiar satisfaction for Hadi, but this sense of accomplishment is short-lived, as he collapses into unconsciousness soon after completing his work (Owlcation, 2018, Feb. 12).

As a result, boundaries are dissolved in Saadawi's writing, as they were in Shelley's, which is a key feature of postmodernism. Criminals and victims are now linked because executing criminals resulted in the deaths of victims. "Each of us possesses a measure of criminality... there are no innocents who are entirely innocent or criminals who are completely criminals," the Whatsitsname concludes (and which Saadawi quietly infers) (156, 214). It's Saadawi's way of suggesting that everyone in Iraq is a criminal as well as a victim. As a result, the creature has become a symbol for a cycle. (Reda 19)

Elishua refuses to accept her son's death. Even more than the death of her husband and the emigration of her two daughters, this loss defines her existence. When thousands of others were dying, her neighbors couldn't care less about the loss of one young man. She, on the other hand, has been grieving him for the past 20 years. She has faith in her patron saint to return him to her. As a result, when Frankenstein climbs to her house from Had's shed, she welcomes him as her son right away, giving him her son's clothes and tending to his wounds. She ends her



sorrow the next day by purchasing meat, donning a crimson bandanna, and informing her neighbors that her son has returned (Elayyan 162)

Four beggars are killed in the first attack of the Whatsitsname on the streets of Baghdad. "Each of the beggars had his hands around the neck of the man in front of him," the narrator said of this supernatural crime. It appeared to be a bizarre tableau or theatrical scenario. Their clothing was ragged and filthy, and their heads hung forward" (Saadawi 69). Insofar as the beggars are killed in such an unusual manner, this tragic crime raises numerous doubts about the offender and instills panic among city residents (Alhashmi 94). As the novel progresses, the monster becomes a pervasive subject of discussion, dominating conversations in the streets and coffee shops of Baghdad. His notoriety grows to such an extent that he appears on the Iraqi government's "Most Wanted" list, accused of committing numerous heinous crimes across the city (Alhashmi 94).

Hadi's creation is identified by various names throughout the story, including "Criminal X," "The One Who Has No Name," and most commonly, "Whatsitsname" (translated as Ashismi in Saadawi's original Arabic text). The monster's peculiar biological makeup presents ongoing complications: unless he avenges the deaths of the individuals whose body parts compose him, those parts begin to decay and detach, often in absurd and darkly humorous ways. These challenges are further heightened by his self-imposed principle of only incorporating body parts from innocent people. This restriction is critical to maintaining what he perceives as the integrity and clarity of his mission, a cause he deeply values and regards as a form of justice. His commitment to this ideal, however, underscores the paradox of his existence, as his actions blur the line between retribution and perpetuating violence (Metz, 2018, June 5).

In the end, the Whatsitsname is overcome not only by the sheer number of offenders he feels driven to punish, but also by the passage of time. "Every piece of dead flesh that made up his body fell off if he didn't avenge the person it came from within a specific length of time," the narrator explains. But even if he did avenge someone, that person's piece would fall off anyhow, as if it wasn't needed" (Saadawi 134–35). He is more concerned with his own survival than with suppressing violence. He then resorts to murdering others in order to prolong his own life (Alhashmi 95) The section of the body will collapse when Frankenstein exacts retribution on one of the persons from whom he borrowed. This means that Frankenstein will have to keep killing in order to replace the missing components. In order to survive, he started murdering innocent people and developed horrible behaviors. The majority of the novel's characters appear to have a selfish personality. Selfishness is a common response to anxiety and fear. Solomon characterizes vengeance as "a socially constructed emotion that may be nurtured to



contain not only its limitations but also a complete comprehension of the greater good (ghazi 4037)

Indeed, the rise of the Whatsitsname can be seen as a divine summons. "The innards of the darkness shifted and gave birth to me," according to Whatsitsname. I am the answer to their cry for justice and vengeance on those who have wronged others" (Saadawi 143). As a result, the Whatsitsname is a hero for those who were slain anonymously, as the Whatsitsname declares: "With the help of God and heaven, I will avenge all the perpetrators." There will be no need to wait in agony for justice to arrive in heaven or after death since I will ultimately bring justice to earth (Alhashmi 99)

Elishua refuses to accept her son's death. Even more than the death of her husband and the emigration of her two daughters, this loss defines her existence. When thousands of others were dying, her neighbors couldn't care less about the loss of one young man. She, on the other hand, has been grieving him for the past 20 years. She has faith in her patron saint to return him to her. As a result, when Frankenstein climbs to her house from Had's shed, she welcomes him as her son right away, giving him her son's clothes and tending to his wounds. She ends her sorrow the next day by purchasing meat, donning a crimson bandanna, and informing her neighbors that her son has returned (Elayyan 162)

The Whatsitsname begins his mission as a figure of vengeance, targeting those directly responsible for killing the people whose body parts compose his stitched-together body. However, his sense of justice becomes increasingly blurred as he expands his retribution to include those who insult or offend him personally. As the Whatsitsname himself declares: "I am now taking revenge on people who insult me, not just on those who did violence to those whose body parts I'm made of" (Alhashmi 99). This shift highlights the deepening complexity of his quest, as his actions increasingly resemble the very violence he initially sought to avenge.

The world around the Whatsitsname is chaotic and violent, further complicating his pursuit of justice. For instance, the owner of the Akhawain laundry shop tells him about police raids targeting armed gangs involved in trafficking women out of Iraq. Similarly, a worker at the bakery reports rumors of terrorists coming from the provinces to hide in local hotels, prompting the police and American forces to conduct searches. Despite spending half the day gathering information, the Whatsitsname hears nothing about the mysterious disappearance of a corpse he is searching for (Metz, 2018, June 5). This bleak environment underscores the futility of his mission as the cycle of violence perpetuates itself. As he admits: "My list of persons to seek revenge on became greater as my old body parts dropped off and my aides added pieces from my new victims, until one night I realized that under these circumstances I would confront an open-ended list of targets that would



never end” (Saadawi 153). In this context, the relentless pursuit of justice gives way to a grim struggle for survival. Hannah Arendt's observation resonates here: “The practice of violence, like all action, alters the world, but the most likely change is a more violent world” (Alhashmi 100).

The novel also delves into themes of mourning and emotional transformation, particularly through the character of Elishua. Drawing from Freud's theories on mourning and melancholy, her acceptance of a substitute for her lost son can be interpreted as an attempt to sever her emotional ties to the deceased and redirect her affection toward a new object—symbolically represented by a younger son who reminds her of her days as a young mother (Lernerm 46). Judith Butler's perspective further deepens this analysis, suggesting that Elishua's actions are part of an effort to “preserve the object as part of the ego,” allowing her to integrate her loss into her sense of self while seeking new emotional investments (Elayyan 162). These layers of psychological and philosophical inquiry enrich the narrative, illustrating the intricate interplay between grief, identity, and survival in a world consumed by violence.

Consequently, violence has created a widespread sense of dread in Iraq's capital city, where people are constantly on the verge of death and live in constant terror. “Things like a lack of trust among people, the absence of law, the absence of security, heightened anxiety,” writes Saadawi (Arango, 2014). Fear is the source of the country's iniquity and immorality. Indeed, Saadawi is interested in using gothic themes in his work to portray a sense of fear. As represented by Saadawi, people are tormented by horror. “Every day we're dying from the same fear of dying,” he say. (Alhashmi 102)

“Whatsitsname was at a loss for what to do at this point. He understood his goal was simply to kill, and he knew he had to kill new individuals every day, but he had lost track of who should be killed and why” (Saadawi 200). Frankenstein has many allegorical meanings. Iraq is “a body without a spirit” (Saadawi 40). He is paranoia, uncertainty, horrifying social events, horror, horrible age lunacy, an instrument of death and war's ugliness, if not war itself, the period's criminal (ghazi 4038)

As a result, ending her sorrow is not a betrayal of her Iraqi heritage. The elderly mother decides to depart because she may wish to help to the preservation of her grandson's identity, as he does not speak Arabic and will most likely adapt into Australian society. Her departure is typical of Iraqi Christians who, in the absence of significant tribal or sectarian military support, are left with no choice but to go. (Elayyan 162)

The monster, later dubbed Frankenstein by the journalist, is born pure, just like all children, because he was created from the bodies of victims. Everyone sees in him



the possibility of vengeance, perhaps even a new beginning for the country. Frankenstein is the archetypal Iraqi for the Lesser Madman: he is made out of parts of people from many walks of life. Frankenstein represents the tool of destruction that will prepare the way for the Savior's appearance to the Great Madman, hence he is assisting him in making the Savior's presence feasible. Frankenstein is the Saviour of the Greater Madman (Elayyan 164)

In one of Baghdad's neighborhoods, the war destroyed the city, people fled, and violence, chaos, and sectarianism spread as a result of the city's low standard of living, as well as a large number of explosions, killing, and blood. Hadi digs through the blood, rubble, and smoke for the remains of the blast victims, where he collects the remaining parts of dead human bodies, wraps them in a cloth, and departs the scene. Hadi takes the various parts after going home and puts them together to form a whole body , (ghazi 4033)

Hadi penetrates the human remains of the explosion victims and stitches them together to form an unsightly bleeding human body, after which he names him (Al shesmma), while others refer to him as the criminal x (ghazi 4033)

At first, Frankenstein appears to be a hero. He seeks vengeance against murders, criminals, and terrorists. Ironically, the three beggars who assault him and whom he forces to strangle one another are his first victims. Except for the traffic lights and the dark lane they lived in, Brigadier Surr claims that no one would notice them (Elayyan 164)

The city of Baghdad is engulfed in a wave of murders and escalating violence. Whispers spread through its streets about a strange and mysterious figure—referred to as "Whatsitsname" or "Criminal X" by the Iraqi prosecution and legal authorities. This enigmatic entity, described as a ruthless and uncontrollable force, is tied to Hasib's spirit and roams the streets of Baghdad on a relentless quest for vengeance. Whatsitsname's justification for his killings is rooted in what he calls a "noble mission": avenging the deaths of those whose body parts now constitute his own stitched-together form. However, this mission is fraught with grotesque urgency. As his body begins to rot and decay, he is compelled to find replacements—new hands, eyes, and other organs—by killing individuals deemed guilty. The physical condition of his existence demands continual violence, forcing Whatsitsname to perpetuate a cycle of death and mutilation in order to survive. His quest for justice becomes entangled in a sprawling web of bloodshed that crosses political and sectarian lines, implicating various factions in the city's ongoing turmoil (Ghazi 4034).

In Saadawi's narrative, this figure embodies far more than a literal avenger. Whatsitsname serves as an allegory for the absurdity of cyclical sectarian violence, carried out to grotesque extremes. Faraj, a mysterious writer for a prominent



publication, is one of the many characters whose lives are influenced—either directly or indirectly—by the manipulative and murderous actions of Whatsitsname. Saadawi's postmortem creation is a haunting figure: a "phantom of wrath," a "jinn of dismay," and a "spirit of lost conflict." The creature holds profound hermeneutic power, serving as a symbolic representation of the chaos and despair that permeates the city. Yet, the figure's allegorical strength is paradoxically weakened by its physical construction. Whatsitsname is almost entirely composed of the remains of older, capable male bodies, a fact that taints the purity of its symbolic mission.

For readers interpreting Whatsitsname as an exaggerated metaphor for Iraq's cyclical sectarian violence, the figure becomes a hyperbolic representation of the absurdity and futility of this endless conflict. By embodying the consequences of violence in such a literal and grotesque way, Saadawi forces readers to confront the brutal reality of a society trapped in a cycle of destruction and revenge (Ghazi 4035).

2.4 Revenge in Frankenstein in Baghdad

To reflect all types of violence that Iraqis face, Ahmed Saadawi creates a creature made up of innocent individuals of various ages. Saadawi signifies the widespread terror engendered by many forms of violence. 'What's-it's-it was an amalgamation of all religions and ethnic groupings within the Iraqi population, both innocent and criminal. He was seen as a savior by the old regime and the US occupation. In Baghdad's Frankenstein, those who have lost their humanity are becoming part of the deadly loop. (Ghazi 4032)

The noble purpose of the Whatsitsname never stops, peace never arrives, and the list of victims to avenge never ends. As the creature begins to kill all kinds of individuals only to stay alive, the creature's objective and the outcome of his acts contradict one another. His quest to revenge the innocent, bring justice to the world, and bring peace to the world becomes ludicrous and paradoxical. Saadawi appears to be using the monster to show how justice is a more complicated concept than most Iraqis wanting vengeance choose to consider. The term "justice" refers to a Never, ever, ever be objective. In Najjar's interview, Saadawi expresses his views clearly, saying, "What is justice for one group is injustice for another." In Iraq, actions in the name of justice appear to be intensely personal and even plausible. However, Saadawi's Whatsitsname exposes the flaws in these personal standards and quests for justice. In his review, Sam Metz expresses this clearly, emphasizing the novel's overt message about justice missions inevitably failing. 27 Perhaps the pursuit of actual justice in Iraq is as counterintuitive as the pursuit of justice by the Whatsitsname, which appears to be fruitless and hazardous for



society as a whole, as well as for the justifiers themselves. (Teggart 2019/December/1)

Because he was produced from the corpses of the victims, this monster, subsequently termed Frankenstein by the journalist, was created as innocent as any children. Everyone sees in him the potential for retribution or even the rebirth of the nation. Frankenstein is the Iraqi quintessential, according to Lesser Madman, because it is made up of bits of citizens from different walks of life. The Great Madman uses Frankenstein as a weapon of destruction, opening the way for the saviour's appearance and making the savior's presence unavoidable. As with the Great Madman, Frankenstein is the Savior. At first glance, Frankenstein appears to be a hero. He seeks vengeance against assassins, criminals, and terrorists. His first victims, however, are the three beggars who attack him and who, ironically, are his first victims who are attempting to strangle one another Except for the traffic lights and the dark street where they had lived, Brigadier Surûr claims that none of them were absent. His next victim is Abu Zaydûn, a barber who was responsible for the deaths of several young Iraqis during the Iraqi war. (Ghazi 4036)

Daniel, the older woman's sole son, and Salîm, the son of her neighbor, were among those killed in the Iranian war against Iran. The section of the body will collapse when Frankenstein exacts retribution on one of the persons from whom he borrowed. This means that Frankenstein will have to keep killing in order to replace the missing components. In order to survive, he started murdering innocent people and developed horrible behaviors. The majority of the novel's characters appear to have a selfish personality. Selfishness is a common response to anxiety and fear. Solomon characterizes vengeance as "a socially constructed feeling that may be nurtured to contain not only its bounds but a thorough comprehension of the overall situation. Revenge is a natural emotion that develops in social life, and it should be regulated in such a way that the victim is protected by the law that emerges. The novel explores how the protagonists deal with their "precarious" situations. (Ghazi 4037)

Although the body terrorizes Baghdad and is unaffected by police gunshots, we are confronted with a variety of viewpoints since the creature has its own followers (some of whom see the creature as a "Godsent" way of "salvation"). For example, we see Eliashu, an elderly Christian woman who takes in the monster because she perceives him as her son Daniel, who went missing twenty years ago during the Iran-Iraq war and whose death she continues to deny. The creature is her son, according to her, who was sent to her by Saint Georges, to whom she had prayed for years. Other followers include the Magician, the Sophist, and the Enemy (a former Iraqi government officer who couldn't get along).

We also have the three insane men: the young, the elderly, and the eldest, who believe that the Whatsitsname is the Savior who has finally arrived to carry out



God's justice on Earth. "They all thought I was the face of God on earth," the creature says (159). Their purpose was to assist their rescuer and track down criminals who could supply him with the "pieces" (150) he required. (Reda 18) would not be considered as trash, but rather as a dead person who deserves to be recognized and buried properly" (27). As a result, he has created "a composite of victims seeking vengeance so that they may rest in peace" (130). Hadi's corpse, like Shelley's monster, laments being misunderstood and thus rejected, "they have transformed me into a criminal and a monster... this is a grave injustice" from another part (143). The reader, on the other hand, does not experience the same sympathy that Shelley's language evokes. Worse, it goes on to say, "People have been giving me a poor reputation." They accuse me of committing crimes, but they don't realize that I'm the only one who can bring justice to this country.

I represent the impossible mix that has never been attained in the past because I am made up of body parts from people of all ethnicities, tribes, races, and social classes. I'm Iraq's first actual citizen. (141, 135) It is avenging victims and innocent people from the criminals who killed them, rather than killing indiscriminately and violently. "I had just plucked the fruit of death before it dropped to the ground," the monster claims, "I was not a murderer" (162). According to the Whatsitsname, it was on a "prophetic mission," (139), and was a "extraordinary murderer... in the service of truth and justice" (201). It exclaims, "I'm the answer to the poor's call," as it records its story on Mahmoud's recorder. I'm a hero. (Reda 18)

Daniel, the Whatsit, or Suspect X as he is also known by the police and the media, remembers crimes that his parts were involved in and wants to make up by killing and avenging people who were wronged. Daniel is made out of bits that feed his memory, and when he completes a task, that piece falls off. Daniel begins to flake away after a while, but those who were aware of Hadi's construction merely want to re-infuse life and purpose into their squishy weapon by replacing the failing parts. Daniel is still killing people. (June 5, Metz)

The monster might also be interpreted as a rescuer, given its willingness to exact vengeance on behalf of all victims. Bringing justice to the growing number of victims in Iraq today implies that everyone will be saved. We detect a metaphysical reflection of the concept of salvation attained via the efforts of a single person here. This concept of salvation is subtly questioned throughout the novel. In Arab and Middle Eastern countries, such an idea has frequently resulted in the development of political dictatorships. Unfortunately, tyranny continues to exist in Iraq, and it did not end with Saddam Hussein's authoritarian reign. (Najjar, March 26, 2014)

MN: Does today's Iraq require a Frankenstein-like monster to exact vengeance on behalf of all victims?



AS: Certainly not! The novel, in fact, says the exact opposite. Our personal values of justice, retribution, revenge, and punishment are reflected in the what-is-its-name. For one group, what is just is unjust for another.

For one group, what is just is unjust for another.

The Iraqi Frankenstein is built up of body parts from victims belonging to several parties, each of which considers the other to be an enemy. As a result, this Frankenstein will murder himself. To put it another way, the what-is-its-name is a fictitious depiction of everyone killing everyone. Rather than being the solution, this character is a visual depiction of the broader dilemma. (Najjar, 2014, March/26)

If there is a lesson to be learned and a moral moment to be observed today as Iraqis, it is to recognize that we are not all victims and that we have all contributed in some way to the production of victims. (Najjar, March 26, 2014)

Analytical part :

Four beggars are killed in the first attack of the Whatsitsname on the streets of Baghdad. "Each of the beggars had his hands around the neck of the man in front of him," the narrator said of this supernatural crime. It appeared to be a bizarre tableau or theatrical scenario. Their clothing was ragged and filthy, and their heads hung forward" (69).

Insofar as the beggars are slain in such an unusual fashion, "He [the Whatsitsname] had strangled, and then by some odd and difficult operation, he'd put their hands around each other's throat," the incident raises many doubts about the offender and instills panic among city residents (79).

People are afraid of such an unsettling crime scene as word of the gruesome crime scene spreads throughout the city. As a result, "everyone in the vicinity had heard the story, and the residents were terrified" (79). In the end, the Whatsitsname is overcome not only by the sheer number of offenders he feels driven to punish, but also by the passage of time. "Every piece of dead flesh that made up his body fell off if he didn't avenge the person it came from within a specific length of time," the narrator explains. But even if he did avenge someone, that person's piece would fall off anyhow, as if it wasn't needed" (134_35).

He is more concerned with his own survival than with suppressing violence. He then resorts to murdering others in order to prolong his own life.

His mission is clearly corrupted by crazy at some point. His body begins to dissolve after he exacts vengeance on all the killers responsible for the murders of the victims from whom his body parts are made, and he feels lost in the condition of decay: "The Whatsitsname was now at a loss for what to do." (214)



He understood his goal was simply to kill, and that he would have to kill new people every day, but he had lost track of who should be killed and why. The innocent flesh from which he was made had been replaced by new flesh, that of his own victims and criminals" (200).

As a result, he loses his ability to discern between good and evil and begins killing anyone who attracts his attention. To put it another way, the line between guilty and innocent blurs to the point that "criminals and victims are intertwined in a way that is more convoluted than ever before" (214).

The creature kills an elderly and immensely detested Baathist general who was responsible for sending many young soldiers to die in the 1980s Iran-Iraq war, an al-Qaeda member, and a security contractor, and becomes the subject of widespread gossip and speculation in the process. In a piece titled "Urban Legends from the Streets of Iraq," he is featured alongside Robert De Niro as a Frankenstein monster on the cover of a magazine. (Metz, June 5, 2018)

The mission is marked by shame when Whatsitsname strays from his ethical obligations and defaults on his responsibility toward others. It is this ethical failure that makes him shed his human qualities and descend into a monstrous abyss in which survival is the only preoccupation. To survive, he kills, ensuring his survival by continuing to replace the decaying parts of his body with fresh ones (Alhashmi 96).

For example, Whatsitsname confides in his assistant, an aging astrologer, about how his face changes throughout the time. "Nothing in me lasts long, other than my drive to keep going," he confides, adding, "To keep going, I have to kill" Alhashmi 96. It is in this desperate cling onto life that his need for constantly killing satisfies. He refuses to die not knowing why he dies or what comes after his death. This obsessive attachment to survival outdoes even the commitment of his creators, who sacrificed their lives and body parts for his making. His fear of death clutching at life with an intensity far greater than others do: 267–68.

Here, when Whatsitsname becomes concerned only with his survival and disregards his responsibility for others, he clearly loses sight of truth and justice. As Saadawi says, "So he clung to life, perhaps more than others, more than those who gave him their lives and parts of their bodies" (267–68). In this selfish pursuit of survival, he becomes a monster. Justice, like ethics, requires selflessness and consideration for others before oneself. Whatsitsname's problem throws him into an ethical dilemma: he has to survive, but he also has to act upon his moral commitment to other people. It is this struggle that amplifies his monstrosity and haunts him, disrupting his mission. In forsaking his commitment to others, he destroys his humanness and finally allows his monstrosity to take over. As the



reading of Frankenstein by Saadawi suggests, in losing his humanity, the monster extinguishes his human spirit and leaves only the grotesque and destructive form.

Instead of realizing justice or redeeming a distorted humanity, Whatsitsname succumbs to deformity as its victim. Its monstrous nature overrides its creation purpose, and its mission turns out to be a tragedy (Alhashmi 101).

He also has to deal with the memories in the body parts that make him, which is Daniel-or "the Whatsit," as he is known to the media and police. These memories confront him with crimes related to his parts, making him seek redemption by way of avenging those wronged. Feeding his memory is Daniel's composition, and once a task is fulfilled, that part of the body falls away. However, due to Daniel's deteriorating state physically, the people who know of the creation try to salvage their "weapon" by replacing his failing parts with new ones (Metz, June 5, 2018).

Despite such renewal, constant and incessant, Daniel continues his violent cycle to become a perpetual instrument of death. His monstrosity reflects the consequences of one losing his moral compass and the terrible results of hanging onto survival at the cost of justice and humanity.

People are in a condition of terror and suspense because they don't know who killed these beggars who got renowned through a complicated method. (39)

Who shall I seek vengeance from now on for this victim?

The sophist would claim that I arrived to the end of the magician's plan and became a criminal who, as he planned, murdered the innocent. The sophist will say this, while the sorcerer will speak calmly, explaining that I respond to criminal impulses in the criminal flesh with which I have drawn my body, and that in order to get out of this dreaded path of ridding myself of all this notorious flesh, I will wrestle with them and reach no conclusion, as all thoughts struggle. in my head now.(177) .

"I was meticulous about the portions of flesh that were utilized to rebuild my body," the Whatsitsname emphasizes. I made sure my assistants didn't bring any illegitimate flesh—in other words, criminals' flesh" . (156)

While Shelley's Frankenstein seeks vengeance for himself, Saadawi's Whatsitsname seeks vengeance for (and on behalf of) other victims. Insofar as the creature is "made up of the body parts of those who had been killed, plus the spirit of another victim... He was a composite of victims trying to avenge their deaths so they may rest in peace," his goal for vengeance is about the others from whom his body is composed .(130)



When he goes astray and ignores his responsibilities to the Other, the assignment ends in shame. As a result, he loses his humanity after losing his morality and descends into the abyss, where he begins killing to assure just his life, in the sense that he must continually replace his body parts. For example, Whatsitsname informs one of his assistants, the old astrologer, that his face is always changing. "Nothing in me lasts long, other than my drive to keep going," he continues in the same talk with his assistant. To keep going, I have to kill.' He didn't want to die without knowing why he was dying or where he would go after death, so he clung to life, hoping to find out why he was dying and where he would go after death.(267_68)

People are in a condition of terror and suspense because they don't know who killed these beggars who have become connected in a complex process.

Those who were renowned because of death (the writer conveys his positions when he writes, i.e. (became famous because of death) with death, not life, not life). When violence spreads throughout a country, even the standards of living are altered, and instead of becoming famous for their survival and advancement in life, people may become famous for their unusual ways of dying. There is a hidden meaning in this paragraph: unusual causes lead to extraordinary results, or, in other words, the unexpected as a result of the unexpected. (39)

When the writer has a strong tendency to reveal his personality throughout his work, he uses self-mention indicators. The use of first personal pronouns or identity to reflect the writer's thoughts, tendencies, and socio-original ideology, as well as a direct reference to the writer's presence in the text through the use of first personal pronouns or identity to reflect the writer's thoughts, tendencies, and socio-original ideology (p, 124).

- The most recent evaluation. I don't want my life.. what I am and what my life is... I am nothing... die or live... I am nothing... kill me, but make me the last one in the end.

When Hadi utilizes the contentious character in his novel to represent directly his philosophy about his own life, and perhaps indirectly the ideology of some readers, El-Saadawi employs the method of selfremembrance.(146)

It had begun when I heard the sounds of the looming confrontation below. Bullet bursts that are deafening. The sound of a human scream. I felt like I was being grilled in the sun, so I got up, rewrapped myself in the filthy sheet, and walked up to the fence. Two groups of militants engaged in a quick battle. The first group quickly broke and fled, while the second group managed to apprehend two of the



fleeing group members. They continued to press them into a wall that was nearly ruined and filled with large holes with rifle butts.

It was destroyed by PCC machine gun fire.

Uses the first person pronoun in terms like (which signifies) to refer to self-mention. (I heard and felt something.)(146)

The sophist will claim that I have completed the sorcerer's goal and have turned into a criminal who murders innocent people as he intended. By using a jinn who mocks him and manipulates your thoughts, the magician has pushed you to this conclusion. The sophist will say this, while the sorcerer will speak calmly, explaining that I am responding to the criminal impulses in the criminal flesh with which I have drawn my body, and that in order to get off this dreaded road of getting rid of all this notorious flesh, I will wrestle with them and come to no conclusion, as all thoughts struggle.(199)

"Justice, retribution, revenge, and penalty norms." "I am the solution to their plea for an end to injustice and for vengeance on the wicked," the Whatsitsname says of his mission. I will exact vengeance on all crooks. "I shall finally deliver justice to the world..." (143). The creature perfectly combines the concepts of vengeance and justice. In his opinion, the only way to find justice is to avenge innocent victims, and the only way to do so is to murder the culprits. Perhaps Saadawi observed this worldview reflected in militia action, because vengeance seemed to come in the form of revenge.

"Justice, retribution, revenge, and penalty norms." "I am the solution to their plea for an end to injustice and for justice," the Whatsitsname says of his purpose.

Following the Iraq War, Baghdad became a city of anarchy, vengeance, and unhealed trauma; this turmoil could be best signified by a Whatsitsname made up of a patchwork of body parts of victims who said, "It was a collage of victims demanding vengeance so they might rest in peace" Saadawi 130. This revenge is not an uncalled-for reaction, considering the widespread violence and atrocities committed by the Hussein regime, the US armed forces, and various militias. To many Iraqis who had endured decades of oppression, upheaval, and suffering, revenge was like coming into its own-a means to find peace by violent retribution. The Whatsitsname, collectively comprising those who have seen and/or become victims of gross acts of war, is the powerful visual trope that binds Iraq under the onus of violence and loss-in this case, Saddam Hussein's leadership, among others (Saadawi 130).

Still, the Whatsitsname is not what brings peace. Never solving the pain of its victims, his crusade for vengeance causes even more chaos. Peace can never be



had since the creature survives on an unending spree of killings with ever-more victims to avenge in front of or next to an increasingly higher number. Of course, that Whatsitsname will never pull off this perfect justice serves to underscore futility in that political vacuum constituting 2005 Iraq. In this turmoil, one of the main protagonists of the novel, Mahmoud, advances a theory of justice that can be considered reasonable: "legal justice, heavenly justice, and street justice... however long it takes, offenders must face one of them" (Saadawi 173).

Yet, all this theory is far from reality in Baghdad: when criminals and innocents alike are being victims of the violence, and the suicide bombings just go on, one might doubt that the government would, or even could, restore the lost justice. Mahmoud himself begins to doubt the theory of his: "Mahmoud remembered his theory about the three types of justice, but he wasn't sure it was correct. There was chaos out there; there was no logic to what was going on" , says Saadawi 273. At the end of the novel, Mahmoud's ruminations have brought him to a startling understanding of justice: "Every criminal he had killed had also been a victim" Saadawi 214-215. The acknowledgement of such a perspective upsets the comfortable binary of good and evil and further problematizes the definition of justice in relation to Iraq's unending conflict.

The Whatsitsname is an undercutting of conventional moral divides. Neither thoroughly good nor all bad, this creature's existence further obliterates distinctions between victim and aggressor-the body parts derive from persons who had not been exactly innocuous; the persons for whom it attempts to take vengeance were themselves not wholly evil. Zahra Hankir, in her review for Literary Hub, emphasizes that Saadawi does this on purpose to underline the issue of moral ambiguity, adding that Saadawi has explored collective guilt in Iraq. Saadawi himself says, "People tend to regard themselves as victims," challenging readers to confront the shared responsibility and complicity of all those connected to Iraq's ongoing suffering.

In Frankenstein in Baghdad, the Whatsitsname is possibly the finest example of the cyclical nature of violence. His motives are clear: he wants to revenge the deaths of his composite victims and bring them peace (Saadawi 130)

He is a murderer. However, a few killings are insufficient. In fact, the Whatsitsname's objective of enforcing justice by violence need more flesh in order to continue (Saadawi 135).

Section four

Conclusion



Frankenstein in Baghdad is a gripping and thought-provoking novel that not only delves into a specific period of Iraq's turbulent history but also offers a fresh and intimate perspective on daily life during the chaos of war. For readers who may not fully recall the details of this era—perhaps only glimpsing fragmented images of the conflict through nightly news broadcasts—the novel provides an unparalleled window into the lived experiences of ordinary Iraqis. Through its Arabic lens, it reveals that the hopes, fears, and values of the Iraqi people are universal, resonating deeply with audiences far removed from the setting. Against the backdrop of a haunting modern horror story, these shared human experiences are woven into a narrative that is both grotesque and profoundly beautiful.

The novel's chilling and immersive nature makes it nearly impossible to put down; its masterful storytelling captivates the reader from beginning to end. In fact, it is the kind of book that can easily be devoured in just a couple of sittings. Ahmed Saadawi brilliantly merges historic events with a modern reimagining of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, creating a narrative that is both deeply rooted in Iraq's reality and universally compelling. His depiction of the Frankenstein monster—a figure born from the remnants of violence and loss—is not only an innovative twist but also a poignant allegory for the cyclical destruction and fragmentation experienced by a war-torn society.

Saadawi's literary achievements have not gone unnoticed. In addition to his recognition as an accomplished novelist, he has earned France's Grand Prize for Fantasy, further solidifying his place as a leading voice in contemporary literature. Beyond his work as a novelist, Saadawi is also a skilled documentary filmmaker and poet, a multidisciplinary artist whose talents enrich his storytelling with layers of depth and complexity. Frankenstein in Baghdad stands as a testament to his ability to merge genres and perspectives, offering readers a chilling yet profoundly human tale that lingers long after the final page.

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